

Praise for Public Health Dentistry

by Dorinda D. Ball (DH '03), LT, USPHS



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If you had told me five years ago that I would have experienced all the things I have since I graduated from the UMKC dental hygiene program, I would have seriously doubted you. While I was in school I decided that private practice just didn't seem like an option for me, so I started researching other avenues. I had eight years of prior service in the U.S. Air Force, so the government seemed like a natural way to go. Quite by accident, I discovered the commissioned officers of the U.S. Public Health Service, one of the seven uniformed services. I am now a Lieutenant (Lt.) (we base our rank on the "sea services" like the Navy) stationed in Peach Springs, Ariz., working for the Indian Health Service (IHS).

I enjoy being able to serve the underserved. The Havasupai, one of the tribes I serve, live near the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Because there are no roads (and therefore no cars — only horses, mules, or hiking) I fly in and out by helicopter to reach them. The Hualapai, a tribe that you may have heard about, have the Skywalk over the Grand Canyon. It is quite a sight! Both communities are poor. They don't have casinos but instead rely on

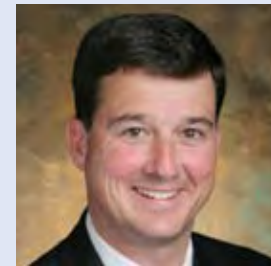
tourism to help support themselves. In addition to full clinical duties, I am involved in developing community programs (like sealants and fluoride varnish), providing community oral health education and working with public health nurses.

I also have been able to participate in humanitarian deployments. Last fall I served on the USNS Comfort and traveled to the countries of Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana and Suriname. I placed sealants, painted fluoride varnish, provided oral health instruction and performed prophies and limited periodontal therapy. I also had the privilege of developing and presenting a PowerPoint training module on "Non-Surgical Periodontal Therapy" for dental providers at the Cheddi-Jagan Dental School in Guyana. They liked it so much that they kept it for future training. From July 1 to August 5, 2008, I participated in a second humanitarian mission, this time on the USNS Mercy to the countries of East Timor, Australia and Papua, New Guinea. We arrived in East Timor on July 12. I prepared a presentation on oral hygiene and dental health for public health clinicians in that country and another on non-surgical perio therapy for dentists in New Guinea.

Just before I deployed, I was notified that I had been appointed to the American Dental Hygienists' Association Council on Public Health. I am extremely honored to have been selected.

I knew my education at UMKC was going to be excellent, but little did I know how well it would prepare me to go on to do the things I have done in such a short time. When I am asked where I attended school, I am very proud to say the University of Missouri-Kansas City! ■

Dr. Jeff Cavanaugh Completes Term as AAOF President



Jeff Cavanaugh

The Denver AAO meeting held special significance for Jeff Cavanaugh (DDS '94, ORT '96), as he officially completed his duties as the president of the American Association of Orthodontists Foundation. The AAOF has been the primary funding body for helping young orthodontic educators get established and set up research laboratories and projects. The UMKC School of Dentistry and its Department of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics appreciate the efforts of Dr. Cavanaugh in this worthy endeavor. Of course, his duties with AAOF are not done, as he remains on the AAOF Board. Keep up the good work Jeff! ■

American
Association of
Orthodontics