



A Monthly Newsletter from ADEA Executive Director Richard W. Valachovic, D.M.D., M.P.H.

*In this month's letter, Dr. Rick Valachovic, Executive Director of the American Dental Education Association, looks at the role of the ADEA Corporate Council.*



*ADEA is the one of the few health related associations, if not the only one, to bring Corporate Members directly into governance and programming.*

### **Not Just Shrimp and Chardonnay**

Not that we don't love the shrimp and chardonnay. We deeply appreciate the breakfasts and lunches and dinners and breaks and receptions and all the other ways in which ADEA's Corporate Members help to support the social events that grace our meetings and conferences. That's a traditional and positive role for corporate members, and there's no question that pleasant and relaxing settings encourage networking. We're all for it.

But that's just the beginning of the mutually beneficial corporate story. Our Corporate Members also help to bring about and support important educational programs that give rise to ADEA's stature as the "voice of dental education." They meet a wide range of ADEA needs, including putting the Journal of Dental Education (JDE) online and securing riveting speakers at ADEA Annual Sessions.

Corporate Members are part of everything we do at ADEA. They are at the table with us, playing a meaningful role in deliberation and governance. We are, in fact, one of the few health related associations, if not the only one, to bring Corporate Members directly into governance.

The ADEA Corporate Council, whose administrative board is currently chaired by Ms. Jennifer Spresser of OMNI Preventive Care, a 3M ESPE Company, meets and sets policy for itself. Large companies and small companies participate equally in governance and benefits, and they get the same level of recognition when sponsoring programs or events at ADEA meetings.

ADEA Corporate Members have full voting representation in the ADEA House of Delegates and choose a member of the ADEA Board of Directors. Dr. Ronald L. Rupp, Senior Manager of Professional Relations at GlaxoSmithKline, who was elected ADEA Vice President for the Corporate Council in March, will serve a three-year term on the ADEA Board.

Many Corporate Members have played other important roles, serving on ADEA Presidential Task Forces, the ADEA Annual Session Planning Committee, and the ADEA House of Delegates Reference Committees, for example.

Corporate membership in ADEA has almost doubled since 2000, from 29 to 56. ([Click here for the complete list of corporate members.](#)) Corporate financial support has grown much more, from \$100,000 in 2000 to \$1.7 million this year. To put it another way, our corporate members are providing about 13 percent of our annual revenues.

So what is the return on this significant investment of money and time by our Corporate Members? After all, ADEA does not endorse products, and we do not name events for products or companies. Of course, each Corporate Member gets a package of benefits that includes 10 complimentary Individual Memberships, a subscription to the print edition of the JDE, discounted advertising rates, and priority booth placement at the ADEA Annual Session and Exhibition. Corporate Members are encouraged to submit ideas for Annual Session programs.

Taking a longer view, ADEA Corporate Members are investing in the academic dental community because they know we are educating the future generation of the dental workforce. They have a stake in the next generation. They are committed to enhancing

dental education because it's good for business. And there's something else that's good for business: With corporate membership comes access.

- *Access to many levels of decisionmakers from ADEA's member institutions, including those who come to our limited-attendance meetings. Learning what's on the minds of dental school deans, allied and advanced program directors, clinic and finance administrators, faculty, staff, and students helps Corporate Members plan and market their products.*

- *Access to the rich store of information on ADEA's [website](#). (And, by the way, a new website specifically developed for our Corporate Members is scheduled to debut this summer.) Corporate Members tell us that the information they get from ADEA directly affects their corporate initiatives, marketing materials, research and development, and strategic sales direction. One Corporate Member particularly singled out our "relevant and timely" information from Capitol Hill, pointing out that "Staying abreast of federal legislation that impacts health care delivery and specifically oral health care can signal future trends."*

Meanwhile, sponsorships by ADEA Corporate Council members have for years provided significant support to the annual meetings of dental deans, allied dental program directors, and the ADEA Council of Sections, each of ADEA's three major centers (Educational Policy and Research, Equity and Diversity, and Public Policy and Advocacy), the Gay-Straight Alliance Section, and the ADEA Section on Prosthodontics, among others. Corporate Members were significant supporters of ADEA's first Fall Meetings in December 2006.

Dozens of companies and organizations generously supported ADEA activities and events between the 2006 and 2007 Annual Sessions, in so many ways that [the full listing of support](#) runs to nine pages.

Even so, as we look at our corporate members, we see them as sources of expertise as well as funds.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), for example, has been our partner in developing [a new resource guide for predoctoral education](#) about oral health care for independent older adults. The GSK/ADEA Advisory Committee created a 12-lecture model curriculum, which has been distributed in hard copy and CD to every dental school.

In another intellectual partnership with GSK, ADEA has created the ADEA/GSK Dental Hygiene Teaching Fellowships. As a part of this program, fellows will give clinical education presentations related to oral health and disease at allied dental and dental professional association meetings, in dental hygiene schools, and before community groups.

Zimmer Dental, to take another example, has formed an educational partnership with ADEA to strengthen undergraduate and advanced dental education, including the teaching of implant dentistry. The ADEA/Zimmer Dental Implant Education Teaching Award, new in 2007, awards \$25,000 to an institution and dental educator team demonstrating excellence and innovation in implant dentistry education, whether its setting is in the classroom or another environment.

For over a decade Sunstar Americas, Inc. has supported the ADEA/Sunstar Americas, Inc. Harry W. Bruce, Jr. Legislative Fellowship, which enables a dental school faculty member to spend up to a half year in Washington, DC, working with the ADEA Center for Policy and Advocacy on important issues affecting dental education that are being considered by the congressional and executive branches of the federal government.

There are many more examples of Corporate Member support for ADEA programming. The Colgate-Palmolive Company has for many years sponsored the well received "Discourse and Dessert" Evening Plenary on Gender Issues and its guest speaker at the ADEA Annual Session. For the past six years, all Corporate Members have shared equally in funding the keynote speaker at the Opening Plenary at the ADEA Annual Session. The Procter & Gamble Company has been a major supporter of the biannual ADEA International Women's Leadership Conference and of our efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of dental students and faculty from minorities underrepresented in the profession. And at our 2007 Annual Session in New Orleans, OMNI Preventive Care, a 3M ESPE Company, and Philips Oral Healthcare, Inc. jointly

sponsored **ADEAassist**, our volunteer effort to help in the post-Katrina recovery of the city.

Here's something else that we value about our Corporate Members: the fresh and different mindset they bring to us. The 2003 Deans' Conference in Puerto Rico stands out in my memory. Twenty-one of our corporate members banded together to plan and sponsor an all-day team building and leadership skills development program.

We had just settled in when a squad of uniformed men raided the room and took over the meeting. These were the Afterburners, a team of former Gulf War combat pilots who apply their experience to business training. They broke us into small groups and assigned us to figuring out how to move ordnance around. Everyone had to take a role and play it to the hilt, and we studied how people take on (or don't take on) leadership roles. It was not your usual academic exercise!

After a day with the Afterburners, a little shrimp and chardonnay was very welcome. And our Corporate Members are welcome in ADEA—in our programming, in our governance, and in helping to maintain and enhance ADEA as the voice of dental education.



**Richard W. Valachovic, D.M.D., M.P.H.**  
Executive Director  
[valachovic@adea.org](mailto:valachovic@adea.org)

**[American Dental Education Association](#)**

**1400 K Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005**

**For member service questions, call toll free 888-ADEA OPEN (888-233-2673)**

**Phone: 202-289-7201 Fax: 202-289-7204**

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