



CALIFORNIA DENTAL ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION PRESENTS HUMANITARIAN AWARD TO DR. GUILLERMO C. VICUÑA, DDS

Dentist inspired many and brought dental care to field workers, children and underserved valley residents

December, 2009

Sacramento, Calif. – Dr. Guillermo C. Vicuña, DDS was honored with the second California Dental Association (CDA) Foundation Humanitarian Award in a presentation on November 13 at the CDA House of Delegates meeting in Sacramento.

Dr. Vicuña earned the award after a lifetime of advocating for underserved patients in the San Joaquin Valley. He recently returned to his native Argentina, but accepting the award for him at the ceremony last month was his brother, Dr. Patricio Vicuña.

Dr. Vicuña established the Su Salud health care program in 1983 in order to bring oral health care to families and individuals who would have otherwise had no help. The program started small, but grew to provide care and educational materials to over 70,000 people. It even went on to host the Su Salud Health and Education Fair held at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, where 1,200 volunteers, seven hospitals and 46 community organizations provided care to 15,000 people.

“Dr. Vicuña is a hero of mine,” said James Van Sicklen Jr., DDS, a longtime friend and colleague and one of many who nominated him for the Humanitarian Award. “There is nobody inside or outside of dentistry who carried the prevention message to the degree, or with the passion or perseverance, that Dr. Vicuña has.”

In addition, Dr. Vicuña began bringing senior dental students from Dugoni School of Dentistry to San Francisco every Saturday provide volunteer dental services to those who otherwise lacked access to care. He also cofounded the Disease Prevention Center in Stockton and the Tour of Life Education program, providing a better understanding of basic health by incorporating Su Salud’s message “prevenir es curar — to prevent is to cure.” Finally, Dr. Vicuña was able to get his message of health education and prevention out to those most in need by coordinating a bilingual media campaign publicized through newspapers, radio and television.

“Dr. Vicuña has been a mentor of many young dentists and dental students,” said Lyndon Low, DDS, MS who also nominated Dr. Vicuña for the award. “He has been an inspiration for so many who long to integrate volunteerism within their own private practices. This contribution by Dr. Vicuña to his profession is not measurable but highly valuable to our community.”



Vicuña's has earned numerous awards over the years, including a Point of Light Award from then President George H.W. Bush in 1991, a Health Care Champion Award in 2006 from U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer as well as countless other local, state and national recognitions.

The CDA Foundation Humanitarian Award was established in 2008 by the Foundation to recognize California dentists who have distinguished themselves by outstanding, unselfish leadership and contributions to fellow human beings in the field of dentistry.

California Dental Association Foundation

The CDA Foundation was formed as the philanthropic affiliate of the California Dental Association in 2001 with the mission to improve the oral health of Californians by supporting the dental health profession and its efforts to increase access to care for the state's most vulnerable people. The CDA Foundation works with experts in the dental profession, private business, academic institutions and government to produce programs that increase access to care, promote prevention education and intervention, advance health policy research and build a sustainable oral health workforce. www.cdafoundation.org.

###