

said, "One person can make a difference," and the celebration in your honor is a fitting tribute to the significant difference both of you have made in improving the lives of so many people and in

working so tirelessly in the field of oral health care in the United States. I know that there are many people who are grateful for the dedication you have shown. I share the respect and admiration of all your friends and family in

this tribute and I hope the future will bring you continued success. With my best wishes,

Sincerely,  
Edward M. Kennedy  
US Senator

## A Tribute to Myron Allukian, Jr., DDS, MPH

**Barry S. Levy, MD, MPH, Immediate Past President, American Public Health Association**

Dr. Myron Allukian, Jr., we honor you here  
For your distinguished service and extraordinary career.  
A national leader, you've been instrumental  
In demonstrating that just about all public health is dental.

For neither personal advancement nor personal wealth  
You've contributed enormously to oral health.  
In Greater Boston and throughout the nation  
You've been a leading champion for fluoridation.  
If it weren't for you and the roles that you play,  
Our nation would be in a state of decay.

With innovative programs, you did succeed  
In bringing dental health programs to many in need:  
To those who are impoverished and those with HIV,  
To the homeless, the elderly, to Vietnam refugees.

Myron, you've worked professionally in many sectors,  
You've been Boston's long-time Community Dental  
Programs Director,  
You've taught many students about public health principles  
and oral health tools  
In your faculty roles at three public health, one dental  
hygiene, and three dental medicine schools.

In APHA, you've shown your leadership skill;  
There's no major role here that you did not fill.  
Your crowning achievement was eight years ago,  
When you served as APHA president—far and wide you did  
go,  
Giving untiringly of all of yourself,  
Spreading the message of public health.

John Knutson was the first dentist to serve as APHA pres.  
But he ran unchallenged—at least that's what Myron says.  
Myron, you ran your campaign, you struck all the right notes,  
You shook all the hands...and even counted the votes.  
You spoke in many states the country through,  
And you sometimes brought your kids along with you.  
You returned to Vietnam in this APHA role,  
And carried a message from your heart and your soul  
Of partnership to move beyond yesterday's sorrow  
To a healthier, more peaceful world of tomorrow.

And in APHA, after your roles had been served,  
You passed on the challenge and gave others of us the nerve.  
Among the Association's officers, when we talk, one on one,  
We discover that it was Myron who made all of us run.

Over the years, Myron, you've been a teacher and mentor  
To many students and colleagues from many departments  
and centers;  
And to me, you have been a trusted adviser,  
Perhaps not much older, but substantially wiser.

In so many other ways, you've been effective:  
In incorporating dental health into the nation's prevention  
objectives,  
In writing over 100 publications  
On all subjects from fluoridation to fluoridation.

There's some more information that is consequential  
That I'll share if you keep it quite confidential:  
It's descriptive data shrouded in much mystery,  
It's best referred to as "Myron's Oral History."

Myron was born on Armenian Christmas and in the 50+  
years since,  
His mother continues to believe he's a prince.  
Myron has remembered his roots—or so he's behaved;  
Even his deciduous teeth have been saved.

In his family, Myron has taken much pride:  
For 23 years, Ruth's been his bride,  
And it's true that her wedding ring Myron did fuse  
From golden teeth that his father could no longer use.  
Myron and Ruth's six children, now aged 12 to 21,  
Have shared lots of love, affection, and sheer fun.  
Myron III, Kristin, Alison, Jason, Alexandra, and Nathan's  
their crew.  
Myron, we've heard none of them can outrun or outwrestle  
you.  
Family outings are not picnics—they're collections of samples  
In order to determine if the fluoride levels in water are  
ample.

An articulate speaker, when you talk we take notes,  
Especially on words from the people you quote.  
Myron, your sources are many, classic books you do mark.  
When you saw Jackie Mason, you took notes in the dark.  
Your humorous stories amuse us public health folk,  
Especially when they end with the words: "That was a joke!"

Myron, you're a great athlete, wrestling makes you a bit  
purer,  
Although you're no Jesse "The Body" Ventura.  
But in things that do count, there is no competition,  
Cause, Myron, you top Jesse as a great politician.

How do you do it all? We don't know, but we're Myron  
Believers,  
It helps us to know that you used to juggle meat cleavers:  
Yes, this public health leader, Renaissance Man so holistic,  
Once was known as Myron the Manual Mystic.

In education, Myron, you've set a patten,  
Now all of your kids go to school at Boston Latin—  
On the other hand, for housework you don't have a feel,  
And Ruth says she's never seen you cooking a meal.

Myron, your interests span from the teeth to the toes,  
From flossing to dancing, as everyone knows,  
So at each APHA meeting, we compete to the beat  
For the Myron Allukian Award for Flying Fleet.

Myron, you are head and shoulders—and 32 teeth—beyond  
any peer,  
A role model to many, including all of us here.  
You are someone whom we have greatly admired;  
Whenever in your presence, we are deeply inspired.

So, congratulations on receiving this tremendous award  
For your distinguished career, in which you've never been  
bored,  
And we wish you good health and many more adventures  
And may you have a very long life, without needing  
dentures.

### Steven Uranga McKane, DMD, MPH, Former President and CEO, The California Endowment

I am genuinely honored to be with you on this occasion to recognize an extraordinary individual, and to reflect on how he has entered into and altered the lives of all of those in the room this evening, the lives of countless more including future generations in his home state of Massachusetts, and the lives of perhaps, just perhaps, a handful of others outside of the Bay State! Myron Allukian is a role model, an inspiration, and a leader worthy of praise and recognition for truly making a positive difference in the world.

Myron is the rare person, at least in my experience, with the ability to wed the academic and practice elements of public health through linking the education and training of individuals to the real world of service delivery. His application of science to address community health issues is equaled by the use of practice matters to inform the education of future health professionals and in doing this, he shows the utmost respect for the knowledge and power of the community, particularly the underserved, by engaging the community as a key partner in articulating its issues, and the design and implementation of sustainable solutions.

It is this approach that has been the focus of the work of many of us here tonight and a result of spending time

with you, Myron.

With the limited time available, please allow me to recall just a few experiences from my affiliation with Myron over the past 20 years that illustrate how Myron is a special human being.

#### The Performer

Most of us know Myron the performer. We've heard stories of his cleaver-juggling act. His dancing prowess is legendary. Given his history as a wrestler, we should not be surprised to hear some day of the election of Governor Myron "the Body" Allukian!

But I first saw Myron in 1975 at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine in his capacity as assistant clinical professor. I was a student and he was introduced to my class as a guest speaker and an antifuoridationist. He was quite convincing as he ran down his list of the evils of this poison! As a class, we had already fallen out of favor with the dean and his faculty for protesting and rejecting a research requirement. So it was no surprise that we immediately and rudely began to argue with this nut case. At the end of the session, the truth was told and an indelible impression was made on another cadre of future oral health professionals.

#### The Mentor

In 1978, I spent the summer in Myron's office. The opportunity was unpaid, of course, but afforded me experiences in educating newly elected state legislators on fluoridation; in doing the work to receive the initial federal designation of a number of Boston communities as dentally underserved; and attending meetings that ranged from the board of the Massachusetts Public Health Association to Neighborhood Health Center staff meetings. (After Myron introduced me at the Board meeting, I was referred to as Myron Jr. the remainder of the day. I immediately shaved my beard off!)

Throughout this time together, I felt like Myron gave me his full attention. He encouraged my participation and welcomed my contributions. He provided guidance and advice. He asked thought-provoking questions and pressed me to analyze meetings and discussions. He taught me about critical assessment, strategy, tactics, and building constituencies. All of these things have been, and always will be, part of my work.

While all of this is edifying and good, the most memorable event occurred during the first few days of the summer internship. It was a simple act, but one I recall daily.

He invited me into his office and asked me to take a seat across from him at his desk. He went into a monologue about his joy and enthusiasm for coming to the office each and every day. How he looked forward to new challenges and opportunities to cross his desk. I listened, politely, but thought to myself, what a crock ... he must do this with every poor student who passes through the office. I was, at that moment, unimpressed and eager to get involved with some real work.

Well, 10 years later I found myself as the director of health for the city of Hartford. I was inviting students to sit across from me at my desk, and effervescing (if you can imagine me getting excited about anything!) about the excitement of coming to work each day, and looking forward to new challenges and opportunities to cross my desk.

But what Myron was really telling all of us students was that the most important thing professionally is to be happy, stimulated, and challenged by our work. It could not be truer today, and should be what we all strive to achieve in our careers.

### **The Model**

Over the years, I have gained a greater appreciation for Myron and his commitment and dedication to improving the lives of others. I have observed him in professional organizations including the American Public Health Association, both in this section and on the board, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, and most recently, the Harvard School of Public Health Alumni Council, to name a few.

His involvement assures success in any one of these settings. His leadership has been demonstrated in various forms, from guiding and directing a

group to complete a task or project, to providing one-on-one guidance and advice.

It is fair to say his involvement has brought new vitality and direction to nearly everything he has done. He sees the big picture, raises the critical, usually unasked questions, and focuses on achieving results for the good of the many.

He is tireless and selfless in devoting his energy to enhancing the public's health. He is persistent and while he endeavors to support people to do their best, he is respectful and self-critical.

He also taught me to never be without snacks!

I know of no better example of integrity and professionalism. He is the model public servant, a national leader, and our social conscience. It is my honor, and our privilege, to be a colleague.

### **David I. Rosenstein, DMD, MPH, Professor and Chairman, Public Health Dentistry, Oregon Health Sciences University**

I first met Myron Allukian in 1968, when we both were students—he was a graduate student at Harvard while I was in my third year of dental school. We had a fair amount in common—we were both from Boston, both decided to work in the field of public health, and both were single.

We frequently did things together professionally. This is neither the time nor the place to discuss the time he visited me when I was a graduate student at Berkeley and he took me to a biker bar and party with the cast of the Joffrey Ballet, so you will have to ask me about those events at a later time.

Along with two of my classmates interested in public health, we sought out activities that would augment our education. After a few false starts with faculty at the dental school, I ended up at the Bunker Hill Health Center. My-

ron had just started as the director. I vividly remember a call from Myron shortly after I started, telling me to be certain to wear my white coat that day, as if any student needed to be reminded to wear a white coat back then. I was going to meet Senator Ted Kennedy. Myron knew he had a student with him when he introduced me to the senator and I said, "Pleased to meet you, President Kennedy." Not yet, but thank you, he replied.

I did have my single most memorable experience that summer. Shortly after treating a child, Myron and the medical director came to see me. I just knew I had done something terrible, but didn't know what it was. I was asked if I had treated the child, and if so, exactly what was said. I tried to explain that I hadn't done anything wrong and was once again asked ex-

actly what I had said. The child was autistic, and the mother had never seen her son shake anyone's hand before. The exhilaration I felt having done something in a small neighborhood health center, for a child left in the shadow of life, was something I have yet to match professionally. As I now look back on my career, one that will end in two or three years, I note that it was a full career, involving academics, NIH research grants, working for Congressman Waxman, and most importantly, providing direct patient care for over 2,000 people who are HIV positive. Nothing, however, compares with the sense of satisfaction I had that day with a little boy, in a community health center in Boston, run by Myron. At that moment, I knew I had taken the right path, and am thankful for the role Myron played in my career.

### **Mark D. Siegal, DDS, MPH, Chief, Oral Health Services, Ohio Department of Health**

I want to start out by thanking the planners for this session for scheduling me in the first wave of speakers; now I'm confident that I'll catch my plane at 8:00 PM tomorrow.

This ceremony is a tribute to this year's Knutson Award recipient in more ways than meet the eye. To organize it, he had to do two of the things he does best: delegate and challenge.

Who can argue that lining up 10 people to say a few words is some nifty delegation? And who wouldn't call our collective charge challenging? We each have four to five minutes to say

something professional, dignified, and presumably different from what the other nine are saying and what is in the Cliff's Notes disguised as this evening's program.

I am here because I am one of the fortunate people who passed through Boston early in his career and had the opportunity to learn dental public health from this man—formally from 1978–81, and informally, ever since. In preparing my comments, I decided that the best I could do would be to tell you something that you don't already know about the guest of honor. In my case, it takes the form of a story. It's a story about the only time I ever saw him at a loss for words. Interestingly enough, it happened at an APHA meeting: Las Vegas, in 1986, September 30, 3:35 PM, to be exact. I was on a panel about local dental programs with him and Steve Uranga McKane. And right there, in front of a room full of people, he said how proud he was to be on this panel with two of his former students. In turn, I was incredibly proud, at that moment, to be receiving public recognition from such a revered member of my profession. For the first time, I felt like his peer, rather than his student. As he spoke the words, I could see the sincerity in his eyes and hear it in his voice, and I was

awfully proud to be there—until, that is, he identified us as "Steve McKane and...." He couldn't remember my name. But he obviously learned from the experience, because I've never seen him at a loss for words since. Did I mention that I'm completely over that?

At the risk of saying some things that others might, I'll share that I have always been impressed by this evening's honoree as a consummate political tactician, a mentor, a writer, and a leader. In addition, I got to see a very human side of him each time that his 88-year-old father waited in the outer office, picnic basket in his lap, there to have lunch with his son. In Armenian, I believe the expression is "he's a real Mensch." He taught me Armenian wisdom and I consider him my "Armenian godfather." Who can argue with, "Whether the melon falls on the knife or the knife falls on the melon, it is the melon that suffers"? I have to admit that I was surprised to read these same words attributed to African origins, when previously I had it on authority that this was an old *Armenian* saying.

On a lighter note, I know of no other public health dentist, living or dead, who has had a dance award named after him. To this day, I firmly believe that he is to dancing what Fred Astaire

was to dental public health.

He got me involved in the American Public Health Association and made me commit to the rigors of studying for the American Board of Dental Public Health exam just by saying that the next thing I had to do was a DPH residency and get my boards. He only said it once—not even forcefully—and I complied, out of a sure knowledge that if my mentor thought board certification to be an important milestone, it must be. For some reason I always remembered and was struck by his humility because although I was certain he had received numerous awards, it was only his ABDPH diplomate's plaque that adorned the walls of his office. And it was an amazing office, with piles of papers on a table off to the side. Yet, he could find anything he needed in those piles. I guess he taught me "pile management."

I am very honored that he asked me to say a few words this evening. I owe much of whatever success I have enjoyed in my professional life to his tutelage, and it is from the bottom of my heart that I say I can't think of a more deserving colleague to receive the John W. Knutson Distinguished Service Award than Dr. Myron Alukian, Jr.

### **Aljernon Bolden, DMD, MPH, Director, Community Health Programs, Boston University School of Dental Medicine**

Last month, the immediate past president of AAPHD, Dr. Alex White, had challenged those in the field of public health to view the glass of liquid not in the traditional way of whether it is half empty or half full, but rather to assess the content, the caliber, and quality, if you will, of what is in the glass.

If we consider the public health arena as being the glass, then let's examine the contents. What are some of those characteristics necessary to be a competent dental public health professional, and who possesses them? I believe that Myron is an ideal model because of the "content" of his character. I make this statement because for over 25 years I have had many opportunities to study the contents of Myron's glass. I have found a potent cocktail consisting of dedication, disci-

pline, intestinal fortitude, patience, tolerance, cultural sensitivity, integrity, perseverance, and most importantly, compassion. This potent content, I believe, has allowed Myron to make outstanding and sustained contributions to improve oral health in this nation and the world. Many of those accomplishments are outlined in the program.

Myron is a person with a diverse background: a Vietnam veteran, a first-generation Armenian-American, and an outspoken advocate of the undeserved. He possesses a multiplicity of interests, talents, and skills—yet just a single vision when it comes to people's health. I believe that his diversity allows him to be culturally sensitive and compassionate to the less fortunate in our society.

When it comes to integrity and eth-

ics, Myron's reputation is irrefutable. He has been and still is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. In the military you are expected to sacrifice your life for the beliefs of God and country. In the civilian world, it does not appear to have been any different for Myron. He has been willing to sacrifice his professional life and his personal life for his belief that we must do right by our fellow person. I applaud Ruth and their children for supporting Myron's passionate beliefs.

Myron is a living example of what he has advocated. The standards he set for others, he keeps himself—except for one occasion—July 3, 1972. A day that will go down in infamy. I like to call it the 4th of July Lock-In.

In the early days when I first met and worked for Myron as a college work-study student during my junior

year at BU, I observed that Myron was always the last to leave the office. In fact, I honestly believed he lived there, and probably did since he was a bachelor at the time.

One afternoon, just before the 4th of July holidays, Myron had given me a task. In my zeal to complete the task and to demonstrate that I could stay as long as he did, I became completely absorbed in the work. I completed it a little later than the normal work day, and went eagerly to give it to Myron, and also to show him that I had stayed beyond my work/study time. Myron could not be found. When I realized this I tried to leave the building only to find that all the doors had been locked

and chained and the guard dogs had been released. For once I had beaten Myron in dedication, I thought, but to this day I am not really sure of this or whether it was another of Myron tests. Myron, on a personal note, thank you for being many things to me—an employer, a teacher, a mentor, and a jailer—because of your passion I am hooked on this public health thing. You have also been a confidant, a colleague, and a friend.

Thank you, Myron, for not only talking about the qualities a public health person should possess, but also actively demonstrating what it is to be that “good liquid in the proverbial glass.” You have taught me aggressive patience, what it is to strive for excel-

lence constantly, to follow your beliefs with passion regardless of the outcomes. You have taught me how to fight the good fight and the right fight despite the odds. Although we may not have always agreed on the strategy for battle, we have always agreed on the war we were engaged in and shared the ultimate goal, that the best in oral health be available to all.

Myron, I salute you both with a glass socially and with a hand professionally. I salute you because of the pride and honor that I feel being associated with you, a leader and fellow warrior in the fight to ensure that oral health as part of total health becomes a reality for all.

### **Larry Hill, DDS, MPH, President, American Association of Community Dental Programs**

Myron, thank you for allowing me to be a part of this awards ceremony. I can't express to you just how honored I am to have been asked to be a small part of your evening.

No one has probably had a bigger influence on my career in dental public health than Myron Allukian. We learn something from everyone we come in contact with. I have learned an awful lot from Myron and I continue to learn from him.

For example, it was Myron who first convinced me that I should go into dental public health for the money! After getting out of the Navy, I had moved to Boston, thinking it was a great city for a single-soon-to-be-rich dentist like myself. I found myself, however, working in a less than high-quality Medicaid mill in Boston barely making enough to pay my rent. Then, I heard about some guy named Myron at the Health Department who was looking for a couple of dentists for neighborhood health centers. I interviewed. He offered me \$16,000 a year with no promise of a raise, and convinced me that this was the financial opportunity of a lifetime. I'm still convinced, Myron, but I'm having a little trouble convincing my wife.

He also taught me to never underestimate quiet old men. When Myron learned that I thought I might be interested in dental public health, he asked if I'd like to be on a fluoridation committee in Boston. I only got to attend two meetings before moving on to my

MPH program in Minnesota. I anticipated a large committee, but there were only two others in attendance, one was a kind, soft spoken, very intelligent older gentleman whose name I barely had a chance to learn. When I bought my first dental public health text book at the University of Minnesota, I realized the older gentleman in Boston was Dr. James Dunning, the author of the book that was about to become my bible.

It was from Myron that I first learned that not everyone can get dental care, that kids get sick from dental disease, and that our health care system doesn't adequately address the problem. I learned that some 14-year-olds don't talk or smile because of malocclusions and that moms cry because they can't afford orthodontics for their kids. I hadn't learned that in dental school, but it had a profound impact on me.

Today, without telling me directly, rather by his actions, he continues to make me understand that with vision, commitment, and perseverance, we can fix these problems. Myron is vision, commitment, and perseverance personified.

But he is more than that. Myron is perhaps the greatest delegator I have ever met. It's a quality we all know and love. Many of you know that the American Association of Community Dental Programs has been working to get off the ground for many years. One of the problems has been that city and

county dental programs personnel are so overextended in their jobs, it is very difficult to find the time to do organizational work. As the president of that organization, I had a conference call one morning of five members, including Myron, so that I could spread out the work assignments and create some commitments and accountability. Myron, as always, had great ideas. In his unique Boston/Armenian dialect he said, “Larry, here's what you gotta do” and then proceeded to tell me “you gotta do this, you gotta do that, you gotta do..., you gotta do....” Seeing all the work coming back to me, in frustration, I raised my voice and asked, “Myron, what do *you* do?” He paused and then softly said, “I'm the guy who tells you what you've gotta do.”

When Myron delegates, he not only tells you what to do, he is not afraid to suggest how you should do it. For example, he recently asked me to write a letter of recommendation for him. I told him I would be happy to do so and that I could turn it around much more quickly if he could provide me with a summary of his career accomplishments. He immediately faxed me a very impressive list of his contributions to the public health of the world, the last bullet of which addressed specifically his rare combination of “modesty.”

But in the big picture, Myron is modest. He may speak about his programs in Boston, but you won't hear him talking about how much credit he

can take for what I've been able to accomplish in Cincinnati, or Mark Siegal in Ohio, or David Rosenstein in Portland. We all carry a little of Myron

to work with us each morning. I think we all work a little harder—I know I do—to make Myron proud of us. And tonight, Myron, I'm awfully proud of

you! We are a dental public health family and your well-deserved honor tonight honors our whole family.

#### D. Mercedes Franklin, DMD, MPH, Senior Director, New York City, Oral Health Programs and Policy

The date: fall, 1969. The place: the Waldorf Astoria; a reception held during the ADA Annual Session. I was a senior at Barnard College in a room full of chattering professors and deans of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, which was opening its doors to the first women students since World War II. It was rather like Dustin Hoffman's character in the opening scene of the movie classic *The Graduate*. One person emerges from the crowd with the one-word magic bullet advice: *Plastics*. And, a man materialized next to me with two words, *Public Health*.

I don't know if I was more startled by the unfamiliar phrase, *public health*, the Armenian accent, or by the striking appearance of the bearded dentist in a flashy plaid jacket. But he was persuasive and his passion for his life's work was immediately evident. With this introduction, Myron began a now 30-year relationship as mentor and friend.

On a cold February morning in 1972, my course work began in *Ecological Dentistry*. Myron, do you recall your lecture that day? I do: *Needs, Priorities, and Services*. Soon afterwards, I took the fast track, abandoning my dream of a home dental office. I completed my DMD and MPH in four years, then my residency, and tackled pioneering career choices ... as an assistant dean at NYU, and then in industry as the only executive dentist at Sterling Drug.

But the year 1982 brought about a strange twist of fate. I was by then chief dental consultant for the US Labor Department's national Job Corps Dental Program, overseeing 107 sites in 43 states. I supervised 10 regional consultants, among them my mentor, Dr. Allukian.

While I had the more lofty title, I frequently looked to him. Faced with the emerging AIDS epidemic, I sought his advice in 1984 when developing infection control policy. The timing was visionary, preceding publication

of the AAPHD resolution, which Myron spearheaded, and the CDC recommendations. So controversial was the subject that the Job Corps medical director questioned any reference to HIV.

But there was an even bigger challenge. The official response to the epidemic was a discriminatory practice, which excluded people from Job Corps based on HIV status.

Myron is tenacious. He confronted the director of Job Corps at a national meeting of the health consultants, citing the harmful effects of this policy on the corps members and the public. The director vowed he would never again attend such a meeting. While we couldn't win that battle, such discriminatory practices were declared unlawful by the courts.

Myron is committed. I remember him at the dental consultants' meeting in September 1984, in Maryland. His wife, Ruth, had encouraged him to attend, even though she was very pregnant. She assured him that she had no indications the baby was on the way. I arranged a consultant's dinner at an Italian restaurant. Myron labored over the menu. Should it be veal parmesan? Selecting another entree, he was disappointed. But the veal got rave reviews. The next day, the group lunched at a restaurant in the hotel. Still ravenous, Myron placed his order for veal parmesan. Suddenly, a man rushed in with a message for Myron to call Job Corps. When directed to call Ruth, he learned she had started contractions. Always ready for fight or flight, Myron grabbed his suitcase from the hotel office and miraculously navigated himself onto a plane, arriving back in Boston in time for the birth of their last daughter, Alexandra. To this day, he says that whenever he has veal parmesan, he thinks of Alexandra.

In 1993 I became an assistant commissioner for the New York City Health Department, heading what is arguably the largest dental program of

its kind. We knew we were significant. Then through a contract in 1994, the program was subsumed by the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation ... the largest municipal hospital system in the United States, and neck-and-neck in the world with Paris and Tokyo. Now, within this vast system, we were small. My mentor was unfazed. Myron had been through two mergers in Boston; the entire Boston Health Department with the Boston City Hospital—the public hospital—then that merged with the Boston University Hospital—a private hospital. He insisted, "The fun in public health is that after this challenge there will be another."

With every new boss, there is that necessity to educate, using a lecture I call *Dental Public Health 101*. When I told Myron that a physician, Dr. Dunn, would be my third supervising senior vice president, he asked, "Do you mean Dr. Van Dunn?" Myron had worked with him on HRSA and dental public health residency issues when the impressive physician was senior health policy advisor for Senator Kennedy. Myron, the consummate teacher, convinced me that Dr. Dunn, having worked with him, was a proponent. Knowing Myron, I could be sure he had made his mark.

At my first meeting with Dr. Dunn, I skipped my usual lecture and discussed critical policy issues. But it was my opening statement that immediately set the tone for a most productive working relationship and a positive direction for public health dentistry in New York City. I said, "Hello, I am Myron Allukian's clone." Yes, I dared to make that claim, because I knew the overwhelming impact it would make. It is the impact that the name of Myron Allukian has on any proponent of public health, which is the reason why he so greatly deserves this award today. Congratulations, Myron from all of us and thank you for all you have done for each of us.

**Stephen B. Corbin, DDS, MPH, Vice-President for Professional Development and Institutional Advancement, Oral Health America**

I am both pleased and honored to have been invited by Dr. Allukian to make formal comments this evening. This is a daunting task, given the extensive materials that Myron offered to send me in advance and the brief time allotted. Myron has pointed me in the right direction, though, by giving me three clear instructions: "Be brief ... but not too brief; be funny ... but not too funny; be honest—oh well, you'll know what to do."

Although I have worked closely with Myron on many matters for more than two decades, I did review his extensive vitae several times recently. Normally, when reviewing someone's professional credentials, I look closely at their work record, the types of jobs they've held, their levels of responsibility, how long they stayed in each position, and their professional development. Generally, individuals who have spent a long time in one job, say more than seven to eight years, don't fare well under my scheme. So I was surprised to note that Dr. Allukian has spent nearly three decades holding down a single position. But then, I thought some more, and truth be told, he has probably physically spent no more than five or six relative-value-unit-years as the director of Boston's Community Dental Programs. Unfortunately, the bulk of Myron's travel occurred in the propeller era of airline travel prior to frequent flier miles being available. As mild-mannered but always thoughtful Gary Rozier queried after Myron completed a very full term as president of the American Board of Dental Public Health, "By the way, just what does Myron do?"

A better and more direct question would be "Is there anything that Dr. Myron Allukian does not do?"

I will focus my serious comments in a personal way, selecting some brief examples, by no means exhaustive, of why Myron is so special. First, is that he is PROACTIVE. Myron has never waited for an invitation to step up, accept responsibility, and exhibit leadership on even the most difficult public health issues. He has never said,

"That's not my responsibility" when a critical challenge has arisen.

Early in 1985, while serving as director of the Dental Disease Prevention Activity at CDC, I was in Boston testifying before a public hearing on smokeless tobacco. Myron asked me out for a drink because there was something he wished to discuss. He said, "This HIV business is going to be big, really big. In your new position, you need to get something out, like a position statement." I argued that it was much too early, that there was not enough science upon which to base any positions. "I still think we should do something," he persisted. Not long after that, under Myron's yoke, "The Control of Transmissible Diseases in Dental Practice: A Position Paper of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry" was adopted and published; shortly after that came the *MMWR* article, "Recommended Infection Control Practices in Dentistry." The rest is history. Dr. Allukian personally drove these actions. They might have eventually come about anyway, but I am convinced that he moved the action forward by at least two years. This got dentistry out on point on this issue, rather than dragging its tail behind.

A second characteristic is Dr. Allukian's unbridled PASSION for public health. I have seen him stand up so many times, often in hostile territory, to clearly articulate positions that were scientifically, public health-wise, and ethically on target, even though there was no welcome reception. He has stared down some imposing figures in his time and has done it with a sense of grace and professionalism. He never backs down from doing the right thing. A brilliant strategist, he will pause, reconnoiter, and try another path, but he will not quit. In the mid-1980s, Myron and I were invited to be expert reviewers for a New York State report on fluoride. This report was stimulated by persistent anti-fluoridation pressures on the health commissioner, who had appointed a toxicologist to develop a report on

fluoridation and fluorides. You can imagine the type of report a toxicologist would draft. After the first meeting with the author, Myron said to me, "Egads, we're going to have some trouble with this guy." Myron was relentless. I'm sure the guy thought that we would come up and make some minimal suggestions about changing terminology, or suggesting some additional references. Over a period of more than a year, Myron fought harder than Johnny Cochran to get his points across.

I believe that Myron was viewed initially as an administrative impediment to be managed; but he turned out to be more like a three-week wood tick than a fly in the ointment. In the end, he prevailed at the 90 percent level or better. We will never know what the long-range impact would have been on fluoridation in New York State, and beyond, if Myron had not been Myron.

My last point for emphasis is Dr. Allukian's PEDAGOGICAL skills. A better teacher I have never encountered. I learned the art and science of public health policy making largely from Myron. One can read theories about policy making in textbooks, and case studies of policy making are presented in graduate school. But, Myron showed me how one actually does policy development, from the point of identifying a need for new policy, through fact finding, consensus development, negotiation, marketing, lobbying, and, where necessary, arm twisting. He is patient and persistent, which is why he has been so successful. He loves to mentor young people in public health. There are many of Myron's mentees in the room tonight.

Time does not permit further elaboration beyond these Cliff's Notes. I have tried to be brief, I thought I heard a few chuckles, and I swear that everything I said was honest. Congratulations, Myron, on your selection as the Knutson Award winner. We owe you very much. You are joining elite company and you have abundantly earned the right to be there.



## Dushanka V. Kleinman, DDS, MScD, President, American Association of Public Health Dentistry

### The Myron I Know

The Myron I know has been there since I bit the public health apple. He has been and is on the podium, at the microphone, in the hallways, at the receptions—tirelessly promoting actions that in turn promote the public's health.

### The First Time Ever

I first met Myron Allukian, Jr., DDS, MPH, in the mid-1970s in Boston while I was a student in Tony Jong's dental public health master's program. Myron was spearheading a military-like, multifaceted strategic educational campaign to inform Massachusetts state legislators about the benefits of water fluoridation, a message delivered by every means possible. I was one of the many graduate students in the metropolitan area who participated in his army. At that young age Myron dispensed clear and sharp instructions very much like the Myron of today. Rumor had it that he was an adept juggler of meat cleavers, so I did whatever he told us to do, learned a tremendous amount, and with his mentoring began to understand the many issues we face in public health.

### Myron as the Itinerant President, or: Once a President always a President

The Myron I know has always been presidential and provides executive orders continuously. At the American Public Health Association we know Myron as the second dentist and first Vietnam vet to be president of this association. At the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) we claim him as a very special past president, one who guided us successfully through the American Dental Association's specialty reapplication and defense. However, it was not until recently that I learned the truth—Myron actually has been president of one or another organization continuously for over twenty years. Starting with the Massachusetts Public Health Association in 1977, Myron has successfully led the American Armenian Dental Society, AAPHD, Massachusetts Health Council, APHA, American Board of Dental Public Health, Massachusetts Public Health Museum, and the Harvard University

Public Health Alumni. This does not include the many years Myron has devoted prior to and after each presidency and the time he has spent founding some of these organizations. This startling fact made me turn to a more in-depth study of Myron, to better understand the person who has done so much and affected so many of our lives.

### Myron as a Case Study

On the eve of this special occasion, albeit a bit premature, I am willing to unveil some preliminary analyses of our dear friend. Given the time frame I will share only a few tables and figures to give you a sense of my initial findings.

**Finding #1: Myron knows what everyone is doing because he is a somebody everywhere.** This finding can be based on his professional or organizational presidencies alone. However, a more thorough review of his academic and professional organization affiliations further supports this finding. Myron's academic and professional organization affiliations are presented in Figure 1. At any given time Myron is affiliated with six or more academic institutions and about eleven professional organizations. The data also show that once Myron commits to a cause or effort, he provides his support for the duration. For academic institutions he still is affiliated with seven of the nine institutions that are still in operation. For two of the universities he has affiliations with two separate schools. These academic affiliations range between 2–29 years with a median of 11 years and a mean of 14.1 years. Myron is still an active committee member or officer in over

half of the professional organizations with which he has had affiliations. These affiliations range from 2–24 years. The median is 16 years and the mean is 13.5 years. No wonder Myron knows everything and everyone knows Myron.

**Finding #2: Myron is effective because every year of Myron's effort is equivalent to 5.6 years of effort for the average person.** This amazing finding is based on an analysis of the number and cumulative years Myron has held concurrent other professional positions. Over the past 28 years of full-time work Myron has accrued an additional 130 years of effort directed toward these other professional positions (Figure 2). In addition to his permanent position as director, Bureau of Community Dental Programs, Boston Public Health Commission—a position he has held since 1970 with various titles—he has held a variety of positions in six major categories. These include state/regional programs, federal programs at the Department of Health and Human Services, a federal program (Job Corps) at the Department of Labor, examining and registration boards, educational programs, and nonprofit organizations. These positions have addressed topics ranging from advertising for children's television (ACT) to AIDS and maternal and child health, and include programs at the state, regional, national and international levels. If I were you I would consider Myron stock. It provides a tremendous return on an investment.

**Finding #3: Myron is slowly but surely taking over the globe (or at least the United States).** The data from his major committee assignments (Fig-

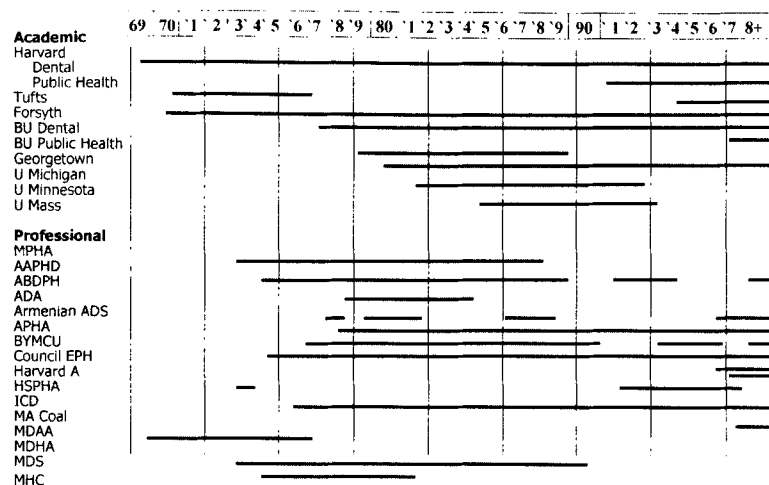
TABLE 1  
Major Committee Assignments by Geographic Location: Number in Two Time Periods (Myron Allukian, Jr.) MAJ Study

	Period I 1967–82	Period II 1983–98	Trend from Period I to II
Boston	9	4	—
Massachusetts	7	5	—
National	2	10	+
All	18	19	+

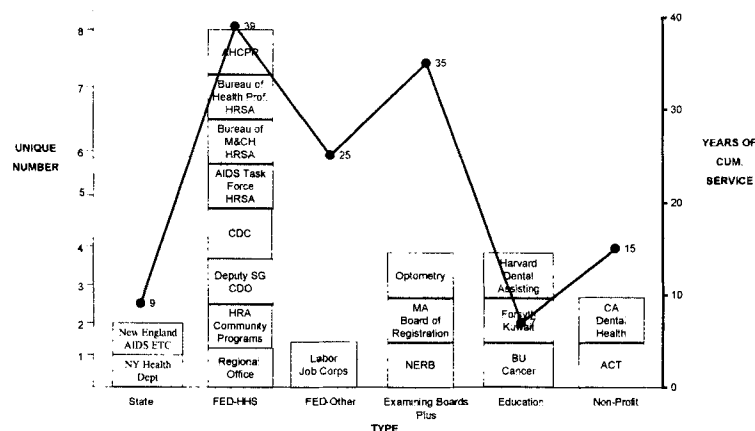
Note: Of the total 37 assignments, 19 are dental, and 18 are in general health



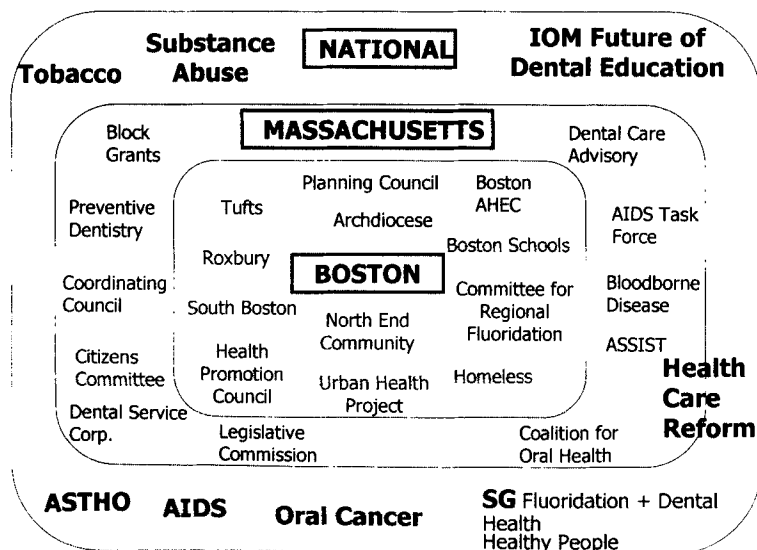
**FIGURE 1**  
Type and Duration (in Years) of Academic and Professional Organization  
Affiliations: MAJ Study



**FIGURE 2**  
Unique Number and Years of Cumulative Service of Other Professional  
Positions by Type: MAJ Study



**FIGURE 3**  
Major Committee Assignments



ure 3) appear to be concentrated in Boston and Massachusetts when displayed in this manner. However, organizing the data in a different format one can see the true pattern emerging. Table 1 shows Myron's assignments for two time periods, 1967-82 and 1983-98. Of the 37 committee assignments, about half are dental and half address general health issues. The trend from the first to the second time period demonstrates a fivefold increase in national activities while activities at the state and city levels are decreasing. If this trend continues, one can clearly imagine what will happen in the next 15-16 years.

Aside: I am looking for a journal to submit this study upon completion. In the interim, please give me a card if you want a draft of this paper. However, not all data about a person can be derived from their curriculum vitae. I am now beginning to expand Myron's case study to include other aspects of his character and will report further analyses at a future meeting. Until then I will give you a sneak preview of the other side of Myron.

### Myron Preceded John Travolta

John Travolta is nothing compared to Myron. Myron's dancing agility is well known to this audience. What may not be well known is his performance at the first annual dance contest for APHA's Oral Health Section and how the special award, given in his name, came about. While sitting in a swimming pool during the 1984 APHA meeting in Anaheim, Tony Jong, Lee Joseph, and I decided that it would be good for the spirit of the then Dental Health Section membership to launch an annual dance contest at the annual meeting. That evening several of us invaded the disco lounge after the disco dancers departed. At this very first dance event, while others were traditionally bopping up and down in twos, Myron showed his dancing leadership talent by taking off in a new direction. Out came a handkerchief that he waved high in one hand, and hopping rhythmically, first on one foot and then on the other, he collected all of us one by one with his other hand. We wove up and down the disco dancers' steps following Myron, who created a dancing DNA-like structure. At the Section Council meeting that week, the Myron Allukian Flying Feet award was proposed by Mark

Siegal. The next year we held the APHA Dental Health Section reception and a dance in our home in Washington, DC, and Myron won the Saturday evening contest dancing with Linda Niessen—our living room floor has never been the same. Eat your heart out, John Travolta.

### **Myron as Friend, Colleague, and Passionate Public Healthier**

One cannot help but love the Myron I know. Myron may appear as an Allukian-one-note until you have been exposed to all the other notes. His musical repertoire is very complex. He is a choreographer, a composer, a conductor, a coalition-builder, health promoter, a gold standard, and more. He

cares about suffering melons and half-empty cups—that is to say, he cares about those who are disadvantaged here and around the globe. Myron, please accept my sincere congratulations upon receiving this award and please keep doing this type of work for the rest of your life. We need you!

### **J. Robert Hendricks, President, Class of 2000, Tufts School of Dental Medicine**

After I graduated from college in 1995, I began working as a deputy finance director for a local congressional candidate in Tennessee. In August of 1996, just before the November election, I somewhat reluctantly began dental school in Boston at Tufts University. With this new challenge taking place in my life, I began to seriously consider my future plans not only in dentistry, but in life. With my enormous interest in politics and considering my future goals in that arena, I felt that I needed a credible career path that could bridge the gap between dentistry and politics. More importantly, I knew that I needed a mentor in dental school who believed in me and understood my goals.

Now, I'll tell you how I came to know Dr. Allukian. During my first semester at Tufts, Dr. Allukian spoke to my class about various topics relating to dentistry and its role in the health care of the nation. But the dominating theme of his presentation was how dentists have a responsibility to unselfishly improve the overall health of the country. To be honest with you, I had never heard a health care professional, moreover a dentist, speak about health care in such a way. As I listened to him speak about issues, I

immediately knew he was a politician in a predominantly nonpolitical profession. After his lecture, we had several meetings and phone conversations, which led us to work together on a project that documented the activity of water fluoridation in Massachusetts over the past 30 years. What transpired was a project that I spent 50 hours a week on for 10 weeks, including weekends, during my summer break between my first and second years of dental school.

Working with Dr. Allukian on a daily basis was a great learning experience for me. Not only does he have an unbelievable work ethic, but he never stops trying to explore new things and finding ways to improve the oral health of Massachusetts, and the country. I sometimes marvel at the fact that as a dental student I was able to complete a project that will have a profound effect on the lives of people in Massachusetts. In summary—it is a “priceless” opportunity and privilege that would not have been possible without Dr. Allukian.

After working with him professionally and getting to know him personally over that summer, I honestly can say that I never saw him get emotional—he always meant business. But that changed when he conducted an

HIV/AIDS symposium with my class last year. He told us a story about a woman who had called him in need of dental care and couldn't find treatment. So, he contacted a dentist who provided care for this woman as a favor to Dr. Allukian. As he explained the story, his voice trembled with emotion and at that point I saw and finally understood the passion that drives him on a daily basis. From that moment on, I knew that I wanted to believe in what I was doing and truly make a difference for people in this country, just like he does every day. To be able to affect the quality of lives is not only my reason for wanting to become a dentist, but to be involved in the political process of our country.

I am very fortunate to have such a great and adept mentor as a Dr. Allukian, who understands what true leadership is and who isn't afraid to tell it like it is. He reminds me a great deal of my parents, who always encourage me never to settle for second best and to always make the most out of my abilities. I know that Dr. Allukian has had a very positive and meaningful effect on all of your lives, as well as on mine, and it is a true honor to be in your presence speaking on his behalf this evening.

### **Kristin Felice Allukian, Dr. Allukian's 19-year-old daughter**

Good evening. I would like to take a moment on behalf of my brothers and sisters to let you all know how proud we are of our father. Not only

as a public health expert, but also as our Dad, he's always been loving and caring and he's always been there for us, no matter what. So, Congratula-

tions, Dad, not only for what you have done for public health, but what you have done for us.

**Alice M. Horowitz, PhD, Senior Scientist, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research**

It is an honor and a pleasure for me to say a few words about Myron on the occasion of his receiving the John W. Knutson Distinguished Service Award in Dental Public Health. I have waited years for this opportunity and I confess that I probably was the first to get in line to volunteer for this toast-roast.

Now, any of us who know Myron will understand when I say that I am certain I received more direction from Myron about how to prepare my remarks for this evening than Clinton did in his preparation for responding to Ken Starr. I had numerous calls from him inquiring, "How's it going?" or suggesting, "This is how you oughta do it." Although I told Myron that I already had a copy of his CV, another one was sent anyway. In addition, I received volumes of information about how many presentations he has made, on what topics, and in what parts of the world. I also received a copy of every newspaper clipping in which he had been quoted. Further, I received several copies of tonight's program in various degrees of completion with the admonition to read it because there was information contained in it that I was not likely to know because it had been written by someone "who knows me very well." "Myron," I asked, "who wrote it?" He didn't want to say. I persevered, "Myron, next to Ruth, who knows you better than I do? Who wrote it?" After a brief pause, he said "I did." Finally, I received an hour-long video—an interview with Myron—the shortened version, mind you—and was strongly urged to review it. I did, of course, and I must admit it provided a few interesting and different insights about Myron. I asked for and, of course, received dozens of photos taken throughout his life.

As a result of all this research, I have chosen the title, "Myron—the Dental Mystic" for my presentation for several reasons. Webster's dictionary defines a mystic as "someone beyond human comprehension." Another Webster definition is, "filling one with wonder or awe." Both fit! Myron is a mystic. You will learn more about Myron the Mystic as we proceed.

Myron was born on Armenian Christmas (that says a lot right there, as Myron is quick, candid, and humble



*Myron Allukian, Jr., preschool age*

to point out) to Mary and Myron Allukian, Sr., in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on January 6, 1939. He was an adorable baby and the pride and joy of his doting parents. He was born and reared in the South End of Boston where he learned how to get along and survive and where little value was placed on education. He had never seen a swimming pool until he was 8 years old. Despite this late start, he became an avid sportsman—swimming, gymnastics, wrestling—after being introduced to the YMCA. Sports had a major impact on his life. He graduated from Boston Latin School, where he was captain of their swimming team. He swam for eight years, then decided that he was waterlogged and so he tried wrestling.

At Tufts University during undergraduate school he was captain of the wrestling team. He had quite a reputation both at wrestling and as an entertainer. As a youth, he worked in his father's market. He wasn't able to sit still very well; in fact, today, he likely would be classified as being hyperactive. When business was slow, Myron taught himself how to juggle ... starting out with oranges and potatoes, but switching to meat cleavers because

customers wouldn't buy bruised and dented produce. At college social events and in night clubs, he juggled meat cleavers, much to the delight of his audiences, but to the chagrin of his mother.

When he completed undergraduate school, Myron still didn't know what he wanted to be (when he grew up). He vacillated between wanting to be an actor, a dancer, a model, a juggler, or a dentist. He had applied to several dental schools; but not having heard from any of them, he took off for California hoping to be "discovered" in Hollywood. He spent the summer on Muscle Beach, barely earning enough to eat and with no money for rent, but generally enjoying himself. He continued to juggle. One day in late summer he had a telegram from his parents—call the dean at the University of Pennsylvania Dental School at once. He did and the dean asked him if he would like to start dental school that fall. The dean told him to be there in two days. Concomitantly, Myron received an invitation to compete in the nationally televised Ted Mack Original Amateur Hour. He decided to try that also. Long story short ... he stuck with dentistry. But, he continued to earn tuition and living expenses by juggling and by other means. One of these means was by posing as a model for art students. Although Myron was generous in providing photos for me to use in this presentation, he refused to let me have photos depicting his modeling career: "No, Alice, this is for



**MYRON—THE MANUAL MYSTIC**



*Refugee camp, Danang, Vietnam, 1965*

a professional audience”.

Following dental school Myron joined the military, volunteering with the Marines, and was stationed on Okinawa and in Vietnam as a prosthetics dentistry officer. In addition to treating military personnel, in his spare time he organized a group of dentists to provide dental care to thousands of children in orphanages. Although he didn't know it at the time, it was in Vietnam that he first started practicing dental public health. After his return to the United States, he ended up being a three-year research fellow in ecological dentistry under the tutelage of Dr. James Dunning. The rest is history.

Dr. Allukian has distinguished himself in a variety of capacities, which include lecturing, consulting, publishing, conducting research, implementing health center dental programs, and making policy. He truly practices dental public health. He led the fight for fluoridation in Boston and surrounding communities. He has championed the cause for the poor, homeless, underserved, and HIV patients. Myron is the only person to be elected twice as chairperson of the Oral Health Section (then Dental Health Section) of the American Public Health Association. Further, during these terms he led the reorganization and revitalization of the section. He recruited new members and urged many more to get involved. Subsequently, he was elected

chairman of the APHA's Intersectional Council and then the Committee of Affiliates, the only person ever to serve in both of these positions. He also was elected to APHA's Executive Board for a four-year term. He served on numerous committees within the association and was elected president of APHA for 1989–90. He is the second dentist and first Vietnam veteran to hold this prestigious position in the Association's 125-year history.

While serving in APHA positions, Myron always remembered that his roots were in dental public health. He always plugged for community water fluoridation and the neglected epidemic of dental diseases. Further, he nominated and got appointed many members of our section onto APHA



*President of the APHA, National Press Club, 1990*

committees, which provided greater visibility for oral health matters within APHA. He was a great strategist, convincing one member of the Oral Health Section to run for a position on APHA's nominating committee—a highly sought-after position—because of the potential to influence the naming of candidates. The Oral Health Section member won largely due to Myron's campaigning.

If you have not worked with Myron when he is campaigning, you have never seen a master politician in action. He never misses an opportunity to work the crowds for whatever dental public health causes are important at the moment. What a negotiator! With his persuasive prowess, Boston accent and, oftentimes, his entourage of supporters ... who could say no?

In addition, Myron has been president of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, as well as the American Board of Dental Public Health. Myron is one of only a few dentists who have been elected to the prestigious Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences.

He has served in a variety of capacities on regional boards of dentistry and even served as chairman of the Public Health/Legal Committee of the National Optometry Board Examination. During the time he was chairman of the then Dental Health Section, he organized a committee to review national dental and dental hygiene written board examinations to determine just how many questions, if any, were concerned with prevention. No surprise; such questions were few. So, Myron challenged members of the committee to draft new questions and submit them to their respective boards. We did the work; Myron pushed it through and monitored progress. He is a Tom Sawyer *par excellence*! This process took nearly six years and, as a result, dental public health is now a part of the National Dental Board Examination.

Meanwhile, Myron was busy in his private life. He met and married Ruth, a public health nurse. They have six children: Myron III, Kristin, Alison, Jason, Alexandra, and Nathan—all of whom, by the way, do use e-mail.

His awards and honors are numerous, including, but not limited to: the Merit Award, Massachusetts League of Neighborhood Health Centers; the James W. Dunning Award of the Den-

tal Health Section, Massachusetts Public Health Association; the Alfred Frechette Award of the Massachusetts Public Health Association; the Distinguished Faculty Award, Harvard School of Dental Medicine; the Community Service Award, Health Planning Council of Greater Boston; the Special Merit Award, American Association of Public Health Dentistry; and the Distinguished Alumni Award, Harvard School of Dental Medicine.

Those of us in dental public health tend to work hard and play hard. Myron excels on both counts. In addition to being a diligent dental public health worker, he is an excellent dancer. Once when APHA was held in Washington, DC, Dushanka and Joel Kleinman convened a buffet/dance event in their home. They had lots of good food and had hired a deejay. There were numerous good dancers all vying for the prize. After awhile all eyes were riveted on one dance team: Myron Allukian and Linda Niessen. We observed that Myron whispered something to Linda who looked at Myron somewhat incredulously, but gave him a brief nod of OK, with a smile of course, mixed with just a hint of terror. At this point Myron deftly hoisted Linda above his head, never missing a beat, and twirled her overhead. Linda, perfectly horizontal and with her arms to her side, continued to smile. Some of us weren't so sure that Linda would not go sailing through one of the living room windows. But no, she landed safely and of course they won. Since that time the section's award is known as the Myron Allukian, Jr., Flying Feet Award.

Myron is famous for calling government workers after 5:30 PM and leaving a message that he is still at work and isn't getting his tax dollars' worth. Once, however, he called me before 8:00 AM and before he even said hello, he said: "I'm glad to see that this taxpayer is getting his money's worth." He was at home, of course, when he called.

Myron also is great at seeking the advice of others. For example, earlier this year Myron called me on a holiday. Now *that* was unusual. He called to tell me that he had received the letter advising him that he had been designated the 1998 recipient of the Knutson Award. He wanted to know what I thought about his negotiating with the Awards Committee so that he



*Fred and Ginger*

could receive the award in the year 2000, when the APHA meeting would be held in Boston. His rationale for this negotiation was so that his family could attend the awards ceremony in addition to more people with whom he works. (He also thought that perhaps he was too young to receive this award.) I thought that his idea was outrageous and instantly replied, "Myron, my advice is to take the award and run!" After a pause his response was, "That's what Ruth and my kids told me."

Myron, no one else in public health has talked me into doing so many things, especially running for various offices in different organizations. Once when I was very reluctant (adamantly opposed) to run for an office

because of an unusually demanding schedule, he had Ruth call me to twist my arm further. It was upon recognizing what Ruth had to contend with (seven Allukians on a daily basis) that I knew I could juggle work, home, classes, a dissertation, and run for office—a piece of cake! Although on occasion, Myron, you have irritated me, few command the respect and love that I have for you. Few have accomplished what you have for the public's oral health. Myron, you are a mystic: you are beyond human comprehension, and you fill me with wonder and awe. Above all, you are a dedicated public health worker who unequivocally is deserving of this very prestigious award. Congratulations!