



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Liz Jans
Meyocks
319-321-5695
lizjans@meyocks.com

Additional Media Contact:

Lyndsay Bradshaw
Delta Dental of Illinois
630-718-4753
lbradshaw@deltadentalil.com

Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Seeking Applications for \$100,000 Wisdom Tooth Award

*Eligible (Name) County organizations looking to impact Illinois children's oral health encouraged to apply
by May 21*

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (March 19, 2018) – Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of Delta Dental of Illinois, is now accepting applications for its annual Wisdom Tooth Award. The \$100,000 grant will support a nonprofit organization that works to improve the oral health of Illinois children and plans to expand or enhance an existing children's oral health program in Illinois. Eligible organizations must have a physical presence in Illinois, benefit children and have an established program that provides oral health education and/or access to oral health resources and care.

"Tooth decay is one of the most prevalent health care issues children face today," said Lora Vitek, director of philanthropy and community relations for Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation. "We know tooth decay significantly affects Illinois children, impacting overall health, development, nutrition, learning and self-esteem. Twenty-two percent of Illinois third graders have untreated tooth decay according to a 2016 statewide oral health assessment we helped develop. Through our Wisdom Tooth Award program, we support programs and organizations that are working to improve children's oral health and overall health across the state."

The 2017 Wisdom Tooth Award recipient was the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Dentistry. The grant is being used for general anesthesia equipment in the UIC College of Dentistry pediatric dental clinic. Of the more than 9,000 children served at the clinic annually,

many must be treated under general anesthesia because of their young age, extensive dental treatment or special health care needs. Limited access to operating rooms at the University of Illinois Hospital severely limited access for children needing procedures. With the new general anesthesia equipment, the UIC College of Dentistry can provide general anesthesia directly in the building without having to use the hospital's services.

The 2018 deadline for applications is May 21 at 7 p.m. Central time. The 2018 Wisdom Tooth Award recipient will be announced this summer. The organization that receives the grant has up to two years to use the funding.

The application and criteria are available at deltadentalil.com/ddilfoundation/wisdomtoothaward. Illinois public charities that are classified as exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and public or governmental entities, such as public schools or health departments, are eligible and encouraged to apply.

To learn more about Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation and its programs to improve oral health in Illinois, please visit deltadentalil.com/ddilfoundation.

About Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation was formed in March 2008 by Delta Dental of Illinois, a not-for-profit dental service corporation with a mission to improve the oral health of the communities it serves. Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of Delta Dental of Illinois and works to support and improve the oral health of people in Illinois. In the past decade, combined efforts of Delta Dental of Illinois and Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation have provided more than \$3 million to programs and organizations in Illinois that improve the oral health of the residents of Illinois.

-###-