

At the heart of it all was the consensus that IPE is the best way to foster inter-professional practice and reach the goal of patient-centered care.

In this month's letter, Dr. Rick Valachovic, Executive Director of the American Dental Education Association, describes what you may have missed at the 2011 ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition, with a little help from the Association's microblogging friends.



From San Diego in 140 Characters or Less

@ericamanczuk: In the air on my way to #adeaannual mtg in #SanDiego. Excited to learn more about dental ed, meet new people, and eat...

Perhaps [a little birdie](#) told you, or perhaps you are hearing it here first. The microblogging website Twitter connected attendees on site and kept our colleagues back home informed. Don't be surprised if they chirp in periodically with Tweets (messages of 140 characters or less) to help me tell you what you missed if you weren't in San Diego last month.

First, the obvious. Sunny skies, ocean breezes, Navy ships passing by. Seafood, dessert, more seafood, more dessert. A lot of talk about interprofessional education (or to those who have been at this for a while, IPE). Lots of smiles, great conversation, and after dark, throngs of dental educators, students, residents, and fellows wandering through the historic Gaslamp Quarter, crowding into seaside eateries, or seeking the quiet of a late-night stroll along the waterfront.

[@LLUDentistry](#): Thank you for a wonderful #adeaannual in #SanDiego. It was a great setting for presentations, meetings and collaborating.

At the heart of it all were the educational sessions themselves: 21 symposia, 20 Faculty Development Workshops, 14 Lunch & Learns, and programs sponsored by each of 42 Sections and seven Special Interest Groups. (Not to mention governance and committee meetings and members' forums.) I wish I could have attended all of them, but as anyone who has ever attended an ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition knows, you can only be present at some. Here are a few I heard folks talking about:

- A symposium that explored best practices in clinical teaching and assessment across the professions
- A program for mid-career faculty wanting to refine their advising skills at the graduate level
- An information session updating members on the latest developments related to GME
- A program that explored the benefits of bringing primary care to the dental office
- A program that aimed to "close the gap" with Cone Beam Volumetric Tomography
- A program aimed at "closing the chasm" between student and faculty technology use
- And in the Exhibit Hall, a New Ideas Session that presented a new tool to allow clinical researchers in dental schools to pool their data

On Monday and Tuesday afternoons, attendees thronged to the Exhibit Hall to participate in the MedEdPORTAL Showcase as well as chat up exhibitors, peruse the posters and ADEA TechExpo, and make the most of giveaways and the free food. The MedEdPORTAL Showcase featured 21 dental educator authors whose teaching resources were peer reviewed and accepted for publication in the electronic repository, created by the Association of American Medical Colleges. [MedEdPORTAL](#) is an excellent example of interdisciplinary education; faculty and students from all health professions use the materials across many disciplines.

[@cyndeelouwho1](#): At #ADEAAnnual. Blown away by the wealth of information. Can't wait to implement what I have learned!

It was a privilege to hear [U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin](#) describe her personal journey at our Evening Plenary on Gender Issues: ADEA Discourse and Dessert. I learned she was a young intern when she brought a resolution that sexually transmitted diseases be included in the medical curriculum before the American Medical Association and secured its approval. That day, she discovered one person can make a difference in policy as well as in practice. She pointed out that prevention has been the foundation of her work as Surgeon General, saying, "I think dentistry may have created the word." Perhaps. Either way, I think she inspired everyone in attendance. As ADEA President Sandra Andrieu pointed out in her concluding remarks following Benjamin's speech, "She shows us that one can be kind, compassionate, and a powerhouse."

Despite the conference's wide variety of offerings, the three morning plenary sessions gave everyone a common frame of reference and brought fresh perspectives into our discussion of interprofessional education. If bringing together the unexpected, partnering with the people you know least, and embarking on a string of failures strikes you as a peculiar recipe for innovation, you will be intrigued by opening plenary speaker Frans Johansson's book, [The Medici Effect: Breakthrough Insights at the Intersection of Ideas, Concepts and Cultures](#). Johansson's extremely energetic presentation of a remarkable series of breakthroughs in business and the arts offered inspiration for educational innovators striving to reach across professional lines.

[@adeaweb](#): "Our best chance of creating innovative ideas comes from combining widely different ideas"—Frans Johansson #adeaannual
[@heikospallek](#): Combining different ideas = multidisciplinary research? #adeaannual

Unlike in previous years, Johansson and the other plenary speakers did not feel obligated to warm up the crowd with dental jokes, but that's not to say they lacked a sense of humor. At Monday's ADEA Political Spotlight, Republican political strategist [Mike Murphy](#) gave former plenary speaker James Carville a run for his money. Murphy donned his analyst's hat to provide a less partisan but equally fast-paced and humorous depiction of current political realities. He gives the Republicans an excellent shot at winning the Senate in 2012.

[@murphymike](#): Just finished my speech. Great group.

Tuesday's plenary, Teaching and Learning Across Generations, featured Anya Kamenetz, author of [DIY U: Edupunks, Edupreneurs, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education](#). She described the university as the defining institution of modern life, one that has changed little since its medieval origins. She pointed out that an illustration of a university lecture painted in 1088 showed "one guy sleeping in the back, two others gossiping in the corner, much like you see in today's classrooms." Her message: a sea change is coming to higher education, spurred by demands for lower costs, better quality, and greater access. Sound familiar? She predicts greater openness (and perhaps interprofessionalism?) in higher education across the board in the very near future.

While our members hold a variety of views on where dental education is headed, they seem to be in agreement when it comes to IPE. The consensus view is that providing patient-centered care requires a foundation of interprofessional practice and that IPE is the best way to get there. In the last few years, many of our institutions have taken first steps in this direction, and several have made great strides, but as our gathering made clear, IPE is still a work in progress. The titles of several presentations sum this up nicely:

- Introducing Interprofessional Education to Dentistry and Dentistry to Interprofessional Education: A "Long and Winding Road," but Well Worth the Trip
- Wish to Reality: Students Become Interprofessional Collaborative Practice Professionals
- The Road to Collaboration Is Paved With Good Intentions: Challenges Developing an Interprofessional Education Framework at NYU College of Dentistry

These presentations described the accomplishments of our colleagues in dentistry and dental hygiene programs and the stumbling blocks they encountered while implementing IPE alongside their health professions colleagues at institutions throughout the United States and Canada. PowerPoint presentations and other electronic resources from many of the educational sessions will be available in mid-April through the [ADEA Online Library](#).

There are many other events I would like to touch on, but I would be remiss in not devoting significant space to Tuesday's Point/Counterpoint symposium on whether or not the profession should encourage the creation of new dental schools. Attendance at this event rivaled or perhaps surpassed that of the plenary sessions.

This highly charged symposium touched on the faculty shortage, academic research, the cost of education, and the quality of care and of teaching, but time and again it returned to the pressing question of access. Dr. Dominick DePaola of Nova

Southeastern University put forward an essentially mathematical argument in favor of encouraging the establishment of new dental schools. Simply put, the demand for oral health care is increasing at a faster rate than the size of the workforce available to provide that care. He also asserted that the 21st century needs dentists with a different set of skills than traditional schools are accustomed to providing, and that new schools are well positioned to produce dentists with interprofessional, oral-systemic, and clinical research competencies. Finally, he suggested that expansion in the number of schools be viewed as part of the natural evolution of dental education. A big tent is a good thing, he argued, because it creates competition and spurs invention and innovation.

Dr. David Nash of the University of Kentucky countered that access is not a valid rationale for starting new schools. He pointed out that access to care was inadequate even in 1982, when the graduation of new dentists was at its peak. In his view, a model such as [one just established in the Netherlands](#) would better serve the American public. That model has reduced the number of dentists it graduates by 20% while extending their training to six years so that all dentists are capable of treating the most medically compromised patients, a growing demographic group as our population ages. At the same time, the Netherlands has increased its production of dental hygienists by 43% and expanded their scope of practice to allow them to provide routine dental care. David urged the audience to revisit the words of William J. Gies, who wrote that education for science-based professions must take place in a university among the community of scholars. He noted that, in his view, few of the new schools follow this model.

Dr. Jerold Goldberg of Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine, one of four prominent educators chosen to respond to the positions put forth, started his comments by remarking that rarely does one have the opportunity to offend so many people in so little time. As you can well imagine, representatives of the new schools mounted a spirited defense to David's arguments, while representatives of established institutions challenged Dom's stance and championed the research foundation of the profession. Despite the frank exchange of views, I sensed that most individuals left the hall invigorated by the dialogue and on speaking terms with their colleagues.

It would be presumptuous of me to speculate on who "won" the debate, but I can say that the audience voted in the affirmative for the Point/Counterpoint format. No doubt we will want to consider using it to probe other issues of concern within our community.

I'm afraid I have exceeded Twitter's 140-character limit, but before I close, I want to thank our outgoing President, Dr. Sandra Andrieu, whose wit, graciousness, and unparalleled enthusiasm permeated the halls throughout the event. I also want to thank Dr. John Gallo, Chair, and the other members of the ADEA Annual Session Program Committee for creating such a wonderful and stimulating environment for this year's gathering. Finally, my thanks go out to the presenters, staff, volunteers, exhibitors, and sponsors whose generosity and hard work made the 2011 ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition such a success.

[@Dammo](#): It was as you say in the States awesome. Thanks for the connections and friendship.

[@linhylinh](#): My first #ADEAannual, but most definitely not my last. I learned so much and I'm looking forward to the ones to come :)

If you are wondering how far people will travel to attend the ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition, Damien Walmsley ("Dammo" above) is a professor at the University of Birmingham School of Dentistry in the United Kingdom, as well as Secretary General of the [Association for Dental Education in Europe](#). Linh is one of seven New York University dental students who traveled to San Diego. You can see her snapshots of the event and videotaped interviews with her fellow students on [YouTube](#).

Next year, the discussion will continue in Orlando, Florida, as we [Engage](#) with each other once again and keep moving forward. In the meantime, those interested in exploring IPE further will have another chance this November, when [Collaborating Across Borders III: An American-Canadian Dialogue on Interprofessional Health Education & Practice](#) takes place in Tucson. I hope to see some of you there.

And now a parting tweet, from our former ADEA TechExpo coordinator and one of this year's ADEA Presidential Citation honorees:

[@eliseeisenberg](#): Thanks ADEA for a great meeting and an active Twitter site.



Richard W. Valachovic, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director
valachovic@adea.org

American Dental Education Association
1400 K Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-289-7201 Fax: 202-289-7204

