

Teeth for Life Scholarships

Restoring health and hope

1.0. Overview of Restorative Dentistry

In dentistry it is said that routine maintenance is the key to keeping your teeth for a lifetime. In a perfect world people would experience excellent oral hygiene and see a dentist regularly, preventing costly treatment over time. Instead, the outcome of consistent, long-term neglect is an edentulous mouth (without teeth).

Oral health is directly linked to overall health. Dental problems are associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, and other health issues. Oral health can also have far-reaching personal and socio-economic consequences related to relationships, education, and employment. The clinical work of surgery, drilling and filling, restores a person's health and appearance, but also their hope and their future.

2.0. The Need in the Pajaro Valley (Santa Cruz County, CA)

The Pajaro Valley is an agricultural region sometimes referred to as the salad bowl of the United States. The practice of dentistry in this region is marked by a unique demographic perhaps more evident here than in other regions of the country.

A segment of the population enjoys some level of dental insurance, mostly sponsored by employers, in sufficient amounts to fund routine exams, cleanings, and occasional restorations.

At the opposite end is a population reliant on welfare. The welfare net, with waiting lists in the hundreds, has become an emergency destination. Regionally, welfare clinics do a combined 80 to 120 extractions each day. Complex treatment and follow-up necessary to help people keep their teeth for a lifetime is practically impossible in a system overwhelmed by emergencies.

Somewhere in the middle is a working population, mostly without dental insurance, willing and able to fund some restorative care, attentive to instruction about improving their oral health over time. This is the target population of the Teeth for Life Scholarships.

3.0. Introduction to Teeth for Life Scholarships

As an analogy, in the field of education a scholarship is a grant based on academic and other personal merit, enabling students who have potential, but no money. Teeth for Life Scholarships grants partial or full scholarships for the dental care of individuals committed to complex treatment, with an excellent prognosis, able to pay for part of their care.

The selection of qualified candidates is key. A distinction is made between emergency dental care, versus intentional, planned, gradual oral rehabilitation. Teeth for Life Scholarships will first identify qualified patients, then assign them to regional dental practices, as needed for Endodontics, Oral Surgery, and full mouth rehabilitation. Scholarships are channeled to dental

offices where qualified candidates have been screened. Dental practices will process these payments as taxable income.

Welfare programs address emergency dental care. Teeth for Life Scholarships is not a relief organization, though there may be overlap at times with social services. Persons already served by social programs will typically continue to be served through those resources.

The vision of providing scholarships to qualified candidates grew from practicing dentistry in the socio-economic reality of Watsonville. Dr. Alexandra Jaquery's office is continually contacted by individuals with complex restorative needs, resulting from circumstances such as prior lack of access to dental care, education, and basic resources. Life is coming together for these patients, but only after serious losses, such as with their oral health.

4.0. In contrast to other programs

Programs have been previously tried in the Monterey Peninsula, mostly as non-profit dental offices. These well-intentioned efforts were short lived for a range of reasons, including the complex logistics of managing, supplying, organizing and staffing volunteer-based clinics.

At the time of this writing, an online search for dental charities for adults, and grant programs for dental care, renders 13 organizations nationally. None are active in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. The common format for these programs is to enroll dentists who will donate their time at designated events, though some are asked to take on complex cases at no charge, in limited numbers. Some programs recruit dentists to volunteer on overseas trips where mobile units are set up and emergency care is provided.

While noble and certainly necessary, these programs do not prioritize patients who will remain committed to continued dental care at a dental practice in their community.

Teeth for Life Scholarships is not a dental practice. It distinguishes itself as an organization that comes alongside qualified candidates, to help fund complex treatment at dental practices where they will establish a relationship for ongoing care.

5.0. Starting Teeth for Life Scholarships

Alexandra Jaquery DDS MS, is a Restorative Dentist practicing since 1991. Formerly she was an adjunct clinical professor at the renowned University of Michigan School of Dentistry, and researcher in the field of pulp tissue engineering. She relocated to California, in 2016, for family reasons, and at the invitation of a high-end Silicon Valley dental practice.

Through a series of events, she gravitated to the long-established practice of a Watsonville born-and-raised doctor who retired. It became quickly evident that the practice of dentistry in Watsonville serves a small population of patients with dental insurance, and a large population of patients without insurance and complex oral restoration needs.

Dr. Jaquery also realized that this community is exactly the environment where her unique and broad experience in restorative dentistry is most needed, restoring health and hope, helping deserving patients to chew, to have teeth for a lifetime.

6.0. The Mission of Teeth for Life Scholarships is to:

- Identify qualified candidates and assign them to regional dental practices.
- Raise scholarship funds that will offset the cost of complex dental treatment.
- Educate the public about oral wellness and dental care.

7.0. Some Operational Characteristics

As indicated previously, a qualified candidate may be asked to fund part of their treatment. Such personal financial involvement engages a candidate's commitment to continued care.

Alexandra Jaquery, DDS, MS, initially serves as clinical advisor of Teeth for Life Scholarships, tasked with patient selection. Dr. Jaquery has personally examined several hundred patients who will be the first applicants. Some are identified in a subsequent section of this document.

While one dentist sees one patient at a time, many dentists serve many patients. The multiplying impact of the Teeth for Life Scholarships is that dental practices will be able to contact Teeth for Life Scholarships about qualified candidates who have presented to their offices.

Teeth for Life Scholarships will avoid property ownership that could expose it to liability. Operations will be streamlined to channel the most resources to paying for dental care, not infrastructure. When designated staff is hired, it is envisioned they will initially occupy administrative space at the dental practice of Dr. Alexandra Jaquery in Watsonville, benefiting from her clinical guidance regarding the merit of applicants.

Teeth for Life Scholarships will not recruit dental professionals to donate their services. The fund will sponsor scholarships at existing dental practices, where such grants will be treated as taxable income.

8.0. Qualified Candidates

From November 2019 through the end of 2022, Dr. Jaquery treated several hundred patients at a reduced cost. It became evident that with such incentive, qualified patients invested in their care, resulting in an excellent outcome. From this experience, the scholarship concept began to form, into what is now the Teeth for Life Scholarships organization.

Inquiries are received continually at Dr. Jaquery's dental practice. Following are some patients Dr. Jaquery has triaged (patient confidentiality ensured by changing their names):

- Brian has been a security guard at a local motel for ten years. Previously he experienced seasons of homelessness, but not substance abuse. With regular work he takes good care of himself, has transportation, but lives paycheck to paycheck. He presented to Dr. Alexandra Jaquery's dental office with gum inflammation and infection, requiring immediate attention. Brian is a candidate for a partial denture and can fund 20% of his treatment.
- Pedro is an agricultural worker in his 40's. Few teeth remain and could be saved through root canal therapy and crowns, structuring partial dentures that would enable normal oral function. He is able to fund 50% of his treatment.
- Jessica has been recently employed and has a lot of catching up to do, starting with wisdom teeth extractions and a few crowns. She can fund 50% of her treatment.
- Teresa has been a cafeteria employee for 20 years at a regional university. She presented to Dr. Alexandra Jaquery's dental office with advanced gum inflammation (periodontitis), teeth and bone loss. She is committed to restoring her oral wellness and diligently funds her care with modest insurance and with her savings. Restorative work involves restoring a few remaining teeth, extracting some that cannot be saved, and placing partial dentures in the upper and lower arches.
- Michael has worked in construction for 20 years. He has a collapsed bite with few remaining front teeth, currently over-used for both biting and chewing. Treatment will be complex, to restore symmetry, balance, and appropriate chewing function.
- Juan is an automotive mechanic with a collapsed bite, over-using remaining teeth for biting and chewing. Symmetry and balance will need to be restored through complex dentistry.
- Steven works in customer service. Through lack of awareness about oral health, among other reasons, he is experiencing gum infection, advanced teeth decay and bone loss. He believes the appearance of his mouth is hindering his professional activity. Restoring his oral health begins with eradicating infection, multiple extractions, some bone grafting, followed by crowns on viable teeth, implants and subsequent completion.
- Dulcelina displays a vibrant smile and is an agricultural worker. She is diligent about home care but cavities are dominant on ten teeth. She needs fillings and crowns. Periodontal disease requires immediate intervention and follow-up.
- Carolina graduated from high school four years ago and has been consistently working in retail. Catching up on her oral health involves restoring several teeth with fillings and crowns. Her gum health is also a concern and periodontal care needs to commence immediately.

- Mari graduated from high school 12 years ago and has been working in retail. Restoring her to dental stability involves a range of fillings, crowns, and gum therapy.
- Cosmo, Felix, and Juan have similar cases, of being practically edentulous. Initial treatment involves extractions and eradication of gum infection, followed by full upper and lower dentures.

9.0. Enduring Legacy

Guilherme Rody Soares (May 26, 1934 to August 24, 2018) lost his father when he was 9 years old in the village town of Barra do Itapemirim, Espirito Santo Brazil. A gifted student, Guilherme left his family and home at the age of 17 to pursue dentistry in the capital city of Vitoria. He became a licensed dentist at age 22, pursued specialization in Prosthodontics and later became Chair of Prosthodontics at Universidade Federal do Espirito Santo. Throughout his life, Dr. Soares restored the oral health of countless patients, and inspired many graduating dentists to do the same. Dr. Soares believed that having teeth for a lifetime was a wholistic remedy for not only personal health, but also social and economic well-being. The Teeth for Life Scholarships honors his legacy.

Dr. Soares imparted to his youngest daughter, Alexandra (Soares) Jaquery, his passion for the art and science of dentistry. Dr. Alexandra Jaquery's earliest childhood memories are of playing with teeth. Having graduated from high school at the age of 16, Dr. Jaquery performed her first wisdom teeth extraction surgery at 19, as a dental student. By 21 she was a licensed, practicing dentist. She pursued graduate education in Surgery and in Prosthodontics, and became a published researcher in the field of pulp tissue engineering. Dr. Jaquery is passionate about the practice of dentistry, which she considers her calling. She is tangibly devoted to the wellness of her patients and envisions that through the Teeth for Life Scholarships she can expand her effectiveness.

Joao (John) Jaquery (August 4, 1928 to August 17, 2011) was the youngest of 9 children born to an Italian couple who immigrated to the Americas fleeing World War 1. During his youth the family experienced seasons of economic need and by his teenage years he had lost most of his teeth. Through a series of circumstances, John became an accountant and a businessman, was married and raised a family. He and his wife Marlene lived frugally, while anonymously sponsoring social programs, as well as talented students in a range of fields, including healthcare. Near the end of his life John was asked what would have been his do-over dream. He said that he wished his teeth had been treated, not extracted. The Teeth for Life Scholarships honors the selfless philanthropy of John Jaquery, as we award others with his wish, to have teeth for a lifetime.

Vini Jaquery, is the third child of John and Marlene, and Dr. Alexandra Jaquery's husband. Having attained graduate degrees in psychological counseling and in business, Vini led for over a decade a Chicago-based non-profit advocacy organization providing adoptions and vocational rehabilitation for Brazilian orphans. The Teeth for Life Scholarships is born of the combined

education and life experiences of Dr. Alexandra and Vini Jaquery, within the context of the overwhelming oral wellness needs in the Pajaro Valley.

10.0. Funding Objective

Dr. Alexandra Jaquery has treated several hundred patients in the Pajaro Valley with complex restorative needs. These cases highlight the urgent need for matching grants that help patients restore their health, their ability to chew, and consequently their personal and social well-being.

In her practice, matching grants hovering 50% of a patient's treatment has often propelled them to pursue complex treatment. Teeth for Life Scholarships currently seeks funding to award \$1 million dollars in the first year, to fully restore the oral health of approximately 300 qualified applicants.

We anticipate a rapid influx of applications by qualified patients, whose needs will be addressed by multiple dental practices in the region as this program grows.

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