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MDHA State of the Association Address  
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Each year in this nation the president gives a state of the union address. I thought I'd do the same. This is my State of the Association address.

As of January 1, 2009 we have 1,011 members. We have 18 components through out the state. There are 13 dental hygiene programs with over 300 student members and more than 70 faculty members in those programs. Our state publication is The Bulletin and is available electronically and one time yearly in print version. Our website, [www.mdhatoday.org](http://www.mdhatoday.org), allows hygienists to stay up to date with what is going on in the state.

In preparing this address it was helpful to perform a SWOT analysis whereby the associations Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats are identified.

The associations' Strengths lie within our membership, our Board of Trustees, standing councils and all members who give their time, passions, dedication, sweat and tears. These things are what continue to move the association forward. The association has many hygienists with exceptional talents in all six of the roles of the dental hygienist. It makes me proud to work with these individuals and their dedication in an inspiration to me.

The Weakness of the association is due to the disparity in members to licensed hygienists. In fact only 10% of the registered dental hygienists in the state are members. The association works for and speaks for RDH's in the state and if 90% of the hygienists are not members it hinders our ability to speak for them. We need to impress on non-members (or potential members) the importance and benefits of membership.

The largest Opportunity in the association is the promotion of and implementation of PA161 Collaborative Practice Programs within the state. We are the Prevention Profession and using PA161-Collaborative Practice Programs to continue to be of service to underserved populations in our state can and will make a difference!

At this time the most worrisome Threat is the Community Dental Health Coordinator initiative proposed by the ADA and supported by MDA. The proposed CDHC initiative would allow minimally educated and unlicensed individuals to provide dental hygiene services to inner city residents. We need to fight this with everything we have! We also need to educate the public, politicians, and practitioners about the pitfalls of this initiative.

In October 2008 the Michigan Dental Hygienists House of Delegates voted to change the structure of the association. We are working hard to implement this change. The major differences are the creations of new councils which include Public Health and Public Relations. The Marketing Council has been divided into Membership Council and Communications Council. The Finance Council, Education Council and Legislative Council remain intact. There are multiple task forces within each council. Along with the change in council structure and oversight group, the Executive Council, was formed. I'm hard at work along with the rest of the officers to insure that this new structure is implemented.

The Marketing Council is working on a networking day in July 2009. The "Launch or Re-Launch Your Career" day is geared toward student members and those hygienists who are looking to reenergize their careers. Stay tuned to the MDHA website for more info.

The Legislative Council is working on future legislative initiative to be promoted by MDHA. Medicaid providership implementation, increased delivery of care settings, and 2<sup>nd</sup> pair of hands for the PA 161 Collaborative Practice RDH are some of those initiatives. The Legislative Council is hard at work keeping us all informed on the CDHC initiative and how you can help motivate legislators and other to look at our Collaborative Practice for access to care solutions. The council completed a Legislative Blitz on Feb 11, 2009 whereby all new legislators received MDHA's platform and information regarding our association. On May 13, 2009 we will again meet with state legislatures for our annual Legislative Luncheon. All members are asked to attend and let your state representatives and senators know you will meet them there.

The Finance Council continues to watch over the associations' fiscal ventures to provide a sound financial stability. Funding is tight and making sure our costs are controlled is of great importance. The council is always looking for fundraising ideas to improve the financial status of MDHA.

The Education Council is actively planning the joint MDHA/MDA Scientific Session. This year's convention will be held April 22<sup>nd</sup> thru April 24<sup>th</sup> 2009 at the Lansing Center in Lansing. Many course are available free of charge and don't forget the vendors! For the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year MDHA will have free reception Friday evening for all hygienists both members and non-members. Come and meet your old friends and make new ones. MDHA has also invited all of the Dental Hygiene Programs in the state to meet with their respective alumni for a mini class reunion.

The Communications Council is responsible for keeping us all informed through the Bulletin and our website. An immediate concern is that the council is in the process of looking for a new Editor for the Bulletin. We are taking applications and are actively seeking to fulfill the position. If you or anyone you know of, is interested in becoming the Editor of the Bulletin please contact the webmaster or myself.

One of our new councils is the Public Health Council. This council is responsible for the coordination of MDHA Public Health initiatives in the state. Many of the issues the council will be watching is the implementation of future PA161 programs, community fluoridation, programs, and connecting with other health councils in the state such as the Michigan Geriatric Coalition and Smile Michigan.

The Public Relations Council is still in its infancy stages. This council is responsible for programs that reach out to the public. This council will also be responsible for developing radio and TV spots, newspaper articles that promote good oral hygiene and material to distribute for Dental Hygiene Month as well as Children's Dental Health Month.

In March the Delegates to the annual session of the American Dental Hygienist Association are traveling to Fort Wayne, IN to attend the District V business meeting. We will be discussing ADHA business especially how it pertains to our members and the health of the profession. A delegate's report of District V will on the website soon afterwards.

We are in the process of rewriting our Procedure and Policy Manual to reflect the changes in the structure. Once that is completed we can begin rebuilding, but we need your help. I ask all members to help run the association! We need you to volunteer to help with all of our councils and task forces. Many hands make light work. We are always looking for members to serve on all of our councils and task forces.

I ask non-members to join our ranks and help promote and protect the profession. Tangible benefits to being a member are numerous but the number one benefit to being a member is the ability to stay informed! You need to have a say in and protect your profession. The association tries it utmost to keep the lines of communication open and to keep members informed. This was one of my goals as president and I'm hard at work fulfilling it.

The mission of the Michigan Dental Hygienists' Association shall be to improve the public's total health by advancing the art and science of Dental Hygiene and promoting the highest standards of education, licensure, research, and practice. I uphold this pledge and keep it close to my heart. I'm working to ensure this mission is carried out by all!

Thank you!