



For Immediate Release

Meharry Dental Students To Present Lessons In A Lunch Box Program At Local Elementary School

Timing perfect to educate children about proper dental hygiene and good dietary choices!

Nashville, Tennessee (October 15, 2008). Dental students from Meharry Medical College are scheduled to give lunch boxes containing motivating oral health messages to more than three hundred elementary school students on Friday, October 31st. The Lessons In A Lunch Box: Healthy Teeth Essentials & Facts About Snacks™ program comes at a perfect opportunity to educate the children at Inglewood Elementary School about proper dental hygiene and good dietary choices. The timing is so ideal since October is National Dental Hygiene Month and the 31st of October is Halloween. While there are activities held around the country to encourage better dental health during October, trick-or-treaters will be focused on consuming colossal amounts of confectionaries.

Chastity Rucker, a third year student dentist, visited Inglewood last week to share the Lessons In A Lunch Box program with a most receptive principal. The student volunteers will present the oral health program that includes a toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss via the lunch box. Dr. Edwin Hines, Chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at Meharry, said "the timing of the program could not be better to help reduce the intake of sweet treats that some children will go door to door to claim on Halloween. This program can really help to motivate kids to think more about brushing after meals and enjoying healthy foods instead of consuming large amounts of candy."

The Lessons In A Lunch Box: Healthy Teeth Essentials & Facts About Snacks program is designed to offer elementary school children memorable oral health education via the cleverly crafted lunch box and lesson guide provided for teachers. The nifty program exposes both the student dentist and dental hygiene student to the opportunity to engage school-aged children and teach them about proper oral health care. Dr. Cherae Farmer-Dixon, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Meharry, stated "this type of community outreach may very well help to encourage more dental students to consider specializing in pediatric dentistry."

More than half of the U.S. dental school deans, including Meharry Medical College's, Dr. William Butler, registered for the program. Lessons In A Lunch Box was first introduced to the dental school deans during the American Dental Education Association Conference last March. The opportunity for the dental school leaders to take part in the program is made possible through grant funding secured by The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute.

Dr. Winifred J. Booker, CEO & Director of Development for The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute and Meharry graduate, is scheduled to lecture on the 31st. Dr. Booker will guide the students through the lunch box program presentation prior to the lecture. The President-elect of the National Dental Association (NDA), Dr. Walter Owens will offer his support at Inglewood Elementary School. Members from the local component chapter of the NDA, the Pan-Tennessee Dental Association will also join Dr. Owens. The students will definitely need the help distributing some 330 lunch boxes to what is sure to be an auditorium filled with hundreds very jubilant youth.

Visit Youtube at mycohi to view the Lessons In A Lunch Box: Healthy Teeth Essentials & Facts About Snacks™ program. For more information about and The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute visit www.mycohi.org

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