

# Academy Connection

VOLUME 14 ISSUE 6

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF COSMETIC DENTISTRY®

MAY/JUNE 2009

CELEBRATING

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YEARS

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## Preserving the Core, Stimulating Progress

by Michael Sesemann, DDS, AACD President

Companies and organizations that enjoy enduring success have core values and a core purpose that remain fixed while their business strategies and practices endlessly adapt to a changing world. Last year our leadership clarified our core values and mission statement.

Our core values revolve around education, inclusion, diversity, and community. The basic dynamic of visionary companies and organizations is to preserve the core and stimulate progress. It is vision that provides that context.

As we embark on the AACD's next 25 years, we need to adapt to our changing environment. There was a time when our uniqueness was essential for our survival. Our identity gave us the courage to persevere through the criticism from traditional, evidence-based dental groups who decried that the thought of initiating and perpetuating a new aspect of dental science, without a previous history to build on, was irresponsible.

Now in the 21st century, many of those same critics have adapted the very same techniques that were developed and cultivated through the educational evolution in esthetic dentistry stimulated by this Academy. Cosmetic and esthetic dentistry are now mainstream, having been determined by a public demand for it to be so.

It is time to combine our vast experience with the long-term data that is now available to endorse treatment decision making that eliminates the risks faced by past pioneers. It is also time that we share our knowledge with all of dentistry for the purpose of benefiting the patients we collectively serve.

With the Academy's long-established ultimate goal being, "To be globally recognized as the preeminent resource for cosmetic dentistry information,

knowledge and credentialing for the dental profession and the public," it is equally important to attach a vivid description. A vivid description is a vibrant, engaging and specific account of what it will be like to achieve our goal.

Quite frankly, if we want to accept the mantle of the largest cosmetic dental organization on earth and we are wishing to be granted a certain respect so that it can facilitate our ability to carry out our objectives, we must also be willing to accept the responsibilities that come along with those wishes. Therefore, we entitled our vivid description "Responsible Esthetics."

It reads:

*We will demonstrate that the Academy unequivocally stands for the practice of Responsible Esthetics . . . we will be the primary dental resource for patients as they strive to maintain their health, function and appearance for their lifetimes . . . we will clearly state and acknowledge that esthetic dentistry must complement the overall general and oral health of the patient, and do no harm . . . we will strongly encourage that treatment decisions are based on the foundation of evidence-based protocols combined with sound clinical judgment . . . we will strongly encourage that cosmetic dentistry integrates interdisciplinary medical and*

*dental treatment to enhance outcomes and minimize the loss of healthy human tissue . . . we will champion and provide minimally invasive treatment protocols, when and where appropriate, that are consistent with the long-term health and needs of the patient . . . we will encourage the utilization of innovation in technology and materials to deliver dentistry that is predictable and long-lasting. Because our voice is far-reaching, we must be counted on to light the way, not create ambiguous standards. Combined with our core values, our charge is to lead the way and do so in a responsible manner.*

Our initial dialogs with various entities in dentistry about our evolution toward the Responsible Esthetics tenets has been overwhelmingly positive. I believe that if our Academy can live by our own words, we will generate a degree of respect and confidence within the dental profession that is unprecedented. Doors that were previously locked to us will open. The ensuing opportunities will allow us to live our core values and purpose on a scale that was previously unimaginable. ✧

My best wishes to you and yours,

*Michael*

