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### **Benefits of Recruitment Methodologies: “Passing the Baton” in Educational Research**

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**Objectives** Utilizing the same oral health presentations to 4<sup>th</sup> graders that helped recruit WV families into the Center for Oral Health Research in Appalachia (R Crout et al *JDR* 94 (Spec Issue A) # 4141, 2015), a study with the same format/presenter (RC) resulted in significant knowledge acquisition to 4<sup>th</sup> graders in an elementary school in Florida (R Crout et al, NRHA, 2016). Due to lack of oral health professionals/educators in rural areas, this study will evaluate knowledge acquisition to 4<sup>th</sup> graders by a high school senior (HSS) mentored/trained by a dentist (RC) followed by the dentist/ student comparison.

**Methods** A HSS was mentored/trained (RC) utilizing earlier Florida study slides/ information followed with 4<sup>th</sup> graders invited to participate at the same school. The same baseline test, was administered followed by the HSS presenting updated information. Questions included brushing/flossing behavior; tobacco products/ methamphetamine effects; when children should have a first dental visit and familiarity with the findings of the first-ever Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health including oral disease/systemic connections. Questions were Likert style (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree).

**Results** Of 41 students, 38 (92.6%) filled out questionnaires. Utilizing the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for statistical analysis of baseline/posttest differences, the presentation increased baseline brushing time, reasons to brush and floss to more recommended levels in the future ( $p < 0.05$ ). With regard to knowledge acquisition: increased correct agreement was noted for the Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health ( $p < 0.05$ ), connections of oral health and systemic disease ( $p < 0.01$ ), tobacco/methamphetamine effects, and time for first dental visit ( $p < 0.05$ ). Results further revealed non-significant differences compared to the dentist ( $p > .05$ ).

**Conclusions** A presentation to a 4<sup>th</sup> grade by a senior mentored/trained by a dentist effectively raised knowledge with non-significant differences compared to the dentists’ presentation. Studies are currently ongoing with the past HSS mentoring/educating a younger HSS student with encouragement by the teachers/ administrators of both the Florida high and elementary schools. This approach may also be useful in rural areas where there may be a lack of oral health professionals/educators.