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Linda Meeuwenberg, RDH, MA, MA, JoAnne Gurenlian, RDH, PhD recently returned from attending a Global Conference held in Cannes/Mandelieu, France. Meeuwenberg and Gurenlian co-authored and presented a paper at *The Women's Leadership Conference - Global Alliances Advancing, Education, Research and Women's Health* sponsored by the American Association of Dental Schools. The paper titled, "A Model for the Development of Effective Women Leaders", addressed the lack of formal professional development training for women in the dental professions. It offered a framework for inclusion of the model, featuring the Dimensions of Leadership® Profile, beginning in the professional curriculum and progressing into continuing education courses.

The number of women admitted into Dental/Medical School is increasing; however, few women hold positions with decision making power within the schools. For instance, higher proportions of women than men, are employed as non-tenure track or part time faculty, and rarely achieve the rank of full professor. Few women hold higher level administrative posts such as Department Chair or Dean. Women in the Allied Dental Professions are predominately female, however few aspire to higher level decision-making positions. Meeuwenberg and Gurenlian recommended that formal leadership training be integrated into the professional curriculum as a means to prepare women for leadership.

Meeuwenberg and Gurenlian are examples of outstanding women leaders in their profession. Both began their careers with a dental hygiene degree and both have acquired advanced degrees. They are founders and CEO's of their own businesses. Dr. Gurenlian is the former President of the American Dental Hygienists' Association and a recipient of the ADHA Warner/Lambert *Excellence in Dental Hygiene Award*. Professor Meeuwenberg was cited for her outstanding contribution to Dental Hygiene Education and inducted into the national honor society, Sigma Phi Alpha. She is the recipient of a *First Place Award* for an Educational Exhibit awarded by the American Association of Dental Schools where she competed with dental schools from the USA and Canada. Both women have published numerous articles and have lectured extensively throughout the world. The Carlson products have allowed them to offer workshops on non-clinical topics and to a variety of additional professional associations. For instance, Meeuwenberg works closely with the local Chamber of Commerce who have sponsored two of her seminars for local businesses and their employees, and has been a featured speaker at various women's conferences.

" As educators, we have seen students struggle with leadership positions such as being elected as officers of their class or professional organizations. Often their frustration leads them to an authoritative role "forcing" cooperation. The traditional model of authoritative management is being replaced with new models of leadership and management focusing on developing relationships and use of work teams with shared leadership. The time is ideal for women to capitalize on their natural strengths in building relationships with others. Being flexible, sharing leadership, and creating trust with a vision that others share, creates followers and effective leaders. The Leadership Profile® is a perfect tool to teach these skills," asserts Meeuwenberg.

Learning communication skills to build relationships is essential in being successful whether in a clinical environment treating patients or aspiring to higher level leadership positions within the profession. Strict accreditation standards focus on the sciences and leave little room for faculty to add additional course material. Professional development topics are often seen as "nice to know soft skills" that will be added into the curriculum "if we have time." "If women are to rise to top level leadership positions, formal training, based on current leadership models that break down the top down authoritative management style (male model) must be introduced," says Meeuwenberg.

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Meeuwenberg has built a team of dental hygienists through the Carlson Learning Company Network concerned with making a difference within their profession. Currently she serves as Manager of three distributors, all dental hygienists with advanced degrees and management expertise. "The Carlson products have allowed me to build my business while still maintaining independent consultant activities. Eventually I am going to be so busy with training that I will need a team of professionals familiar with our industry to assist me in the delivery of programs. There is more than enough work for one person. It has been very rewarding to assist two of my new distributors with setting up their own businesses, as they can benefit from my experience to jump start into their entrepreneurial pursuit," asserts Meeuwenberg.

Recently Linda sold the AIA program to a dental hygiene program professor in Oregon who will begin incorporation as curriculum in the fall, with 60 Dental Hygiene students purchasing the Participants Manual as a required textbook. "This was my biggest sale yet." The sale occurred as a result of having one of their faculty members attend a Leadership Conference sponsored by the American Dental Hygienists Association (ADHA) for Constituent Officers (State Presidents). Each state sent their President- Elect to attend this conference. Meeuwenberg arranged for a table exhibit of Carlson Products managed by her new recruit into the Carlson Network. They were so overwhelmed with requests for additional information, and people wanting to purchase products that the new recruit, Dr. Julie Bonkowski, RDH couldn't manage them all. She sold five sets of AIA tapes and responded with "Maybe I can convince my husband that I can make some money with this network." It was a learning experience and we are much more prepared to manage exhibits with a process for making change, recording sales data and leads. Additional relationships are being built with dental hygiene faculty in the USA, Canada, and Israel as a result of the presentation in France.

Meeuwenberg was asked to deliver the above keynote address by the ADHA President who later invited her to conduct a one day leadership training to her new Executive Board and the Senior Administrative Staff of ADHA. Also, in attendance was a representative from Colgate Oral Pharmaceuticals, the financial sponsor of the conference, who invited her to conduct a one-day workshop with her department at Colgate comprised of dentists and hygienists. She delivered DiSC® and Innovate with Care®. From one keynote address came all the follow up business leads! "I encourage all distributors to work with their professional organizations within their own discipline for these same kind of results," says Meeuwenberg.

An article co-authored by JoAnn and Linda following the Global Conference has been accepted for publication as a guest commentary in the Sept/Oct. edition of RDH Magazine titled "*The Need for Professional Development Topics within the Dental Hygiene Curriculum*" creating more exposure. Linda has also written an article for the Newsletter of the American Association of Dental Implant Auxiliaries & Practice Managers (AADI & PM), to be published in the *Journal of Implant Dentistry* titled, "*Attitude is Everything!*" The article will be published prior to a presentation at the International Congress of Oral Implantologists and the AADI & PM introducing Adventures in Attitudes®. Currently, Linda sits on the Board of Directors for the AADI & PM and was recently appointed to the Editorial Review Board of Implant Dentistry. This is an exciting application of the Carlson Products. The Executive Director of the AADI & PM was delighted with the topic I recommended for publication and the idea of publishing an article to recruit members to attend. Recently, the attendance has been slacking, as people are tiring of the same old clinical topics. The Carlson Products offer a refreshing lift to the association to re-energize it's members.

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Linda and JoAnn are preparing a proposal to deliver a half day workshop at the Annual Session of the American Association of Dental Schools (AADS) to be held in Vancouver in the Spring. titled: "*A Model For Faculty Development Utilizing Instrumented Learning Systems*" - A program for improved faculty retention and student mentoring. If accepted, they will present instrumented learning systems to faculty and administrators from dental schools within the USA and Canada. They will advise participants on the application of materials for faculty development, integration of materials into the curriculum for students and as curriculum for continuing education courses. Dentistry can be a stressful occupation, by providing students with lifelong skills in coping with stress we can increase retention of quality faculty and recruit top students into education and research.

JoAnn Gurenlian is the former President of the American Dental Hygienists' Association and a respected scholar with more than 50 published articles. She is a former columnist for ACCESS magazine published by the American Dental Hygienists' Association. Together JoAnn and Linda have established credibility within their profession paving the way to success with the implementation of the Performax® products. They are preparing future projects including the development of a four-day training program, *Leadership for Women in the Dental Professions* to be offered in Cannes/Mandelieu, France next summer. They will be combining AIA with the Dimensions of Leadership Profile®. Two additional facilitators will join them with expertise in fitness and nutrition. Fitness and nutrition will be integrated throughout the four-day session to keep participants energized. Integrating a two-hour luncheon with a power walk on the Mediterranean beaches and nutritional food choices will promote healthy lifestyle habits as a holistic approach to developing effective women leaders. This should be a powerful event! Exhibits displaying nutritional information will be viewed during the breaks with a selection of evening activities supporting fitness and nutrition. They are seeking endorsements, including contacting Oprah Winfrey, and corporate sponsors to help fund the expenses. "We are so energized about this collaboration that we know the financial pieces will fall together to make this vision a reality," asserts Meeuwenberg. We are very grateful to the Carlson Learning Company and the network of independent consultants for their support in helping us achieve our personal and corporate goals!

Linda can be reached for additional information at 616.972.4489 or meeuwen@centuryinter.net. JoAnn can be reached at 609.795.1750 or FAX 609.216.0515.

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