

The 2016 Wrigley Company Foundation Community Service Grants

Each year, the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company Foundation, in partnership with the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) Institute for Oral Health, awards selected public health programs with a grant to help support their work in the community. Following are just examples of the many programs, and the stories of those who donate time and services to help those in need.



Seal-A-Smile

One recurring theme of those who are awarded grants through the Wrigley Foundation is that their programs don't just help one target audience — they often provide education and services to multiple groups. The Seal-A-Smile program, based out of SUNY Canton's Dental Hygiene Program, is no different.

Lindsay Argyle, RDH, MS, is an adjunct instructor at SUNY Canton. In collaboration with Kasey Penoyer, RDH, MS, full-time faculty member and Community Health course instructor for SUNY Canton, and under the guidance of curriculum coordinator Professor Pamela P. Quinn, RDH, BSE, MSED, Argyle has helped create the Seal-A-Smile program, an outreach program

that aims to provide education and dental services to underserved children with limited access to care.

"All children learned the basics of brushing, flossing and making healthy food choices," Argyle said. "After receiving parental consent and a pre-screening, those found eligible visited the SUNY Canton Dental Hygiene Clinic. James Rozanski, DDS, director of dental services at Faxton St. Luke's, along with several dental residents, provided dental examinations on all participants. Dental exams, bitewing x-rays, sealants and fluoride treatments were completed. All participants received appropriate referrals if additional care was needed."

As a result of their volunteer efforts, an estimated \$25,515 of dental services was donated during the event. While providing access to care for children

is important, the second part of this program is the focus on dental hygiene students, who volunteer their time and gain priceless experience dealing with a unique patient population.

"Each of the 22 senior dental hygiene students volunteered six hours of time to complete pre-screenings," Argyle said. "After providing the educational program, six sophomore students and two supervising faculty performed post-screenings to see if the children had a reduced PHP score as a result of participation in the educational program."

In total, 22 senior clinicians and 18 freshman students volunteered, along with five dentists and five clinical faculty, providing an estimated 588 hours of volunteer time to the project. As Argyle said, the students gained priceless experience they can use throughout the rest of their careers.

"The project enabled the students in the dental hygiene program to better understand how a community project is planned, implemented and evaluated," she said. "It also provided additional clinical experience working with children and added to the well-rounded, hands-on, quality education received through SUNY Canton's dental hygiene program." ■

Applications for the Wrigley Company Foundation Community Service Grants are available in July for completion by October 1 each year. For guidelines and selection criteria, please visit <http://www.adha.org/ioh-wrigley-application>

Community Outreach Education in a Box

Community outreach is essential, especially when serving over 6,000 people across 94 communities. To assist with this need, Heather Johnson, RDH, MEd, and Yvette Thornton, RDH, MPH, co-created the Community Outreach Education in a Box initiative.

"Each 'Community Outreach Education in a Box' contains detailed topic information to offer the dental students a wonderful educational source to teach and present information to countless people in many diverse communities," Johnson said. "The main goal is to promote oral health awareness and its link

to overall whole-person health to the communities in which the dental students serve." The educational boxes are a physical resource filled with models, books, flash cards, handouts and much more to be used by the dental students to teach the children.

Thanks in large part to programs such as the Wrigley grant, the initiative has been a success. Johnson and Thornton were able to create additional boxes to bring to Boys & Girls Clubs, providing education where it is most needed.

"The ADHA Wrigley grant impacted the program by providing us additional

funding to create four educational boxes," Thornton said. "These four boxes were used to educate a population of 205 children by providing visual educational resources to convey the message of dental prevention."

A large part of the effectiveness of the program, according to Johnson and Thornton, is that they educate children early on about proper health care, leading to a lifelong commitment to preventive treatment.

"Children need to learn, early on, about the importance of dental hygiene and its impact on their oral health and overall health." ■



Give Kids a Smile

learning curve as they assimilate to a new culture," Cerveny said. Sensing an opportunity to provide a service to her new community, she joined the Greater Houston Dental Hygiene Society and began volunteering in local community events, establishing connections and laying the groundwork for her own program.

"I worked with the University of Texas School of Dentistry community outreach contact Victoria Patrounova (MHA, RDH) who offered me her dental hygiene students as volunteers and free toothbrush and toothpaste supplies; a dentist, Afshan Kaviani (DDS), who volunteered her time; and Spring Forest Middle School staff and administration as well as the PTA to pull together a day of dental hygiene education offering both oral hygiene giveaways and one-on-one instruction to all incoming sixth-graders during their PE hour."

This first event, as Cerveny recalled, was a success, but she wondered if they could do more.

"We reached over 300 students that day on a shoestring budget and a bunch of goodwill. The day was well received by the students, and I began to wonder what kind of an impact we could make with a little money."

After reading about the Wrigley Grants in Access magazine, Cerveny decided to apply. Her program was selected, and she immediately put the award to good use.

"It essentially gives this community outreach program longevity and an opportunity to be a stakeholder in the Spring Forest Middle School community

for the next two to three years," Cerveny said. "I have non-perishable oral hygiene supplies purchased with the grant money stockpiled in my closet, and foresee running this same program easily for two more years."

The grant not only ensures that the program will run longer, but also more frequently.

"In April of this year, we ran the same program but expanded it to include dental hygiene students from PIMA Institute, a nearby [dental] hygiene school, as well as the University of Texas School of Dentistry dental hygiene students," Cerveny said. "We offered 304 children a short lesson on oral hygiene, nutritional tips [and] one-on-one instruction with big mouth models of proper brushing and flossing techniques."

Being recognized nationally has validated not just Cerveny's work, but the role dental hygienists can play in public health settings. Thanks to the Wrigley grant, Cerveny can help provide a better life to those who have come to this country seeking one.

"Being granted the Wrigley award was deeply satisfying and in a small way addresses a deep dental health need in the refugee community here in West Houston. Giving simple dental education and support to these children can help them assimilate into their new homeland and hopefully thrive. It is my hope that these kids feel and experience a community that cares not only about their teeth and smiles but them as a whole person as well." ■

After relocating to Houston, Texas in 2014, Raquel Cerveny, BA, RDH, enrolled her daughter at Spring Forest Middle School and became an active member of the PTA. One of her first observations, and a constant topic of discussion at PTA meetings, was Spring Forest's diverse student population and the economic hardships some of those students faced.

"The diversity of the student population at SFMS, with a large refugee influx from Congo, Sudan and Iraq, was a persistent topic at PTA meetings because these children are economically disadvantaged and on a tremendous



Foster-A-Smile

Among the public outreach programs to treat underserved populations in Arkansas are Smile Drives coordinated by the National Children's Oral Health Foundation. As a participant in these drives and president of the Arkansas Dental Hygienists' Association (DHA), Audrey Ames, RDH, BS, collaborated with colleague Donna Bailey, RDH, to organize a Smile Drive so that Arkansas DHA members could participate locally.

"We did our first Smile Drive in February of last year to have our association help raise awareness for National Children's Dental Health Month, and decided to donate the items collected to the children in foster care in Arkansas."

Receiving the dental care items was The CALL, an organization that helps support foster children and parents across Arkansas. Because there are CALL organizations throughout the state, Arkansas DHA members were able to duplicate the Smile Drives in several locations. After a while, it became clear to Ames that something more needed to be done: there are an estimated 5,000 children in Arkansas's foster care system, and given the realities of that system, many of those children were having to go without even the most basic necessities.

Ames and Bailey started the Foster-A-Smile program to help those in the foster system. The goal, according to Ames, may be simple on paper, but it demands a lot of work.

"The goal is for every child in the foster care system

to never be without a toothbrush, and for all foster parents to have oral health care items available to them at all times, along with proper oral health care education for all ages, due to the fact they open their doors any time of night or day not even knowing what age the child could be or existing oral health issues they have."

Foster-A-Smile held their first event in late August, and it featured oral health education and training for children of all ages. Ames said that dentists and several dental hygienists were eager to volunteer for the event, and she's hoping it won't be the last. But without the Wrigley grant, the program wouldn't have even managed to begin in the first place.

"The Wrigley grant is totally what is allowing us to do this program. Without the \$5,000 we could not get the materials printed or purchase the oral health care kits that we will be handing out at each event to the foster children. I am so grateful because this is a great need for the foster children in our state. Toothbrushes need to be replaced every three months at least, and with the transient life the foster children live, it is even more difficult to make sure one is always available. The foster parents typically have multiple children, and the cost of oral health care items adds up quickly, especially when they are not given much help financially to purchase oral health care items for the children.

"Again, without this generous grant from Wrigley, this program could not be established with such a strong foundation and begin to meet a great need for the foster families." ■

Senior Smiles



For Staci Stout, RDH, BSDH, the creation of the Senior Smiles program wasn't something she necessarily planned or envisioned. But plans can change, and often when least expected. The idea for the program, which aims to provide the underserved elderly population with much-needed oral health care, arose from a conversation she had with her students.

"The motivation for starting Senior Smiles stemmed from an experience I had with some of my dental hygiene students," Stout said. "They reported seeing a couple of patients from a local assisted living residence. The patients' physical condition was untidy, but when the students looked intraorally, they were shocked by the amount of debris and decay present. The students questioned their patients on their ability to brush regularly. The patients said that they did not receive regular oral health care, and when they asked for assistance from their caregivers, they were told there wasn't enough time to help.

"I explored this problem further and found that this situation was the rule rather than the exception in most of the elderly care residences. I began to reach out to our assisted living associations on how to address this problem. They invited me to come speak about oral care at an annual state meeting. When I was done with my presentation, I was approached by a marketing director that wanted to start an oral health program within her assisted living residence. We started working to set up Senior Smiles as a pilot program

that would create a model for providing oral health care to our elderly as well as education to residents, staff and management."

From there, Stout met with administrative staff from local assisted living facilities, presenting the case for proper oral health care, and before she knew it, the plan was put into action.

"[The staff] were engaged and eager for their residents to receive oral health care," Stout said. "They could see the value of improving the oral health of their residents and the positive effect it could have on overall health.

"Once the management understood what we could provide, we set up an oral health assessment day to screen most of their residents. We were able to determine the care that would be needed and schedule future appointments with a dental hygienist. We also were able to make referrals to appropriate dental professionals. We then met with the staff and caregivers and provided education on oral health and denture care. From now until the end of the year, we are providing dental hygiene care to individual residents within the facility and bedside as needed."

Through a chance encounter and plenty of hard work, Stout is well on her way to helping out her community and giving back to the aging population. But she acknowledges that the road would be much tougher if it weren't for programs such as the Wrigley grant.

"The Wrigley grant has been such a valuable resource to get the program started. It has allowed us to purchase needed supplies, equipment and to compensate dental hygienists for their service.

"In 2009, all Utah adults on Medicaid, except pregnant women, lost dental coverage due to state budget cuts. The success of our Senior Smiles program is evidence of the need to restore dental services for our state's aging population," Stout said. "The Wrigley grant has allowed us to provide valuable oral health services and has helped us obtain necessary equipment we wouldn't have been able to otherwise." ■

Smile Care Everywhere

Sustainability is vital for the success of any program, and it has allowed Smile Care Everywhere, through Pacific University, to operate since 2008. The program began by participating in health fairs, and occasionally offering free oral health services to the migrant and seasonal workers of Oregon. The program was able to achieve this success by partnering with local businesses, and in 2011 they joined forces with Wilber Ramírez-Rodríguez, RDH, EPDH, BSDH, owner of Dental Reach Inc. By 2013, Ramírez-Rodríguez was more than just a volunteer; he was an instrumental part of maintaining that sustainability.

"From 2013 to the present, we built collaboration with several local organizations such as Hispanic Dental Association, Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, Providence Health &

Services, Catholic Parishes, Promotores de Salud, Centro Cultural de Washington County, Medical Teams International, and SALUD services from Tuality Health Care," said Ramírez-Rodríguez. "Our goal for this program is to make [it] sustainable by working in collaboration."

One of Smile Care Everywhere's most recent initiatives has been to place portable dental units in places where underserved populations can easily access them for oral health care. The cost of the services provided is subsidized by a grant through Providence Health & Services. The patients are asked to make a nominal donation toward their services; however, if a patient is unable to pay, they are seen at no charge. Services that will be provided include dental hygiene exams, visual oral cancer screenings, prophylaxes, fluoride varnishes, and

oral hygiene instructions. The dental units will be housed at St. Elizabeth Catholic, and Ramírez-Rodríguez is optimistic that it will benefit the community greatly.

Ramírez-Rodríguez, fully understanding the importance of collaboration, recognizes that without programs such as the Wrigley Grant, sustainability would be even more difficult to achieve, and programs may not see the success they hope to achieve.

"Thanks to the contributions like the Wrigley Grant, our program becomes sustainable and creates access to care, helping us providing patient education, prevention and promotion, changing patient behaviors, and preventing systemic and oral disease." ■



Maryland Special Olympics Special Smiles Program

When a person spends 21 years volunteering for the same program, it's no longer a hobby, or a way to spend the occasional weekend. It's a passion, one that's just as fulfilling as it is challenging. But the payoff for Sheryl Syme, RDH, MS, is more than worth it.

Syme has been involved with the Maryland Special Olympics Special Smiles program for 21 years, and has served as the state clinical director for Maryland Special Olympics Special Smiles for the past nine years.

"Our goal is to expand the number of individuals with intellectual disabilities receiving oral health screenings, oral health education, athletic mouth protectors and fluoride varnish applications while participating in the Maryland Special Olympics Summer Games," Syme said.

The Maryland Special Olympics Special Smiles program is dedicated to this goal, and works to achieve it through dental screenings, education and referral programs collaborating with the state's main athletic training program for individuals with intellectual disabilities. During a recent event, 147 athletes, nearly double the number of previous years, received a wide range of services.

"Athletes received an oral health screening, oral hygiene education, and we fit them for an athletic mouth protector and apply fluoride varnish," Syme said. "Each athlete also received our purple Special Smiles t-shirt and a canvas carrying bag containing toothpaste, sugarless gum, interdental cleaners, toothbrushes, floss, mouth rinse, a summary report of their oral health findings and oral health literature."

Because of the increase in number of athletes seen, and the need to purchase updated supplies, Syme

acknowledges that without the Wrigley Grant, much of this simply wouldn't have been possible.

"The Wrigley grant enabled us to purchase oversize mouth models and toothbrushes to use at our oral health education station. Additionally, the Wrigley grant enabled us to purchase purple Special Smiles t-shirts used as athlete incentives that were a big hit with the athletes and staff.

"The ADHA Institute for Oral Health and the Wrigley Company Foundation Community Service Grant programs are essential for community outreach conducted at local levels by volunteer registered dental hygienists and members of the professional dental health care team." ■

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