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**ADA Culminates Yearlong 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Observance at its 150<sup>th</sup> Annual Session**

*Highlights remarkable history, role of dentists and reaffirms patient advocacy*

HONOLULU, Oct. 2, 2009 -- The American Dental Association (ADA) yearlong observance of its 150<sup>th</sup> birthday will culminate with tonight's spectacular program, "An Evening under the Stars," at the Waikiki Shell.

"The ADA's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a very significant achievement in the history of our profession and our Association," said ADA President John S. Findley, D.D.S. "It also is a time to take stock of the tremendous accomplishments of organized dentistry, remembering how the ADA and its members helped advance the cause of the profession, patient care and the march of scientific progress."

In July, President Barack Obama sent a letter congratulating the ADA for its valuable role in helping Americans maintain their oral health over the past 150 years. In May, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson's resolution congratulating the ADA for its anniversary.

**ADA origins traced, role of dentists**

The ADA traces its origins to the mid-19th century when representatives of eight regional dental societies and two dental colleges came together at Niagara Falls, N.Y., to establish a representative body of "stability and character." They called their fledgling organization the American Dental Association.

Dentists are doctors specializing in oral health. They diagnose oral disease, create treatment plans, interpret x-rays and diagnostic tests, ensure the safe administration of anesthetics, monitor the growth and development of the teeth and jaws, perform surgical procedures on the teeth, bone and soft tissues of the oral cavity and manage oral trauma and other emergencies.

Over the years, dental technology has evolved from a manual foot treadle to electric high-speed and laser drills; quick-acting, short-duration anesthetics are available to patients and computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) used to create dental crowns and bridges.

### **Time capsule**

In honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the ADA opened a time capsule in April placed in the center column of the ADA Chicago headquarters front exterior colonnade on Feb. 26, 1966. The time capsule, which represented a snapshot of the era, contained a variety of items including currency, newspapers, audio tapes of past ADA presidents, photos, an ADA Centennial postage stamp and ADA policy documents. The 1966 time capsule commemorated the newly constructed Chicago headquarters, with instructions to open during the ADA's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. By the end of this year, the Association plans to create a new time capsule with modern-day items symbolizing the era and seal it with instructions to open during the ADA's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

### **Special anniversary publications**

Special publications include a coffee table book with photos and historical anecdotes about dentistry and the ADA spanning 150 years and a special anniversary supplement in *The Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA)* in September.

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### **About the American Dental Association**

Celebrating its 150th anniversary, the not-for-profit ADA is the nation's largest dental association, representing more than 157,000 dentist members. The premier source of oral health information, the ADA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1859. The ADA's state-of-the-art research facilities develop and test dental products and materials that have advanced the practice of dentistry and made the patient experience more positive. The ADA Seal of Acceptance long has been a valuable and respected guide to consumer dental care products. The monthly *Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA)* is the best-read scientific journal in dentistry. For more information about the ADA, visit the Association's Web site at [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)