

Perspectives

STEMMING THE TIDE: AAED'S NEW ESTHETIC AND RESTORATIVE UPDATE

A recent *JERD* editorial (Volume 16, Number 2) generated significant feedback and continues to reverberate long after it was published. "I Have Had Enough!" written by Dr. Gordon Christensen, focused on the alarming trend in continuing dental education that threatens the very core principles of ethics and excellence that have long been the hallmarks of the dental profession. Emerging new technologies *do* impact dentistry, so upon whom will practitioners rely for their continuing education needs?

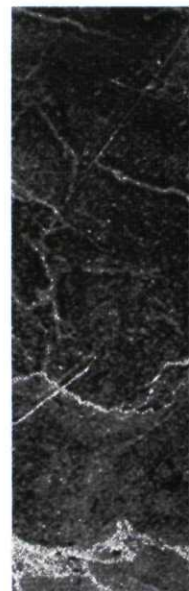
All too frequently, continuing education programs today are peppered with commercially biased, self-serving lecturers bent on championing concepts that promote "instant dentistry" and maximized profits while ignoring the long-term health implications for the patient. Ethical teachers who foster concepts based on scientific evidence and conservation are unfortunately becoming increasingly scarce. The contemporary "educator" frequently takes an apprentice-based approach: "Do it the way I do, and you will be successful" is the contemporary mantra we hear time and again.

In an attempt to stem this unsettling tide of commercialism and "quick fix" dentistry, the American Academy of Esthetic Dentistry (AAED) elected to use its collective expertise to provide an annual forum for high-quality, evidence-based continuing education. To that end, the annual Esthetic and Restorative Update (ERU) was implemented. For the first time, any interested dental professional can attend an annual educational forum constituted by AAED fellows who will share cutting-edge information on a broad range of interdisciplinary esthetic and restorative topics. These presenters represent the most highly recognized and sought-after speakers in the profession today.

It is quite possible that you know very little about the AAED. Founded in 1975 by Dr. Ronald Goldstein and the late Dr. Charles Pincus, the AAED is a small organization composed of distinguished dental professionals from virtually every facet of the profession. The founders' vision was to bring together a diverse group of qualified, talented individuals who share a common interest in the emerging field of dental esthetics and the promotion of excellence in total patient care. Fellows in this

academy epitomize the highest standards of the profession. Some are dedicated to full-time academics, whereas others are involved with continuing education, research, and development. They are ambassadors of information in the profession and transmit their messages through a variety of channels. You are very familiar with their names; you have read their books and articles in peer-reviewed journals and you have likely attended at least one of their lectures. Yet, you may not have realized that they are among the select 125 members of the AAED.

Why did the AAED endeavor to initiate an annual continuing education forum that is open to the entire profession? When this academy was started, annual meetings were limited to members and a few invited guests. However, the AAED's mission statement states, "The main purpose of the American Academy of Esthetic Dentistry is to promote the integration of dental



esthetics into the total spectrum of oral health care and provide a leadership role for the profession by defining the highest artistic, scientific and ethical standards through research, publications and educational presentations." To actualize this mission more fully, the executive council voted to commit academy resources and initiate an annual, open, continuing education forum, the Esthetic and Restorative Update (ERU). All speakers are members of the AAED who donate their time and expertise to ensure the success of this effort. The first ERU was held this past year in Seattle, WA, and the response by the attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

The AAED is proud to have set the standards in the field of dental esthetics for the past three decades. Through the years, its hallmark has been the advancement of clinical excellence and high ethical stan-

dards. We urge you to join in our continuing commitment to better dentistry and to stem the tide of commercialism and overtreatment of the public. The AAED invites you and your colleagues to join us in Orlando, FL, on April 8 and 9, 2005, for the "Esthetic and Restorative Update 2005" to learn the most current information from the most respected educators in dentistry. Our noted panel of speakers will include Drs. Vincent Celenza, Gerard Chiche, Gordon Christensen, Mark Friedman, Cary Goldstein, Gregory Kinzer, Vincent Kokich Jr, Baldwin Marchack, Daniel Nathanson, Dennis Shanelec, Frank Spear, and John West. We believe you will find this meeting educational, refreshing, and highly informative. More importantly, it will be your opportunity to interact with these individuals and other colleagues who share the desire to return

ethics and excellence to continuing education in dentistry.

For more information on this event, please contact AAED Headquarters: phone 312-321-5121, e-mail aaed@smithbucklin.com, or visit their Web site at <www.estheticacademy.org>.



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