

Journal of Public Health Dentistry "Best Paper of the Year"

Presented by William R. Maas, DDS, MPH

In 2002, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) established a competition to recognize the high quality of papers submitted to the *Journal of Public Health Dentistry (JPHD)*, which has helped it maintain its reputation as one of the most influential journals in dentistry. The Editorial Board reviewed nominations from among all papers published in the 2001 volume of *JPHD*, and the first

"Best Paper Award was presented in Danvers, Massachusetts.

After a one-year hiatus in this program, a new corporate sponsor stepped forward to provide a financial grant to match the in-kind contributions of AAPHD, which include the considerable efforts undertaken by *JPHD's* Editorial Board in reviewing all papers published during the course of the previous year to select the one to be highlighted as the best of that

volume. Dentsply International is the new corporate sponsor of this award, enabling AAPHD to recognize the best papers published in the 2002 and 2003 volumes of *JPHD* at the annual awards luncheon on May 5, 2004.

The bibliographic citation of the best papers published in 2002 and 2003 are noted below, and the remarks made by the senior author in receiving the award follow.

Journal of Public Health Dentistry Best Paper of 2002

Chavers LS, Gilbert GH, Shelton BJ

Racial and Socioeconomic Disparities in Oral Disadvantage, a Measure of Oral Health-related Quality of Life: 24-month Incidence

J Public Health Dent 2002;62(3):140-7

Remarks on Receiving Best Paper of 2002 Award

Scott Chavers, MPH, PhD

I would like to express my deep appreciation for having the American Association of Public Health Dentistry select our paper "Racial and socioeconomic disparities in oral disadvantage, a measure of oral health-related quality of life: 24-month incidence" as the best paper published in the *Journal of Public Health Dentistry* in 2002. To have a paper selected for publication in *JPHD* is an honor in itself, but to have a paper chosen as Paper of the Year evokes both deep humility and heart-felt gratitude, given the outstanding quality and significance of the work published in *JPHD*.

I apologize for being unable to accept this prestigious award in person. I am especially disappointed by not being here in person because of my appreciation and respect for the impact that each of you within public health dentistry have made on the day-to-day quality of life and health of the public. I would also like to express my gratitude and appreciation for



Dr. Scott Chavers

those who stand in the front line, delivering dental services to those in greatest need.

One individual who stands on the front line is Dr. Gregg Gilbert. Gregg's

vision for the Florida Dental Care Study (FDCS) continues to produce significant insight into long-term changes in oral health outcomes and demand for specific dental services, as well as correlates of oral health outcomes and demand for dental services. The Florida Dental Care Study has produced over 60 research articles to date, and it was Gregg's guidance that formed the basis for the hypotheses we tested and the interpretation of our results. Gregg has assembled a multidisciplinary team at the University of Alabama-Birmingham (UAB) School of Dentistry to work on the FDCS. From the UAB School of Public Health, Gregg recruited Dr. Brent Shelton and me to work on biostatistical and epidemiologic issues encountered in the FDCS. It was truly the positive synergy of Gregg's guidance, Brent's ability to develop and apply complex biostatistical concepts, and my understanding of epidemiologic nuances in observational studies that

made our research successful.

Recognition from working in other health areas that oral health is a fundamental component of overall health and quality of life brought me into public health dentistry. As I have moved into studying other health areas, this fundamental component is

continually reinforced.

In closing, thank you again for this great honor. Thank you again for the truly important work that you do, and I hope that our paper will be prove to be beneficial to you in carrying out this important work.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Chavers declined the \$1,000 prize associated with the award and asked that the funds be deposited in the AAPHD Foundation in honor of the faculty, staff, and students at the University of Alabama-Birmingham (UAB) School of Dentistry and the UAB School of Public Health.]