

## Winter 2008 TDHA Trustee Report to BADHS

**Member Services Council** – Our state membership is currently 1,324. The numbers show that TX had 377 dental hygiene graduates last May, who had until December 31, 2007 to make a transition in membership, from Student to Active. Their dues renewal would then be on the Winter cycle. 176 graduates made the transition, and 201 did not.

A workshop was held on January 11, 2008 where Council Co-Chair Helena Gallant Tripp, RDH, began with a demonstration of stability, using stackable boxes of varying size to represent the association at local, state, and national levels. Her point was that when we base our strength at the local component levels (biggest box on bottom), we can build state-level strength upon it (medium box), and national-level strength upon that (the smallest box). The stability of this structure can then withstand much more force and pressure without losing ground. Conversely, when the association has its greatest emphasis on the national, then state, then local levels, the tendency is greater for the structure to topple with a minimal amount of force. We are encouraged to work hard in our grassroots efforts to build our components to great strength and stability.

We then worked as a group to collect and share ideas on recruitment challenges, recruitment successes, retention challenges, and retention successes. We also talked about the top reasons for becoming a member, as well as the benefits that keep us coming back. All the notes are currently being re-organized from our workshop to an electronic document that will be sent to component Membership Chairs in the weeks to come.

**Dental Hygiene Education** - We know there are several new dental hygiene programs trying to open around Houston. Houston Community College began a program this semester, and soon to follow will be Remington Program in/near the Houston area, as well as Weatherford College, 20 miles west of Fort Worth.

Lorie Jones, RDH, BSDH, is TDHA Immediate Past President, and DHE Chair. She reported that she has been, and continues to be, in contact with the Texas Higher Education Board about the curricula, accreditation, and the needs assessment of new programs in Texas. She also reports that while most programs do begin without accreditation status, they must achieve accreditation by the time of graduation of the first class; otherwise, those graduates may not apply for licensure to practice dental hygiene.

Other TDHA Board members may soon be seeking out a position on the CODA Advisory Board, in order to offer a healthy influence that will help maintain our high standards in education, as well as to offer pertinent needs-assessment input.

**Public Affairs Council** – Karen Marsh, RDH, submitted a compilation report on Sealants Across Texas from October 2007.

-*Austin District* saw 23 children, placed 111 sealants, and referred 1 child with acute infection; total service value (TSV) \$4,820.00.

-*Corpus Christi* saw 35 children, and placed 113 sealants; TSV \$7,090.00.

-*East Texas* saw 46 children, and placed 193 sealants; TSV \$9,920.00.

-*Greater Fort Worth* saw 32 children, placed 12 sealants, and referred 31 children with acute infection; TSV \$7,031.00.

-*Greater Houston* saw 26 children, and placed 74 sealants; TSV \$2,590.00.

-*Sabine* saw 33 children, and placed 200 sealants; TSV \$8,475.00.

-*San Antonio* saw 44 children, placed 127 sealants, and referred 2 children with acute infection; TSV \$5,463.00.

The following components are planning their projects for February 2008: Central Texas, Concho, Greater Houston (2<sup>nd</sup> project), Rio Grande, Sabine (2<sup>nd</sup> project).

Current total value: \$45,390.00; 239 children seen; 830 sealants placed.

Healthy Start for Texas Teeth is seeing a great need for volunteers at various locations throughout the state. Components are encouraged to appoint one member to seek out a position on their local Head Start Advisory Board.

Another branch of Public Affairs Council is *Area Media Spokespersons*, whose members have decided to try to make two videos this year – “What is a Dental Hygienist?” will be aimed toward laypersons, and legislators, and dentists as well. “What is TDHA?” will be aimed toward our own members and/or colleagues who may be interested in learning more about how our state association is run. It should also clarify its makeup, such as the fact that TDHA has no office or headquarters in Austin with a staff of employees. All the Officers, Council Chairs and members, and Board of Directors are volunteers who chose to serve on our behalf, collectively. The video should also have a message of encouragement and motivation that will help inspire our colleagues to want to be involved in the process of progression.

**Governmental Affairs Council** – The next Legislative Session will be in 2009, and the GAC team is already looking ahead to the next plan for success. One of the strategies to be set in motion for the off-year is to have more grassroots efforts going on in the district offices. It has been suggested that each component should have a Legislative Chair but also that chair should designate a “point person” for each district, or a “district liaison” that the GAC team can guide into a pre-planned schedule of district office visits in 2008, with a recommended protocol. Let me know if you are interested in helping with this!

Our 2009 Legislative Priorities will be (1.) administration of local anesthesia under supervision, and (2.) to improve access to long-term consistent oral healthcare by expanding Section 262.1515, by (a.) increasing locations dental hygienists can enter to

include all Head Start centers, community health centers, and any other Texas State Board of Dental Examiners approved facility, and (b.) increasing the number of visits a dental hygienist can provide preventive services to a patient for up to one year.

The GAC is in the process of implementing a new strategy to make our collective priorities and intentions very clear to everyone, including the usual opposition that has faced us in the past. They are sending letters to all dentists in Texas, an open letter for any and all to read, that plainly states we are not seeking Independent Practice. We are not operating with a “hidden agenda.” This effort is intended to ensure that our voice is being heard by more than just a core group of people. These letters are to be mailed this month, and copies of this open letter may be posted on various websites, as anyone is allowed to read it.

**TEX HYPAC** - Encourages members to be aware of Allied memberships in other associations without their knowledge or consent. Apparently this has happened to many hygienists who found that their employers have listed an entire office staff as Allied members to other associations of the employer’s choosing, in order to increase the perceived membership database. Some state dental associations claim that their member services will fill all our needs from low-cost CEs to various journals, and fair representation for the whole dental team. ADHA is the largest professional association representing the interests of all dental hygienists. Also remember that in any association, Allied members have no voting power.

**Students Affairs Council** – Dental Hygiene students are gearing up to head to Austin to attend SADHA Annual Session, February 8-9, 2008. They have their own House of Delegates, where they simulate conducting business as an association. They also display scientific table clinics, and participate in other fun activities. Winners will be announced for the BJ Long Memorial Scholarship, Nancy Tibbets Scholarship, TDHA Scholarship, Nicole Eusebio Memorial Service Scholarship, Omega Student Scholarship of Excellence, and the Texas Dental Placement Network Scholarship. Qualifications for each of these can be reviewed under the Students section at [www.texasdha.org](http://www.texasdha.org).

**Ways and Means** – Now available at the TDHA Store (found in Members section of [www.texasdha.org](http://www.texasdha.org)) - a “new and improved” version of the professionalism posters that many of you received upon graduation and still have framed in your operatory now. (“About Your Dental Hygienist...”) The new posters are letter-size instead of legal-size, and the wording has been revised some.

**Publications** – Any pictures or articles that we have of our component’s activities that we would like to go into the next issue of TDHA Times should be submitted to Jan Smith by the deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Website Committee** – We always have the opportunity to advertise our CEs on TDHA’s website ([www.texasdha.org](http://www.texasdha.org)), but it has been suggested also to take advantage of summer time to hold CE’s and to advertise state-wide for greater attendance. Summer is also a critical time to reach out to new graduates to let them know we are ready for them to join with us in our component’s activities. Lynn Southerland is the current contact person for these updates.

**Corporate Relations** – We are asked to remember our corporate sponsors when we are given samples or donations for use in our community service events by giving them due recognition in whatever press or media is generated by newspaper, radio, TV, etc. Likewise, when we give a “goodie bag” of oral hygiene products to legislators or other colleagues, and they have been donated to us by a corporate sponsor, it keeps a very good relationship if we have given credit for that generosity and have let the recipient know exactly the source of kindness.

**News from ADHA** – We were pleased to be visited by ADHA District IX Trustee, Bonnie Flanagan, RDH, from Oklahoma. She reported to us that ADHA is closely following several targeted sites for ADA’s pilot projects for the CDHC, including University of Oklahoma, and other universities in Arizona and Michigan. She reports that these pilot projects are not faring well with Dental Hygiene faculty in these areas, nor with the Board of Regents (specifically OU). No curriculum has been set, and no faculty have supported this project.

“Unleashing Your Potential” is the focus of the new Branding Campaign! With a new logo and a new slogan, ADHA is driven to reach out to all dental hygienists and to attract new members with professional and emotional needs. ADHA strives to reflect the current “face of dental hygiene” today, and so realizes that RDHs need an association that caters to all their needs as individuals as well as communities. Check [www.adha.org](http://www.adha.org) for tools and resources to use at our component level, or simply to purchase your own ADHA accessories.

Always remember to check [www.texasdha.org](http://www.texasdha.org) and [www.adha.org](http://www.adha.org) for the latest information.

Respectfully Submitted by –  
Olivia Schreiner, RDH  
TDHA Trustee