

Roots & Wings is a Montessori philosophy of individualized education of the whole child, ethically, socially, academically, physically, spiritually and artistically, thus enabling each to become a self-reliant, satisfied, confident and productive citizen. It is from this mission statement that the name and the philosophy of the cybercommunity ROOTS was taken.

ROOTS is a gathering place for those who wish to make endodontics the foundation of comprehensive dental care. An eclectic and remarkable collection of individuals from a quilt of countries, the ROOTS family members gather 24/7/365 to share with each other, to care about the needs of those who are lesser advantaged, but mostly to raise the bar on the standard of care and means of delivery of optimal endodontic therapy regardless of location.

To suggest it is a vision or a **clicks** and mortar creation of passion and commitment does it an injustice. It is in truth, a manifestation of a central core of individuals, who recognize that with growth, a perpetual quest for knowledge and unceasing desire to see what lies around the next corner, you can change your world.

Its core values are primal; education need not be restricted by affiliation, categorization, financial wherewithal or language. The Internet offers the most unique visual learning medium in the history of mankind and as such ROOTS has transcended the banal chat forum mode of most Internet groupings and allowed the majesty of the talent of its members to present its standards of care.

The worlds' leading authorities in endodontics visit ROOTS with an unprecedented frequency. Guest Member Days with Paul Abbott, Arnaldo Castellucci, Gilberto Debelian, Ken Hargreaves, Ben Johnson, Paul Wesselink, Cornelius Parmejier (pending), Jose Siquiera, Martin Trope, to name but a few, are the norm. These giants in the field visit the forum and share their current research and development in an exchange that at times lasts for days. They come to share and care and in doing so, they invariably

understand the philosophy of ROOTS and to an individual have become ROOTERS by the experience.

Many come to the annual real time ROOTS event, the SUMMIT which in 2005 goes international for its Fifth iteration by affiliating with the Asociacion Mexicana de Endodoncia (AME) from May 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005 [(www.AMEROOTSSummitV.com) – in development]. These events are supported by companies from around the world who have become strategic partners in the NEXUS of profession and industry that is the hallmark of the ROOTS project. Steve Jones of Sybron Endo, Bruce Finnigan of Pentron Corp., Dan Fischer of Ultradent, and a myriad of other individuals from the industrial support infrastructure of endodontics have come to understand that tradition is a wonderful thing if you can use it as a base for growth, not a mantra for incessant preservation of the status quo.

What makes them all the more unique is that the presenters are not paid, they pay their own way and accommodation and the only courtesy truly afforded them other than the ceremonial ROOTS hat is that paying the registration fee was waived at ROOTS SUMMIT III. And yet they come, many asking to be allowed to present year in and out because the energy, the intensity, the drive to learn is so overwhelming.

Generalist/specialist, the dichotomy is not allowed to exist on ROOTS. You are a dental practitioner and the only caveat is that you seek to raise the bar and you have come to understand that a rising tide raises all ships.

ROOTS is a non-profit entity. No membership fees exist, no costs are borne by the individual members, no SUMMIT registration fees are levied to students of endodontics who are in the midst of their training programs and those who work the gears and levers are not compensated and yet, their numbers are growing.

ROOTS euphemistically calls itself a University. Treatment conference is a daily occurrence; the latest endodontic literature is reviewed, dissected, analyzed, and critiqued. Clinical cases are presented daily in a variety of formats ranging from

PowerPoint to animation and they represent the best of the best. Mentoring of those seeking to learn hallmarks another component of ROOTS.

ROOTS recognizes that scales of economy are a reality, that there are those who simply can't access the equipment or levy fees to sustain a level of care commensurate with the cost of the materials to be used. And yet, companies donate product, support training of those in countries with less advanced health care delivery systems and ROOTERS have traveled to those countries to assist in the exponentiation of the learning curve or our industry sponsors have underwritten the travel of those individuals to the ROOTS SUMMIT to enable them to return as missionaries of endodontic education in their own country. This too will flourish over time as ambassadorship is added to the lexicon of largesse on ROOTS which is now hallmarked by MENTORSHIP.

Two spectacular individuals create the dynamic of ROOTS, two among many. Fred Barnett of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is the Dean of students. A brilliant and beloved academician and clinician, Fred commits endless hours to ROOTS as its beacon for learning. He is a confidant of all the greats in endodontics and they return his friendship with endless commitment and contribution to his "university". Joe Dovgan is the industrial relations director. A brilliant inventor, he provides the bridge to the industry that has finally given corporate dentistry and insight into how to truly end the dance of uncertainty that characterizes relations between the profession and those who make their living by selling to it. That is a tenuous relationship in most professions as the mix can be conflictual.....no longer.

You join ROOTS by going to [www.rxroots.com](http://www.rxroots.com) and clicking on the DISCUSSION GROUPS link. The rest is simply completing a form. ROOTS has gone one step further, it has developed an educational email domain for use with the cybercommunity or any dental educational interests. RxDentistry.com is essentially a HotMail, Yahoo and GOOGLE style email service that by using the server that fuels the ROOTS project can eliminate viruses, spam and afford storage levels that exceed most global service and provide Internet accessibility to the forum anywhere on the globe.

All Brazilian dentists are welcome to join ROOTS along with those of your colleagues who have already done so. Carlos Murgel, Marcia Valeria Vieira, Gilberto Debelian, Eudes Gondim and many, many more.

The future for ROOTS holds fascinating change. The most basic long standing desire is to continue to foster educators in the endodontic field from countries around the world. This is to be done in a number of differing outreach projects. The simplest effort **to date** has been to provide ROOTS as a vehicle for those who aspire to **postgraduate** endodontic education in **endodontics**, and that has occurred with ROOTS **members** from Jamaica and Spain being accepted to Nova in Florida and UNC North Carolina, **certainly based on their records, but as certainly based on their records on ROOTS**. Many ROOTERS have become clinical evaluators for new product development on a global scale and the effort is underway to develop two new websites; [www.endopinions.com](http://www.endopinions.com) - an evaluation group who use and comment on new product introductions to the endodontic armamentarium, and [www.edudatemedds.com](http://www.edudatemedds.com) a calendar of CE venues around the world and a showcase for ROOTERS who teach.

Links to Montage Media in New Jersey and Oemus Media AG in Leipzig will hopefully create ROOTS affiliated journals to showcase member article content in new and innovative formats. Technique animations using three-dimensional graphic software are in the “storyboard” stages. In yet another example of profession and industry. Steve Jones of Sybron Endo ([www.sybronendo.com](http://www.sybronendo.com)), one of the first industry members to “git it” in terms of the power of Internet technologies to expand the foundations of learning, is underwriting this effort with the assistance of the brilliant graphic artists at Montage Media ([www.montagemedia.com](http://www.montagemedia.com)).

Join ROOTS, share and care with 700 other folks from around the world committed to endodontic excellence. Come to AME ROOTS SUMMIT V in Monterrey, Mexico May 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005 and begin a fantastic voyage of friendship and mentorship that will sail into the sunsets of change for the betterment of all who love the world of dentistry.