

1997 Distinguished Service Award: Helen K. Doherty, Administrative Secretary, AAPHD Joseph M. Doherty, DDS, MPH

Introductory Comments by Myron Allukian, Jr., DDS, MPH, President, AAPHD, 1995

Good Afternoon. The purpose of this special tribute and luncheon is to honor Helen and Joseph Doherty with the Distinguished Service Award of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, the highest honor of our association, for their excellent and distinguished service to AAPHD.

I would like to begin this special tribute with a toast to Helen and Joseph on this the 60th anniversary of AAPHD. Please raise your glasses of fluoridated water. To Helen and Joe, we salute you and thank you for your many contributions.

May you live as long as you want,
And never want as long as you
live,
And in the coming years,
May you have infinite health and
happiness"

This award is really for two individuals, each of whom has made unique and everlasting contributions to AAPHD and dental public health. This award is for Helen, who has served AAPHD since 1983, with all of her heart, soul, and energy, to make AAPHD an exemplary association. And for Joe, who likewise worked with Helen, for furthering AAPHD, but who also in his own right has made many contributions to dental public health and has been one of our outstanding leaders. This award is also for one family, the Dohertys, who are committed and dedicated to uphold the highest principles of AAPHD. It has been said that "It takes a village to raise a child"; I would like to say, "It took a family, like the Dohertys, to revive AAPHD, and to make it viable, productive, and responsive to changing times." AAPHD has been raised to new heights of credibility and effec-

tiveness as a result of the Dohertys conscientious work and tireless support of AAPHD. Who can estimate the impact of Helen and Joe's reaching out to serve AAPHD's members all around the world?

In 1983, when I became president-elect of AAPHD, I learned at our annual meeting that we had a \$6,500 deficit. We thought we had just saved our specialty from an ADA proposal to change the definition of dental public health to include a requirement to practice clinical dentistry. I then learned that all the dental specialties were going to be reviewed for recertification and dental public health was selected at random to be the first. We had just terminated our contract with a private firm who handled the AAPHD office because we ran out of money. We decided to move ahead on a shoestring budget with new administrative staff, Helen Doherty. Joe was then the AAPHD secretary-treasurer, so you can guess who recommended Helen.

Well, from that point on, AAPHD could go nowhere but up, and we did, thanks to the Dohertys. At our next annual meeting in 1984 at the "famous" LADHA Hotel in Atlanta, we had the highest number of attendees ever in the history of AAPHD, 211 registrants. Since then we have gone from 485 members to 850 members and we successfully became recertified as a specialty with our application serving as a model for all the other specialties. Our budget and revenue are now quite stable and strong.

The Dohertys were so committed to AAPHD that they had their four children assist in AAPHD mailings and even had one of their children change her wedding date so that it would not

conflict with the AAPHD annual meeting. What a commitment to AAPHD and the future of dental public health. I am honored to have worked with such conscientious and dedicated individuals. They exemplify the highest of commitments to AAPHD.

These are just a few of the many achievements AAPHD realized, thanks to the Dohertys. In developing today's program, I had asked Joe and Helen to give me a list of who they would like to speak at today's tribute; they gave me a list of 35 people. Unfortunately, since we only had 1 1/2 hours for this ceremony, with great difficulty and deep regret, the number of speakers had to be limited.

One of the complexities of giving this award to the Dohertys I mentioned earlier is that Dr. Joseph Doherty has made so many distinguished contributions to dental public health over the years, in addition to what he has done for AAPHD with his wife, Helen. Dr. Doherty was a past president of the following organizations: Association of State and Territorial Dental Officers (ASTDD) in 1986, AAPHD in 1987, the American Board of Dental Public Health in 1990, and the Richmond Virginia Dental Society in 1990. In each of these roles, Joe has been an outstanding leader. He received his dental degree in 1958 from the University of Detroit Dental School, where he met Helen, who worked in the Dean's office, and his MPH from the University of Minnesota in 1962. He became a diplomate of the ABDPH in 1970. Today's speakers will give us different perspectives on Helen and Joe, in the many roles in which they served.