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**2011 PENN DENTAL MEDICINE GRADUATION
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“OPEN MOUTHS AND OPEN MINDS”

Thank you for that kind introduction, Dean Kinane. Thank you as well to the distinguished Penn Dental Medicine faculty and administration for the privilege of joining you at this very important event. And my sincere congratulations go out to today's 2011 Penn Dental Medicine graduates and your families. Thank you for allowing me to share a few thoughts with you as you begin what I am sure will be long and successful professional careers.

Looking out over today's graduation class reminds me of my graduation from the University of the Witwatersrand almost 40 years ago. My class was so young, eager and energetic. But when I went to a recent college reunion, it was filled up with a bunch of really old looking, gray-haired people, some with no hair, who claimed to be classmates of mine. I can't believe all these old men know me.

It is so nice to be back on the Penn campus because I have wonderful memories of a long association with the University of Pennsylvania. Not that long ago, in 2002 and 2004, my wife and I were sitting on the other side of the podium with hundreds of other proud parents in the audience, watching our son, Paul, receive his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the College and The Wharton School. Four degrees and a lot of tuition fees later, I am pleased to now be standing on this side of the podium. And one of my great friends and mentors was Professor Edward B. Shils, who founded the Wharton Entrepreneurial Center and was the Executive Director of the Dental Manufacturers of America, our trade association. Ed was no stranger to graduation ceremonies either. He earned six degrees here at Penn – his first in 1936 and his last in 1997. The conference room in the Schattner Center is named the Shils Board Room. With these warm memories in mind, it is my great pleasure to be with you today.

Do you remember that scene from “The Graduate” where Mr. McGuire escorts Dustin Hoffman out of the party to the patio and says, “I just want to say one word to you...just one word...are you listening? Plastics!” Today I just want to say one word to this graduating class, and it's not “plastics.” It is “open.” “Open” is going to become one of the most important words in your future.

You will go from here today and “open” your practice career – some graduates in private practice, others in public health, others in a corporate setting, and some in academics.

If you see an average of 15 patients a day, five days a week, you will probably say “open” to your patients more than 150,000 times over the course of a 40-year career.

And that includes taking time off for vacation! Can you imagine saying any other word 150,000 times?

But even more important than “opening” your practice career or asking your patients to “open” is the need to keep your mind “open” as a dental professional, because even though today marks your graduation from Penn Dental Medicine, your education has really just begun.

I say this from first-hand experience. When I became Chairman and CEO of Henry Schein in 1989, let alone 31 years ago when I joined the dental family, dentistry was a very different profession from what it is today. Over these 31 years I have had a front-row seat to technology-fueled innovation that has unfolded to transform into the modern dental practice.

Thirty-one years ago can you imagine trying to convince a dentist that if he or she wanted to build a successful practice it would need to include CAD-CAM with in-office chair side dental crown and bridge milling; dental lasers; digital imaging that could be viewed immediately chair side in the operator; cone-beam imaging technology; integrated practice management systems encompassing electronic charting, and electronic medical records to tie everything together instantly and electronically link the dentist and auxiliary staff to patients and dental labs; Internet connectivity; a Web site; Twitter; Linked In; Facebook; and electronic billing, claims and recall cards. But that is exactly what has happened since I joined the dental community.

And the astonishing thing to realize is that the dental technology advancements that we have seen over the past 31 years will pale in comparison to what we will see in the next half a decade and the years when each of you will be in the prime of your professional careers. You will be the wave of dental professionals who will master this new technology that we cannot even imagine at this time and assimilate technology into your practices to continually improve the care that you provide to patients.

Because you will play this pivotal role, keeping your mind “open” will be one of the most important qualities that you will bring to the chair side each day. So what does it mean to have an “open” mind? In a world where technology and communications have linked people around the world as never before it means being “open” to maintaining a global perspective on the dental profession as you treat your patients in your local community. It means opening yourself up to sharing best practices or collaborating with colleagues around the world, and applying that knowledge to benefit patients in your practices. With the Internet and social media, the opportunity to collaborate globally now exists all day every day through handheld wireless devices or laptop computers, and we cannot imagine where technology will take us next.

Being a successful dental professional also will require you to have an “open” mind about leadership. There will be a dental team frequently looking to you as the CEO of your practice for direction, professional development, motivation, reassurance, and, in many cases, for a continued sense of job security in unstable economic times.

Throughout your career, I encourage you to be “open” to embrace this leadership role as your dental team expands and evolves, and look for ways to help members of your staff grow professionally.

You also will be a recognized health care leader in your profession, your community, state, country, or in some cases internationally. The recognition of the strong link between oral health and overall health will continue in the future. Please be “open” to this! It will be up to this new generation of dental professionals to expand upon the already important role that the dentist plays in the larger health care continuum.

You will need to be “open” to being a leader in embracing new technology. I spoke earlier of some of the common technology tools that help dental practitioners improve efficiency and quality care. While we cannot predict with certainty what technology advances may occur in the future, we do know that a digital highway has already been created that links all of the developed world and much of the developing world. This digital highway extends into the dental profession, linking dental clinics with other dental and health care professionals; patient homes; dental labs; insurance providers; dental manufacturers and distributors; dental educators; professional associations; and dental advocacy groups. It will be up to each of us to be “open” to successfully navigate this new highway.

Additionally, with social media a patient’s experience in your clinic – whether positive or negative – can and will easily be instantly communicated via Facebook or Twitter to hundreds of their friends – while they are still in your chair! The impact of social media is only going to intensify in the future, and it will be something that every successful dental professional must be “open” to mastering.

Dentists also should be “open” to the needs of a patient population in a world where the demographics are changing rapidly. Each day the world’s population grows by more than 200,000, and today almost half of the world’s population of 6.5 billion is under age 25. Yet in developed countries such as the United States we are seeing an aging population. The World Health Organization projects that people 60 years and older will rise from 600 million in 2000 to 2 billion in 2050. As the affluent baby boomer generation ages, it will devote substantial discretionary income to staying well and maintaining good oral health.

In addition, we are seeing increased diversity in the developed countries. This means that cultural competency in the practice of dentistry will be essential in the future. Here in the United States, the Census Bureau projects that by 2042, those who trace their roots to the developing world will represent the majority of America. The “minority” will be the “majority.” Only five years ago experts had predicted this would occur in 2050, and now it is 2042.

This class demonstrates the growing diversity we are seeing. There are graduates from 26 states across our country, as well as 17 foreign countries, and a large number of graduates here today can take their skills to the developing world. As a person who

grew up in South Africa and immigrated to the United States, it is wonderful for me to see this degree of global representation in the Penn Dental Medicine graduating class. Please be “open” to understanding the implications of changing demographics on the practice of dentistry.

Dean Kinane assures me that everyone graduating today has been trained to be an excellent clinician. But for many graduates looking to open a practice, that alone will not be enough. When you move into private practice, you will own a small to medium-sized enterprise (“an SME”) and become a small business entrepreneur, which demands a set of skills seldom taught in even the best dental schools like Penn Dental. I urge you to “open” your minds to ways to improve your business acumen as you build your practice. Look for processes and tools that will enhance the efficiency of your practice as you continue to provide the very best care to your patients. Remember that you not only will be a great clinician but also the CEO of a business.

My next piece of advice is particularly heartfelt: please “open” your mind to giving back to society in a way that will help expand access to oral health care in underserved communities, both locally and around the world. This is the mission of Henry Schein Cares, our Company’s global corporate social responsibility program, and we are very proud that Henry Schein has been ranked first in our industry for social responsibility in Fortune’s 2011 list of the World’s Most Admired Companies.

Penn Dental students are already giving back by working in the community through the PennSmiles mobile dental clinic and other projects. After graduation, the opportunities for a dentist to continue giving back are wide-ranging: donate your time at a local community health center clinic; contribute a portion of your teeth whitening fees for a week to a charity; volunteer to go on a dental outreach mission to Africa, the Caribbean or South America; participate in the ADA’s Give Kids A Smile day each year, as we do at Henry Schein. Without exception, the dentists who have done these things have told me that the experience has enriched them as dental professionals. And remember that Henry Schein Cares stands ready to support your volunteer missions to underserved communities.

Next, “open” your mind to the importance of partnership. You will need to choose long-term partners who can help build your practice: other dental practitioners; a broader allied dental team; and dental manufacturers, distributors and others from private sector who will support your practice. Seek and be “open” to finding partners who understand your vision and share your commitment – partners who can add true value to your practice, bring benefits to your patients and build your success.

Finally, always keep an “open” mind about finding the right balance between your life as a dental professional and your life outside of the clinic. This is balance between professional life, family and “the other things in life,” which should always include social responsibility. Finding this balance reminds us why we are working so hard in the first place, and it enables us to enjoy our careers longer.

As new dental professionals, you could ask for no better start to your careers than the education and training you have received here at Penn Dental Medicine, and no more exciting time to enter the great profession. But this is just the beginning.

Please be “open” to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Keep a global perspective. Be a leader of people, of health care, and of technology. Recognize the needs of a changing patient population. Embrace your role as a business leader. Give back to society. Choose your partners carefully. And balance work with your personal life. If you are “open” to these ideas, I have no doubt that the world will “open” itself up to you over the course of your long and successful career.

Thank you, and once again congratulations on this tremendous achievement.