Ultradent CEO called Americans to
Turn backs on the Trump presidency

Artificial sweeteners linked to
Weight gain, heart disease
and other health issues

First generation graduates
LA&HA Master’s Programme

CEO and founder of Ultradent Dr Dan Fischer has written an open letter calling on Americans to turn their backs on the Trump presidency. In response to Trump’s reaction to the tragic events in Charlottesville, Virginia, on 12 and 13 August, the full-page letter in USA TODAY has caused the already maxed-out political turmoil to spill over into the dental industry.

In his opening sentence, Fischer wrote: “As the founder and CEO of Ultradent Products, Inc., a proud American manufacturer that employs over 1,400 Americans and exports 65% of what we manufacture, I feel it is my duty and obligation to make my voice heard.” Pointing to Ultradent’s core company values of “integrity, quality, care, innovation and hard work” as guiding his leadership of the company, Fischer felt compelled to voice his disapproval at what he describes as an “out of control” Trump, going as far to say “should I ever find myself in the presence of Donald Trump, I will literally turn my back to him.” This call to action from Fisher has not been met with open arms from all corners of dentistry. Some loyal Trump supporters working in the industry suggested via Facebook that Americans and dentists turn their backs on Ultradent Products.

In the letter, now published on turnyourbacks.org, Fischer concludes by writing: “For those of you who support this person or who don’t feel comfortable that it is correct to ‘turn your back,’ you too are my fellow Americans, and I equally defend your right to freedom of speech. Do as your conscience dictates.”

According to a recent study released by the Canadian Medical Association, artificial sweeteners may not be as healthy alternative as first thought. In a systematic review of 37 studies that followed over 400,000 people for an average of 10 years, the researchers aimed to find out about negative long-term effects on weight gain and heart disease in people who consumed artificial sweeteners. Initial results did not show a consistent effect on weight loss, while the longer observational studies showed a link between the consumption of artificial sweeteners and relatively higher risks of weight gain and obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease and other health issues.

Nevertheless, lead author and assistant professor Dr Meghan Azad said, “Caution is warranted until the long-term health effects of artificial sweeteners are fully characterised.”

This year, the first generation graduated the LA&HA Master’s Programme in Laser Dentistry. The programme is an educational curriculum designed by the Laser and Health Academy to provide participants with a comprehensive level of knowledge about laser use in dentistry, with an overview of laser applications, laser physics, safety and hands-on practical work.

This year’s graduating class has eight laser enthusiasts from six different countries. Some of the students were new to lasers, while others had already been working with lasers for several years.

A total of five separate modules are required for completion of the programme, giving participants the skills needed for using a laser system in the dental office. There is strong interest from dental experts worldwide for the LA&HA Master’s Programme, knowing that an in-depth knowledge of laser use is essential for running a successful dental practice. The next modules are in full swing. For dates go to www.fotona.com.

Source: Fotona d.o.o.
Fossilised teeth cast doubt over Humans’ arrival in South East Asia

South East Asia is a key region for understanding the human dispersal out of Africa and down to Australia. According to recent fossil teeth findings by researchers from the University of Queensland in Brisbane and Macquarie University in Sydney, this migration towards Australia may have occurred 20,000 years earlier than previously thought. In a video posted online, the scientists follow the footsteps of Eugène Dubois, the paleoanthropologist famous for his discovery of “Java Man” (Homo erectus). In the Sumatran region of Indonesia, they reenter a cave site called Lida Ajer, where in the late 1800s the Dutchman collected fossil teeth from other hominins. According to Dr Gilbert Price of the University of Queensland’s School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Dubois’s recovery of the human teeth was in itself very interesting, but no one had spent much time trying to determine its significance. However, after an in-depth documentation of the cave and reanalysis of the specimens using a new dating programme, it was confirmed that the teeth came from modern humans, Homo sapiens, and most interestingly that they dated to as long as 73,000 years ago.

In a twist that may become a contentious topic at a later date, the findings from the study also suggest humans could have potentially made the crossing to Australia even earlier than the accepted 60,000 to 65,000 years ago.

Prevention before intervention in the Oral care of older patients

In light of the ageing population, dentists need to be aware of the risks of multifactorial oral health problems in elderly patients. A recent article has recommended a maximum interception approach involving all members of the healthcare team and promoting evidence-based self-care. Dental professionals must be prepared for the sheer number of older patients, especially among the baby boomers (the generation born between 1946 and 1964), retaining their natural teeth for longer, stated article author Prof. Laurence J. Walsh, University of Queensland, Australia. Particular problems include root surface caries in patients with a strong history of coronal caries and those who suddenly develop salivary hypofunction. Furthermore, elderly patients suffer from more chronic diseases and are medically more complex.

Older patients sometimes cannot maintain sufficient oral health, owing to a decline of fine motor skills and reduced sight. Hence, Walsh advised a multidisciplinary approach with doctors, nurses and carers working together to provide good oral health for patients living in long-term care facilities. A key message must promote oral health as part of overall health, he said.

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