

President's Column

LEAVING A DENTAL LEGACY



Dr. Tom Breneman

The holiday season is the ideal time of year to reflect on our good fortune and on the importance of giving back to the community and to our profession. That's why I'd like to reinforce the Dentistry Canada Fund (DCF)'s relevancy and meaning to the dental profession in my year-end column.

Giving back is good for us not just for its own sake, but because it is good for the profession. Think about it. Where would we be if we had not from the outset been mentored into the profession both during our studies and after we left dental school? Those who came before us did that mentoring voluntarily, and we must ensure that this process of mentoring continues for the benefit of future generations of dentists entering the profession.

One of the best ways of helping dentists is to support DCF — the charitable arm of Canadian dentistry.

DCF is in the midst of delivering its annual donor appeals, including its General Appeal and targeted appeals in support of specific funds, such as the N.S. Dental Association Fund, the Dr. Jerry Barrett/Dental Association of P.E.I. Fund, the B.C. Public Outreach Fund, the new Academy of Dentistry International Fund, and others.

One of the slogans that DCF is using at the top of its appeal letters is: *The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast us.* This theme suggests that DCF, our national charity for oral health, offers an opportunity for a lasting legacy by helping to build the charity and its various funds. With that philanthropic spirit in mind, the donor (the dentist) must decide that our charity is worthy of their support — that a donation to DCF makes a difference.

Why does a gift to DCF matter? It matters because ...

- A donation gift to DCF's education and research programs provides direct assistance to the next generation of dental practitioners in this country — our next generation of leaders. By providing our charitable support, we recognize dental excellence and the importance of pursuing the highest education standards leading to the exemplary practice of dentistry. DCF's academic scholarships, research fellowship grants, assistance for educational conferences and various award programs all provide recognition and inspiration to today's students. These programs are a living testament to the fact that Canada's dentists *care* about investing back into the generations that are following us. The pursuit of the highest standards of dental education achievement is vital to the continued development and evolution of the profession we all care about. DCF's programs continually raise the bar —

that is, they continue to raise dental standards.

- By investing in research and supporting research programs and conferences, DCF is helping to ensure that we remain at the leading, cutting edge of dental innovation. Canadians are well represented and respected on the international dental stage. As one example, DCF supports the Canadian delegation at the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) conference each year. ISO is the organization that conducts the research and establishes the standards and provisions for the approval of new dental products. The safety of the consumer and the protection of the dental practitioner is our paramount concern.

DCF's investments in education and research programs have a ripple effect, a value that accrues exponentially, with a significant impact on the profession.

DCF's public outreach programs are having a measurable impact on the lives of more and more people. Through our involvement in DCF, we're literally putting smiles on people's faces and relieving dental pain and suffering. DCF's hospital and children's/seniors' public outreach initiatives are treating some 5,000 compromised patients every year.

Clearly, the ultimate winner from DCF's charitable efforts is the Canadian public, our patients and ourselves!

So as we celebrate the festive season, I urge you all to consider giving something back to the profession. Please see the DCF donation form on page 664. Leave a lasting legacy for future generations of dentists.

Tom Breneman, DMD
president@cda-adc.ca