America’s ToothFairy: NCOHF celebrates year of successes

By Robert Selleck, today Staff

America’s ToothFairy: National Children’s Oral Health Foundation staff members gathered with representatives from many of the organization’s supporters Thursday evening to celebrate 2017 successes.

The Celebration of Smiles event is held annually offsite during the Chicago Dental Society Midwinter Meeting.

America’s ToothFairy Executive Director Jill Malmgren thanked the many companies that have donated funds, products and other resources to support the broad network of nonprofit community-based providers the foundation helps support.

Thanks to such support, since 2006 more than 8.8 million children and caregivers have received oral health care and education; more than 1 million screenings have been provided to underserved children; more than 1.2 million oral-care products have been provided to underserved families; and more than $16 million in oral-health educational materials, grants and in-kind donations have been made.

Among the foundation’s goals for 2018, Malmgren said the plan is to provide 350,000 dental-care products to at-risk children, a number that was almost achieved in 2017.

The evening’s celebration included a live performance from former “American Idol” contestant Tony Tatum and an inspirational talk by former National Basketball Association great Muggsy Bogues, widely known as the shortest player to have performed in the NBA.

He is best remembered for his seasons as point guard with the Charlotte Hornets.

In his remarks, Bogues shared a poignant story about having a broken front tooth restored as a child growing up in public housing in Baltimore. He said the confidence boost he had after the procedure was transformative and continues to benefit him today because it enabled him in his youth to more openly smile and readily communicate with others.

The evening included a silent auction featuring sports and music industry memorabilia, including a signed basketball and vintage Hornets T-shirt from Bogues.

The non-profit organization is devoted to expanding access to dental care for at-risk children. All of the funds it raises go directly to such programs.

Here in Chicago

To learn more about America’s ToothFairy’s mission to promote the importance of oral health and its link to overall systemic health for at-risk children, you can visit www.ncohf.org. Here in Chicago, you can find them in the exhibit hall in booth No. 1003.

* America’s ToothFairy Executive Director Jill Malmgren thanks the organization’s many supporters, including underwriters 3M, DENTSPLY Sirona, GC America, Invisalign, KaVo Kerr, Patterson Dental and Septodont.

* NBA great Muggsy Bogues shares a poignant story about the transformative confidence gain he realized after having a broken front tooth restored as a child. (Photos/Robert Selleck, today Staff)

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* Muggsy Bogues’ autographed basketball commands center court in the evening’s silent auction.