



Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

Delta Dental of Illinois  
111 Shuman Boulevard  
Naperville, Illinois 60563

**Contact:**  
Liz Jans  
The Meyocks Group  
515-238-4304  
[lizjans@meyocks.com](mailto:lizjans@meyocks.com)

**Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation awards \$100,000 Wisdom Tooth Award to St. Bernard Hospital and Health Care Center**  
*Award helps improve oral health of underserved Chicago children with special needs*

**NAPERVILLE, Ill. (June 30, 2014)** – The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of Delta Dental of Illinois, awarded its second annual \$100,000 Wisdom Tooth Award to the dental clinic at St. Bernard Hospital and Health Care Center to help improve the oral health of underserved Illinois children, particularly those with special needs.

“The St. Bernard Dental Center is one of the few facilities providing comprehensive oral health care for children with special needs,” said Lora Vitek, director of philanthropy & community relations for the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation. “We are thrilled to be able to again recognize and support such a deserving organization and help them provide a needed service to children who might not otherwise have access to oral health care.”

Located in Englewood, the St. Bernard Dental Center provides comprehensive oral health care to children living in impoverished, underserved communities on the south side of Chicago and throughout Illinois. The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation’s \$100,000 award will allow the dental center to purchase essential dental supplies, as well as add another dentist to focus on caring for children with special needs.

“Thanks to the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation’s award, we will be able to continue to help improve the oral health of underserved children with special needs, said Dr. Vipul Singhal, director of oral health services at St. Bernard Hospital and Health Care Center’s Dental Center. “Children with special needs face increased oral health problems because of physical, cognitive and financial challenges. Routine oral health care, like brushing and flossing teeth, can be more difficult for these children and may require caregiver support.”

Along with the inability to manage their own oral health care, children with special needs may lack the communication skills to convey that they are experiencing dental pain. The St. Bernard Dental Center helps train parents and caregivers to look for changes in children’s behavior to detect oral health issues before they become chronic conditions.

The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation’s \$100,000 annual Wisdom Tooth Award recognizes one Illinois nonprofit organization that has made a significant impact on improving Illinois children’s oral health with a proven program that provides oral health education and access to oral health resources and care. This signature grant is designed to help expand or enhance an existing children’s oral health program in Illinois.

The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation will acknowledge the St. Bernard Dental Center in September.

Wisdom Tooth Award applicants were evaluated on five criteria: alignment with the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation mission, vision and program areas; program stability, longevity and success; financial and operational stability; positive or improved outcomes; and public awareness.

Last year, the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation awarded the first ever Wisdom Tooth Award to Promise Healthcare in Champaign. The next Wisdom Tooth Award application cycle will be in the spring of 2015.

For more information about the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Wisdom Tooth Award or to support the Foundation, please visit [deltadentalil.com/ddilfoundation](http://deltadentalil.com/ddilfoundation).

***About Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation***

*The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation (DDILF) was formed in March 2008 by Delta Dental of Illinois (DDIL), a not-for-profit dental service corporation with a mission to improve the oral health of the communities it serves. DDILF is the charitable arm of DDIL and works to support and improve the oral health of people in Illinois. In the past decade, combined efforts of DDIL and DDILF have provided more than \$2 million to programs and organizations that provide oral health education and expand access to oral health care for Illinois residents. DDIL provides dental benefit programs to individuals and more than 5,000 employee groups throughout Illinois and covers two million employees and family members nationwide. DDIL and DDILF are based in Naperville, Illinois.*

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