

A Note from the 2017 Chair of the Academy of Distinguished Educators and the JADE Editorial Board Chair

By
Silvia E. Spivakovsky, DDS
 Clinical Associate Professor
 Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology,
 Radiology and Medicine
 NYU College of Dentistry



This issue of the *Journal of the Academy of Distinguished Educators (JADE)* focuses on the challenge of global oral health disparities and the importance of preparing students to address the lived reality of communities in need of dental education and care, both globally and locally.

We begin with a guest editorial by Shirley Birenz, clinical assistant professor of dental hygiene at NYU, who offers a dental hygiene perspective on the importance of interprofessional collaborations in mitigating the global burden of oral disease.

Our centerpiece article, by Habib Benzian, adjunct professor in NYU's Department of Epidemiology & Health Promotion, focuses on the importance of developing sustainable models for student engagement in global oral health while seizing opportunities to implement powerful healthcare strategies at home as well. The *Oral Health Atlas*, Second Edition, of which he is coeditor-in-chief, is discussed as an innovative teaching tool to help achieve this goal.

Commenting on Dr. Benzian's article are Peter Loomer, clinical professor and chair of the Ashman Department of Periodontology & Implant Dentistry at NYU, and Joana Cunha-Cruz, re-

search associate professor in the Department of Oral Health Sciences at the University of Washington School of Dentistry, and her colleague, Kirsten Senturia, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Health Services, University of Washington School of Public Health.

In his commentary, Dr. Loomer discusses the need for novel solutions to address healthcare challenges in resource-poor communities while potentially adapting such solutions to address health problems in our own resource-rich communities.

Finally, Drs. Cunha-Cruz and Senturia point to the lack of systematic evaluative evidence that international service-learning benefits dental students, universities, and the U.S. healthcare system, and challenge us to create metrics that would enable critical evaluation of global health experiences as a first step in developing equitable partnerships designed to reduce oral health disparities.

I want to thank all the authors for sharing their views and expertise in such a thoughtful manner and the members of the JADE editorial board for their insight and commitment to the issues discussed. We hope you enjoy reading the publication as much as we enjoyed bringing it to you. ■