2018 CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP AND PHILANTHROPY REPORT

VIBRANT

INSIDE

STEP INTO A SCHOOL CLINIC

BE INSPIRED BY ENTREPRENEURS

WALK WITH US IN DETROIT

Photo: *Entrepreneur Tony Allen is optimistic about the future.*
By Tina Nguyen

DELTA DENTAL OF MICHIGAN, OHIO, AND INDIANA

DELTA DENTAL®

> In 2019 and beyond, we will engage corporate, philanthropic and nonprofit partners in new and powerful ways.
>
> GORAN JURKOVIC, CPA, CGMA | President and CEO

Unwavering commitment, powerful results

Good oral health has defined Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana since we were formed in 1957, and it has driven our Brighter Futures corporate citizenship and philanthropy initiative for most of the last decade.

We've proudly invested almost **$27 million** since 2012 and have made a difference in the lives of more than **1 million** people annually.

Our commitment is unwavering. Our results, powerful.

But oral health isn't an isolated issue. It is connected to public health, education and economic development and, thus, confounded by many underlying issues, including poverty, unequal access to health care and educational opportunity.

We can and we must do more. That's why Delta Dental and the Delta Dental Foundation are broadening Brighter Futures to encompass initiatives that build healthy, smart, vibrant communities.

This book and our new companion website, **www.buildingbrighterfutures.com**, showcase the power of our passion and dedication to improving public health and creating successful, sustainable communities in 2018.

In 2019 and beyond, we will engage corporate, philanthropic and nonprofit partners in new and powerful ways.

We hope you'll join us to make a difference and build brighter futures for all!

GORAN JURKOVIC, CPA, CGMA | President and CEO
Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana

EXPLORE VIBRANT ONLINE

Building Brighter FUTURES
Healthy • Smart • Vibrant

Dive into the pages of VIBRANT, and discover more online:
www.buildingbrighterfutures.com

Online you'll find our digital adaptation of VIBRANT, along with more about our mission to build healthy, smart, vibrant communities. Explore the stories and more:

- Videos
- Photo albums
- Audio clips
- Downloadable PDF of VIBRANT
- News stories
- Statistics
- 2018 partners list

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Look for QR codes where added content is available. By scanning a QR code, you'll be taken directly to that story's online content. Download a QR scanner from the Google Play or App stores, or if you have an iPhone, most models can scan the QR code directly through your camera app.

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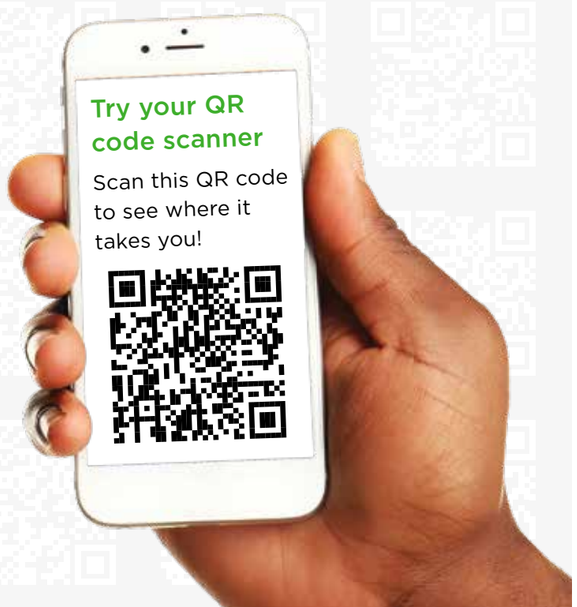


Follow along

We'll continue to share stories about our work in the communities we serve. Check back for the latest updates in the months and years to come.

COMFORT & CARE *DOWN THE HALL*

WHEN FOURTH-GRADE TWINS MARCUS AND MARQUES HAVE A TOOTHACHE OR A FEVER, HELP IS JUST A SHORT WALK DOWN THEIR SCHOOL HALLWAY.

HERE IS THEIR STORY ▶

THE SCHIFF WELLNESS CENTER, LOCATED AT THE ACADEMY OF WORLD LANGUAGES IN **CINCINNATI, OHIO**, IS HOME TO THE DELTA DENTAL CENTER, A MEDICAL CLINIC, A VISION CLINIC AND COMING SOON, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Delta Dental Foundation provided **$200,000** to equip the dental clinic, and it's already making such a difference.

That difference is filling four cavities and capping a tooth in a comfortable, familiar environment for Marcus, whose previous dental visit was traumatic and tearful.

"We went to the dentist about two years ago, and he didn't have a good experience, so we didn't go back," says mom Elaine McGhee, who is thankful for the dental clinic staff and their expert care. "I really did not know when I was going to take them back to the dentist, so having this clinic open has helped tremendously."

The Academy of World Languages is organized as a community learning center—a hub in the neighborhood—with wrap-around services designed to meet the needs of the community.

Though the Schiff Wellness Center is connected to the school on one side, a separate main entrance for the public makes it look like a standalone building, and everyone is welcome. Adults without connections to the school are invited. Students from nearby schools are bused in.

The clinics accept Medicaid and private insurance, and they have a sliding fee schedule, so everyone who needs help gets it.

"Because we're a federally qualified health center, it allows people to get services that they otherwise wouldn't be able to afford," says Nancy Carter, associate dental director for the Cincinnati Health Department. "It keeps them from making hard choices."

While the wellness center serves the entire community, its first responsibility is to the Academy of World Languages, where the population is approximately half immigrants or refugees. About 30 languages are spoken among the students and staff.

Teachers embrace the wellness center, because having health services within easy reach means students spend more time learning. Before the clinics opened, parents often would take their entire family out of school for just one child's appointment so the siblings could serve as interpreters. Now students can visit the dentist or doctor and then go right back to class.

Photo: *Elaine McGhee and her sons, Marcus and Marques, feel like part of the family at the Delta Dental Center right at their school.*

Elaine values having her sons' teachers just down the hallway so she can let them know about a health issue or get the boys' homework for them if they are too ill to return to class.

"I don't want them to miss school," she says. "I want them to be here every day if they can, and I just feel better if the whole team knows what's going on."

The wellness center staff embraces this family feel and values being able to complement the students' education with comprehensive health care. They like to think of it as the children having lots of moms and dads, all looking out for their education and their oral and overall health. ■

"I DON'T WANT THEM TO MISS SCHOOL. I WANT THEM TO BE HERE EVERY DAY IF THEY CAN, AND I JUST FEEL BETTER IF THE WHOLE TEAM KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON.

THERE'S PLENTY OF WATER IN THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT LIFE, BUT NOWHERE IS THERE LIFE WITHOUT WATER.

—SYLVIA A. EARLE
AMERICAN OCEANOGRAPHER AND FIRST WOMAN TO SERVE AS CHIEF SCIENTIST AT THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

WATER IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR EVERYDAY LIVES, BUT WHETHER WE DRINK ENOUGH OR HAVE EASY ACCESS TO IT IS SOMETHING TO CONSIDER.

CLEAN WATER FOR DETROIT STUDENTS

The Delta Dental Foundation (DDF) and other philanthropic partners committed $2.4 million to replace all of the drinking fountains in Detroit Public Schools Community District with hydration stations that filter out contaminants, just weeks after Superintendent Nikolai Vitti, Ed.D., shut down the old fountains because of elevated lead levels.

The DDF's contribution of $300,000 funded the installation of 66 hydration stations at 14 schools.

David Boye, a sixth-grade teacher at Munger Elementary-Middle School, is confident the hydration stations will be a huge health and safety upgrade. "Staff and students are already excited about getting the stations up and running," he says.

Access to plentiful, clean drinking water throughout the school day helps students stay focused and energized. In addition, having convenient sources of clean drinking water at school encourages students to choose water over sugary drinks, which is great for teeth and bodies. ■

JOINING FORCES TO REDUCE SUGAR CONSUMPTION

With a shared interest in keeping Michigan families healthy, the Delta Dental Foundation and the American Heart Association teamed up in 2018 on the Rethink Your Drink MI campaign.

The campaign was designed to increase awareness of the potential health consequences of sugary beverages, including hypertension, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, tooth decay, obesity and more. The campaign targeted households in Detroit, Grand Rapids and mid-Michigan, and included billboards, TV, radio and social media.

A kickoff event at the Grand Rapids Children's Museum had schoolchildren scoop 34 pounds of sugar into a wheelbarrow—the amount an average American consumes every year just from sugary drinks.

See the campaign at www.rethinkyourdrinkmi.org ■

QUENCHING THIRST

The Rethink Your Drink: Water's Cool at School program had another successful year.

The Delta Dental Foundation (DDF) partnered with the Michigan Education Special Services Association (MESSA) to commit $300,000 to install new hydration stations in 104 schools in Michigan. And the DDF invested $100,000 in Indiana for 23 schools.

Since the Water's Cool at School launch in 2016, 133,761 students and staff in 219 schools across Michigan, Ohio and Indiana are now benefiting from clean, cold, filtered water and water bottles donated by the DDF.

The DDF also committed to installing hydration stations in five community centers in Michigan and Indiana in 2018:

- **Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum**
  Ann Arbor, Michigan
- **Impression 5 Science Center**
  Lansing, Michigan
- **Longway Planetarium**
  Flint, Michigan
- **Woldumar Nature Center**
  Lansing, Michigan
- **Children's Museum of Indianapolis**
  Indianapolis, Indiana ■

THE RIGHT FIND

ESTABLISHING ROOTS IN A HIGH-NEEDS AREA

AS A HIGH-SCHOOLER IN POCATELLO, IDAHO, JORDAN ALLEN PLANNED TO ENTER THE FAMILY BUSINESS. BUT AFTER A FEW MONTHS WORKING AT HIS DAD'S CAR DEALERSHIP, HE REALIZED HE NEEDED A DIFFERENT CAREER.

Fast forward seven years to **Marietta, Ohio**, and now Dr. Allen is right where he wants to be.

Every day, he relieves pain, improves health, builds confidence—all while working with colleagues he describes as "wonderful—just the greatest people."

Dr. Allen graduated from The Ohio State University College of Dentistry in May 2018 and immediately moved to Marietta to work for Family Tree Dental, with two locations in Marietta and an office just across the West Virginia border.

Marietta is an active city, population 14,000, with loads of community spirit, cute shops, and scenery for days since it's located at the confluence of the Ohio and Muskingum rivers. But it's also considered a high-needs dental treatment area, and one of the Family Tree Dental offices is the only dental office within a two-hour drive to accept Medicaid.

As a senior at Ohio State, Dr. Allen received the Delta Dental Foundation's Community Commitment Award for **$25,000** to practice for one year in a high-needs area.

He and his wife, Britton, had already planned to move to Marietta when he received the award, but they considered it as affirmation that they were making the right decision. The $25,000 helped with the move and immediate financial needs for the young family expecting a baby.

"We love it here," Dr. Allen says. "The people are wonderful. The other doctors are just fantastic people. We feel very fortunate."

And providing dental care to low-income patients is a priority for him.

> **"PEOPLE DRIVE HOURS AND HOURS TO SEE US. IT'S NICE TO BE ABLE TO GIVE BACK A LITTLE BIT.**

"It's a service we're able to provide for the community, and it's a huge need," he says. "People drive hours and hours to see us. It's nice to be able to give back a little bit. At this office in particular, we do a lot of extractions, and we do a lot of dentures.

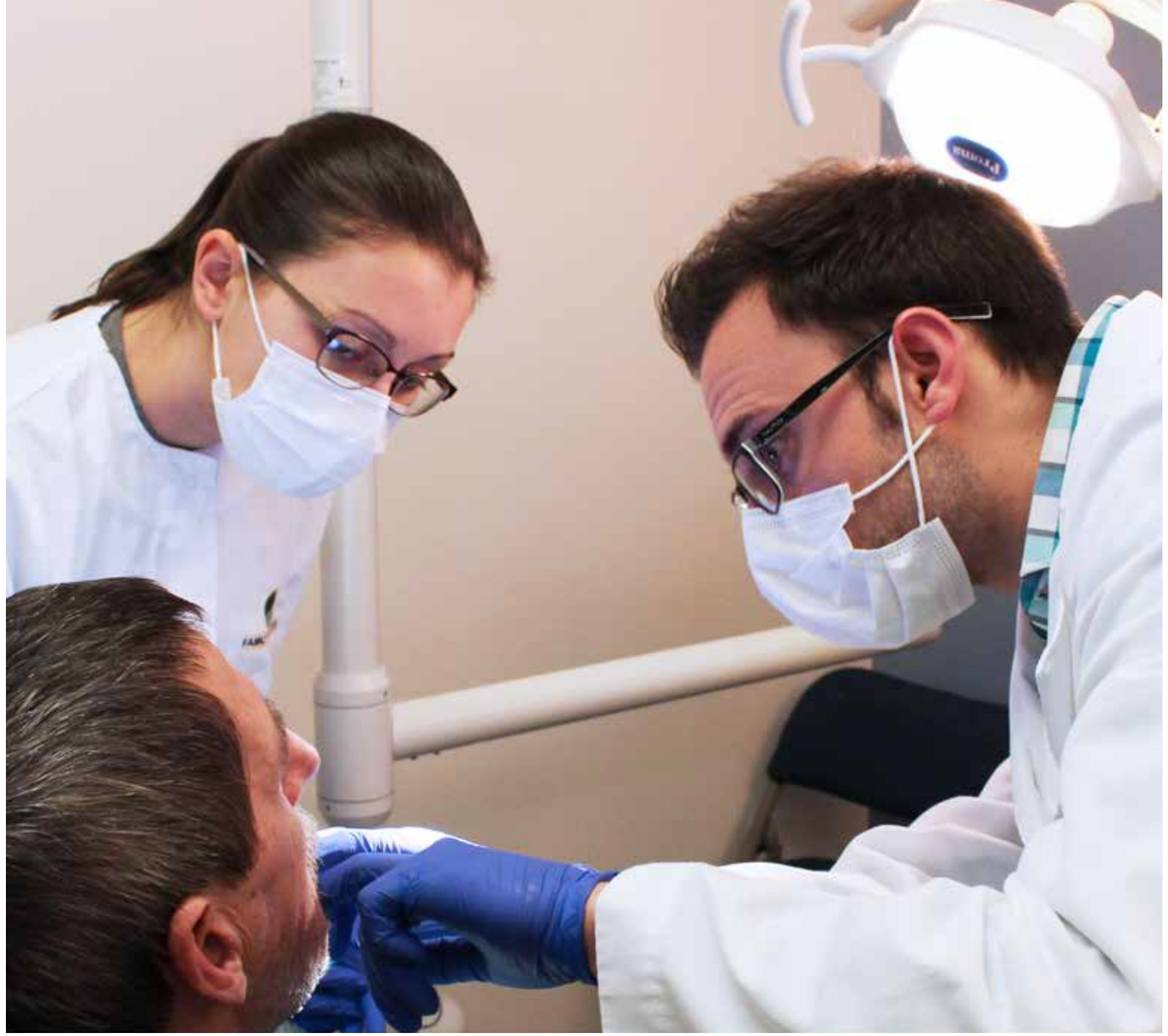


Photo: *Dr. Jordan Allen examines a patient who is getting new dentures and a fresh look at his future.*

"There have been a few cases where people have come in, and they haven't had teeth or dentures for decades. When you first meet them, their faces are a little sunken in because they don't have teeth to support things.

"When you deliver their dentures to them, it changes everything. Their faces light up when they get to see they have teeth again. And fairly regularly we get to do that for people. It's super rewarding."

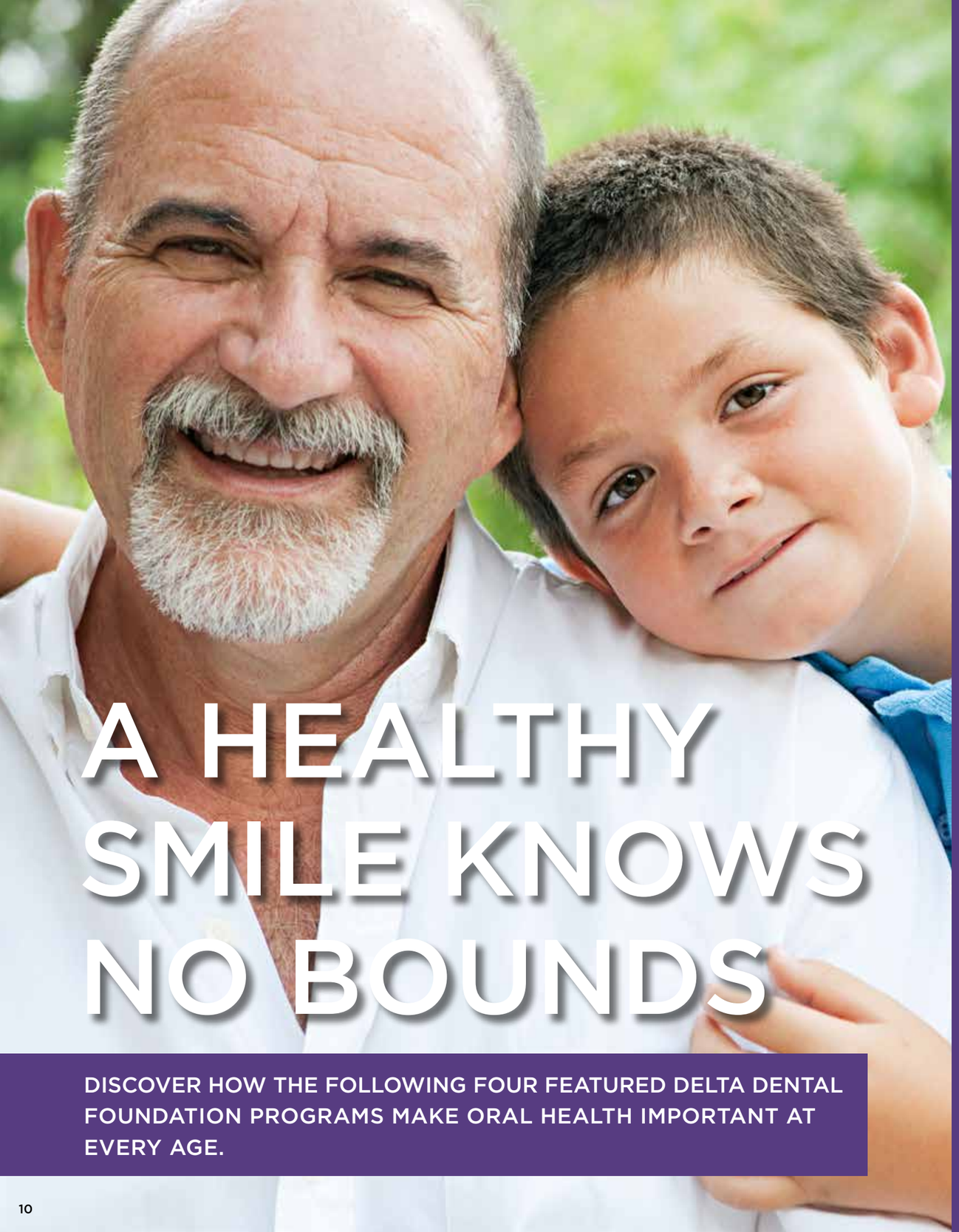
As his required year at Family Tree Dental wraps up, Dr. Allen is staying put. His family bought a house in Marietta, and he's buying into the dental practice.

"I feel really fortunate to be part of this group," he says. "Our motto is 'comfortable, convenient and kind,' and everybody here lives it. We take wonderful care of people."

In Ohio, the tourism slogan is "Find it here." For this Idaho kid turned Ohio dentist, practicing in Marietta was the absolute right find for him. ■

COMMITTED TO SERVE

Dr. Jordan Allen received one of the Delta Dental Foundation's annual awards to graduating dental students. Scan this QR code to see the four other award recipients. ■



A HEALTHY SMILE KNOWS NO BOUNDS

DISCOVER HOW THE FOLLOWING FOUR FEATURED DELTA DENTAL FOUNDATION PROGRAMS MAKE ORAL HEALTH IMPORTANT AT EVERY AGE.

SERVING HEALTHY SMILES

In the third year of our lively Serving Smiles to Seniors program, **371 mid-Michigan** senior citizens enjoyed lunch, presentations and oral health bingo, compliments of the Delta Dental Foundation.

New in 2018, registered dental hygienists and dietitians helped drive home the oral health message by providing dental screenings, and oral health and nutrition presentations. Partners on this project included Smiles on Wheels, the Michigan Office of Retirement Services and the Tri-County Office on Aging.

Seniors left the events with dental kits, prizes and smiles. ■

CHOOSING CHANGE

Teenagers at Mount Clemens Middle/High School in **Michigan** are taking part in a pilot program designed to help low-income students make long-term lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of chronic conditions including obesity, Type 2 diabetes and tooth decay.

The I Choose Health program is a partnership between the Greater Detroit Area Health Coalition, Henry Ford Hospital Macomb and the Delta Dental Foundation. Students in the program attend **16** weeks of classes focused on making healthy choices, setting goals, reducing stress and developing good eating habits.

Following the classroom sessions, students meet weekly for an additional **16** weeks to practice their healthy habits. Activities include visits to farmers markets, cooking classes, and hiking and biking on local trails. Special parent nights are designed to reinforce what students are learning and to provide families with resources to make long-lasting changes at home. ■

CONNECTING BRUSHING AND READING

The Delta Dental Foundation expanded its partnership with Reach Out and Read in 2018 to help even more young children and families learn about the importance of developing good brushing and reading habits at a young age.

Children ages 6 months to 5 years who are seen for a well-child visit receive an oral health storybook while the pediatrician discusses the importance of developing early reading skills and practicing good brushing habits at home.

The foundation has committed nearly **$175,000** to Reach Out and Read since 2015, and the program is now at **14** clinic sites in **Ohio** and **four** in **Michigan**, reaching about **15,000** children annually.

"I really like the reading and brushing logs given with the books because they give me the opportunity to get patients and parents invested in literacy and oral health by being able to track their progress," says Zenar Yohannes, M.D., of Dayton Children's Pediatrics in Dayton, Ohio. "I have also had several parents ask for additional charts for siblings!" ■

JOINING THE SMILE SQUAD

More than **12,000** Girl Scouts across **Michigan, Ohio** and **Indiana** learned about good oral health in 2018 by participating in the Delta Dental Foundation's Smile Squad patch program.

To earn their Smile Squad Girl Scout patch, girls and their troop leaders used creativity and scouting skills to learn how the mouth links to overall health and well-being.

Girls chose from a variety of activities including science experiments, field trips, nutrition, reading and good oral health habits. The foundation provided all program materials—and the patches—at no cost to the participating troops. ■

PROMISE MADE; PROMISES KEPT

DELTA DENTAL CONTRIBUTED **$22,500** TO THE LANSING PROMISE IN 2018 TO OPEN THE DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY TO YOUTH AND DEVELOP A SMART, CAPABLE, LOCAL TALENT PIPELINE IN **MID-MICHIGAN**.

The scholarship program provided tuition assistance for post-secondary (college or skilled trade) education to nearly **1,000** eligible high school graduates in the Lansing School District. The expectation is that an investment in high-potential youth will transform the community.

"The Lansing Promise starts with a scholarship, removing financial and emotional barriers to success after high school," says Justin Sheehan, executive director of the Lansing Promise. "But the promise is also about community and opportunity. We want to see change in our lifetimes, and thanks to the investment of Delta Dental, we will."

Tina Nguyen and Tony Allen are two Lansing Promise scholars who exemplify the hope and possibilities among youth in Lansing. Their grit, tenacity, creativity, optimism and commitment to the region represent an intangible but powerful return on Delta Dental's investment.

HERE ARE THEIR STORIES ▸

Photo: *Photographer Tina Nguyen poses for a self-portrait with her dog, Kanga.*

I LOVE LANSING

Tina's story

TINA NGUYEN APPRECIATES STRUGGLE, DIVERSITY, ANIMALS, OPPORTUNITY AND LANSING.

"I love Lansing," she says. "I love the seasons, the small towns, but most of all, I love the people. I grew up in a diverse community, and that is something that I will always love about what this city has done for me."

The 20-year-old Lansing Community College student, who runs her own business called Tinalooa Photography, has documented it all through the lens of her 35mm camera.

A self-described "goof" whose parents are immigrants from Vietnam, Tina is dedicated to building community and increasing opportunity in mid-Michigan. The tuition support from the Lansing Promise enables her to focus on her studies and her business.

"Entrepreneurship is what I'm all about," she says. "Starting something from scratch, bringing an idea to life. My business is all about my passion for the community."

A big lesson for Tina is the power of failure. She seeks to normalize it and teach others how to navigate and use failure to their advantage.

"I think if we see it as just part of progress, we can go through it fearlessly," Tina says. "People listened to me, cared about me, invested in me. I want to be there for others and show them the way to connect to the resources that are everywhere." ■

> "STARTING SOMETHING FROM SCRATCH, BRINGING AN IDEA TO LIFE. MY BUSINESS IS ALL ABOUT MY PASSION FOR THE COMMUNITY.

For more information or to support Tina's photography business, go to **www.tinalooaphotography.com.**

Tony's Story

When Tony Allen thinks about Lansing's future, he thinks about unity, growth, change and prosperity—and he sees himself in the center of it all.

"I don't believe I have to leave this city to find opportunity; there's no instant gain in doing that," says Tony, a 21-year-old Lansing Community College student. "I'm going to stay and build it—I'm going to create jobs."

He's off to a great start. Tony and two of his Eastern High School friends and fellow Lansing Promise scholars started a small clothing company called LNSNG (Lansing without vowels) in 2017. It is designed to inspire a cool local vibe and enhance local pride.

The Lansing Promise allows him to balance his life and focus on his dreams.

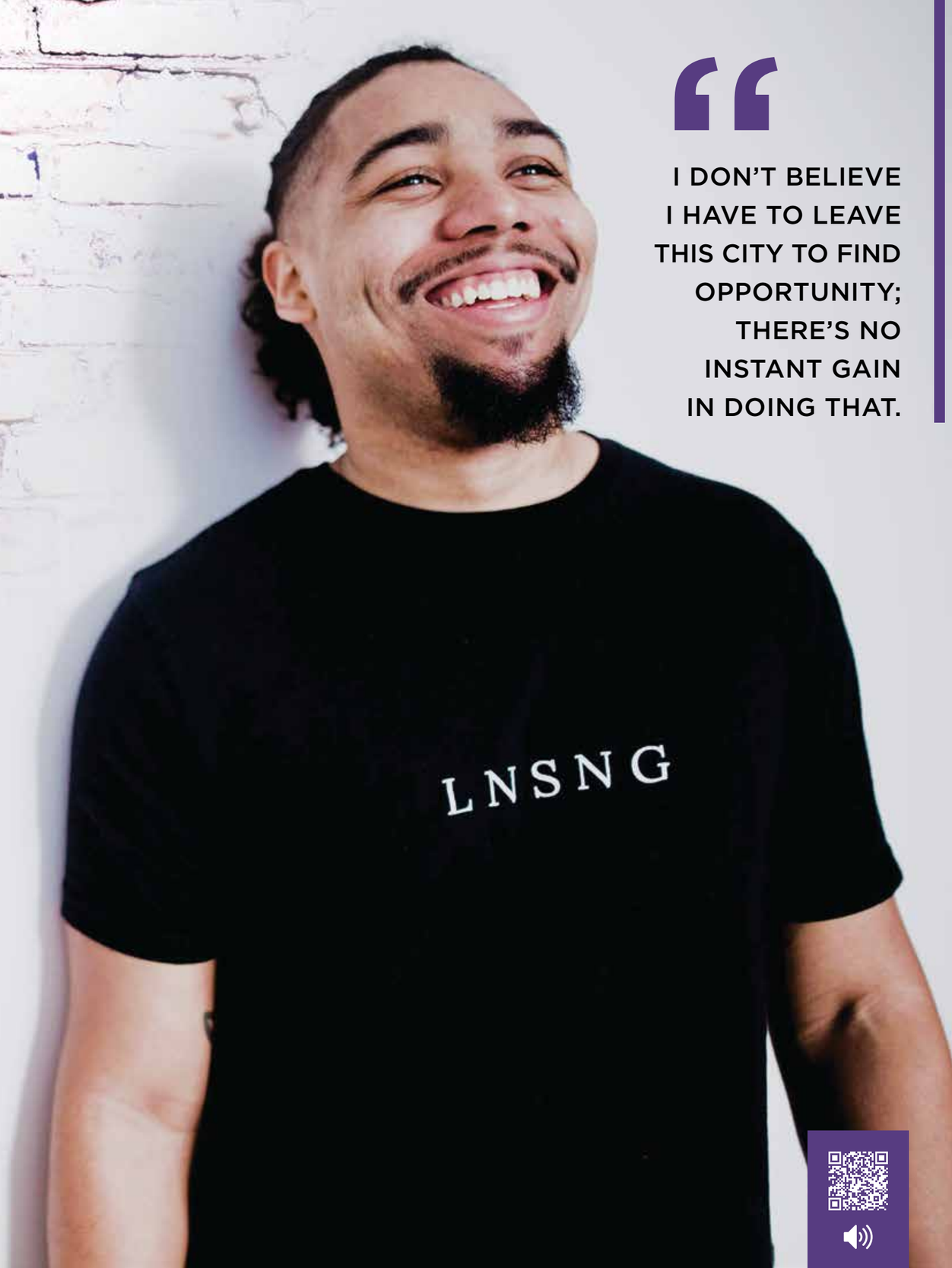
"Without the burden of tuition, I don't have to work seven days a week," Tony says. "I can focus on my homework and on building our company."

All profits from LNSNG go back into the company or the community. The company works with local musicians and artists, many of whom graduated from high school with Tony and his friends. They have produced designs to help raise funds for local causes, including scholarships.

The young entrepreneurs are saving to buy a $2,500 printer to step up production and quality of their apparel.

"I pride myself in my ability to get stuff done," Tony says. "My advice to others: try things; get help when you need it; talk the right way and put yourself out there."

Visit www.LNSNG.co to find out more about Tony's company and how to support it. ■



"I DON'T BELIEVE I HAVE TO LEAVE THIS CITY TO FIND OPPORTUNITY; THERE'S NO INSTANT GAIN IN DOING THAT.

Photo: *Tony Allen is happy to call Lansing home.* **Photo by fellow Lansing Promise scholar Tina Nguyen.**

‘THAT DAY WE WERE JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE’

NATALIE ANWAR IS USED TO THE STARES, GAWKING AND FEELINGS OF JUDGMENT WHEN SHE GOES OUT IN PUBLIC WITH HER TRIPLETS WITH AUTISM.

“I’m a single black mom with boys who don’t behave,” says Natalie, whose 12-year-old sons, Aidan, Braden and Jaden, were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at age 3. “I always feel like someone is watching me, stereotyping me, judging me. I usually don’t have the energy to deal with it. So we just don’t go anywhere.”

Then Natalie learned about low-cost sensory-friendly theater performances at the Wharton Center for the Performing Arts at Michigan State University.

Delta Dental invested $60,000 in the series to make live theater accessible to about 2,000 individuals with special needs and their families.

Natalie, who lives with her mother in DeWitt, Michigan, took all five of her boys, including the two without ASD, and another adult to the productions of “Clementine” and “The Lion King.” “The Cat in the Hat” was also part of the series.

About 1,400 families with loved ones on the spectrum attended “The Lion King,” which was for many the first live theater performance during which they felt accepted and supported.

The theater bustled with activity throughout the show, including squealing, shouting and dancing. Some attendees walked the aisles; others ate, fidgeted or played on tablets. Many families did a walk-through before the performance so they knew what to expect; others engaged in art and other activities ahead of time to prepare for the experience. Some never left the quiet room that was available for families who needed a break.

Natalie’s children had issues that day, unrelated to the performance. But she was able to manage them with the help of staff and volunteers. And she said the best part was that she felt welcomed even when her children acted out.

“Never in a million years would I have done it if not for the sensory-friendly program,” she says. “That day we were just like everyone else; it was surreal.” ■

Photo: *Natalie Anwar reflects on a portrait of her sons Aidan, Braden and Jaden.*

> **NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS WOULD I HAVE DONE IT IF NOT FOR THE SENSORY-FRIENDLY PROGRAM.**

Photo: *Delta Dental's parade crew is eager to begin the trek down Woodward Avenue on Thanksgiving morning.*

JOINING THE **PARADE**

AMERICA'S THANKSGIVING PARADE IN DOWNTOWN DETROIT

The **120-foot** Delta Dental Smile Safari float, complete with a massive mother "molar bear" reading to her cubs, a "molar express" train and many toothy animals, made its debut in America's Thanksgiving Parade in **Detroit** in 2018.

The float carried the messages "Brush for a Healthy Smile" and "Read for a Healthy Mind" to an estimated **1 million** spectators lining the parade route and another **65 million** watching it on **185** television stations across the country.

The parade, named America's best by USA Today in 2018, is one of Detroit's premier annual events drawing corporate, philanthropic and nonprofit partners to the city for a free holiday celebration.

More than a dozen employees braved the cold temperatures, dressed in festive safari animal costumes, and escorted the float along the three-mile route from midtown to downtown Detroit.

"The atmosphere was electric with excitement and energy, and I had the best time being a tiger and walking next to the spectacular Delta Dental float," says Nikki Call, customer service training specialist. "I was high-fiving, hugging, skipping, smiling, dancing and hand-shaking the entire time, and I had an absolute blast!"

Delta Dental's **$125,000** sponsorship of the parade aligns with our commitment to build vibrant communities. ■

"THE ATMOSPHERE WAS ELECTRIC WITH EXCITEMENT AND ENERGY, AND I HAD THE BEST TIME BEING A TIGER AND WALKING NEXT TO THE SPECTACULAR DELTA DENTAL FLOAT."

—NIKKI CALL | DELTA DENTAL EMPLOYEE

Photo: *U.S. Army veteran Raymond Kilbourn gets care at the Charlotte, Michigan, clinic where his granddaughter Alicia Horton is a dental hygienist.*

STEPPING UP FOR OUR VETERANS

In observance of Veterans Day, the Delta Dental Foundation (DDF) and My Community Dental Centers (MCDC) partnered to provide free dental care to military veterans at MCDC clinics in **Charlotte, Detroit** and **Flint, Michigan**.

Veterans and their families received free dental cleanings, fillings and extractions because a **$10,000** grant from the DDF offset the cost of care. Dental staff performed nearly **500** dental procedures during the one-day event, totaling more than **$32,000** worth of care.

Veterans expressed gratitude, appreciation and, for some, tears of joy for the treatment they received.

Carl Tielking, a 56-year-old veteran from Lansing receiving care in Charlotte, was most looking forward to having his teeth restored so he could enjoy his favorite snack again—a toasted English muffin.

"Right now I can't eat hard foods like carrots and nuts like I used to," Carl says. "I can't get nutritious food that way. I want to have a healthy mouth and a smile that is not crooked."

In addition to receiving dental care, veterans went home with personalized notes thanking them for their service, hand-written by Delta Dental employees. ■

Photo: *Carl Tielking of Lansing.*

CONNECTING EDUCATION WITH COMMUNITY NEED

Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) School of Dental Medicine in **Cleveland, Ohio**, is expanding and moving its dental clinic to the poorest, and one of the oldest, neighborhoods of Cleveland, funded by a **$1 million** grant from the Delta Dental Foundation (DDF).

The Delta Dental Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) Clinic will house **210** treatment rooms—**120** for general practice dentistry and the remainder for specialty dental practices.

It's opening in a three-story, **130,000-square-foot** building on the new Health Education Campus in Cleveland's Hough neighborhood. It is expected to treat about **25,000** patients per year, and payment will be on a sliding fee scale to assist uninsured, low-income patients.

The new Health Education Campus project is a partnership with the Cleveland Clinic and will focus on interprofessional care, in which students of two or more health professions learn together. The Delta Dental AEGD Clinic will be part of the dental school's community dental clinic.

The DDF has a longstanding partnership with the CWRU School of Dental Medicine, including support through dental student scholarships, student leadership awards and an annual Community Commitment Award. ■

EXPANDING ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL CARE

The Delta Dental Foundation (DDF) awarded **$300,000** in 2018 to Great Lakes Bay Health Centers (GLBHC) to expand its **15-chair** Wadsworth Dental Center in **Saginaw, Michigan**.

The dental center is located across from a bus transportation center and adjacent to the health center, which makes access convenient for patients.

Saginaw is designated as a dental and health professional shortage area, and GLBHC is one of only a few clinics in the area that accepts Medicaid and offers a sliding fee scale for uninsured patients. The expanded dental facility can provide preventive and restorative care to more than **10,000** low-income and uninsured patients annually.

The DDF also has partnered with GLBHC on a number of other projects, including equipping clinics in Bad Axe and Owosso, Michigan, and funding the purchase of a new mobile dental clinic.

GLBHC serves **48,000** patients annually and is the second largest of the **42** Michigan health center organizations. ■

FUNDING CLINICS

The Delta Dental Foundation priorities include increasing access to care and creating dental homes for underserved children and adults. In 2018, the foundation provided funding to build and/or equip the following clinics. They are listed by organization, clinic name and location.

- **Beaver Island Rural Health Center**
  Beaver Island Dental Clinic
  Beaver Island, Michigan
- **Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine**
  Delta Dental Advanced Education in General Dentistry Clinic
  Cleveland, Ohio
- **Covenant Community Care**
  Gardenview Estates Dental Clinic
  Detroit, Michigan
- **Exalta Health**
  Delta Dental Foundation Pediatric Suite
  Grand Rapids, Michigan
- **Great Lakes Bay Health Centers**
  Wadsworth Dental Clinic
  Saginaw, Michigan
- **HealthSource of Ohio**
  West Clermont School-based Dental Center
  West Clermont, Ohio
- **Thunder Bay Community Health Center Services**
  Onaway Dental Clinic
  Onaway, Michigan
- **University of Michigan School of Dentistry**
  Delta Dental Integrated Special Care Clinic
  Ann Arbor, Michigan ■

BRUSH PROGRAM WIPES OUT *FEAR*

Going to the dentist can trigger anxiety for children under the best of circumstances. For Erica Walker and her daughter Mallory, who has cerebral palsy, it was downright scary.

"She was terrified to go to the dentist, to sit in the chair, to lay back, to open her mouth and let them work on her teeth," says Erica of **Fort Wayne, Indiana**. "Everything about the situation made her nervous and scared."

Mallory, 7, was born with a seizure disorder that led to a hemispherectomy to remove half of her brain at 6 months old. The surgery stopped the seizures but left her with cerebral palsy, which means she has weakness from head to toe on her right side and has trouble doing things most people take for granted—chewing, swallowing, walking, using her right hand.

On top of the daily challenges, Mallory has had numerous dental problems related to a fall and subsequent infection that caused her to have three teeth extracted when she was just 3.

Erica needed help diffusing Mallory's anxiety and reinforcing good oral health habits with her and her other children, Carter, 9, and Gracelyn, 4.

That help came when she discovered the new Brush materials, specifically developed for children with special needs.

Brush is an interdisciplinary yearlong oral health curriculum with support materials, including hands-on teaching resources, designed to introduce oral health education while reinforcing literacy, science, math and creative arts.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

The goal of the Brush program is to reduce dental decay in infants and young children using a comprehensive approach that involves parents, caseworkers, early childhood education professionals and children.

"We developed Brush to be used in early childhood education settings and by home visitors. Almost from the start we were getting requests to develop specific materials for children with special needs," says Holli Seabury, Ed.D., former CEO of McMillen Health and new executive director of the Delta Dental Foundation (DDF). "When interviewing parents, we heard so many heartbreaking stories about how many dental issues their children had and how scared parents were to take their child to a dentist, even though it is critically important for children with a disability to have a dentist on their health care team."

With support from the DDF, the Brush program developed specific training and materials for use by early interventionists and educational materials for parents of children with special needs. In the pilot year, **250** professionals who work with more than **5,000** children received training.

"It allowed for another way to teach brushing," says Erica, a pediatric social worker. "Having something to hold onto and play with made it less scary for them. And, for me, the program was easy to read and learn about."

The new parent tools in the Brush program helped Erica make teaching and learning about oral health a family affair. Coupled with finding a sensitive pediatric dentist, this has made all the difference for Mallory.

"She now does wonderful at the dentist," Erica says. "She gets in the chair by herself. She asks lots of questions. She lets them clean and count her teeth—all without any distress." ■

OTHERS LIKE MALLORY

For many children with a disability, their smile is their most effective way of interacting with the world. Poor oral health may affect a child's quality of life and their ability to eat, sleep and function without pain. The Brush program's new educational resources and training improve the oral health of our most vulnerable children and help all children to reach their full potential.

To learn more about the Brush program, go to **www.brushdental.org**. ■

HELPING THOUSANDS

In 2018, with **$89,000** in support from the Delta Dental Foundation, McMillen Health provided the Brush curriculum, professional development training and parent materials to nearly **35,000** children in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. Nationwide, the Brush program has helped **1.5 million** children, from infants through age 6, since its inception. ■

Photo: *Erica Walker and her children, left to right, Gracelyn, Mallory and Carter.* **Photo courtesy of Allison Turcovsky of AMT Photography, Fort Wayne, Indiana.**

CULTURE OF CARING

EMPLOYEES AT DELTA DENTAL ARE BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES IN OUR COMMUNITIES. IN 2018, 627 EMPLOYEES DONATED 1,555 HOURS THROUGH OUR MANY PROGRAMS, INCLUDING THESE THREE.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

Employees set a company record in 2018, donating a jaw-dropping **45,334** items to our annual food drive, nearly doubling the previous year's total. For each item donated, the company matched $1. As a result, the food and a company match of **$45,334** went to multiple organizations, including Greater Lansing Food Bank and Gleaners Food Bank Detroit in **Michigan**, Faith Mission and Greater Cleveland Hunger Network in **Ohio**, and Children's Bureau Inc. in **Indiana**. ■

HELPING STUDENTS

Our Pack a Smile school supplies drive lightens the back-to-school burden for low-income families. Employees donated enough supplies to fill **1,725** company-donated backpacks. Filled backpacks went to Samaritas and YouthQuest in **Michigan**, Lorain City Schools and Franklin County Children Services in **Ohio**, and Teachers' Treasures in **Indiana**. ■

PROMOTING READING

Each year, employees celebrate March as National Reading Month by visiting classrooms to read an oral health storybook and share our favorite equation—**2x2+20** (brush **twice** a day for **two** minutes, and read daily for **20** minutes). Employees also take gifts, including toothbrushes, activity cards, bookmarks and more. ■

RESTORING LIFE IN A REBUILT CITY

WHEN DELTA DENTAL JOINED LIFE REMODELED'S SIX-DAY CLEANUP EFFORT IN DETROIT, EMPLOYEE AND PROUD DETROIT RESIDENT ADRIANNE LEWIS JUMPED IN TO HELP.

"TO ME, VOLUNTEERING AND HELPING PEOPLE YOU DO NOT KNOW IS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE.

HERE IS HER STORY ▶

Adrianne Lewis and a team of volunteers walk down a **Detroit** street, pushing lawn mowers and wheelbarrows filled with rakes and weed trimmers.

They settle in to clean up an overgrown alley with garbage entangling the fence between homes. Volunteers clear brush and dig out debris—dragging suitcases, a dilapidated door and more to the curb.

Alleys like this are common routes for children walking to school in the inner city. Adrianne's own mother-in-law grew up in the area and walked to nearby Central High School.

This family connection is one of many reasons why Adrianne, a Delta Dental customer service representative, volunteered this day. Delta Dental sent nearly **100** employees over **two** days to volunteer in the Durfee/Central community as part of Life Remodeled's Six-Day Project.

Life Remodeled is a Detroit organization that helps transform lives by investing about **$5 million** in cash, labor and materials into a Detroit neighborhood each year. The goal: remodel a community asset, repair owner-occupied homes and mobilize thousands of volunteers to beautify **300** city blocks across **six** days. Life Remodeled and its volunteers are revitalizing the city.

"(My mother-in-law) was showing me the areas where she lived and she had walked to school," Adrianne says. "She couldn't imagine walking to school with the area being the way that it was. With the houses being torn down and all of the blight. She said she probably would have been scared to walk to school.

"But that was the point of us coming over here, cleaning up—so that the kids would feel safe; the neighbors would feel safe; the elderly would feel safe."

HOMETOWN PRIDE

Adrianne is a child of Detroit—she has lived here since she was 11 years old, when she moved from Nashville, Tennessee, with her mother and sister. Her husband, Warez, has lived in Detroit since he was 3. Today, they're raising a family on the city's northwest side, roughly six miles away from her volunteer site.

Detroit gets a bad rap, but Adrianne knows that living in the city comes with advantages. Her family enjoys the city's rich history and culture. A love for Motown, the museums, Belle Isle, downtown and the city's festivals—Adrianne's pride for the city is evident.

"If you engage in the things the city offers, you'll see it's not always the bad news you see all the time," she says. "Some news is close to home and is sad, but we also have a lot of good things going on in the city. You can't focus on all the bad things."

And it's organizations like Life Remodeled that are focused on the "good things."

"They're in the heart of the neighborhood doing something. They are working to make all of Detroit better, not just downtown," Adrianne says.

INSTILLING CHANGE

Life Remodeled normally makes one-year investments in neighborhoods, but the organization has committed to the Durfee/Central area until at least 2020. Progress is evident in this neighborhood where Detroit's civil unrest began in 1967.

In 2017, Life Remodeled began renovating and repurposing the former Durfee Elementary Middle School and adjacent Central High School into the Durfee Innovation Society. It repaired **53** homes, boarded up **534** vacant houses and removed blight on **367** blocks. In 2018, it beautified **316** blocks, boarded up **396** houses, cleared **102** alleyways, planted more than **700** trees, shrubs and perennials, and much more.

As Life Remodeled continues its revitalization efforts, Delta Dental and employees like Adrianne plan to be there, doing our part. ■

Photo (next page): *Detroiter Al Powell watches a Delta Dental crew at work and says he's thankful for the effort.*

WE MAKE SURE DELTA DENTAL IS A FORCE FOR GOOD.

GORAN JURKOVIC, CPA, CGMA | President and CEO
Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana

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