

I would like to nominate Winnie Furnari as Educator of the Year. There is so much more about this educator that a routine Curriculum Vitae just can't relay. Her CV lists some of the most amazing achievements in dental hygiene research and literature. They range from peer reviewed dental hygiene journals to a more diversified portfolio of professional journals such as the Journal of Forensics Sciences. Winnie has done it all. She has been recognized with many awards for service and achievement for her accomplishments in all the roles of the dental hygienist: clinician, educator, researcher, administrator and advocate. She is determined to succeed and move her beloved profession of dental hygiene forward for over 27 years. She does this not only for her personal development but the devotion to student achievement. Winnie has shown exemplary leadership skills such as a practicing registered dental hygienist, faculty member, student professional development coordinator, and ADHA Student Chapter Advisor. She is truly a role model for every educator to emulate. Winnie takes her messages not just to students in a formal program but to colleagues delivering education to various groups on various aspects of her expertise. She is involved with many professional organizations and has served in numerous leadership positions. Even with all of this, she remains humble and uses an amazing philosophy. She believes and relates her key saying that "a success for one dental hygienist is a success for all of us."

To me, she means outstanding educator, respected mentor, inspirational professional and so much more. I had the honor and privilege of working with Winnie eight years ago as a visiting Masters student from the University of Maryland Dental School, who needed experience in a teaching facility to finish my degree requirements. Winnie not only accepted me as her mentee but surpassed any responsibility for that relationship to become the best mentor anyone can have. She taught me by listening, challenging me, and collaborating concepts of dental hygiene

education and theory. Winnie nurtured my growth as both a practicing dental hygienist, Masters student, faculty member and a contributing member of the ADHA. Winnie has and continues to cultivate me, to develop my role as an educator, and through her instruction encouraged me to be more participatory in my professional organization, the New Jersey Dental Hygienists' Association.

In addition, to my educational development, Winnie sat as a committee member on my Masters Thesis. She proofed and discussed all aspects of my thesis research and truly contributed to my future career in dental hygiene education. Every day Winnie would ask, advise, and assist in my education. However, I need to mention that I am only one of many faculties for whom she has contributed on thesis committees. She has overseen many. Winnie also has proofread a few of my journal articles before submission for publication and has served as a secondary author for faculty and students alike. She mentors students for leadership roles in dental hygiene and in the community. She mentors their research and accompanies them for presentations and community service. Recently, I sent her a copy of my premise for my dissertation. I know she will read it and provide me with the best recommendation for improvement.

On a personal level, Winnie's style of andragogy comes mixed with various aspects of her caring personality. She is never punitive in nature but seizes all opportunities to teach. Often after speaking with her, my mindset becomes focused on being a better educator and dental hygiene researcher. If students need advisement on any perspective of their academic careers, she is the first one students will seek advice from. She is in contact with her alumna who continue to write her for friendship, guidance and references. Once during one of her lectures, I found myself immersed in her topic on diabetes and left inspired to create a community diabetes

program in my private practice. Winnie has proven to be the most dedicated faculty member at New York University College of Dentistry and to the ADHA. Her knowledge of dental hygiene policy and practice led me to a position as Political Action Committee member for NJDHA, as well as serving as recording secretary for the Northern Component of NJDHA. It is also with great honor to get to work side by side with her as she mentors me to be a student advisor to ADHA this Spring.

If you were to ask any of the students that she cultivates each one would say, what an inspiring, compassionate, woman. Winnie will go to great lengths to see all of her students succeed. I have not met anyone like her and can only hope that I become half the educator she is. I highly recommend Winnie Furnari as *Educator of the Year*. She genuinely is dedicated to providing high- quality education to dental hygiene students. Winnie characterizes excellence in teaching, mentoring, and endless devotion to student accomplishment.

Sincerely,

Kim Attanasi, RDH, MS