ADEA Awards Citation to Delta Dental for Help Provided to Hurricane-affected Dental School

When Hurricane Katrina devastated the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center — that state’s only dental school — Delta Dental member companies banded together to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars to support the school and its more than 300 students.

This past month, the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) issued its Presidential Citation to Delta Dental for its contribution to the future of dentistry. The award was presented at the ADEA Annual Session and Exhibition in Orlando, Fla. by ADEA President Eric J. Hovland, D.D.S., M.Ed., M.B.A., Dean of the School of Dentistry at Louisiana State University.

“Naturally, we’re pleased with the award, but the most gratifying part was being able to help these students and the school following such a terrible disaster,” said Marilynn Belek, DMD, chief dental director and executive vice president of Delta Dental of California, New York and Pennsylvania, which spearheaded the fund-raising effort. “These students represent tomorrow’s dentists, and we truly are investing in the future of dentistry by providing the support they need to continue their studies.”

Hurricane Katrina devastated LSUHSC’s campus in New Orleans. Subsequently, students and faculty were relocated to a temporary campus some 80 miles away in Baton Rouge, where some of them will remain until 2007.

Last November, each of the 312 dental students from LSUHSC received a check for $1,000, thanks to a grant funded primarily by Delta Dental of California and Delta Dental of Arkansas.
Other contributors included Delta Dental member companies in Colorado, Iowa, Pennsylvania, New York, Rhode Island, Virginia and Wisconsin, as well as Delta Dental of California’s advertising agency, Warren Kremer Paino, of New York City.

Delta Dental of California contributed a total of $380,000 to LSUHSC and its students, including a $25,000 grant to the dental school and a $35,000 unrestricted educational grant.

Ed Choate, President and CEO of Delta Dental of Arkansas, said the students and school are to be commended for continuing the dental program in the wake of such a grave tragedy and under very difficult conditions.

“These students and faculty built a temporary campus from the ground up. Their commitment to proceed in the face of such adversity speaks very well for their future, and the future of dentistry,” Choate said.

**About Delta Dental**
Delta Dental of California, Delta Dental of Arkansas, Delta Dental of Pennsylvania, Delta Dental of Colorado and other affiliated Delta Dental member companies are part of the Delta Dental Plans Association, the nation’s largest dental benefits system, which jointly covers about 46 million of the estimated 159 million Americans with dental insurance.

**About the ADEA**
The American Dental Education Association (ADEA) is the leading national organization for dental education. Its members include all U.S. and Canadian dental schools, and advanced dental education programs, allied dental education programs, corporations, faculty, and students. The mission of ADEA is to lead individuals and institutions of the dental education community to address contemporary issues influencing education, research, and the delivery of oral health care for the health of the public. ADEA’s activities encompass a wide range of research, advocacy, faculty development, meetings, and communications, as well as the dental school admissions services AADSAS and PASS and the *Journal of Dental Education*.

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