

ans Administration and serving with distinction on several federal committees.

She is a strong advocate for program planning and evaluation and data collection. In partnership with CDC's Division of Oral Health, NIDCR created the Data Resource Center, which is a repository of oral health data available to all.

Dushanka is also a visionary and advocate for scientific knowledge in diverse fields such as genomics, bioengineering, epidemiology of oral mucosal lesions, informatics and health literacy and applying them for

the public's health benefit. Dr. Kleinman is a true scientist and is always looking for the scientific basis for decision-making.

I was thinking about Dushanka's journeys in life, beginning at age three, when her family left Yugoslavia to escape Communism and walked through the Alps at night, over the border into Italy. She has climbed many mountains since then, and continues to show us the way with her vision, her dedication and her enthusiasm for science, research and education. And she does it with a sense of humor and compassion. She has

served as a role model and mentor to many of us here today.

I could not close without mentioning Dushanka's husband, Captain Joel Kleinman, and their two daughters, Alexa and Jessica. Her attributes of a mother and wife are also distinguished and worthy of recognition!

In recognition of Dr. Kleinman's contributions to public health and dentistry, as well as her leadership to the American Association of Public Health Dentistry and the United States Public Health Service, I am pleased to present her with the Distinguished Service Award.

Remarks on Receiving the Distinguished Service Award

Dushanka V. Kleinman, DDS, MScD

I am deeply humbled by this award and thank the AAPHD senior leadership, my nominator and the awards committee for this honor. AAPHD has been my "professional" home – a comfortable place where we learn from one another, debate, and most importantly, revitalize ourselves. The energy we feel at these gatherings often leads to the "yes" to committee assignments and program event planning. Then when we get home, we realize the full implications of our actions but know the spirit of these collective efforts bring priceless rewards for public health action and for ourselves.

I accept this prestigious award on behalf of the many teams I have had the good fortune to work with, for each of you know that nothing in public health is done alone. Like all of you, I have been blessed with support from family, friends and mentors – many in this room, many here that are yet to be my mentors, and many now departed – and I thank them.

We all know the work that must be done to improve oral health. Some say progress is not being made; others say the progress is not moving fast enough; while others say we are falling behind. All these scenarios have some truth to them – depending upon where you sit and your focus.

I believe we are on the verge of a revolution of progress – progress that will come as a result of organizations

working together. We are witnessing an incredible alignment of organizations, although not all are on board. I also believe that there is, among all organizations, a recognition of the realities of the magnitude of the problems facing us in ensuring optimum oral health for all, although not all organizations see the problems or solutions in the same way. But this alignment of organizations is a beginning. Just look at this meeting and what has been accomplished in a few years when organizations have left their "egos" at the door. As a result we are seeing the benefits:

- ♦ The power of collective gathering and collaborating – AAPHD and ASTDD – a rich program, media outreach and network;
- ♦ The seeding and nurturing of new groups – Medicaid/SCHIP Dental Program Representatives – critical especially during these trying times; and just yesterday,
- ♦ The launching of the Transition Steering Committee of the National Oral Health Action Partnership, the creation of a home for the National Call to Action to Promote Oral Health.

I believe organizational motors and leaders drive change – and success is dependent upon inter-organizational linkages. It is not just a func-

tion of numbers, it is the strength of passions and missions that stimulate and support one another as we address common goals.

I have learned much from AAPHD and its members and leaders. I have learned about commitment, dedication, and creativity. AAPHD truly holds the conscience for oral health. We still have a lot to do, however. The list is long. We must further integrate oral health among health care providers and with other sectors. We must align reimbursement systems. There are many other activities that warrant our attention, but let me stress one that we can immediately incorporate. We must have active participation and routine presence of the public – small letter "p" – at our meetings, and as we develop our strategic plans and programs. Our entire focus is on enhancing the public's health. With their direct participation at our meetings and on our committees I know we will be more effective and our approaches will be enriched. Formal alliances with voluntary organizations is a must.

Finally I thank Tony Jong, who convinced me early on that dental public health was a much better career choice than endodontics. He introduced me to the world of public health and Tony was right, as he always was. Once again, I thank AAPHD.