



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **FIND Project Awards Denison Dentist Loan Repayment Grant**

*~Dr. Arron McWilliams to be honored at Nov. 18 reception~*

**Ankeny, IA** (November 13, 2009) —Denison dentist Arron McWilliams has been awarded a \$100,000 educational loan repayment grant through the Fulfilling Iowa's Need for Dentists (FIND) project, which recruits dentists to rural communities and underserved Iowa counties by helping them with their dental education debt.

Dr. McWilliams graduated from the University of Iowa College of Dentistry in 2002 and then completed her pediatric residency at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Dentistry in 2006. Over the last few years, she has been working throughout Northwest Iowa.

"The average dentist graduates from dental school with more than \$120,000 in debt. Loan repayment programs can be one of the most effective ways to recruit private practice dentists to underserved areas of Iowa," said Donn Hutchins, president and CEO of Delta Dental of Iowa.

The goal of the FIND project is to stimulate additional community funds to match Delta Dental's Loan Repayment Program and to promote the importance of a dentist to the community's economic growth and overall health in identified rural communities.

McWilliams' award is comprised of \$50,000 from the Delta Dental of Iowa Loan Repayment Program, and \$50,000 in matching grants from the Chamber and Development Council of Crawford County and a congressional earmark for the FIND project from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

McWilliams' and her husband, Drew, have recently renovated their practice at 28 North Main Street in Denison. A reception/open house for the FIND award and practice opening will be on Nov. 18 from 4 – 6 p.m. A ribbon cutting ceremony is also scheduled.

"Denison and Crawford County are very fortunate to have a pediatric dentist in the area that can address the needs in our communities," said Don Luensmann, executive director of the Chamber and

Development Council of Crawford County. “Our involvement with recruiting Dr. McWilliams will have a positive impact on the local economy because families will now be able to receive this type of specialized care locally.”

To be eligible for the Delta Dental of Iowa Loan Repayment Program, award recipients agree to practice in a designated dentist shortage area in Iowa and devote at least 35 percent of their practice to Medicaid-eligible, elderly, disabled, and other underserved patients over a three-year period. Sixty-three of Iowa’s 99 counties are designated as dentist shortage areas for the Loan Repayment Program for the FIND project. The Loan Repayment Program is a component of Delta Dental of Iowa’s Public Benefit program that invests in projects that improve the oral health of Iowans. For more information, visit [www.iowafindproject.com](http://www.iowafindproject.com).

FIND project partners include Delta Dental of Iowa, Iowa Area Development Group, Ripple Effect, University of Northern Iowa Institute of Decision Making, Iowa Department of Public Health Oral Health Bureau and the University of Iowa College of Dentistry. The partnership received federal funds to be used over a one-year period starting Sept. 1, 2008.

*Delta Dental of Iowa is the largest and most experienced provider of dental benefits in the state. As a not-for-profit, Delta Dental of Iowa invests in oral health projects through the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation that focus on access to care, prevention, education and research. Delta Dental of Iowa is a member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, the leading national network of 39 independent dental service corporations specializing in providing dental benefits programs to 54 million Americans in more than 89,000 employee groups throughout the country..*

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