I am pleased to present the 2015 Strategic Plan for the School of Dental Medicine. This plan represents the vision of a large group of stakeholders. There has been consistent effort to describe a vision and mission which embrace the heart of the School of Dental Medicine. The plan itself will be an ongoing and living plan, established with a constantly moving horizon such that it remains contemporary and meaningful. This planning process has been guided in large part by the senior administration of the School. However, we would be remiss in not recognizing the singular efforts of Dr. Jean O’Donnell, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and Ms. Marcia Walsh, Director of Administration, for their substantial work.

This particular plan will embody our efforts at creating an educational environment for the future; providing patient care which is meaningful and educational; pursuing research which will enhance the oral health of individuals for years to come; permit our graduates and alumni to understand the School not only as the source of their education but as a lifelong resource; and finally, to ensure an environment and culture which embody the ideals of a lifelong-learning, competent, ethical healthcare provider. I hope you embrace this plan as we do.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Braun, DMD, PhD
Dean
Established in 1896, the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine has been educating students to take their places among the best dental practitioners, researchers and educators in our region, across the country, and even around the world. We are one of six Schools of Health Sciences at the University and are the only school to manage our own clinic. Our accomplishments reflect the dedication and success of each member of the School of Dental Medicine family.

We are proud of our long tradition as innovators in dental medicine. Our first female student was admitted 117 years ago, and today more than half of our vibrant and diverse first-year pre-doctoral class are women. We nurture in our students a strong foundation in the biological, behavioral and clinical sciences and a belief in the importance of professionalism and life-long learning.

Half a century ago we pioneered the specialty dental care that we now deliver in our fully equipped Center for Patients with Special Needs. The School’s general dental clinics and 11 specialty clinics play an integral role in improving the oral health of the patient population of southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond. Some patients travel hundreds of miles to access the high-quality care our clinics provide every day.

Our researchers expand the horizons of knowledge and are internationally renowned for their groundbreaking developments in the areas of craniofacial genetics and craniofacial regeneration. We are identifying genes that contribute to complex human phenotypes, and are using tissue engineering to heal wounds and restore function and appearance to defects of the face and skull.

Every day, the positive contributions of our faculty, staff, residents and students—the Pitt Dental Medicine family—demonstrate their commitment to our mission of advancing the future of dental medicine through teaching, research and service.
Vision

The mission of the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine is to improve oral health through TEACHING, RESEARCH AND SERVICE

TEACHING
a new generation of clinicians to deliver oral health care with skill and compassion

RESEARCH
that expands the boundaries of our knowledge and builds on discoveries to enhance human life

SERVICE
to the diverse community of patients who entrust themselves to our care

The University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine will be a diverse, welcoming and supportive community widely recognized for excellence and leadership in the improvement of oral health.

We will train our students to care for patients skillfully, professionally, and compassionately; to treat each patient with respect and kindness; and to be aware at all times of the privilege and responsibility of being entrusted with the care of another human being. We will model evidence-based treatment and the importance of life-long learning.

We will actively contribute to the mission of the University of Pittsburgh to be a leading research institution, broadening the scientific foundations of dental and craniofacial medicine and translating new knowledge into life-enhancing treatments for people everywhere.

We will be known for our clinical expertise and serve as a regional resource to which our neighbors will turn for comprehensive care. We will use the best techniques and current technologies to create optimal outcomes for our patients.

We will maintain a strong and enduring connection with our alumni to help ensure our school’s success for generations to come. Our alumni will carry on our mission through clinical excellence, service to the dental profession, and generous outreach to people in need.

Values

Service
Providing exemplary service to our students, faculty, patients, and society.

Passion for Excellence
Continuously striving to achieve the highest level of excellence in education, research, and service.

Professionalism and Integrity
Adhering to the highest ethical and professional standards of our profession.

Leadership
Serving as role models and mentors to students, faculty and staff to shape the future of oral health care.

Collaboration
Embracing a team approach to accomplish shared goals.

Humanism
Respecting the contributions of each person within the School of Dental Medicine family to foster an environment of trust, safety, and fairness.

Mission
The School of Dental Medicine is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for students in its predoctoral, residency, graduate, and dental hygiene programs. Our graduates will be highly skilled, compassionate and ethical practitioners in their field. Clinical education and delivery of care will be patient-centered with respect for the uniqueness of each patient’s individual and cultural history.

Education at the School of Dental Medicine will be based on a solid foundation of the best available scientific evidence and will foster the skills needed to critically evaluate new knowledge. Through collaboration with the strong research programs within the School and the University, we will facilitate student interest in scholarly activities that help advance the profession of dental medicine and instill the value of lifelong learning. Our advanced degree programs will provide formal opportunities for students to pursue knowledge in clinical specialties, the biomedical sciences, and public health. Authentic patient experiences alongside other health professions students will prepare our graduates to practice as members of an interprofessional health care team to improve patient outcomes. Our students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and values that will distinguish them as 21st century leaders in their profession and in their communities.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1
Education

Enhance our educational programs to remain current with the changing landscape of dental science, practice, and technology with an emphasis on evidence-based practice and lifelong learning.

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the patient base to provide expanded clinical educational experiences to all students.
2. Emphasize contemporary approaches to disease management and prevention based on risk classification.
3. Adapt educational approaches to facilitate use of evidence-based andragogical methods.
4. Establish a culture of excellence in teaching through faculty development opportunities.
5. Empower students to take part in continuing education programs to develop the skills necessary to critically evaluate content as it relates to evidence-based practice and lifelong learning.
6. Support graduate and advanced education programs that meet community needs and diversify the School’s educational offerings.
The School of Dental Medicine is dedicated to providing comprehensive oral health care services to the people of western Pennsylvania and beyond. This mission to serve is aligned with our mission to train students as excellent clinicians prepared to meet the needs of a diverse population, including the underserved, uninsured, and those with special needs. Our students, residents, and faculty will provide care across all disciplines of oral medicine that address a broad range of patient needs through all stages of life. All patient care, from the most basic to the complex care provided in our Center for Patients with Special Needs and our Multidisciplinary Implant Center, will be provided with compassion and expertise.

Our faculty will be among the best and brightest in the profession, known for their knowledge, skill, and evidence-based approach to patient care. They will serve as role models to our students and their expertise will be recognized as a valuable resource for their colleagues in the profession. Our staff will embody the essence of the “Pitt family” through a customer service approach that demonstrates kindness and competence with every patient. We will work alongside our health sciences colleagues to cultivate interprofessional collaborative care to improve the oral health outcomes of our patients. Our patient care team of students, residents, faculty and staff will appreciate the privilege given to them by patients who entrust their care to us. Through access to the latest technologies and attractive, contemporary facilities, we will deliver patient care that meets or exceeds our own defined standards and inspires our patients to recommend us to their families and friends.

OBJECTIVES

1. Optimize the patient’s care experience.
2. Expect the quality of care provided to consistently meet or exceed our own standards of care.
3. Expand the use of evidence-based, cutting-edge patient care techniques to include incorporation of diagnostic and other personalized oral medicine tools.
4. Expand opportunities for community outreach and interprofessional collaboration in the delivery of patient care.
5. Partner with the University to accelerate advocacy initiatives to broaden state funding of oral health care services to adults and children in Pennsylvania.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2
Patient Care

Serve the oral health needs of western Pennsylvania and beyond throughout the stages of life, including individuals with special needs.
Research

Create a robust, diversified platform of basic, translational, and clinical research in strategically focused areas of concentration.

In the last decade, the School of Dental Medicine has made strategic investments and built an exciting level of momentum in dental research. The 2015 opening of Salk Hall Pavilion, which will house the School’s labs in 26,000 square feet of purpose-built research space, marks the beginning of a new phase in the program’s growth, and an opportunity to expand the research enterprise strategically in both basic and translational research.

Nationally and internationally, the School of Dental Medicine is known for its exceptional work in the fields of craniomaxillofacial genetics and tissue engineering. These programs’ collaboration with the Human Genetics Program of the Pitt School of Medicine and with the renowned McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine magnify the impact and elevate the profile of the School of Dental Medicine’s research efforts. Investment in these core programs will continue as we explore, evaluate and select new areas of focus for basic, translational and clinical research, potentially expanding existing collaborations and identifying new scholarly partnerships and alliances.

We are determined to expand the translational component of our research portfolio. While nurturing research interests and encouraging scholarly efforts in current clinicians, we will actively recruit additional clinical scientists to build a critical mass of expertise. To support this expansion and ensure the continuity of our long history of research and development, we will seek new funding opportunities through federal, private, and corporate partnerships and endowments.

OBJECTIVES

1. Establish three to five areas of scholarly concentration with a critical mass of researchers for long-term investment and development.

2. Expand research activities involving faculty, residents, and students into all clinical departments.

3. Increase submissions for extramural funding from basic science and clinical faculty.

4. Develop strategies to increase students’ and residents’ interest in research and academic dentistry.

5. Create a strategy to support an expanded research program, including the establishment of endowed chairs.
Alumni

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Foster a strong and enduring relationship with our alumni.

The recruitment and enrollment of students into the programs at the School of Dental Medicine establish an enduring bond between our students and the School. This bond is based on the expectation that through collaboration, both the alumni and the School can be better positioned to achieve their goals. On the School’s part, collaboration consists of providing a continuum of services that begins well before graduation and extends throughout our alumni’s professional lives as they mature from new graduate to established professional.

Serving alumni requires ongoing communication aimed at identifying evolving professional needs and a commitment to be responsive to those needs. We will strive to enhance existing activities that connect alumni with the School and commit to engaging with alumni at all stages of professional development to ensure that we are being responsive to their needs.

Giving back is also important. Every student, while in training, has benefited from the generosity of alumni through their contributions of time and resources. By making their own contributions to the School after graduation, alumni can help to ensure that the School continues to provide the same benefits to current students that they enjoyed while in school. These contributions extend well beyond financial contributions and include mentorship, engagement with students and support for student awards and other professional activities. We will engage with our alumni by providing them with ways to strengthen their affiliation with the School and contribute to the success of our students.

Ensure among prospective students that the School is viewed as a welcoming institution that will support them throughout their professional development.

Create a nurturing and supportive relationship with students throughout their time at the School.

Serve as link between students and alumni to facilitate the transition to practice through support in seeking post-doctoral training and practice opportunities.

Enhance educational support to alumni by providing a strong and accessible continuing education program.

Ensure ongoing communication and support with alumni so that they remain connected to the School’s activities and take pride in its accomplishments.

OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure among prospective students that the School is viewed as a welcoming institution that will support them throughout their professional development.

2. Create a nurturing and supportive relationship with students throughout their time at the School.

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4. Enhance educational support to alumni by providing a strong and accessible continuing education program.

5. Ensure ongoing communication and support with alumni so that they remain connected to the School’s activities and take pride in its accomplishments.
The School of Dental Medicine will nurture a culture of understanding, dignity and respect for all. The quantity and quality of communications will be expanded and enhanced to ensure that all members of the School community feel included in its life. The environment at the School of Dental Medicine will be regularly assessed and measured, with all invited to share their views. A disciplined process will be created to prioritize and execute initiatives to continuously improve the School experience for all.

Efforts to recruit a diverse cadre of qualified students will continue to expand, through improved pipeline initiatives, stronger outreach efforts, and increasing scholarship support. The School will align itself with established University programs to identify high quality candidates to enrich the diversity of faculty and staff. By active and visible expression of its core values, the School of Dental Medicine will strengthen its identity as a family that values the uniqueness of each of its members.

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a diverse, welcoming and supportive environment for students, faculty and staff.
2. Act in visible ways to promote understanding, dignity and respect for all members of the School of Dental Medicine community.
3. Expand and improve communications among all constituencies at the School.
4. Upgrade physical spaces and equipment to meet School of Dental Medicine community and patient needs.
5. Strengthen efforts to attract and retain a diverse population of students, faculty and staff.
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<td>Associate Dean</td>
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