



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **DELTA DENTAL OF IOWA CELEBRATES \$1 MILLION INVESTED IN DENTAL EDUCATION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM**

**JOHNSTON, Iowa (September 1, 2011)** – Delta Dental of Iowa today announced the Delta Dental of Iowa Dental Education Loan Repayment Program/Fulfilling Iowa’s Need for Dentist’s (FIND) project reached an investment milestone of \$1 million to help improve oral health care access in Iowa’s critical need areas. Gov. Terry Branstad spoke at a reception honoring FIND dentists, partners, community leaders and some of the state’s key oral health stakeholders.

The Delta Dental of Iowa Dental Education Loan Repayment Program/FIND project recruits private practice dentists to underserved areas of Iowa by helping repay their dental education loan debt. Since 2002, the program has successfully recruited 18 dentists to practice in rural areas across the state. To date, more than 123,495 services have been provided to 37,968 underserved Iowans by Loan Repayment/FIND dentists in Iowa.

Established in 2002, the Delta Dental of Iowa Dental Education Loan Repayment Program annually offers a \$50,000 award over a three-year grant period for the repayment of dental education debt. In return, the participating dentist agrees to practice in one of Iowa's designated dental shortage areas and to allocate 35 percent of patient services to underserved Iowans.

In 2008, Delta Dental of Iowa secured federal funding to establish the FIND project through the Iowa Rural Dental Health Initiative. The FIND project offers participating dentists up to \$100,000 for dental education loan repayment while stimulating additional investments through community funds in critical access counties. The Iowa Rural Dental Health Initiative’s FIND partners include the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Delta Dental of Iowa, Iowa Area Development Group, Iowa Department of Public Health, Ripple Effect, and the University of Iowa College of Dentistry.

“Delta Dental of Iowa is pleased to celebrate the investment of \$1 million to improve Iowa’s dental workforce in critical need areas and support local economic development,” said Donn Hutchins, president and CEO of Delta Dental of Iowa. “Financial assistance

and student loan repayment programs are effective ways to recruit dentists to underserved areas of Iowa. With the FIND partners, we can leverage additional community funds to encourage private practice dentists to locate in rural communities and be successful for years to come.”

In 2011, the Iowa State legislature, with support from the Iowa Department of Public Health and Delta Dental of Iowa, appropriated \$50,000 for FIND project funding. This funding will be part of a public-private partnership that will extend the FIND project’s reach to assist two rural communities in recruiting a dentist with up to \$100,000 for dental education loan repayment. The 2011 state appropriation of \$50,000 will generate an additional \$50,000 in funding from community matching requirements and an additional \$100,000 contribution from Delta Dental of Iowa.

Since 2002, the 18 dentists recruited through the program include:

- Dr. William Wever II – Columbus Junction, IA (Louisa County)
- Dr. Eric DeBoef – Oskaloosa, IA (Mahaska County)
- Dr. James Enloe – Ottumwa, IA (Wapello County)
- Dr. Christopher Bogue – Lake View, IA (Sac County)
- Dr. Lori Mason – Parkersburg, IA (Butler County)
- Dr. Olukele Jeboda – Lenox, IA (Taylor County)\*
- Dr. R. Louie Ching – Sac City, IA (Sac County)
- Dr. Maria Fuller – Corning, IA (Adams County)
- Dr. Kimberly Zimmerman – Emmetsburg, IA (Palo Alto County)
- Dr. Sara Jewett – Storm Lake, IA (Buena Vista County)
- Dr. Kari Bolen – Hawarden, IA (Sioux County)\*
- Dr. Arron McWilliams –Denison, IA (Crawford County)
- Dr. Kim Suga – Clarinda, IA (Page County)\*
- Dr. Travis Harbaugh – Allison, IA (Butler County)
- Dr. Sunny Hamilton – Wapello, IA (Louisa County)
- Dr. Roberto Moreno – West Liberty, IA (Muscatine County)
- Dr. Jacob Sorensen – Clear Lake, IA (Cerro Gordo County)
- Dr. Kirstina Gratz – Bloomfield, IA (Davis County)

\* Indicates dentists no longer practicing in Iowa.

For more information about the Delta Dental Loan Repayment Program and the FIND project, go to [www.IowaFINDProject.com](http://www.IowaFINDProject.com).

*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, a national organization of not-for-profit Delta Dental member companies. The national association is the largest dental benefits carrier in the nation providing coverage to 56 million people in more than 95,700 employer groups.*

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