

# Guest Editorial

Dr. Susanne T. Grennell

Being a long-time member of the Academy of Operative Dentistry has been a fantastic experience for me. The annual meeting and the Journal have advanced my knowledge, and people I've met have inspired me and encouraged me to aim higher. The atmosphere at the annual meeting is collegial and friendly. All in all, the Academy of Operative Dentistry is a forum for learning and growing in excellence in dentistry.

I've had the opportunity to serve the Academy of Operative Dentistry in varying capacities, as president, on committees, and, currently, as chair of the Founders' Fund. The Founders' Fund was established specifically to enhance the art and science of operative dentistry by providing financial support for programs in education and research. This is for those of us in every arena: for those in private practice, schools, public services, and the military; for students as well as degree-holding dentists.

The Founders' Fund has underwritten a number of causes over the years. Currently, we fund the Ralph Phillips Student Research Award and the Rising Star Award. We have money in secure certificates of deposit that has been raised through your generous donations. According to our bylaws, we are directed to use only the interest generated by the principle to further our mission. For the past number of years, interest levels have been low, and we have received fewer donations. This has left us unable to fund as many projects as we would like. The Ralph Phillips and Rising Star Awards currently consume all our spendable funds. Fortunately, we still have a small but eroding cushion of accumulated interest available. Because of this, the Founders' Fund was able to cover a request made last summer when a newly graduated dental resident wanted to come to our

annual meeting. His finances were limited, making it impossible for him to cover the registration. As we all know, education has become a high-ticket expense. We all appreciate the dilemma young graduates have in trying to establish their lives while contending with serious debt. When young dentists are interested in excellence in operative dentistry, the Trustees of the Founders' Fund sincerely want to encourage them to become members of the Academy of Operative Dentistry. Setting up another award to support meeting attendance for a young dentist, or perhaps a senior dental student, merits our attention. Yet, no matter how worthy this may be, the limited resources currently within the Founders' Fund make consideration of this idea difficult or impossible.

Excellence in dentistry thrives within the Academy of Operative Dentistry. For encouraging excellence in dentistry and interest in membership in the Academy, I am asking all our members to contribute to the Founders' Fund. Please give online or use the brochure. Remember—this donation is fully tax deductible. Along with your donation, you may choose to honor or contribute to the memory of someone.

The honored individual will receive a notification from the Academy. This is an ideal way to show appreciation for someone special as well as appreciation of our Academy.

Let us keep our Academy strong. Thank you for your generous support.

Note: 2019 Founders' Fund contributors will be recognized on a list in the 2020 Annual Meeting Program.