

ALPHA OMEGA ACHEIVEMENT AWARD DECEMBER 30, 2007

John Wolffe, International President;
Hagie Slutzky and Dany Kaufman, Marshals of this convention;
Arnold Feldman, Chairman of the Achievement Medal Committee;
Incoming President, Cliff Litvak;
My Fellow Alpha Omegans;

I am extremely honored to have my name added to the list of Alpha Omega Achievement Medal Recipients. I have been a proud member of Alpha Omega since 1962, some 45 years. At this convention we are celebrating Alpha Omega's 100th anniversary and Israel's 60th anniversary.

The dream of a Jewish Homeland goes back 2000 years and in 1897, Theodore Herzl, at the first Zionist Congress, stated that "If you will it, it is no dream."

Dental Students of Jewish faith in 1907 formed Alpha Omega Fraternity because of an awareness that only by concerted efforts on the part of a unified group, could anything resembling fair play be effected in access to a dental education.

Today, Israel is a reality, and Alpha Omega Fraternity has achieved its primary goal of ending religious discrimination in dental education. Both of these accomplishments are a testament to the Power of Vision, coupled with years of dedication, sacrifice and hard work. **"If you will it, it is no dream."**

Forty years ago, I had a vision that implant dentistry would someday become part of conventional dentistry. Like the fulfillment of Alpha Omega's vision, and the vision of the founders of Israel, Implant Dentistry has become an integral part of conventional dentistry, taught in every dental school at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Dental implants are a predictable, functional and esthetic solution to the replacement of lost teeth.

I completed my graduate prosthetic training in 1968, with extensive training in making denture impressions and preparing bridges to replace missing teeth. By 1971, I joined the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, a fledgling organization of about 300 members, to learn how to insert the contraptions of those days, including blade and subperiosteal implants. By the end of the 1970's, I was somewhat discouraged with the unpredictability of these procedures and started to develop my own concepts of implant design and surgical protocol.

By 1982, I had patented the Core-Vent implant, primarily designed for the placement of two free-standing implants in the edentulous mandible to stabilize a tissue supported overdenture. The surgical protocol allowed these implants to

become firmly anchored to the jawbone in a process that later became known as Osseointegration. The use of two implants for overdenture stability first appeared in the dental literature in my 1982 article in the Journal of Implantology, and has become accepted as the minimum standard of care for edentulous patients by the American College of Prosthodontists.

In 1986, I developed the Screw-Vent Implant, with its patented internal connection, in contrast to the external hex implants of the Branemark System. The internal connection has become the cornerstone for modern dental implant design, licensed to about 10 companies and copied by many more. The whole Israeli Implant Industry was built on companies cloning the Screw-Vent so I did my part to help the Israeli economy. Throughout the 1980's, Core-Vent Corporation made dental implant education readily available and easily affordable to general dentists and specialists alike. Many of you at this convention have come up to me and recounted your first implant experience at one of my training programs.

By 1991, Core-Vent Corporation was the leading distributor of dental implants in the world. I retired from active commercialization of dental implants for a 6 year period from 1991-1997, when Dentsply took over distribution of Core-Vent's products, and again in 2001-2006, with the sale of Core-vent to what is known today as Zimmer Dental.

Today, I am more enthusiastic than ever about the future of dentistry in general and implant dentistry in particular. My Israeli company, Tactile Technologies, after 4 years of development, is about to launch a CT based image guided system for implant placement, and my new company, Implant Direct, is proving that the internet is an effective way to globally market a cost effective, Application Specific, dental implant system. There is still much education to be done before affordable dental implants are accessible to the majority of patients. That is my next vision that I am working on. Like most visions that come to fruition, it requires a combination of 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. Without the support and encouragement of my wife, Reesa, I would not be here before you to accept this prestigious award so I would like to ask her to stand and be acknowledged.

I am happy to also have part of my family here to share this evening with me. My daughter Lisa and oldest granddaughter Dana accompanied us on this trip. My daughter Amy and 5 more grandchildren are in Los Angeles but my brother and sister-in-law, Drs Joel and Barbara Niznick, are here from Ottawa.

I humbly accept your Achievement Medal and thank you for this honor.