
ASTDD President's Welcome and Address

Lynn Douglas Mouden, DDS, MPH

"Time for Action." What a wonderful theme for our 2003 National Oral Health Conference. Since its inception more than a decade ago, the National Oral Health Conference has become the premier dental public health conference in the nation. The addition of our partnership with AAPHD for the past three years has only solidified that position. Time for action indeed, as we meet the challenges of the new millennium by combining our resources, our talents, and our friendships.

Times are interesting and full of contrasts. While no one wants war, our leaders have determined that it is necessary. While we have incredible attention to oral health because of the Surgeon General's Report and the Call to Action, we have unprecedented

budget crises that curtail our oral health programs. While we have an ever-growing NOHC, our committees must work more diligently to provide everything necessary to run a great conference. While we have need for everyone to pull in the same direction, antiquated state regulations and antiquated attitudes often minimize our effectiveness. While we have new funding opportunities, receiving a grant sometimes means less time to devote to programs. While we have increasing needs for volunteers to lead our organizations, every member has "real job" and "real life" needs that tug at our schedules.

Take time during this meeting for the things that are truly important. Take time to learn more about our associations and how you can become

more involved. Take time to learn the latest in improving our nation's oral health. Take time to sit down and meet new colleagues and welcome them to our ranks. Take time to rekindle old friendships and keep a sense of family to our gathering. Take time to thank God for all He has provided. Take time to enjoy Milwaukee and the wonderful people here. Take time to thank our program and local arrangements committees for the wonderful job they've done in the last year. Take time for your favorite libation and the accompanying bratwurst. Take time to research the legend of Mel Fairy.

Welcome to Milwaukee. Welcome to the National Oral Health Conference and welcome to the opportunities of the moment. Have a great conference.