

## Remarks on Receiving the 2000 Public Service Award

**Judy Sherman**

I first received notice that I had been chosen for this award in a letter ... which I opened during a staff meeting. I scanned the letter, reading quickly, and didn't take it seriously. I thought it was a message saying something equivalent to "I had won some land in Florida." But as the meeting dragged on, I reread the letter and clearly understood what it was saying. To be honored by the people who directly benefit from the lobbying efforts is better than winning land.

For more than 14 years it has been my pleasure to represent the ADA and the programs that its members and you care about. I am assigned to handle appropriations, which allows me to give great attention to public health dentistry. When you lobby Congress and ask for program increases, you can't do it with a straight face if you don't believe in the benefits that are derived from those programs.

Many of your programs are easy for me to lobby for because I am a true believer. I come from Michigan—home of Grand Rapids, first city to fluoridate. As a child I was part of a University of Michigan experiment where I went to my dentist every week or two and had fluoride treatments. I

haven't had a cavity since I was 12 and completed the study. I'm not the only one in my family who participated in a clinical trial: my brother was in the first Crest control group. So we both got to say, "Look, Ma, no cavities." Our experiences allow me to strongly support increased funding for fluoride programs ... and dental research.

I am also fortunate to have worked for years with many members of the ADA's Council of Governmental Affairs who have made numerous site visits to Indian Health dental facilities. The last trip that we took particularly sticks in my mind because all the council members came away with great respect for the dentists who have dedicated themselves to working with the IHS. In fact, they were so impressed with what they saw that they have changed how they select council members to go on the trip. Starting this year, they will take a freshman, a junior, and a senior member of the council so that in years when they don't make the trip there will always be someone on the council who will have personal knowledge of the IHS dental program.

There are two things more that I would like to say. A few years ago, I was invited to speak at an IHS health

care providers meeting. Before I spoke, I heard a doctor, another speaker, say he would rather have more funding for a broad public health program than have the ability to see one more patient at the end of the day. I thought that was a great concept and it's one I have tried to follow in advocating for the programs you care about. Dentistry especially lends itself to that concept and we have the statistics to prove it. We just don't always have the money to make it happen.

Finally, I am very pleased and honored to receive this award—but I am also embarrassed—because we have never been able to fully fund any public health dental program. Just once I would like to be able to say to a state dental director, or CDC or IHS or NIDCR: we got all the money the ADA lobbied for. IHS, you can hire as many dentists as you need. CDC, you can give every community that applies for fluoridation money a grant. And NIDCR, you can fund every grant. So, until that happens, this award is going in my office and will be a daily reminder of how much more there is to do for your programs. Thank you very much.

## 2000 Special Merit Award: Rhys B. Jones, DDS, MS

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

Through the Special Merit Award, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry recognizes individuals for special meritorious service to public health dentistry. Many individuals work tirelessly in the interest of the public's oral health, and narrowing the choice to one person can be difficult. I am pleased to present the 2000 Special Merit award to Dr. Rhys Jones.

Rhys is currently director of the

Dental Health Center of East Central Iowa and adjunct professor in the Departments of Preventive and Community Dentistry and Pediatric Dentistry at the University of Iowa. Rhys received his bachelor of science, doctor of dental surgery, and master of science degrees at the University of Iowa. He became a diplomate of the American Board of Dental Public Health in 1986, and has made more than 80 presentations and published more than 40

papers on various dental public health topics.

Rhys has been active in several professional organizations, including the American Public Health Association and the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, where he served on the Executive Council. He is past president of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry. Rhys has served as a consultant on multiple federal, state, and local pro-

jects and is a member of the National Advisory Board of the National Spit Tobacco Education Program. Since 1997, Rhys has been a member of the board of directors of Oral Health America. Rhys helped organize the 1996 Bethesda Oral Health Access Public/Private Leadership meeting that brought together leadership from 14 public and private dental organizations with other national experts on access to begin a dialogue and focus on strategies to encourage public/private partnerships at the federal, state, and local levels for opening doors to oral health care. Many of the recommendations that emerged from this meeting were achieved. This work also led to

the 1998 meeting in Lake Tahoe that many of us participated in.

One of the many lasting contributions that Rhys has made to AAPHD is his work with development and fundraising activities. Rhys began work in this area as program chair for the 1993 annual meeting in San Francisco. He increased outside support from about \$3,000 to more than \$25,000 in one year. You will remember, of course, that Jack Dillenberg was president that year. I think Rhys was worried that we'd go bankrupt without additional support, given Jack's many enthusiastic ideas on how to spend the money!

Albert Schweitzer once said, "I

don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." Through his work and contributions to improve the public's oral health, Rhys has served the profession and the public well. He has been recognized by the American Dental Association, the states of Iowa and Wisconsin, and the US Public Health Services for his work, and I am pleased to add the American Association of Public Health Dentistry to that list. On behalf of the AAPHD, I am honored to present the Special Merit Award to Dr. Rhys Jones.

## Remarks on Receiving the 2000 Special Merit Award

### Rhys B. Jones, DDS, MS

Alex, thank you very much for those kind remarks and this very special award. It is indeed a great honor to be recognized by your peers and professional organization, an organization whose work is so vital to the improvement of the nation's health.

You know, Alex, I'm the only AAPHD member who can top you on longevity of service as past president. Due to the untimely death of Dennis Leverett, I served two years as past president. You have served only 18 months. Actually, I presided over two-and-a-half award ceremonies if you include Joe Garagiola's Public Service Award in Las Vegas when I was president in 1995. But believe me, Alex, it is much easier to give the awards as past president than to be on the receiving end.

I would like to express my appreciation to the remainder of the awards/nomination committee, officers Dushanka Kleinman, Rebecca King, and Kim McFarland. They are the product of our previous nomination committees and are doing an excellent job. But, you know, as with ASTDD, we need to get more men involved with AAPHD, and we now need an Iowan on the Executive Council. For years we had two Iowans and now there are none. Joe Doherty's theory of the Iowa Mafia has been put to

rest, for a while.

A week or so after the wonderful award notification letter arrived from Alex, he sent a list of questions for the awards ceremony and instructed me to get back to him with the answers in a couple of weeks. It proved to be a most difficult task, but it did provide me with an outline to frame my acceptance remarks. I asked Alex if his questions were taken from James Lipton, who hosts "Inside the Actor's Studio" on the Bravo channel. Mr. Lipton asks each of his celebrity actor guests a series of questions about their life and career. Most struggle with the answers, as I did with Alex's format.

Alex's questions were as follows:

*Why dental public health as a career?*

After two years in private practice, I was employed in a hospital-based access program for children in the mid-1970s. I was working in dental public health, but had little training in the specialty. Dr. Naham Cons came to the University of Iowa in the late 1970s and revitalized the graduate program in dental public health. Ron Hunt and I were the first students since Pal Littleton had graduated from the MS program several years before. However, the primary reason why someone is drawn to dental public health as a career is of course genetic. If you have the right genetic coding for dental

public health and you have the opportunity for service, you can't escape it.

*When was your first AAPHD meeting and what was most memorable about it?*

The first meeting I attended was 1985 in San Francisco just after assuming the position as dental director in Wisconsin. The thing I remember most about the meeting was that it was in an old Holiday Inn on Market Street and you could not see the slide presentations because of large post barriers in an L-shaped room.

*What have you gotten most out of AAPHD?*

Without question the inspiration, support, guidance, and camaraderie of fellow AAPHD members.

*What were your funniest moment and most memorable meeting?*

The funniest experience was at a most memorable meeting as president in 1995 in Las Vegas. We presented the AAPHD Public Service Award to Joe Garagiola that year in an after-dinner program before about 350 AAPHD and Hispanic Dental Association members. I finished the introduction to Joe and presented him with the award and he was dying to get into his tobacco/baseball/comedy act. We had to force him to sit back down so Steve Corbin, then chief of staff for the US Surgeon General, could introduce Acting Surgeon General Dr. Audrey