The American Association of Orthodontists will host its annual meeting April 29-May 3 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla., with the goal of “Bringing Us Together.”

“When you’re curious, you find lots of interesting things to do,” a quote attributed to the late Walt Disney, is also applicable to the AAO 2016 Annual Session, said AAO President Morris Poole. Orthodontists display great intellectual curiosity about both the discipline of orthodontics as well as myriad other subjects, he said. Poole noted the Disney quote also expressed what he believes the AAO annual meeting will be.

The AAO’s 2016 Doctors Scientific Program will offer a wealth of clinical and scientific information in application to orthodontic practice, as well as in-depth information about every aspect of effective practice management.

In addition to the typical events and educational sessions you might expect at these types of events, the AAO has some special activities and highlights for attendees, including:

• Opening Ceremonies at Sea World on Saturday, April 30.
• The Excellence in Orthodontics Awards Ceremony and Luncheon, featuring an address by 2012 Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney on Sunday, May 1.
• The International Members Reception at the Hilton Orlando Promenade Lawn on Sunday, May 1.

Feed your curiosity at 2016 annual session

FROM THE EDITOR

Historical overview of orthodontic education

From 1961-2000: Part III

By Dennis J. Tartakow, DMD, MED, EdD, PhD, Editor in Chief

Orthodontic education accreditation for all undergraduate and postgraduate educational programs in the United States and Canada was initiated in the early 1970s. The creation of the Commission of Dental Accreditation occurred in the 1990s, operating under the auspices of the ADA, in order to standardize the accreditation process for all postgraduate orthodontic programs (American Dental Association, 2008).

This was a peer review mechanism that included orthodontic specialists, educational institutions, practitioners, the dental licensing community, as well as public representatives. Their responsibility was to ensure the quality of each orthodontic education program. The Joint Commission on National Board of Dental Examiners established Test Construction Committees in order to examine all undergraduate and graduate dental students for knowledge and proficiency.

Since 1990, the issue regarding recruitment and retention of qualified orthodontic faculty members had been the most important and challenging topic of discussion at every orthodontic conference (Roberts, 1997). Since 1994, the AAO Council on Orthodontic Education (COE) has sponsored conferences for the chairs of orthodontic departments to share common challenges and solutions (Larson, 1998). According to Larson, the Orthodontic Section of the American Association of Dental Schools (AADs) also recognized this critical challenge.

In 1990, the faculty vacancy rate was six percent. At the time of the 1993 survey, 171 full-time faculty positions were funded at the programs that returned the survey and of these, 20 positions were unfilled for
a vacancy rate of 12 percent. In 1997, the vacancy rate increased to 42 percent. If orthodontics can provide an environment that makes education and research a reasonable choice through which one can make a decent living, the specialty will maintain its high standards and continue to flourish (Peck, 2003). Typically, the best dental students are attracted to orthodontics, and a large number of them do have an interest in teaching and research (Larson, 1998).

According to Noble, Hechter, Karaskos and Wiltshire (2009), there are more than 700 orthodontic residents enrolled in the 65 postgraduate orthodontic programs in the United States. Approximately 400 new residents per year are accepted in 69 postgraduate orthodontic programs in the United States and Canada (Johnson, 2008). All postgraduate orthodontic programs range from two to four years in duration, some offer certificates in orthodontics and others offer M.Sc. and/or Ph.D. degrees. The total number of residents averages 800 to 1,200 per year.

By 1997, these issues were finally brought to the surface by an important landmark survey of all orthodontic department chairs. The COE and AADS surveyed all orthodontic programs in the United States and Canada in order to visualize the problem and develop greater understanding for the negative trends of orthodontic faculty recruitment and retention (Larson, 1998). Larson noted that two orthodontic educators, Storey (Department of Orthodontics, University of Toronto, Faculty of Dentistry, Ontario, Canada) and Biggerstaff (University of Texas, Department of Orthodontics, Health Science Center, San Antonio, Texas), constructed a survey instrument in order to reassess previous data from similar projects that were completed in 1990 and 1991. This survey instrument was modified to allow for comparison with those earlier results regarding faculty retention. Those results confirmed that there was an increase in unfilled faculty positions. To be continued...

Editor's note: References will be included at the end of the final portion of this series.

FROM THE EDITOR

Dennis J. Tartakow, DMD, MEd, EdD, PhD, Editor in Chief

AAO, Page 1

• The AAO Gala at Universal Studios, Orlando, on Monday, May 2.
• The Featured Speaker series with leaders in the field including Lou Mongello, Dick Hoyt, Bruce Christopher and Brad Barton.

The AAO 2016 Annual Session named lecture speakers will be:
• Jacob A. Salzmann Lecture: Dr. Larry Andrews. Andrews, founder of the Six Keys™ to Optimal Occlusion and the Six Elements of Orofacial Harmony™, is a clinical professor in the orthodontic residency program at the University of California at San Francisco. He authored the textbook “Straight Wire, The Concept and Appliance.”
• Edward H. Angle Lecture: Dr. Birte Melsen. Melsen served for many years as a professor and head of the Department of Orthodontics at The School of Dentistry, Aarhus University, Denmark. She has a private practice in Liibeck, Germany, that focuses exclusively on adult orthodontics. She continues to lecture and conduct research.
• John Valentine Marshon Lecture: Dr. Sheldon Peck. Peck previously was a clinical professor of developmental biology at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. He is now an adjunct professor of orthodontics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an associate editor of The Angle Orthodontist. In addition to the bountiful educational opportunities, the AAO 2016 Annual Session offers a great chance to learn about new products and technology in the orthodontic industry. More than 300 companies will exhibit the latest and greatest products and services available to orthodontists throughout the Orange County Convention Center.

Nicknamed “The City Beautiful,” and known worldwide for its theme parks, Orlando offers AAO 2016 Annual Session attendees a perfect setting in which to relax, have fun and learn, according to the AAO Annual Session Planning Committee.

To make it easier for attendees and their families to enjoy Orlando, annual session lectures will end daily at 2:45 p.m. (with the exception of Saturday, April 30, when lectures will end at 3:15 p.m.). AAO Tours of Orlando may be booked during registration. For more information and a complete guide to the AAO 2016 Annual Session, please visit www.aaoinfo.org/meetings/2016-annual-session.

Both Universal Studios and Sea World will host AAO 2016 Annual Session Events. Check the AAO guide to make sure you don’t miss anything.