

Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation Names Inaugural 'Oral Health Hero'

TULSA, Okla., Dec. 21, 2012 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation is pleased to name D. Michael Spradlin, DDS, of Tulsa as the recipient of its first Oral Health Hero Award, a new program to recognize the contributions of volunteer dentists across the state.

Spradlin was honored Dec. 17 at the Mother Teresa Dental Care Center of Catholic Charities of Tulsa where he volunteers.

After retiring from private practice, Spradlin began serving as a volunteer dentist and clinic administrator for Mother Teresa Dental Care Center. Since leading the effort to set up the clinic in 2009, he has served nearly full-time administering the program, recruiting and scheduling other volunteer dentists and hygienists, and treating patients. He contributed more than 1,400 volunteer hours last year alone.

"Volunteer dentists are the lifeblood of charitable dentistry and our new Oral Health Hero Award is a small way for us to recognize and thank them," said John Gladden, DDOK president and CEO. "Dr. Spradlin serves as a shining example of the dedication and passion of the many volunteer dentists in Oklahoma."

The foundation created the Oral Health Hero Award to recognize volunteer dentists who go above and beyond in donating their time and skills to help those in need achieve greater oral health.

When asked why he volunteers, Spradlin said, "This morning I delivered a set of dentures for a lady who we'd been working on for a few visits. After setting and adjusting the dentures, I handed her a mirror. And she looked at herself in the mirror and tears started coming down. She cried.

The donations, the help, the money that we get from various organizations, allow us to do such things as this that are so personally rewarding for both us and the patients. It's just worth it."

In addition to the Oral Health Hero Award, the Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation presented a grant award of \$36,500 to the Mother Teresa Dental Care Center of Catholic Charities of Tulsa.

It included a \$25,000 standard operational grant and an \$11,500 challenge grant for equipment. Delta Dental's foundation will match contributions made by other donors, dollar for dollar, in 2013, up to the challenge grant amount of \$11,500 to complete the \$36,500 award.

"This award means a lot," Spradlin said. "Because what it tells us is that

we're doing good things. Our goal when we first started was to help people with no other place to turn to for care. Delta Dental has helped us to achieve that goal to provide care for people. Without it, we couldn't do it."

About Delta Dental of Oklahoma:

Delta Dental of Oklahoma is a not-for-profit corporation providing dental benefit plans to individuals, families, small businesses and Fortune 500 corporations located across the state and nation. For more information, visit <http://www.deltadentalok.org/> .

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