



# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

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### **Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation launches new community grants program New grants program helps improve oral health of Illinois children**

**August 1, 2012, Naperville, Ill.** – The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of Illinois, is launching a new community grants program to provide funding for programs and organizations that improve the oral health of children within the state.

The Foundation will award grants of \$1,000 to \$10,000 to nonprofit organizations that provide oral health education and/or access to oral health resources to Illinois children. Applications can be submitted online at [http://www.deltadentalil.com/community\\_grants\\_ddilfoundation](http://www.deltadentalil.com/community_grants_ddilfoundation) by October 1.

“Tooth decay is the most common childhood disease in the United States, and in Illinois, more than half of third graders have experienced cavities,” said Craig Grannon, chair of the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Grants Committee. “The need is great, and the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is committed to improving the health of Illinois children. That’s why the Foundation, in partnership with Delta Dental of Illinois, is investing nearly \$100,000 to further our commitment by supporting nonprofit organizations with programs focused on improving children’s oral health across the state.”

“We are proud to launch the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Community Grants Program, which provides a wonderful opportunity for us to boost our community benefit efforts with an impactful approach toward improving children’s oral health in Illinois,” said Lora Vitek, director of philanthropy and community relations. “Our grants program augments the Foundation’s own oral health educational programs, including ‘Land of Smiles,’ which visits elementary schools across the state and educates nearly 30,000 Illinois children each year; and ‘Dentist by 1,’ a statewide public service campaign to educate parents and caregivers about the benefits of taking their children to the dentist by age 1 and educates them on how to care for their children’s oral health.”

The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation’s community granting efforts launched in 2008. Over the past year, the organization underwent a comprehensive review, including strategically planning its focus and initiatives. The re-launch of the community grants program is one of the first steps resulting from this effort.

“The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Board of Directors is enthusiastic to be investing in oral health in communities throughout Illinois. We plan to annually grow this effort to be able to support more programs and organizations with the goal of impacting more children throughout the state,” said Frank Maggio, DDS, chair of the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Board of Directors.

Illinois public charities classified as exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and public or governmental entities, such as a public schools or health departments, are encouraged and eligible to apply.

To learn more about the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation's community grants program or to support the Foundation, please go to <http://www.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.*