



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oral Health Education Acknowledged by National Indian Health Board *Program and Leadership Honored During Heroes Awards Ceremony*

Washington, DC (**October 23, 2020**). Dr. Winifred J. Booker (Piscataway) recently accepted the National Indian Health Board National Impact Award. The Children's Oral Health Institute is acknowledged for their commitment to oral health education and the impact the *Lessons in a Lunch Box*® program continues to make in American Indian country among elementary school children and their families. The Heroes Awards Ceremony, primarily dedicated to the descendent leaders of America's first families was held virtually on Wednesday, October 14th during the Annual National Indian Health Board (NIHB) Conference. In her acceptance, Dr. Booker, the nonprofit's CEO, and Immediate Past President of the Society of American Indian Dentists (SAID) acknowledged the leadership and members of the SAID for their outstanding contribution to the delivery of the health education program. She noted that their commitment has benefited eleven states, including all five elementary schools on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in South Dakota. The president of the SAID, Dr. Jeremy John (Paiute), is quoted as saying, "This honor is a credit to the benevolent spirits of the SAID and so many members of corporate and organized dentistry."

The *Lessons in a Lunch Box* program delivers health education content using a nifty orange lunch box, and a dental carrot case with the support of volunteers primarily from the dental profession. Both containers are uniquely designed to reinforce good oral hygiene practices, encourage diet, and portion controls, and to promote interest in dental health care careers. A lunch box, and toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss stored inside of the carrot case is provided to every child.

Dr. Sandra Wilson (Northern Cheyenne), Dental Clinic Director for the Indian Health Service (IHS) and SAID Board member stated, "I have brought the *Lessons in a Lunch Box* program to schools on Reservations in Montana and Wyoming that have been very successful. If it were possible, I would take this education program to every American Indian Reservation in the country."

The Children's Oral Health Institute Board expressed immense pride for receiving the 2020 National Impact Award for the outreach afforded to American Indian, Alaska Native and children throughout the country. This recognition of service and dedication to oral health education and disease prevention is a first for dentistry by the NIHB. CEO Stacy A. Bohlen offered her deepest gratitude and congratulations to all the award winners, stating, "This year's recipients are an exceptional group." SAID member Dr. Jessica Rickert (Potawatomi Nation), who submitted the prestigious award nomination has been instrumental in collaborating with the Michigan Dental Society to expand *Lessons in a Lunch Box* in that state.

For information about The Children's Oral Health Institute and the *Lessons in a Lunch Box* program visit <https://www.mycohi.org>. To learn more about the National Indian Health Board and to view the digital 2020 National Impact Award program visit <https://www.nihb.org>.

Prevention that Empowers Globally!