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20TH ANNUAL GALA & BENEFIT IN CHICAGO BRINGS RECORD LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR ORAL HEALTH AMERICA

March 4, 2010, CHICAGO, IL--Oral Health America (OHA), a non-profit organization founded in 1955 and headquartered in Chicago, held its 20th annual Gala and Benefit on Wednesday, February 24, at Chicago's historic Union Station. Nearly 900 guests participated in silent and live auctions to benefit OHA while networking with fellow professionals before the Chicago Midwinter Dental Meeting. The event raised over \$400,000, the highest amount in the Gala's 20-year history, for OHA's programs that bring healthy mouths to life.

Proceeds from the auctions support Smiles Across America® (SAA), an OHA program that assists oral disease prevention services in schools for children who are unable to obtain routine dental care due to lack of resources or low literacy or language barriers. The program was launched in Chicago in 1994 with the Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago Public Schools and community partners, and now reaches 90 treatment partners in 27 states. Through 2009, SAA has provided \$1.5 million in funding, supporting services to an estimated 250,000 children annually.

"Oral Health America is privileged to work to improve the oral health of Americans of all ages – particularly those who are most vulnerable," said Beth Truett, President and CEO, Oral Health America. "Our gala shined a special spotlight on our work with children in school-based and school-linked settings across the country, and gave attendees the opportunity to support a national program that is at work with at-risk children and families in schools, clinics and neighborhoods in their own communities."

Gala sponsors were DentaQuest, Patterson Dental, Ivoclar Vivadent, Midmark, 1-800-DENTIST, Colgate-Palmolive Co., Henry Schein Dental, Chicago Dental Society, Belmont Publications, SciCan, National Dentex Corp., Philips Sonicare, Unilever, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Beazley, Burkhart Dental Supply, ConFirm Monitoring Systems, Argen Corporation, Tokuyama Dental, DENTSPLY International, GC America, Inc., DentalEZ Group, and OralDNA.

Dentalcompare donated the production of a video, shown for the first time at the Gala & Benefit that highlights the impact of OHA's SAA program. The video can be accessed at:

http://www.dentalcompare.com/video_view.asp?videoid=528.

OHA's mission is to change lives by connecting communities with resources to increase access to oral health care, education and advocacy for all Americans, especially those most vulnerable. For more information, visit www.oralhealthamerica.org.

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