

## The ACP Foundation and Giving

### Giving

*ProsStars* has previously discussed giving and the concept of giving to the foundations of our various dental organizations. The success we met with was to be slammed by the president of one prominent prosthodontic organization when he said that the newsletter (and its editor, of course) should be sued!

The challenge (Volume III, No. 2, April 1997) that brought about that response pointed out that "Foundations are commonplace today. Almost every dental organization has one. Use caution in believing that they are used for their stated altruistic purposes. In actuality they have vague hidden purposes, and their control is usually under recent past officers who wish to see the foundation's money used for the good of the organization."

The good of the organization being? Paying speakers, enhancing social events, asking for money for one purpose and applying it to others such as Research Symposia and Evidence Based Learning seminars. Yes, there are some scholarships and some stipends going to those in training; both worthy causes. But these causes seldom surface as primary spending objectives. Recommendations in the April 1997 newsletter asked for clear statements related to the spending goals of foundations and year-end recapitulations of how the foundations met those goals.

Three years later we have seen little progress toward these recommendations; a progress that would show statements of where the money is to go and later statements showing how the money was spent for givers of good faith. Somehow foundation business is usually hidden business, maybe because "the Tax Man watcheth!"

### Now a New Call for Giving

Tom McGarry, the newly installed president of the American College of Prosthodontists announced at the American College of Prosthodontists Foundation meeting in Hawaii that a major goal of his for the next year was to find 100 members who would give \$5,000. This goal would "jump start the Foundation with \$500,000," which would "give us enough money to establish credibility with corporate donors."

This is a very creditable goal as far as it goes, and President McGarry has met with success, announcing in December that he had 48 commitments, about half from American College of Prosthodontists members and half from members of other organizations (who no doubt carry membership in the ACP as well.)

Every dental organization, college and university, church and charity has its foundation. Once you become a donor, they never forget you. It seems they share donor lists because being a donor of one begets donorship solicitation from another. The competition for your dollars never ends.

President McGarry should now further clarify with ACP members just what it is he sees as uses for the \$500,000 (plus corporate donations), once gathered. And the ACP Foundation must clearly spell out its short and long range objectives. This is terribly important!

### Who Gives and Why?

The Art of Giving was vividly brought to mind in a beautiful exhibition viewed at Los Angeles' Getty Center this past January. The Getty clarified giving by saying:

"On the surface, gifts express the generosity of one person toward another. Yet in most societies, including our own, there are many kinds of gift exchanges, undertaken for a variety of reasons and on any number of occasions. Gift giving is a complex and meaningful act, one the most important ways that people forge social bonds and become integrated within the broader structures of society.

"In the Middle Ages, gift giving (along with warfare) was the most common means of circulating property among the elite. Slowly, during the course of the 1000s and 1100s, Europe came to rely more on money as the basis for economic dealing. Nevertheless, gift exchange remained an important part of Europe's social fabric, especially among the wealthy and politically powerful.

"People who gave a gift in the Middle Ages expected something in return. Most often it was something intangible—social prestige or the goodwill of a nobleman or church

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group. A prevailing sort of gift exchange involved individuals who gave money, land, or luxury goods to religious institutions in return for prayers on behalf of the donor's soul. Equally important among the aristocracy was the use of gifts to secure the allegiance of a ruler's subjects and the practice of exchanging gifts as part of diplomacy."

## The New Philanthropy

Have things changed? Not much. The religious aspects are still there, but are not talked about much in open society. But even that is changing. President Bush has shed a bit of light on the tie between the goals of religious groups and the goals of government. Also, with the "new economy" comes increased philanthropy! But be careful! Is foundation giving philanthropy, or is it just a means to fatten an organization via the back door? Some of today's new philanthropists help by saying:

*To make a meaningful difference you need to know that your time and money are going toward something worthwhile and effective. Make your organization accountable. Don't be afraid to ask reasonable questions. What is the reach of its program? Who is its target audience? We should expect some kind of discipline as a philanthropist.*

**Kevin Fong, Managing partner, Mayfield Fund  
Menlo Park, California**

*Caring about the community means being a good neighbor. It is your obligation to improve other people's lives.*

**Jonathan M. Tisch, President and CEO, Lowes Hotels  
New York, New York**

*Our true nature calls us to connect deeply to our community. Making a contribution becomes a mutual exchange, rather than a one-way transaction. Take a risk. Transform society into something truly life-serving. Find an exemplar. Seek out people who are acting on their own deeper social nature. Break away from the give-back mind-set and see how social expectations are reinvented.*

**Frances Moore Laps, Cofounder, The American News  
Service, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

*You have to create new wealth; community wealth.. Nonprofits have to find a place at the table by creating wealth. Nonprofits do have valuable assets. They have unique expertise, valuable proprietary knowledge, [and] intellectual property.*

**Bill Shore, Founder and Executive Director  
Share Our Strength, Washington, DC**

*Help people earn money. Give them training they can't afford.*

**Paul Meyers, Ten Thousand Villages, Akron, Ohio**

*Think of charitable giving as part of your financial portfolio. You might look at something a little risky, just as you would do in your regular portfolio. Take a chance. Focus on "results" but know that not everything will work, but also know that new ideas have a shot at changing society.*

**Stacey Palmer, Editor, the Chronicle of  
Philanthropy Washington, DC**

*Be critical before giving your money or your time, but its counterproductive when it leads to control. Giving money may actually isolate you. Remember keep your nose in and your fingers out.*

**Ronald White, Program officer, The Charles  
Stewart Mott Foundation, Flint, Michigan**

## Where Do We Go From Here?

From these observations it's easy to conclude that most giving (and charity) relates to people; people in the organization asking for the funds, and also, people away from it. How do you see the ACP's Foundation? No one said the ACP Foundation is a charitable organization. Does it connect with those in need and the community it serves? Will it make a difference in something other than itself? Will its accomplishments with its gifts be recognizable to the public at large and noteworthy to the profession at large? Are its goals and core values different than any other dental or dental specialty organization? Are its givers just giving because of peer pressure or because it will make them look good to the group or as a group?

The ACP Foundation will have to answer these questions and discern in its own corporate mind what it is that it is trying to accomplish. Then it will have to publicize its goals, showing that it sees the needs of its members and others; and finally it will have to demonstrate how its money will solve those needs. We're calling for the answers and if they look good, we may want to follow with our money.

Tom McGarry is to be congratulated on his initial effort and his willingness to strike out with something that could make a difference in prosthodontics. We ask him to provide the answers; then, let's be ready to support him fully when he does. □

## What's In A Name?

Howard Landesman\*, with his usual sensible thought and heightened sensitivity for the specialty of prosthodontics recently proposed a solution to what he thought were the core problems of the specialty. His solution was twofold. He wants to attract large numbers of minimally educated U. S. and foreign trained graduates into prosthodontic specialty programs in order to provide the educators needed to teach implant dentistry where needed. To effect this solution, he suggested that his organization change its name, adding "Implant Dentistry" to it.\*\*

The core problems that this name change was suppose to correct are: 1] the public doesn't know what a prosthodontist is or does; 2] prosthodontic specialty training programs need to gain in enrollment numbers; 3] the specialty needs to be recognized as innovative; 4] third party payers should be forced to add payments for implant supported prostheses; and 5] prosthodontics should contribute to DDS student training in the difficult field of implant dentistry.

We should look at Dr. Landesman's and other possible name changes in order to gain a better perspective on name changes as a solution for the aforementioned problems:

**The Academy of Prosthodontic and  
Implant Dentistry**

**The American Academy of Maxillofacial  
Prosthodontics and Implant Dentistry**

**Northeastern Gnathological and  
Implant Dentistry Society**

**Pacific Coast Society of Prosthodontists and  
Implant Dentists**

Will any of those name changes add to the public's perception of what a prosthodontist is or does? The public we serve probably doesn't care about or relate to the organization their treating

\*Howard M. Landesman, DDS, MEd, Dean of the University of Colorado School of Dentistry and former Dean of the University of Southern California School of Dentistry

\*\*Academy of Prosthodontics AP Newsletter, Presidential Address "The Academy of Prosthodontics a Time for Change," Vol. 83, No. 1, Winter 2001

prosthodontist belongs to. Their prosthodontist's membership in the A.D.A. probably tells the patient that their dentist is a member of the Americans for Democratic Action. In today's dot com world there just isn't much connection with a name, and function and activity. WalMart has grown to be the largest company in the world, but we know it doesn't "market walls."

*ProsStars* has discussed recruitment problems again and again. Maybe prosthodontics isn't unique. A recent study shows a dip of 3.6% in the number of PhD. degrees conferred nationwide in 1999 over 1998. Engineering, science, math and technology fields all show candidate decreases. A lead question posed to students seeking entry to Georgetown University's School of Dentistry was "what fields are all of the *good* students at your school applying for?" Almost 100% of the replies were "finance!" This leads one to believe that the hard-work professions and their harder-work advanced degree fields, fields without instant high salaries, will be avoided. There are no quick fix answers and no hope for future economic upturns in dentistry's future. This will make recruitment into dentistry and into several of its specialties a continuing problem.

Innovation in prosthodontics? If you think that's a problem you have missed the American College of Prosthodontist's web site. Just click on:  
<http://www.prosthodontics.org/>

and you will have feast of innovation. Recommend this to your generalist colleagues and to your patients. You will see an attractive and modern logo. The answers to what you or others may not know about prosthodontics are readily available. You will be able to find out What's New. Anyone can learn About the ACP. The public can Find a Prosthodontist Near You. Information and suggestions can be gotten through Internet Links. You can E-mail the ACP. Dentistry and the public and ACP members can see ACP events scheduling by logging on to the Events Calender. And finally anyone can Learn More About Prosthodontics.

Now don't forget that this web site was innovated by young specialists who are vigorously improving

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the specialty and all that it means and stands for. They are the right people working on the right processes to improve insurance reimbursements, peer reviews, ethical guidelines, recruitment into the specialty and relationships with generalist and other specialties in dentistry.

The public will become better informed. The specialty will become recognized as being innovative. Insurance carriers will understand specialty treatments. Finally, a valuable part of prosthodontics, implant dentistry, is already becoming better managed and better taught because specialists in prosthodontics are identifying themselves as specialists with talents and training no one else has. The public, other specialties and generalists in dentistry are coming to better understand the specialty of prosthodontics, a specialty that encompasses implant dentistry as well as the other competencies that soar above those of the general dentist, competencies which our training well provides.

With all due respect to Dr. Landesman, he tried where others have not. But prosthodontics and the public's awareness of what we do will not be helped by name changes. His solution is out of date, it has been tried and tried before, and it doesn't lead anyone to a vigorous, innovative, refreshing look at the specialty of prosthodontics. In this day and age we have better solutions and because of them we will have fewer problems! □

**American College of Prosthodontists  
Definition of the Specialty of  
Prosthodontics**

“Prosthodontics is the dental specialty responsible for diagnosis, treatment planning, rehabilitation and maintenance of patients with complex clinical conditions, using biocompatible substitutes, including implants, to replace missing or deficient teeth and/or craniofacial tissues.

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**The ProsStars Newsletter  
Definition of the Specialist in  
Prosthodontics**

“The specialist in prosthodontics does not do the same treatment that the general dentist does.

For each dollar spent, the patient will receive a uniquely different diagnosis, treatment plan and achievement of outcome. The results will be an unnoticeable, pleasing natural appearance, a function that is totally physiologic, and a measurable diminution of future breakdown, unless caused by disease or gross patient neglect. Specialists in prosthodontics have added these values for every dollar spent.

Specialists in prosthodontics can and will serve the needs of the patient with missing oral tissues with singularly special techniques. Additionally, the specialist in prosthodontics will meet the needs of patients with missing tissues that cannot be restored further by surgery with skills and materials that have been developed through research and training beyond that of the general dentist. No one else is trained or the skills to achieve the same results.

When the specialists in prosthodontics is not consulted or given the opportunity to meet these special needs, the public at large suffers.”