



**National Dental Association – HEALTHNOW®**

**Health Equity. Access. Literacy. Technology. Hope. National Outreach on Wheels**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NATIONAL DENTAL ASSOCIATION TO LAUNCH NDA-HEALTH NOW-Atlanta®**

**Greenbelt, MD-** The National Dental Association (NDA) will launch its signature program- NDA-HEALTH NOW® on Thursday, July 21, 2016, at the Andrew & Walter Young Family YMCA, 2220 Campbellton Road SW, Atlanta, Georgia, from 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. NDA-HEALTH NOW® is a grassroots, community-based health project to increase access to oral health in underserved populations. The event at the YMCA is a part of the NDA 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention and will be hosted for the YMCA's Summer Camp children, their families, and the surrounding community. This Project is made possible with funding from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and The Coca-Cola Foundation. Key collaborators for this event are: Colgate, Morehouse School of Medicine, the Georgia Dental Society, and the North Georgia Dental Society. Other community partners include WellStar Health System, Mobile Expressions, Inc., Georgia State University Perimeter College, Wholistic Stress Control Institution Inc., Center for Black Women's Wellness, Atlanta Technical College, Starbucks Camp Creek, Crystal Waters, Atlanta Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, Wellcare, C.H.O.I.C.E.S., and Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness. NDA national corporate partners are: Sunstar Americas, Inc., Henry Schein Cares, Aetna, General Electric, A-dec, ADI-MOBILE, Patterson Dental, and Crest + Oral-B.

The event will feature a vast network of community volunteers as well as volunteers attending the NDA Convention which includes the entire NDA Family – the Student National Dental Association, National Dental Hygienists' Association, National Dental Assistants Association, the Auxiliary to the NDA (spouses), and Undergraduate SNDA members from Morehouse, Spelman, and Clark. The team leaders of this event are Dwayne Turner, DDS, NDA member and Colgate Atlanta BSBF Program Coordinator; Katherine Erwin, DDS, Morehouse School of Medicine; LaVette Henderson, CMP, CVEP, HMCC, NDA Deputy Executive Director; and Hazel Harper, DDS, MPH, NDA-HEALTH NOW® Founding Director. The program will include health and oral health education, nutrition and fitness, health and oral health screenings, as well as opportunities to "Ask the Experts". Colgate's Bright Smiles, Bright Futures van will be on site to provide the children's screening activities (toddlers through age 12) and the Colgate Fun Zone. The WellStar Health System mobile health unit will provide adult health screenings.

Dr. Judy Greenlea Taylor, NDA President, said "In my role as President of the National Dental Association, the only dentist appointed to the Board of the Georgia Department of Public Health, and a practitioner in the state of Georgia, I am committed to addressing issues of access and disparities in health care. A recent report revealed that of the 1,853,488 Georgians living in Dental Health

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Professional Shortage areas, 72% have unmet dental needs. Nationally, Georgia was ranked 49<sup>th</sup> in the country in the dentist to population ratio. The NDA views access as a matter of social justice and civil rights. During my Presidency, I will ensure that the NDA continues to be the voice of the underserved and that our members and students will continually strive to be informed, engaged, and focused on our future.”

NDA-HEALTH NOW® programs are currently active in Chicago, Dallas, Houston, New York, New Orleans, and Oakland. Programs are forming in San Francisco, Detroit, and Flint. Key elements of the project include: 1) establishing referral networks for Medicaid and Medicare patients; 2) compiling resource directories of providers and pharmacies; and 3) developing and disseminating culturally and linguistically appropriate integrated medical-dental messages. In every city, collaborations are formed with other health professional groups and multi-cultural organizations. Future plans include the purchase and staffing of “mixed-use” mobile health units for each city equipped for medical screening, vision screening, and dental services.

**FOR ATLANTA EVENT INFORMATION CONTACT:**

CONVENTION CO-CHAIR: **Kim Turner, DDS, MBA, [busterturner@yahoo.com](mailto:busterturner@yahoo.com)**

CONVENTION CO-CHAIR: **Alfred Wyatt, DDS, [doc2th@bellsouth.net](mailto:doc2th@bellsouth.net)**

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**About the NDA: Founded in 1913** The National Dental Association (NDA) is a Maryland-based organization of African American oral health providers that promotes oral health equity among people of color by harnessing the collective power of its members, advocating for the needs of and mentoring dental students of color, and raising the profile of the professional in our communities.