



DELTA DENTAL OF MINNESOTA

with



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Delta Dental of Minnesota Announces 2011 Serve a Smile™ Winners *Minnesota Internship Center Receives Support for Project*

April 15, 2011 (Minneapolis, Minn.) -- Delta Dental of Minnesota, in collaboration with the Minnesota Alliance With Youth and Minnesota FCCLA (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America), announces that the company has awarded more than \$25,000 in annual youth service mini grants and in-kind donations¹. The competitive-based grants are awarded through Delta Dental's *Serve a Smile* program, which promotes youth volunteer activities coinciding with Global Youth Service Day held on April 15-17.

Kristin Quinn's Art Service-Learning class partook in assembling dental kits for Global Youth Service Day on April 15th. Dental kits were provided in-kind by Delta Dental of Minnesota, and additional funding of \$780 for materials was supplied through Delta Dental's Serve A Smile Grant. Throughout the rest of the school year, students will also construct children's books to distribute to members of the Sabathani and MNIC community to raise awareness of the importance of children's dental hygiene. Books and dental kits will be distributed to daycare centers within Sabathani Community Center and to families in the MNIC community.

"This year many of the Serve a Smile projects continue to incorporate oral health education and awareness, in addition to nutrition and exercise," said Ann Johnson, director of Community Affairs at Delta Dental of Minnesota. "These Serve a Smile projects support our mission of improving health and increasing health literacy."

"Serve a Smile is based on the belief that when creative and resourceful youth volunteers are given an opportunity to participate in public service initiatives with their family, friends, school and community leaders, they can contribute in meaningful ways to help solve community issues," continued Johnson.

(more)

Global Youth Service Day is the most high-profile event in service learning, involving over 3 million youth in community projects. While it's celebrated in over 100 countries in every region of the world, Minnesota is recognized as having the largest Global Youth Service Day program in the nation and world. "The Serve a Smile mini grants get young people involved in building their communities and working across income, racial, religious and cultural lines on issues that impact all of us in society," said Sarah Dixon, CEO, Minnesota Alliance with Youth.

"We're pleased to partner with Minnesota Alliance with Youth and FCCLA for the eighth year," said Johnson. "Minnesota is fortunate to have such outstanding youth organizations with a deep understanding of the needs of children, families and community and strong track records in providing programs and services that make a difference. Delta Dental of Minnesota is pleased to be able to help these organizations carry out their vital work.

¹ *In-kind donations include items such as children's toothbrushes, adult toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss and oral health educational materials geared toward specific populations.*

About Delta Dental of Minnesota

Delta Dental of Minnesota's oral health initiatives are part of its non-profit mission to provide educational information and support community programs that help enhance the oral health of all Minnesotans. An independent, non-profit health services company, we take seriously our mission to serve Minnesotans' oral health needs. Since 1969, we've accomplished this mission by providing the best access across the state to oral health care through affordable dental plans. For more information, visit www.deltadentalmn.org. Delta Dental is a registered mark of Delta Dental Plans Association. Delta Dental of Minnesota is an independent nonprofit dental services company and is an authorized licensee of the Delta Dental Plans Association of Oak Brook, Illinois.

About Minnesota Alliance with Youth

The Minnesota Alliance With Youth is the leading convener, collaborator and capacity-builder for youth development in Minnesota. We work with and for youth to ensure that all young people have access to fundamental resources proven to ensure that youth succeed: the "Five Promises." The Alliance is the Minnesota affiliate of the America's Promise Alliance and is the statewide host-coordinator of the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows. For more information, visit www.mnyouth.net. In Partnership with AmeriCorps, America's Promise Alliance, the Corporation for National & Community Service and ServeMinnesota.

About FCCLA

Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America is a student leadership organization that focuses on youth, peer education and family. FCCLA empowers young women and men to be active leaders in their family, school and community by addressing important personal, family, work and societal issues. For more information, visit <http://www.mnfccla.org>.

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