**An Interview with...**

**Kathi Schreiber, BS, RDH**

**When did you graduate and from which dental hygiene program?** I graduated in 2015 from O’hehir University with BS in Oral Health Promotion and from Forest Park Community College in 1993 with my Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene. I have been a proud ADHA member since I was a student. I had great mentors that encouraged me and my classmates in DH school to be active in the St. Louis component by volunteering to be on a committee after graduating and to get a feel how things operate and what our organization does as RDH’s and what our professional organizations does for all members and even those that are not members. This was great because I have never been involved in an organization at the board level.

**Describe your experience as a member of ADHA?** I learned so much and gained so many skills I would have never had if it wasn’t for all these wonderful ladies that mentored and guided me a long the way. I served on all committees more then once over the years and was President for the St. Louis component in 2000-2002. While I was President, I also served as an Alternate Delegate for our state to represent MO at the national level. That was my 2nd time going to ADHA’s Annual Conference. What a great experience, I met people from every state and look forward to seeing them year after year at ADHA’s Annual Conference. It’s great to know such intelligent women and men that are all registered dental hygienists and many have their BS, Masters and Doctorate degrees and are the movers and shakers that can open doors for anyone looking for more opportunities outside of the clinic chair or a new position in the clinic chair. Knowing speakers as friends and reaching out to them for more information, or to come and speak for our component or state has been great. **Networking and creating relationships are key in any profession!** I met Esther Wilkins, RDH, DMD and yes, I would see her year after year along with so many of you that go to ADHA Annual Conference. She would always be on the dance floor and so much fun. As President I asked her if she would come to St. Louis and be a speaker. She said “YES!” and we rented the largest conference room at the Hilton Frontnac Plaza. The place was packed. I know we had at least 1-2 Periodontist there. It was the best! We bought a case of her books to sell, called “Little Book of Dental Hygienists’ Rules” she signed them along with anyone that brought their text book she wrote as we know it as “Our DH Bible” The other thing we did when I was President was Block Anesthesia courses after the Bill passed at the state capital. We had great turn out for the courses. I was also MO-HYPAC Chair for years in the early 2000’s and then stepped down and help plan all our CE courses and brought in speakers for the St. Louis area to raise money for Hy-Pac.

**Do you have any goals you would still like to achieve?** I would really love to start a mentorship program with 2nd year students at Forest Park CC and other RDH’s in the St. Louis community. Developing relationships, answer questions they may have, share with them what’s out there in our professional world and encourage them to keep their membership and be involved as much as possible for them; to go to with concerns.
Describe a funny moment with a patient you were treating. My patient was a 5-year-old boy and I was done with his prophy and waiting for Dr. Gross to come in and check his teeth. Dr. Gross comes in and starts talking to him and asked this little boy if he had any questions? He said, “Yes, why do they call you Dr. Yucky?” I busted out laughing that I don’t even remember his reply, but I don’t think Dr. Yucky really liked it. I think he did giggle. Kids keep us laughing and smiling!

Who is your hero and why? My mom! She is the strongest person I know. She was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY until she was 10 and then was sent to Upstate, NY to live on a farm with a family until she was 14. She then ran away and went back to NY city to live with her Aunt. When her Uncle came back from being overseas in the Navy, they took my mom with them and moved to Atlanta. They adopted my mom when she was 16 and that same year her mother passed away. Her parents were in and out of her life as she was being raised by grandparents, Aunts, Uncles and other strangers or friends of the family. She had to be independent and fight for herself at a very young age. Her first husband was killed in a car accident when she was pregnant with her first child my oldest brother. She married my father and had 5 more children and she divorced my dad when I was in 8th grade and my youngest sibling was 5 years old. She was an RN and raised us pretty much on her own from then on. She was a leader and served on several boards and volunteered throughout the years. She was always busy until this pandemic slowed her down. She is now 87 rs old and very independent and me, my 2 sisters, and brothers make sure we are there for her anytime. She loves her kids, grandkids, and great grandkids. All she ever wanted was a family and for her kids to have siblings for her to love and be loved!

What are your hobbies if we were not in a pandemic? Exercising at the gym, going hiking, kayaking, learning, and traveling all over our beautiful country and the world with my wonderful husband Bob.

What are you most proud of in your DH career? The support of my wonderful and patient husband. My DH degree and license. The growth and knowledge gained, and opportunities that I have had over the years by being a part of ADHA. Being courageous enough to go out on my own and start TempME, LLC in 1998 and in the early 2000’s becoming a professional educator on behalf of Arestin, and in 2017, becoming a professional educator on behalf of Water Pik. I am also proud to call so many of you my friends that I have met throughout the years and love spending time with you all.