

## **Abstract**

Things you should know about Orthodontic Education—Journey of Life.

Donald Huang, co-chairman of the board of IOF, shared his own story and the motivation behind creating IOF at the Forsyth Orthodontic Symposium in Oct 2022.

Together with a group of leading experts who share the same value, Donald wanted to create a non-profit organization to help clinicians with their life-long development of professional skills in orthodontics.

### **Dr. Ravindra Nanda's introduction to Mr. Donald Huang:**

Our next speaker is going to be Mr. Donald Huang. Donald is co-chair along with Dai Feng, both are here, and they started International Orthodontic Foundation. This is an amazing foundation. I've been involved with them from the beginning. He's also co-founder of CareCapital, which is one of the largest global private equity firms specializing in dentistry.

When I met Donald, he asked me what he can do for orthodontic community. We discussed about the needs to support and unite orthodontic clinicians all over the world.

And I'm impressed with his visions and how much he cares about fostering innovations to improve patient care.

We had our first symposium, speakers from all over the world, which was about four, five months back. So IOF is very close to Donald's heart. IOF is sponsoring this (Forsyth Orthodontic Symposium). IOF is also going to be sponsoring a major research program, and we are looking for grants by the end of this month.

And without much ado, I would like to welcome Donald Huang. I will say, Donald Huang, to come and say a few words. Thank you.

### **Mr. Donald Huang's speech:**

It's a great honor to be here. It's really the committee members and the operation team at IOF who are the real heroes that make it happen.

I want to thank Dr. Ravi Nanda, Dr. Eric Ting, Dr. Peter Ngan, and Dr. Ching-Chang Ko for your support as IOF committee members. And I also want to thank Forsyth for giving us this great opportunity.

First, let me tell you about myself. I was born and raised in an economically undeveloped area. It's known as the hometown of overseas immigrants for the last hundred years. Why?

Because the living conditions are harsh. The place is surrounded by mountains on all sides, and access to the outside world is very limited. People want to leave to pursue a better life and their dreams. My hometown is so isolated from the outside world, that the first time I learned which university is the best in the country was in my 10th grade. I was lucky enough to end up going to that very university. And thanks to good education, I was able to pursue a business career and become an investor and entrepreneur.

The ignorant country boy who I was, is now standing here with you, distinguished audience. I think you would agree how much education can do to transform one's life. Many of my colleagues share similar personal experience of how education has changed their lives.

This is our motivation behind creating IOF. We want to create a non-profit organization to help clinicians around the world with their lifelong development of their professional skills, in orthodontics, an area we are passionate about.

We want to see more of such personal stories to happen. It doesn't matter where you are, whether you are in India, in Spain, in China, or here in Boston, I believe orthodontic clinicians around the world should have the same right to high quality training and personal achievements.

So what is IOF? We are a non-profit organization devoted to improving orthodontic care. It's funded by a group of like-minded and leading orthodontic leaders in US, Europe, and Asia, together with CareCapital.

We are certainly not the first one to do such things. So how can we make a difference? Our committee has identified four themes that are important for this profession are really underinvesting.

These are, first, international collaboration, and second, supporting translational research, third, promoting innovative technologies, and fourth, staying independent from endorsing commercial products. I'll touch more on this later.

We are a young organization, just founded in June this year. We are encouraged by the fact that we are able to attract 8,000 members from more than 100 countries with the successful launch of our inaugural international symposium.

So IOF's funding is provided by CareCapital, a private equity investor in dentistry, whose funding ultimately comes from global institutions such as pension funds, endowment funds, and global corporations.

The IOF mission fits well with CareCapital's broader vision of making investments and building organizations to enable dental professionals. And CareCapital is committed to making available its ecosystem of dental resources to help advance IOF's mission.

I want to thank CareCapital team for their support in this effort, and especially I want to thank my partner, Mr. Dai Feng. Dai is more privileged than I was in education. He grew up on the campus of MIT and went to Harvard for higher education. But we share the same vision. Over the years, he has devoted a lot of his time to dental education out of his usually very busy business schedules. We don't see ourselves just as donors to a nonprofit organization, but we personally invest a lot of our time to participate and organize events at IOF.

So what we do at IOF is essentially three things, training and education, research grants and publication. In training and education, we work with preeminent universities and clinicians to help bring access to high quality CE programs to clinicians from around the world. For example, we are organizing virtual clinical showcase series with a global tour to renown universities from US, Europe, and Asia. This will allow a global audience to learn how innovative techniques are being practiced in real case studies.

We also organize annual international symposiums to discuss the latest trends in research and clinical practice. The first one of this was held in June for three days. 7,000 people signed up for this event. We got 160,000 views from around the world.

Our research grant program is designed to support translation of research into clinical practice. This will promote technological innovations. Application is open without geographical restriction. Applications will be reviewed by a science committee consisting of eminent international scholars. Our annual budget for the research grants are up to 700,000 US dollars.

So this goes back to the four themes we touched on earlier. Many of you in this audience are thought leaders of global prestige, but most of the orthodontic associations you work with mainly focus on their own individual countries.

We hope to provide you an international stage, so that more people in the world can benefit from your ideas. And we keep hearing from thought leaders that research grants are not enough, and that industry hasn't done enough to support translational work for your research.

Therefore, we hope to put together a research grant program that connects industry with researchers in more beneficial ways. We believe CareCapital's entrepreneurial background, and its dental business ecosystem will position IOF well in doing so.

We believe the future of orthodontics is going to be shaped by innovation. Therefore, we will focus research on future trends such as clear aligners, software, biomaterials, 3D printing.

Last but not the least, we don't endorse any products. We will try our best to be non-biased in evaluating technologies. We believe more independent ideas are more important and better than existing products. To the extent that existing companies don't listen to your ideas, I think they will become less relevant over time.

So finally, let me share with you an episode. I had a difficult trip over. I flew in from Paris after a business trip there, but I got sent back right after I landed because my EVUS enrollment was done incorrectly. So I had to fly back to Paris, I got everything fixed and then flew back in again.

So when I was in Paris, my wife asked me, why don't you just come back to Hong Kong and let someone else do it? The kids miss you. And I said, no, I really need to be there in person, because I want to be here face to face with you, the distinguished audience. I want to be here to personally share our vision and to ask you to join us in this journey, to invite you to be our speakers, and to encourage you to tell your friends about IOF, and finally, to get feedbacks from you on how we can do this better together.

Thank you.