

Dedication

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This Special Issue is dedicated to the memory of Deamonte Driver and Captain John P. Rossetti.

In Memoriam: Deamonte Driver

Deamonte Driver was a 12-year-old boy from Prince George's County, Maryland whose life was needlessly cut short by an untreated dental infection. His dental problems may have been avoided had there been a system in place to provide families with evidence-based educational and preventive services. His tragic death mobilized Maryland to take aggressive and comprehensive action. Since 2007, the work of Maryland's many oral health advocates has resulted in significant improvements, particularly related to increased access to care for unserved and underserved populations. The work continues and there is much more to do. Deamonte's spirit lives on in the work of all oral health advocates. We will never forget and we will not let this happen again.

In Memoriam: John P. Rossetti, D.D.S., M.P.H. (CAPT Ret. USPHS)

John Rossetti, a Maryland resident, led a distinguished lifelong career in the field of dental public health. He served his country in multiple ways: with the US Air Force in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, where he headed the Dental

Civic Action Program; as a rural community development volunteer with the Peace Corps in Puerto Rico and Panama; and as a Commissioned Corps officer with the US Public Health Service.

In 1989, John began working for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as chief dental officer for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), and he remained with HRSA until his retirement in 2002. He then continued to serve MCHB for several years as a national Head Start Program oral health consultant. With his dedication to improving the oral health of individuals and populations, John created the essential infrastructure foundation and support for state oral health programs.

John will be remembered for his steadfast support for state oral health program development and for establishing, with MCHB funding, the first oral-health-systems-development grant program for states and communities, a school-based/school-linked dental sealant grant program, and a state fluoridation grant program. Because of his efforts, many state oral health programs began collecting data on oral health status as a component of the required Title V statewide comprehensive needs assessment. To assist in this effort, MCHB funded the development and implementation of Assessing Oral Health Needs: Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors Seven-Step Model. Thus, state oral health programs, including Maryland, were

able to document the need for statewide oral health initiatives and priorities.

Due to John's efforts, Maryland state oral health stakeholders were able to partner with the Maryland MCH program to fund its first statewide school children needs assessment in 1995. This garnered support for data-driven programs and policy initiatives, including the reinstatement of the Office of Oral Health.

John's efforts also led to the sponsorship of national meetings, oral health summits, consensus conferences, and the development of the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center and the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Policy Center. John will be remembered for his generous nature, his willingness to help others, and his unending desire to make the world a better place.