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Pre-Dental Association members Give Kids a Smile on national clinic day

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The University of Michigan - Dearborn's Pre-Dental Association helped to make a difference in a child's life during their participation at the fifth annual Give Kids a Smile (GKAS) event on Feb. 7.

This is the first year that UM-D's pre-dental club has participated in the GKAS, which was hosted by the University of Detroit Mercy.

GKAS is a national clinic day that the American Dental Association puts on every year in February where thousands of kids receive free dental treatment. UM-D's dental organization joined over 100 dental hygiene students from the from UDM's College of Health Professions.

Employees from the McAuley Health Center and the university's dental faculty and staff also volunteered at the event. Students from UDM and UM-D provided direct care for the children or acted as patient supporters.

"We signed in the children and then escorted them to the proper stations," said Pre-Dental Association president Ziyad Elassal. "Some of us who had experience were allowed to assist the dentist with the procedures."

Overall, 259 children received oral exams at the GKAS event. Some of the oral exams the patients



Media Credit: GKAS.org

received were x-rays, cleanings, fillings, root canals and fluoride treatment. The sponsors Colgate also participated in the event by bringing their Mobile Dental Van and having tours of the mobile clinic.

In addition to their contributions to GKAS, Colgate, along with a dentist insurance company, Delta Dental, donated more than 500 toothbrushes and tubes of toothpaste for the children.

The GKAS event received support not only from national sponsors, but also from local news media, public figures and representatives from professional dental associations. Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel Jr., Dr. Ron Paler, President of the Michigan Dental Foundation, Dr. Joann Dawley, President of the Michigan Dental Association and Marge Buehner, who is President of the Michigan Dental Hygiene Association were some of the special guests in attendance.

For more information on Give Kids a Smile, visit <http://gkas.org>.

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