

AAE aims to ‘bridge the gap’

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The American Association of Endodontists (AAE) held its annual session from 13 to 16 April 2011 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. The theme of the meeting, which offered attendees the chance to earn up to 31 continuing education credits, was *Bridging the Gap: Partners in Interdisciplinary Care*. The focus of the meeting was on collaboration among dental professionals for optimal patient care.

"The AAE emphasizes the importance of working with general dentists and other specialists to improve patient outcomes," said AAE President Dr Clara M. Spatafore.

The meeting commenced with a keynote presentation by Christopher Gardner, an acclaimed motivational speaker and author of the bestselling autobiography *The Pursuit of Happiness*.

Gardner shared the important steps to creating a successful and fulfilling life while telling his personal story of seemingly never-ending obstacles and the ways he overcame them. Other special guests included comedians John Pinette and Kathleen Madigan, who entertained attendees the last evening of the annual session during the President's Dinner.

To further enhance communication and strengthen relationships among dental practitioners, the AAE 2011 annual session included two new events promoting networking and the sharing of ideas and experiences. A lunch-n-learn event and roundtable discussions allowed attendees the opportunity to share professional opinions and questions in a less structured environment.

For exposure to endodontic techniques, the AAE's popular Master Clinician Series showcased live surgeries by leading experts in the field. Master clinicians included Drs Dan B. Ang, Todd M. Geisler, James L. Gutmann, James C. Kulild, Stephanie L. Mullins, Richard A. Rubinstein and Fabricio B. Teixeira. Attendees were able to witness implant placement, molar surgeries and a demonstration of regenerative endodontic procedures.

The AAE also hosted its *Access to Care Project* during the annual session. Through a partnership with the San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic and Henry Schein Dental/Henry Schein Cares, pre-screened patients received care from licensed Texas endodontists and endodontic residents from dental schools throughout the state.

"We wanted to give our members and all attendees an intimate look at the best technique for performing endodontic procedures," Spatafore said. "Participants were able to return to their own practices with a new appreciation for the spectrum and efficacy of the endodontist's armamentarium."

Headquartered in Chicago, the AAE represents more than 7,200 members worldwide. The AAE was founded in 1943 and is dedicated to excellence in the art and science of endodontics and to the highest standard of patient care. The association inspires its members to pursue professional advancement and personal fulfilment through education, research, advocacy, leadership, communication and service.

Next year's AAE meeting will be held from 18 to 21 April 2012 in Boston.

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