To spice things up, the AAO offered social activities each day, such as a Fun Run & Walk or an AAO Foundation Breakfast to give honor to key volunteers for their work within the AAO.


Staff sessions included a range of topics from orthodontic digital photography, staff training, risk management, infection prevention, fee collection and more.

The AAO also had its popular featured speaker series, which included a session by best-selling author Dr. Barry Sears. Sears’ presentation, “Why We Gain Weight, Get Sick and Age Faster,” explored the changes in the American diet in the last 40 years that have turned on ancient inflammatory genes that are the underlying cause of our obesity and health-care crisis.

He said the insidious aspect of this increased inflammation is that it is below the perception of pain, which means you ignore its presence until there is enough organ damage that we call it chronic disease. Only by understanding the dietary causes of this epidemic can you then establish a dietary program to reverse the inflammatory damage being caused by seemingly minor changes in the human diet, he explained.

For orthodontists or team members who came to the show looking to stock up on supplies or looking for fun new products to bring home to the office, the exhibit hall was brimming with new technology and other treatments.

Here is a sampling of the hundreds of unique products, free samples and fun treats that were available at AAO attendees in the exhibit hall:

• BracketEars are a fun way to match your braces to your earrings. They are little earrings shaped like a bracket, and with multi-colored elastic packs, you can match them to the color in your mouth! This brand new accessory is also available at Amazon.com.

• To spice up the day, attendees could stop by the circus-like booth from OrthoBanc where folks were “getting silly in Philly.” The booth had complimentary scones and cotton candy for attendees to enjoy while they let OrthoBanc explain how it can simplify your account management.

• Want to help your patients floss more often? Let them try FlossFish! FlossFish uses regular dental floss and goes under the wire and between the brackets so that users can floss with braces on without the fuss of using floss threaders.

• For clinicians who have a few patients playing on sports teams, the TotalCard booth was displaying its new swirl-colored mouthguards. TotalCard offers sports mouthguards, Class II activators, appliance mouthguards and StressGard II, a comfortable easy-fit night guard for TMI pain, teeth clenching and grinding.

• Orthodontists who have been considering clear aligners could visit the ClearCorrect booth to hear more about its many options. Dr. Willis Pumphrey, founder of ClearCorrect, said he introduced ClearCorrect to keep clear aligner therapy simply, friendly and affordable, and he said you’ll save about 40 percent by using his company’s product.

• Another fun way to help your patients show off their style is with Braced-lets. These colorful bracelets — made with actual braces — were created and designed by orthodontists Dr. Marc Lemchen and Dr. Jennifer Salzer along with jewelry designer Lisa Salzer of Lulu Frost.

AAO attendees work their way through the registration at the annual meeting in May. Next year’s meeting will take place April 25–29 in New Orleans. Photo/Sierra Rendon, Managing Editor

Dr. Laura Berman spoke at the AAO’s annual meeting as part of its featured speaker series.

Dr. Barry Sears was a part of the AAO’s featured speaker series.

**AAO meeting**

Next year’s AAO annual meeting will take place April 25–29 in New Orleans.