



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Pictured from L to R: Jeff Plagge, Board Chair, Delta Dental; Donn Hutchins, President & CEO, Delta Dental of Iowa; Dr. Kimberly Zimmerman; and Dr. Ed Schooley, Vice President & Dental Director, Delta Dental.

Delta Dental Awards Emmetsburg Dentist Loan Repayment Grant

ANKENY, Iowa – March 30, 2009 – Delta Dental of Iowa has awarded a \$50,000 educational loan repayment grant to Emmetsburg dentist Kimberly Zimmerman as part of a program to recruit dentists to rural communities and other areas of the state that have a shortage of dentists.

After working as a dental hygienist for 14 years, Dr. Zimmerman went back to the University of Iowa to get her dental degree while working full-time and managing a family. Dr. Zimmerman and her family chose Emmetsburg to establish her practice because the community was growing and their dental needs were not being fully met.

“The average dentist graduates with more than \$120,000 in loans and loan repayment is one of

the most effective ways to recruit dentists to underserved areas of the state,” said Donn Hutchins, president and CEO. “Having a permanent dentist in town makes a big difference to a community’s economy and quality of life. Delta Dental is pleased to play a role in meeting the needs of Iowa’s rural communities and underserved dental patients.”

Delta Dental has awarded 10 dental education loan repayment grants since the program began in 2002. To date, these dentists have performed more than 67,000 procedures on more than 24,500 underserved patients. In order to be eligible for the Loan Repayment Program, grant recipients agree to practice in a designated dentist shortage area and devote at least 35 percent of their practice to Medicaid-eligible, elderly, disabled, and other underserved patients over a three-year period. Eighty-nine of Iowa’s 99 counties are currently designated as Delta Dental of Iowa dental shortage areas.

The Loan Repayment Program is a collaborative effort with Delta Dental of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Public Health and the University of Iowa College of Dentistry.

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 focuses on access to care, prevention, education and research. The Iowa company is a member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, a national organization of not-for-profit Delta Dental plans. The national association is the largest dental benefits carrier in the nation providing coverage to more than 51 million people in nearly 93,000 employer groups.

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