

PDA Public Service Award

PDA Public Service Award Presented to Dr. E. Steven Moriconi



Dr. E. Steven Moriconi presented with PDA Public Service Award by Dr. Jay Freedman.

Dr. Moriconi has always answered the call to perform volunteer dental treatment in his local area by providing pro bono surgical care to indigent patients in and around Jenkintown and Abington Memorial Hospital, as the Division Chief and Program Director for more than 25 years. As a member of the Donated Dental Services network, he has also performed free surgical services in his private practice including basic oral surgery and implant therapy. He has also made 4 dental mission trips to Haiti after the 2010 earthquake devastated the area. During his time spent in Haiti he became aware of the difficulty the medical and dental students in Haiti were having completing their training due to the destruction of schools. Dr. Moriconi established a non-profit organization, *Men Anpil* (Creole for "many hands") to seek out and help fund qualifying Haitian students for training in medicine and dentistry.

The compassion, devotion and spirit of Dr. Moriconi, as well as his dedication to organized dentistry and its mission to improve the oral health of the public, make him a greatly deserving recipient of the 2013 Public Service Award.

Following is the acceptance speech by Dr. Steven Moriconi delivered on Saturday, April 27, 2013:

Thanks, Jay, for a very nice introduction. I appreciate your kind words, and you know how much I value our personal and professional relationship.

President Dishler, members of the House of Delegates, the awards committee, colleagues, friends and family, ladies and gentlemen.

I am both humbled and honored to accept this award today. Humbled because I did not seek it, nor feel I am deserving of it. Somehow I think there are so many others who have done more than I in the public sector, and in service to others. Honored because my peers have decided that what I have done in public service is worthy of such recognition. I would be remiss by omitting the fact that the work I have done has not been in isolation. Many, including friends, colleagues (and I want to acknowledge Dr Angel Stout who has accompanied me on 3 of the 4 trips I have made to Haiti), dental companies, Abington Hospital, and most especially, my wife Kristina and our children, have been supportive and understanding of what we have accomplished. I will not detail the work we are doing, particularly in Haiti, as this information can be found on our website, but since you have allowed me this opportunity to speak, I would like to share a few general thoughts in the spirit of "Tikkun Olam."

Tikkun Olam, as you know, is an ancient Judaic philosophy which affirms that one gains spiritual meaning in their life by serving the needs of the underserved and vulnerable in society.

I know many of you have done some personal and professional service work in your communities and in the larger world. Those of you who have done so know that the reward of seeing the smile, the look of gratitude, the fulfillment of the need, the acknowledgement of your help, is a much greater reward than any award that could be given.

If you have not, however, spent time doing service for others, then in my opinion you are missing an essential part of human life. Stepping outside of your comfort zone, and doing something for those less fortunate, is an incredibly enriching experience. You don't have to run to Haiti; you don't have to travel to a third world country somewhere far abroad. You don't have to set up a nonprofit organization. Opportunities exist in your own neighborhoods, in your own communities, in your own professional organizations be they dental related or otherwise, to participate in public and community service. Lets face it, we all have many commitments and responsibilities, but we are also very fortunate to be here, and very grateful to be able to practice our professions. It is, however, a principle of a good life, I believe, that we should give back to society and share some of the riches with which we have been blessed. The allusion I have used in Men Anpil is that what you do may only seem like a drop in the bucket, but many drops will eventually overflow the bucket, creating a river, and finally an ocean of kindness and service to those most vulnerable.

I encourage all of you within the sound of my voice, and if you read this at some point in the future, to join me and all the many of you who have provided such service to those in need. It is a commitment and experience that will enrich your life, make you a better human being, and continue the thread of goodness that exists in all of us.

Finally, let me share with you a quote by a French author that sat on my wall for many years as a younger person, and which has guided and informed my life since.

"I shall pass through this life but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it. For I shall never pass this way again."

Thank you.

*Dr. Steve Moriconi
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