

## 1999 Special Merit Award: Jane A. Weintraub, DDS, MPH

**Presented by B. Alex White, DDS, DrPH**

A Japanese proverb goes: "Vision without action is daydreaming. Action without vision is a nightmare." How fortunate we are as an association to have so many talented people who have the vision of better health for the public and a professional organization like AAPHD at the forefront of those efforts, as well as the energy and dedication to act on that vision. Through the Special Merit Award, the AAPHD recognizes such individuals for substantial contributions through action related to public health dentistry issues. This year, we are privileged to recognize a person with vision, action, and a good sense of humor. It is my honor to present the 1999 Special Merit Award to Dr. Jane Weintraub.

Jane is currently the Lee Hysan Professor of Dental Public Health and Oral Epidemiology and chair of the Division of Oral Epidemiology and Dental Public Health in the Department of Dental Public Health and Hygiene at the University of California, San Francisco School of Dentistry. Jane received her bachelor of science degree at the University of Rochester and her doctor of dental surgery degree at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Following dental school, Jane moved to Boston and completed her master of public health degree at Harvard School of Public Health and received a postdoctoral certificate in dental care administration in 1982. She served on the faculty at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine until 1984, when she moved to Ann Arbor, MI. During the next four years, she served on the faculty at the Schools of Public Health and Dentistry. In 1988, she moved to Chapel Hill, NC. During the next seven years, she was on the faculty at the Schools of Dentistry and Public Health. In 1995 Jane moved again, this time to the West Coast. She has quickly established herself as a dental public health leader and mentor. At UNC and UCSF Jane has played a central role in oral epidemiology and dental public health training programs, and has mentored many of our

future dental public health leaders.

Jane has received a number of grants from the National Institutes of Health, the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, and industry. She has authored or coauthored more than 70 papers, book chapters, books, or reports.

There is another proverb—from China—that says, "Man who say it cannot be done should not interrupt man doing it." Please, don't interrupt Jane! Her commitment to service is well known. She has served on numerous committees in professional organizations, and has held elected offices in AAPHD, the American Association for Dental Research, and the American Public Health Association. Importantly for our community, Jane's favorite dental public health activities have been coordinating the dental public health board preparation workshops and the recent dental public health competency objectives workshop.

I asked Jane why she chose dental public health as a career. After careful reflection, she replied: "I'm too short

for basketball." Fortune is on our side. Who knows, with genetic engineering, Jane might have been 6'2" and we would have lost her to the WNBA.

I asked Jane about her first AAPHD meeting. She replied:

My first meeting was in Kansas City. The attendance was relatively small, and people were very friendly. I got to meet many people, but did notice that there were only four or five women in attendance. At the time, I was in the last year of my program at Harvard and starting to seek employment. In the early 80s, jobs in dental public health were very sparse. We were in a recession and people were getting laid off. Bob Mecklenburg gave me some advice about leaves on a tree. When you shake the tree, most of the leaves fall off, but the sturdy leaves hang on, and eventually the leaves come back. I think he was telling me to try to be like the leaves that hang on.



*Jane A. Weintraub receiving the Special Merit Award from B. Alex White.*

I remember one particular session where Jim Beck and the group from Iowa were presenting results from the Iowa survey. After I asked a question about interexaminer reliability, Hersch Horowitz, who was sitting next to me, turned to me and asked "Who are you?"

Fortunately for us, Jane held on and now most everyone knows who she is. I also asked Jane about her most important contributions to dental public health. She identified three areas:

First, education—both direct interaction with students and activities that improve dental public health education, such as competencies, standards,

and accreditation and commission activities. Second, research—usually directed toward prevention of oral disease and health policy activities, such as lobbying on Capitol Hill for money for dental public health residency programs. And third, raising the consciousness of dental public health to people in other dental fields and outside of dentistry. We would all do well to follow her lead.

Many of you know that at last year's meeting, I presented Jane with the President's Award. At that ceremony I asked for a show of hands of individuals who had benefited from Jane's commitment to teaching and service. I'd like to do that again. If you have

ever taken her board course, been her student, or benefited in some other way from Jane's guidance, would you please raise your hand? Jane, that's quite a tribute to you.

Marion Wright Edelman once said: "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time." Caring, commitment to and concern for the cause, and collegiality are words that many use to characterize Jane. These are also words that Jane uses to describe her experiences with AAPHD. We're fortunate, indeed, to have members like Jane, and I'm delighted to present her with the 1999 Special Merit Award.

## Remarks on Receiving the Special Merit Award

### Jane A. Weintraub, DDS, MPH

I am very honored to receive this award. I would like to take this special opportunity to publicly thank many people who have been mentors, role models, friends, and colleagues. When I was a child, one of my favorite books was about a little girl who had lots of dolls, but wanted one that combined her favorite characteristic of each doll—the blue eyes of one doll, the dark hair of another, the smile of a third, etc. She went to the doll maker and he made a doll for her with the best characteristic of each of the others. If it were possible, I would like to be like that doll. I would like to incorporate into my dental public health practice the attributes of the many people that I've learned from and worked with in my dental public health career.

I would like to have:

**D**edication to public health goals, like Dushanka Kleinman,

**E**nergy and ability to provide encouragement, like Gary Leske.

I've learned about:

**N**onconformity from my sister Susan Pepperwood,

**T**eaching skills from Dave Striffler,

**A**ttitude, as in having a positive attitude, from Dick Adelson



Jane A. Weintraub

**L**ove, from my parents.

I've learned about:

**P**rofessionalism from Gary Rozier and Alex White,

**U**nderstanding from many friends including Melody Hobbs, Peggy Wurm, Linda Kaste, and Susan Hyde,

**B**ook publishing and seeing the big picture from Chet Douglass,

**L**oyalty and commitment to dental public health from Joe and Helen Doherty and Stan Lotzkar.

I've received:

**I**nspiration from Jim Dunning,

**C**ourage from Alexia Antczak-Bouckoms.

I've learned about:

**H**umor from Helene Bednarsh

**E**pidemiology from Jim Beck,

**A**ltruism and data analysis from Stuart Gansky,

**L**eadership from John Greene and John Stamm,

**T**horoughness from Brian Burt, and

**H**ealth department issues from Myron Allukian, Jay Kumar, and Samantha Stephen.

Put it together, and what do we have? The best of Dental Public Health. Although I am out of letters in this anagram, there are many other wonderful people whom I have worked with at Harvard, Michigan, North Carolina, and the University of California, San Francisco, or whom I have gotten to know through AAPHD or other public health activities. Thank you very much for this recognition. I plan to continue to serve this organization so that someday I might deserve the Distinguished Service Award, like Alice Horowitz.