

Donna Lee – 7 nominations

Nominator: Joanne Wing

Donna is exceptional in her dedication to Oral Health Care and has spent years in clinical general and perio practice, as well as being a clinical educator in both DMD and DH programs. She has pursued grad studies and continued volunteer work to merge her social work and oral health backgrounds to take up the challenge of improving oral care access and education to remote geographies and indigenous communities where she has first hand seen the needs and importantly the possibilities to increased access to oral care. She blends earning the trust of marginalized members of society and the provision of clinical care and education to help the. Improve their health and well being together. Donna also presents her work to the profession to further grow support and awareness. Without listing every accomplishment I've summarized why Donna deserves recognition as a DH superhero! Her tireless volunteer work and continual personal education is merely to further her goal to offer action as an active practicing clinician bridging academia with real treatment and real patients! No easy task-she has gargantuan goals and determination.

Nominator: Heather Anderson

I am nominating my friend and colleague, Donna Lee, for the super hero award. I have worked with Donna on and off for about 15 years in a not for profit community clinic and in private practice. I have been a CDA/Clinic Co-ordinator since 1984. D is the perfect candidate for the super hero award. D approaches everything in life with passion. She is most dedicated and enthusiastic about dental health. I have seen her in action at work as she totally involves her patients in their oral health. They always leave the office with the education, tools and a renewed desire to have healthy gums and teeth. She is warm, approachable, funny and intelligent. Our patients love her. In her spare time, she runs marathons, climbs mountains (Kilimanjaro), feeds the homeless and volunteers and educates at First Nations community centres. About three and half years ago, Donna decided to go back to school to get her Master's in Public Health and Dental Public Health specialty. She graduated last fall and is now working in Iqaluit. She is the oral health promotion specialist for the Government of Nunavut. Her goal is to 'increase equitable access to both health and oral health care for all Indigenous peoples'. If anyone can do this, it is Donna. She is driven, passionate and capable. She is a super hero and an inspiration to us all. She could probably save the polar bears too!

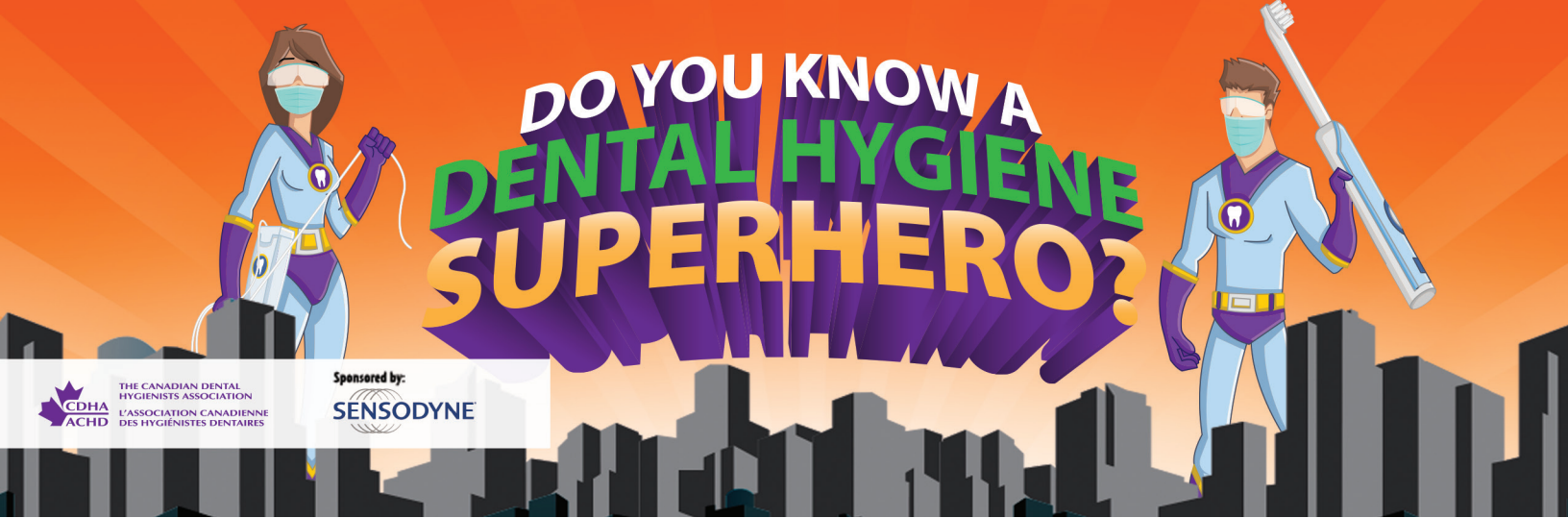


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Nominator: Dr. Henry Louie

I have known Donna Lee since I started my post-graduate program in Periodontics in 1992. During this time, she was completing her dental hygiene program in Vancouver. Prior to being a dental hygienist, Donna was a certified dental assistant and a social worker. Donna has excelled in both her clinical and academic career. She has practiced in general and periodontal practices in Vancouver, as well as satellite periodontal clinics in the Yukon and northern BC. She recently completed her Bachelor of Dental Hygiene program, finishing a combined graduate program (Master of Public Health in medicine and diploma in Dental Public Health). She has also been an inspiration to her peers, recently being selected to receive the Dianne Gallagher Inspiration Award. Donna's most admirable quality, however, is her passion to improve access to health and dental care for Canada's indigenous peoples. Throughout her career, she has devoted much of her time volunteering and practicing in rural communities. It is not surprising at all Donna just recently left Vancouver to serve a one year position in Iqaluit as the oral health promotion specialist for the Territory of Nunavut. In her new position, Donna is truly a trailblazer in her field. Given that the territory is only nineteen years old, there is a lack of guidelines and services in place in regards to oral health for the Inuit. Her primary responsibilities are to develop oral health promotion strategies for the Government of Nunavut, and to work closely with the Population Health team with their health promotion campaigns (including issues related to maternal and children's health, smoking cessation programs, cannabis, injury prevention, nutrition, cancer, and alcohol). Her position also involves collaborating with other stakeholders in the community such as the schools, college, and long-term care facilities with oral education and curriculum development. Donna's new domain of Nunavut is a vast territory with 25 communities dispersed over 2 million square kilometres. She will be visiting these communities to assess their oral health needs and services. When Donna first told me she was going to Iqaluit for a year, I had just heard in the news that the temperature in Iqaluit was -40 degrees Celsius! Also, due to a blizzard, some areas did not have water or sewage. Accepting the responsibility of the position she has taken in these challenging conditions takes the courage and compassion of a very special person. I proudly and sincerely nominate Donna Lee to be a Dental Hygiene Superhero.

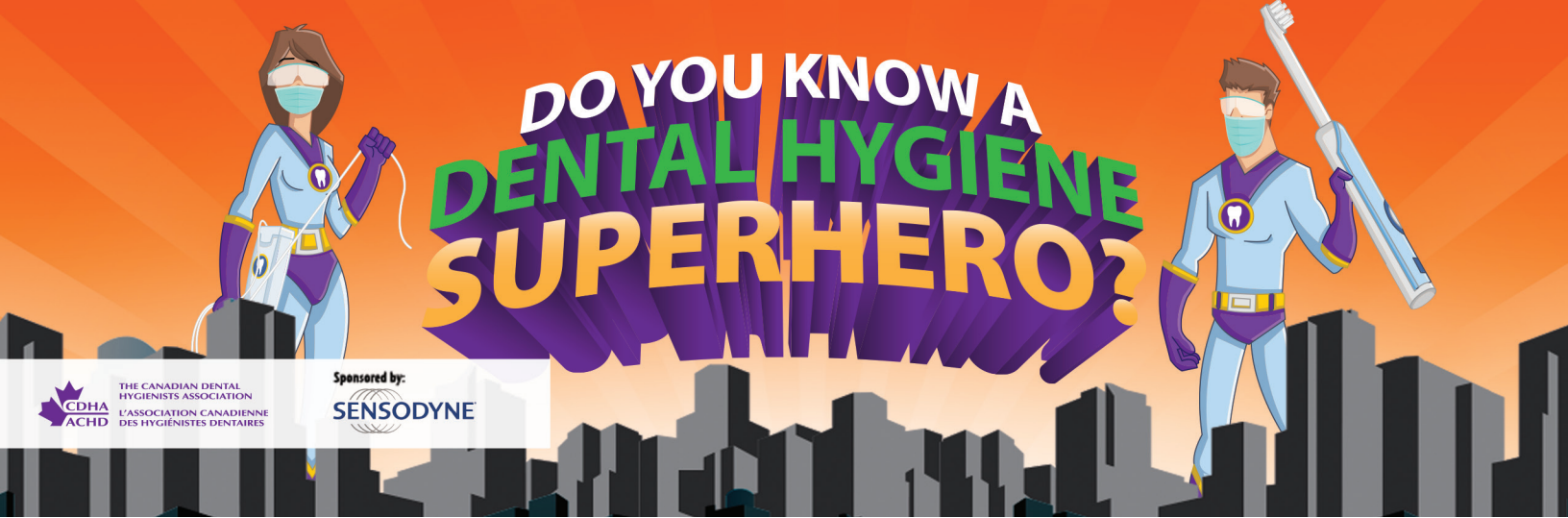


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Nominator: Nicole Fisher

Ms Donna Lee is an incredible Dental Hygienist with a passion for promoting oral and overall health for people in all communities. She has extensive clinical and educational experience, along with a long list of volunteer work. As a fellow RDH, Ms Lee has inspired me to pursue my own career educational goals to further help others. She is the most recent recipient of the BCDHA Dianne Gallagher Award, recognizing her as a pioneer in her field with her recent completion of the UBC combined MPH-DPH Specialty (2017). Ms Lee is presently employed as the Oral Health Promotion Specialist for the Government of Nunavut and its 25 communities, a brand new challenge that she is embracing whole-heartedly, moving from a comfortable home here in the lower mainland to Iqaluit, Nunavut in the middle of winter! Her work has focused on marginalized populations and on First Nations. Ms Lee has volunteered with Downtown Eastside, BC Special Olympics, Vancouver Native Health, Haida Gwaii, the Musqueam First Nations & presented her original work at CDHA (2017) in the Musqueam 101 Series “Increasing Indigenous Cultural Content in DH Curricula: A Pilot Project”. She has been a volunteer with the Warriors Against Violence Society in Vancouver and with CAPHD’s communication committee. Other presentations include CAPHD 2015 & 2016: “Dental Services at a Not-for-Profit Dental Clinic in Vancouver, BC: The Case of Public Dental Insurance” and “Exploring Access to Oral Health Among Marginalized Persons with a History of Incarceration.” Ms Lee’s background in Social Work has prepared her well for these opportunities she has found and created to reach all people to improve health. In addition to her community health work, she has worked with the clinical Faculty of Dentistry and Dental Hygiene at UBC for many years and is currently completing her Provincial Instructors Diploma. In addition to all of this, Ms Lee is a warm and caring person who is a pleasure to be around and learn from. She is a true Super Hero!

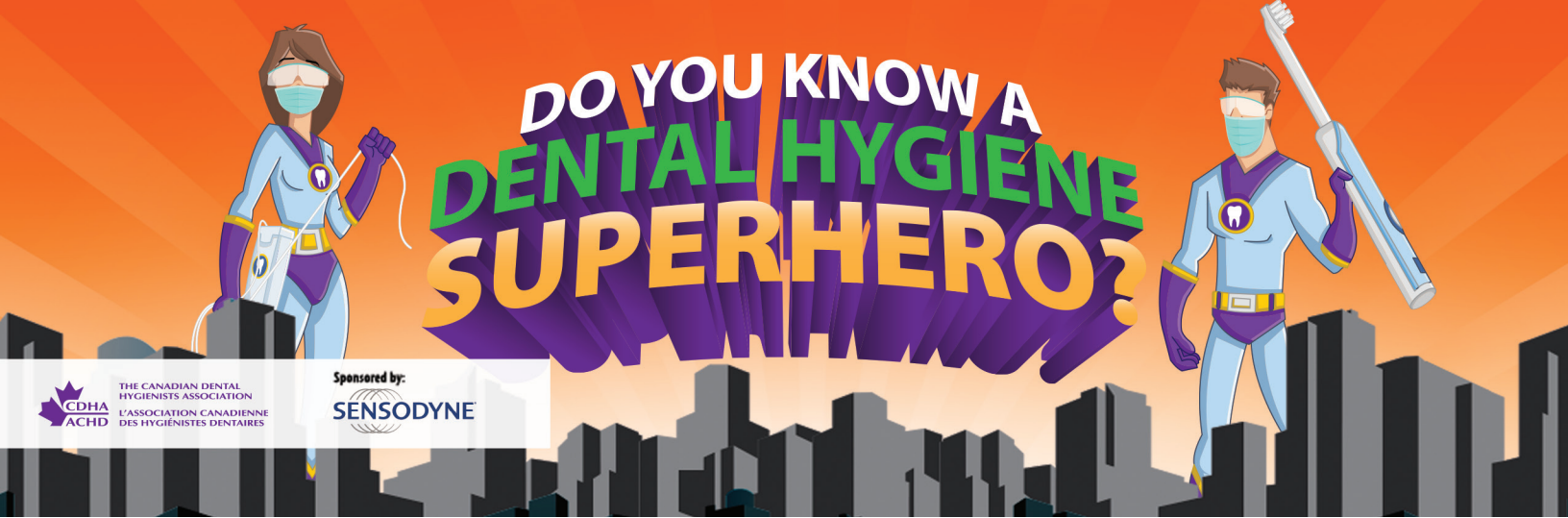


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Nominator: Dr David Zaporinuk

I'm very pleased to nominate Donna for this recognition. She has been a true leader in the Dental Hygiene field of public health. She is the first graduate of the UBC combined Masters of Public Health & Dental Public Health Speciality. She has demonstrated tremendous commitment and skill as both a clinician and an educator. She has volunteered countless hours to support a number of community groups. I'm tremendously impressed with her commitment to the oral health and general well-being of our Indigenous communities. I worked with Donna through my role as the Supervising Dentist for the First Nations Health Authority in BC and am very proud of her for taking up the extremely challenging position she now has in Nunavut, again supporting our Indigenous Peoples. I am happy to provide more information on her accomplishments and urge you to recognize her important contribution.

Nominator: Dr. Sandy Ko

Look no further than Donna Lee for the Wonder Woman of Dental Hygienists. She can be found on the rooftops of skyscrapers and on mountaintops in the countryside looking to protect the disadvantaged in dental health. Donna has worked in a variety of dental practices including an urban community health centre, a specialty periodontal office, a general family office, and in remote communities. She has taught as a clinical instructor for the University of British Columbia Dental Hygiene Degree Program and for the Doctor of Medicine Dentistry Faculty. Recently, Donna became the first hygienist to complete the Combined Masters of Public Health and Dental Public Health Specialty at the University of British Columbia and she has accepted a position to live and work in Nunavut as an Oral Health Promoter for the Department of Health, Government of Nunavut. What motivates Donna is the desire to help people who have limited access to dental services and in particular in the First Nations communities and with the indigenous people in northern communities. She has presented her research at several conferences and enjoys opportunities to promote dental public health. Donna's super powers include excellent communication and clinical skill and an unstoppable work ethic. She makes her patients very appreciative of her passion and her care. They consider her as their 'Superhero'.

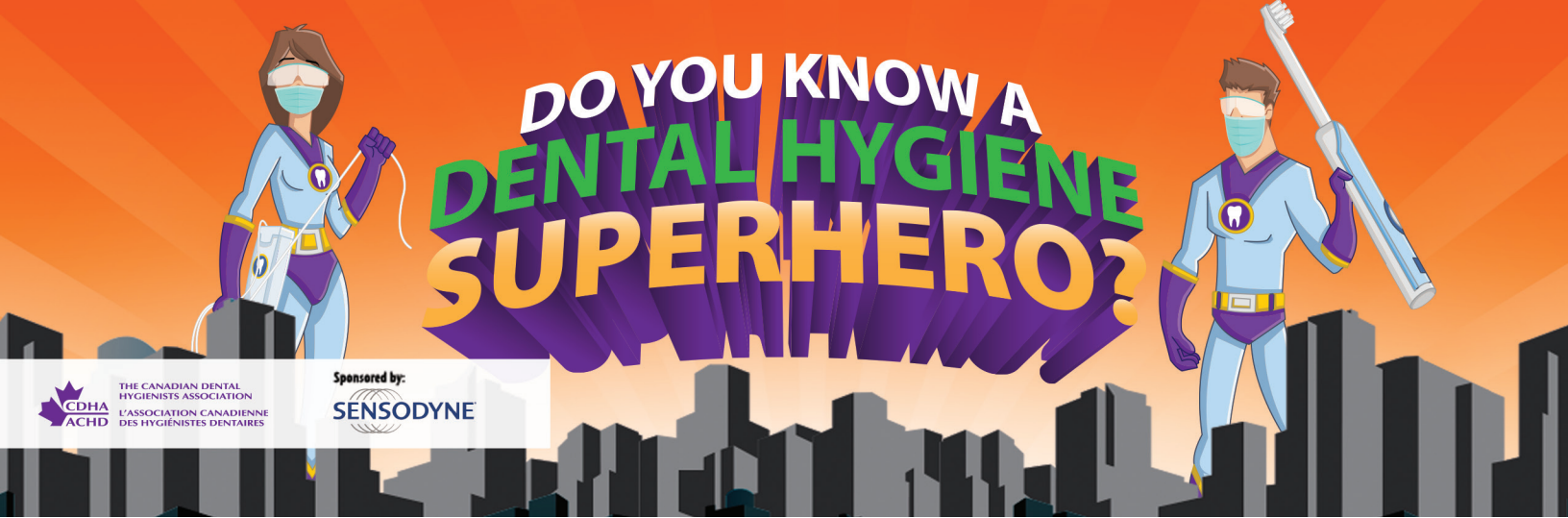


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Nominator: Cindy Chan

Dear Dental Hygiene Canada: When I read “dental hygiene super hero” a picture of one of my former classmates, a wonderful friend and colleague, Donna Lee, sumitting Mount Kilimanjaro immediately came to mind. Donna has inspired me academically, professionally and personally throughout the 23 years that we have known each other. I met Donna in 1994, at our VCC Dental Hygiene School entrance interview and was immediately impressed by her professionalism. On the first day of class I was not at all surprised to see that she had been a successful applicant for the program. As classmates in the 2 year diploma program, I came to know Donna personally and academically. She was a conscientious student, a perfectionist in every way and took her studies seriously. Although she has a quiet demeanour previous experience in dentistry, made her a natural leader. Donna leads by example and inspired the other students, including myself to self- evaluate and ask how we can excel whether it is for exams, projects, or clinical evaluations. Her tireless effort and hard work helped Donna win several awards including the BCDHA “Student Table Clinic Award” and the “Clinical Scholarship Award”. After graduation, I’ve had the pleasure to work with Donna in general dentistry. She is always willing to share her experience and knowledge in periodontal practice and is also a constant resource of advice and knowledge in patient care especially in instrumentation. As a mentor to me she shares stories of the experiences and challenges she faced in periodontal practice. She took pride in the high standard of patient care she gave to each and every client who sat in her chair and beamed when she spoke of the healing and resolution of gingival tissue after initial therapy. My own professional philosophy, that every dental hygienist should practice as they would in a periodontal practice, was inspired by Donna. Donna completed the Bachelor of Dental Science degree in Dental Hygiene in 2014 but she has always had an inquiring mind, and to give up the security of private practice to pursue a combined Master of Public Health and Dental Public Health Specialty degree at UBC further inspired awe in me. Having known Donna for over 20 years, this path she took was one of the most challenging in her lifetime so far. There were many sleepless nights, stress, struggles and self -doubt (she was a proficient self- evaluator) as she juggled roles as a master student, clinical instructor and lecturer at the UBC DMD and Dental Hygiene programs. She persevered through adversity and earned the Dr. James Rossiter Public Health Practicum Award in 2016 (recognition of excellence of public health policy makers and practitioners) to become the first and only graduate in 2017 of the dual master program. The sacrifices Donna selflessly has made to contribute to public health by helping marginalized people in

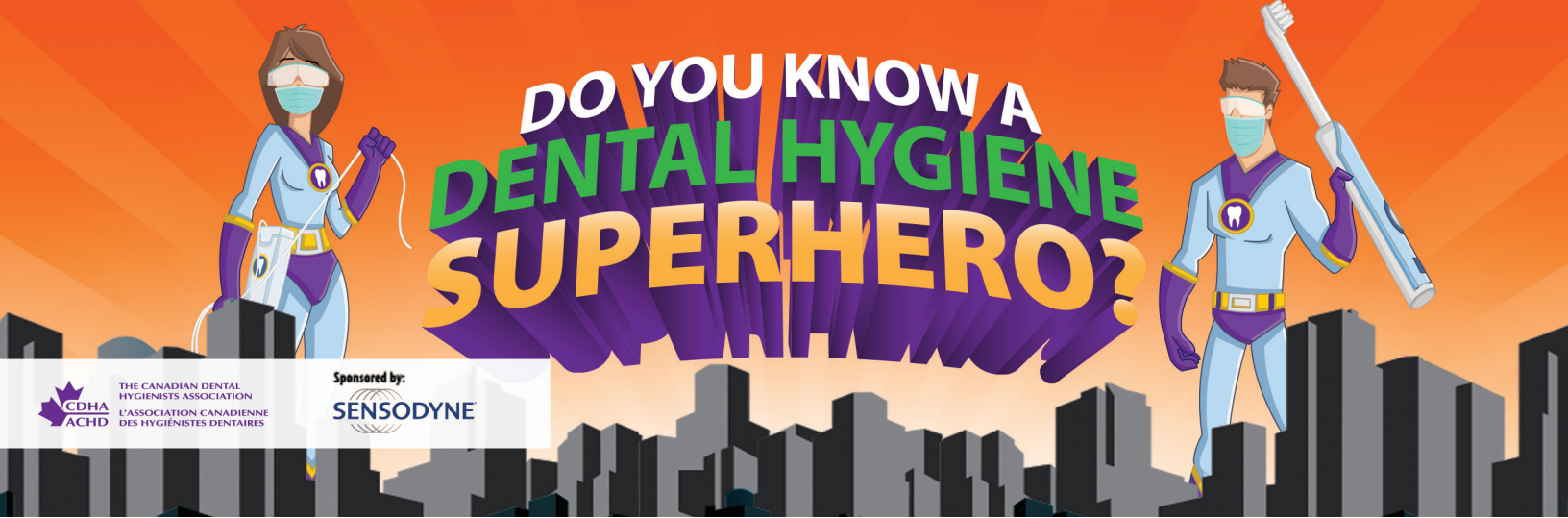


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the community obtain oral care and for the profession of dental hygiene, is truly what makes her a super hero. While working up north during her studies, Donna developed an interest in working with the Indigenous population. Amongst her numerous volunteer activities she is also an oral health educator at an indigenous support group and dental hygienist at the Vancouver Native Society. Her public health vision is for increase access to health and oral care for native people. She has research publications in progress and her goal is to make oral health care accessible to everyone. Not only was Donna an inspiration to me professionally she was also an inspiration to me on a personal level. When Donna started running marathons in 1996, I watched in admiration of the level of fitness she was achieving and envied the amount of calories she was able to consume. What I couldn't empathize with was the mental and physical struggle that accompanies marathon training and the race itself. To be honest, I thought she was crazy. Until one day I thought, maybe I can train for a marathon and I took up running. By then she had run multiple marathons. She was very supportive during my training, giving me strategic advice, hand me down running clothes and she even came out to watch me on race day despite having recent major surgery. Marathon training is mentally and physically vigorous and builds character as I have discovered. Something that I thought I could not and would not ever do in my lifetime. But Donna inspired me to take the challenge and just as she inspired one of my professional philosophies (noted above) Donna gave me my running philosophy, do it now when you can because one day you may not be able to. Donna has and will continue to inspire me and many dental hygienists on many different levels. She is definitely a superhero in dental hygiene and public health. Please consider her as a deserving candidate to receive this award.



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