

Donaghey Award for Outstanding Service

Rev. John Donaghey, SVD, dedicated much of his life to Divine Word, first as an instructor and later as dean of students, vice president of academic affairs, president and a longtime member of the Board of Trustees. The award was established in 1999 to honor those who have shown a long-term commitment to Divine Word College.



Epworth Dentist Honored for Restoring Students' Smiles

For two decades, Dr. Kim Kissell, DDS offered discounted services to Divine Word College students who faced serious dental problems. The local dentist retired in 2022 but in April, Divine Word College honored him with the Donaghey Award for Outstanding Service for his consistent kindness and generosity of time and talent.

For years, Kissell and his staff at Epworth Family Dentistry worked together to identify and resolve students' oral health issues. Sometimes communication was challenging. DWC students come from all over the world and some are at the college to learn English. Kissell and his staff took time describing dental procedures, working with interpreters and using photographs to explain conditions to students.

Some patients didn't have any prior experience with dentists, while others arrived with botched dental treatments that needed repairs. The hygienists reviewed general oral hygiene instructions with each person and did their best to set them up for future dental success.

“We took care of it and did our best to right the wrongs that had been done and to return their mouths to a healthy state,” Kissell said.

The staff at Epworth Family Dentistry even accommodated students outside of regular business hours when dental emergencies arose. Due to financial limitations, Kissell said he couldn't provide comprehensive dentistry for all students or achieve cosmetic perfection for them, but he could ensure that their conditions were stable and healthy.

Kissell said his relationship with DWC was mutually beneficial.

“The diversity was a great thing because it allowed me to have experience with people who I wouldn't experience if this was just regular small-town Iowa,” he said. “Most of the students were extremely grateful for what we did and that in itself makes me feel so good.”