

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Free Dental Care Provided by VDAF Mini-MOM Event at
Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center**

Richmond, VA – October 28, 2020 – In a new partnership, the Virginia Dental Association Foundation (VDAF) and the new Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center, in conjunction with members of the dental residency program at Johnston Memorial Hospital, provided free dental care to 115 patients during the Abingdon Mini-MOM (Mission of Mercy) event, held October 22-24.

Through a partnership with Dr. Michael McCracken, Dr. Scott Miller and Mission Dental Virginia, the Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center provides a variety of services, including preventive and restorative care. Dental care is typically offered to the uninsured on a sliding scale, targeting low-income community members in need throughout Southwest Virginia. However, all care provided at the Mini-MOM event was free to patients.

The VDAF provides free dental care through various direct service programs, including the Mission of Mercy (MOM) mobile dental projects, Donated Dental Services (DDS), and Give Kids a Smile!. The MOM program was created in 2000 by Dr. Terry Dickinson, former executive director of the Virginia Dental Association. Since its inception, the program has provided more than \$26.1 million worth of free dental care to more than 31,000 Southwest Virginia patients. The VDAF's participation in the Mini-MOM clinics is supported by grants from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, the DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement, and the Virginia Dept. of Health.

Over the two and a half-day event, 115 Southwest Virginia patients received free dental extractions, exams and oral cancer screenings. The total value of care provided by dental residents, as well as volunteer dentists, was \$95,830.

"This recent Mini-Mission of Mercy event was an exciting opportunity for our dental residents to serve our community, providing free services to 115 patients," said John Jeter, Vice President and CEO, Johnston Memorial Hospital. "It reaffirms our dental residency program's importance in fulfilling the mission of Johnston Memorial Hospital, as we seek to impact the health of our region and deliver the best possible care. Without the generous support, passion and collaboration of all the organizations and individuals involved in this dental clinic, we would not be able to continue to touch the lives of so many."

"The VDAF is very grateful for the collaboration of all our generous partners," said Tara Quinn, Executive Director of the Virginia Dental Association Foundation. "This and future mini-MOM events will help to reduce health disparities by providing needed dental care while also helping to create a pipeline for future dentists to practice in Southwest Virginia."

"This event would not have been as successful if not for a collaborative effort between our residency, local dentists, WCC dental hygiene students, MECC dental assistant students, and the nursing students from VHCC. We also appreciate the support of the folks at United Healthcare, JMH and especially the VDAF for all they do for our local communities," Dr. Scott Miller.

ABOUT THE VDAF

Founded in 1996 as the charitable and outreach arm of the Virginia Dental Association, the VDAF is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide access to dental care for underserved and underinsured Virginians. For more information about the Virginia Dental Association Foundation and its programs, visit www.vdaf.org.

ABOUT THE AHCDC

Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit community dental clinic located in Abingdon, VA to provide oral health care to uninsured and recovery program adults in Southwest Virginia. For more information about the AHCDC, visit <https://www.appalachianhighlandsdental.com>.

###

Contact:

Tara C, Quinn, Executive Director
Virginia Dental Association Foundation
3460 Mayland Court, Suite 110
Richmond, VA 23233
quinn@vadental.org
(804) 523-2181

Elaine G. Smith, Executive Director
Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center
616 Campus Drive, Suite 110
Abingdon, VA 24210
Elaine@aphighlandsdental.onmicrosoft.com
(276) 525-4487