

Owens & Minor celebrates a commitment to diversity at its 10th Annual Healthcare Supplier Diversity Symposium

By Rachel Cimino McCue

More than 150 participants gathered in Richmond, Va., in September to celebrate a decade of commitment to supplier diversity at the 10th Annual Healthcare Supplier Diversity Symposium (HSDS), hosted by Owens & Minor, Inc.

“Activate! Growth, Relationships and Change” was the theme of this year’s symposium, as Owens & Minor, along with co-hosts, sponsors, and guests, celebrated a long-term commitment to improving and expanding supplier diversity in the healthcare marketplace. For the

manage our costs and how we improve health results,” Sebelius said. “The law that gets everyone into the system is helpful, but it’s just a platform. Now we must pay attention to what happens once they’re there. The attention needs to be given to quality.”

Sebelius addressed the opportunities that opened up for small businesses after the Affordable Care Act was signed into law over five years ago. She encouraged business owners to look to technology as a means of improving their offerings to ultimately enhance the quality of care that each patient receives.

Derreck Kayongo, co-founder of the Global Soap Project, spoke about activating change, encouraging the audience to share their good fortune with others. Building on his story that began when he was a child refugee in Kenya, Kayongo told the audience how he co-founded The Global Soap Project, a non-profit organization that donates bars of repurposed hotel soap to vulnerable populations around the world.

“In activating change, you have to pay attention to events around you,”

he said. “What is new? What is changing? How do you do business responsibly while still making money?” Owens & Minor donated proceeds totaling \$5,000 from an inaugural golf tournament to Global Soap.

Angela Wilkes recognized

A highlight of this year’s Symposium was the presentation of the annual Earl G. Reubel Award, which Owens & Minor established to honor the life and legacy of the late Earl G. Reubel, co-founder of Virginia-based Kerma Medical Products, Inc. The 2015 recipient – Angela T. Wilkes of



Derreck Kayongo, co-founder of the Global Soap Project, and Tonnice Charles, Director, Category Management, and the organizer of this year’s event. An inaugural golf tournament raised \$5,000 for the Global Soap Project.

past 10 years, the Healthcare Supplier Diversity Symposium has assembled healthcare professionals representing minority-, women-, and veteran-owned enterprises (MWVBEs), as well as major healthcare providers, distributors, and industry-leading manufacturers.

This year, symposium participants heard from a variety of subject-matter experts, including the 21st U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, who shared insights gained from leading the successful charge of President Obama’s Affordable Care Act. “Where America stands globally depends on how we

Angela T. Wilkes and Associates – spearheaded the supplier diversity efforts at Owens & Minor for 14 years, establishing the Symposium in 2005 and acting as its driving force until 2014. Following Wilkes’s recent retirement, Dr. Dannellia Green was named director of supplier diversity. G. Gilmer Minor, III, chairman emeritus of Owens & Minor, presented Wilkes with the award.

“There is no point in trying to put Angela in a box,” said Minor. “She defined diversity at Owens & Minor and was a champion for diversity in our industry. It is an honor to present the award to her, as she was always doing

things right and, at the same time, doing the right things.”

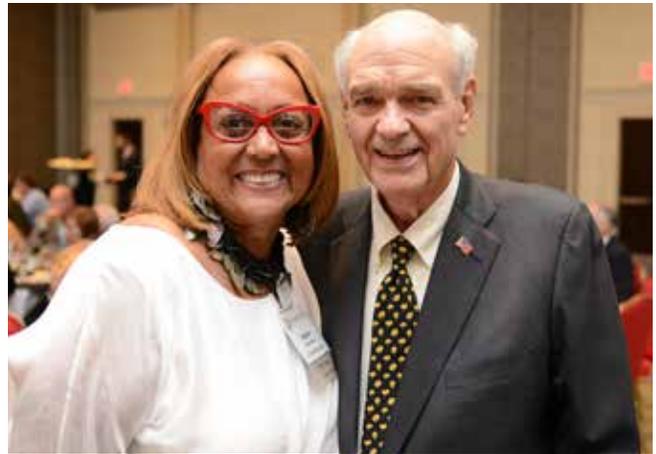
Over the two days, guests were engaged in a number of panels and workshops featuring Owens & Minor President & CEO P. Cody Phipps, President of McKesson Medical-Surgical Stanton McComb, and President of the Health Industry Distributors Association Matthew Rowan, along with senior leadership from DuPont and National Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc.®

This ten-year milestone for the Healthcare Supplier Diversity Symposium was reached with the support and dedication of Owens & Minor and the assistance of Carolinas-Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council, the Healthcare Supplier Diversity Alliance, and the National Association of Health Services Executives.

More than 25 major corporate sponsors contributed to the success of the event, including VCU Health Medical and



(L to r): G. Gilmer Minor, III, chairman emeritus of Owens & Minor; Joe Reubel, president of Kerma Medical; Angela Wilkes, president of A.T. Wilkes and Associates, and recipient of the 2015 Earl G. Reubel Award for Supplier Diversity; Andrea Reubel-Walker, director of marketing and national key accounts, Kerma Medical; Derreck Kayongo, co-founder of the Global Soap Project.



Angela Wilkes, president of A.T. Wilkes and Associates, with G. Gilmer Minor, III, chairman emeritus of Owens & Minor



Marty Maarter, Owens & Minor’s Director of Strategic Supplier Programs presents a \$5,000 check to Derreck Kayongo, co-founder of the Global Soap Project, at the 10th Annual Healthcare Supplier Diversity Symposium, hosted by Owens & Minor.

B. Braun Medical, Inc. Other corporate supporters included: Amerinet, Becton Dickinson and Company, Dell Computer, Medtronic, Kerma Medical Products, Inc., SourceMark, LLC, and the Healthcare Supplier Diversity Alliance.

“At Owens & Minor, we serve healthcare markets that are highly diverse,” said Phipps. “In a quest to do that well, we provide energetic support for diversity in the healthcare supply chain. We are committed to expanding opportunities, making connections, and driving innovation in healthcare – and that takes people from various backgrounds with diverse perspectives. As our market evolves, we are determined to tap the best partners, teammates, and ideas so that we thrive in a complex and changing market.” **rep**

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