The Academy of General Dentistry brought about 4,000 attendees to San Diego in late June for its 55th Annual Meeting & Exhibits, which included a Convocation Ceremony aboard the flight deck of the USS Midway.

“This is the largest meeting we’ve ever had,” said Dr. Vincent “Vinny” Mayher, Jr., president-elect of Academy of General Dentistry. “It’s setting all kinds of records for us. We’d love to see it get even bigger and better.

“We had about 1,850 dentists, which is a record for us, 900 dental auxiliaries and in the 3,000-4,000 range for overall attendees.”

The event at the San Diego Convention Center offered a wide variety of lectures and participation courses, with topics ranging from oral cancer diagnosis to treatment planning guidelines to pharmacologic management.

“The AGD has always had an incredible amount of meetings and offerings, but what is the most amazing is the amount of participation courses we offer,” Dr. Mayher said. “We have more participation courses than any other meeting that’s out there. And not to demean lecture courses, but our dentists like to see and put their hands on exactly what they’re working with, which we can provide with these hands-on courses.”

One of the highlights of the event was the AGD Convocation Ceremony, in which the 2007 class of AGD Fellows and Masters and Lifelong Learning and Service Recognition recipients received their honors.

“This is our largest fellowship and mastership convocation class ever, and it just warms my heart to see that many general practitioners wanting to continue to educate themselves,” Dr. Mayher said. “These are goal-orientated people who just want to do more and more, and I’m so impressed with them.”

The exhibit hall was brimming with a wide variety of sponsors and exhibitors, and the AGD worked especially hard to draw attendees into the hall with Learning Labs (offering CE credits), book signings, raffle drawings, receptions, coupon books and more. An inspired concept was the Kids’ Corner in the Exhibit Hall, which offered a fun and educational spot for attendees to let their children play while they explored the exhibits.

Dr. Mayher said he looks forward to his year as president of AGD and the group has many programs he’ll work on continuing and expanding.