The Christian Dental Society has equipped and inspired Christian dentists to treat the needy for almost five decades. This organization gives American dentists, students, and auxiliaries the opportunity to serve in locations around the globe, including places where dental care is almost nonexistent.

The CDS traces its roots to 1962 when 12 interested dentists met in Miami, Fla., during the ADA convention. Dr. John McInnes, a dentist from Tucson, Ariz., became temporary chairman and the group named itself the Christian Dental Society.

The society opened its doors to Christian dentists of all denominations who were interested in working with foreign dental missions. CDS was formally organized in 1963 during the ADA convention in Atlantic City, N.J. The next year, the group was incorporated in Colorado as a non-profit organization.

The primary purpose of the CDS is to publicize and facilitate dental mission trips for its members and others. To this end, CDS member services include inexpensive rental of equipment and instruments, information regarding upcoming trips around the world, and mentoring of dental students and new dentists in the exciting field of missionary dentistry. Fifty-two mission trips during the past year have included CDS equipment. Several hundred additional trips around the world involved members of the CDS.

While all of these trips provide much-needed services, conditions can vary greatly from one trip to another. Some mission trips use established clinics and have access to electricity and running water. Other trips to less-developed areas require dentists to carry their equipment and supplies on their backs from village to village. To meet the challenges of the latter, CDS has an inventory of efficient, lightweight, portable dental equipment. This includes chairs, headlights, handpieces, and sterilization systems.

In addition to its efforts to facilitate mission trip opportunities, the CDS hosts an annual conference for members and families. Past speakers at these conferences have included Jim and Naomi Rhode, Dr. Van Haywood, and Dr. Pascal Magne, as well as a host of experienced missionary dentists with some amazing stories to tell.

The following is an example of the type of work CDS does around the world.

**Jammin’ Jamaica**

In 1979, while in college, Dr. Jim Carney was vacationing in Montego Bay, Jamaica. It was a most enjoyable trip, prompting him to want to return to the country.

But unwilling to merely enjoy all that Jamaica had to offer, he pondered, “What might I be able to do to help the wonderful people of Jamaica?”

A few years later, after completing dental school at the University of Iowa, he responded to an appeal from the Christian Dental Society to offer free dental services in Jamaica. Little did he know at the time just how involved he would eventually become.
of many ministries of the Christian Dental Society, gives a
glimpse of the opportunities that exist to offer dental skills to the
needy around the world. Members of the CDS share a strong
desire to help the dentally underserved wherever they might be.
But their incentive goes beyond humanitarian concerns. The
care that is given is offered as a testimony to a loving God, who
desires to show His love to people of every tribe and nation. Free
dental care is offered to everyone possible, regardless of their
religious beliefs. Those who receive treatment are also given an
opportunity to learn about the inherent joy and peace that can
be found through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Dentists, hygienists, and assistants who desire more informa-
tion regarding CDS membership and mission trip opportunities
can visit the CDS Web site at www.christiandental.org. In ad-
dition, the home office may be reached at (563) 578-8887 or via
e-mail at cdssent@netins.net.

Dr. William T. Griffin has practiced dentistry in the Newport
News, Va., area since 1983. According to Dr. Griffin, “Dentistry allows
me to use my God-given creativity to benefit others.” He completed
his doctor of dental surgery at the Medical College of Virginia.
Reach him at williamgriffindds@gmail.com. Dental mission trip
information may be found at www.dentalmissiontrips.com.

Since that time, Dr. Carney, who practices in Lombard,
Ill., has made more than 60 trips to Jamaica. He has also
established seven dental clinics in various areas of Jamaica,
enabling many others to share in this work. Approximately
70 to 80 dentists have accompanied Dr. Carney on these
trips, many of whom subsequently returned to these clinics for additional trips.

In addition, about 160 dental students from schools such as Iowa, Temple, Pittsburgh, and Michigan have joined Dr.
Carney on these trips. This has provided an excellent oppor-
tunity for the students to greatly expand their dental knowl-
edge and experience by working with experienced doctors
for patients who are most grateful for their services.

As Dr. Carney reflected on his many trips through the
years, he commented, “I still love the people and feel ener-
gized each and every time I go.”

Many of Dr. Carney’s trips are a family affair, involving
his wife, Sue, who is also a dentist, and their children, Kelly
and Madeline, who have developed into most capable assis-
tants. Dr. Carney describes this as “quality family time
at its best.”

The clinics that Dr. Carney has established have given
other dentists the opportunity to treat the people of Ja-
mica without having to transport their own equipment.
Dr. John Drescher, a veteran of 16 trips to Jamaica, is par-
ticularly grateful for Dr. Carney’s clinics.

“They make it easier for me to go on missions to Jamaica,”
stated Dr. Drescher. “Things are more organized, and the
clinics help us to establish a relationship with people in the
community. The gratefulness of the patients we have treated
has made me realize that we are really performing a much-
needed service, and that we are appreciated and loved.”

Hopefully the example above, focusing on the work of one