DEFINING THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL DENTISTRY
The profound research performed at Pitt Dental Medicine is responsible for the steady improvement in rank over nearly two decades—validation of our commitment to exploration, investigation and analysis, and to the quality of the innovation being created here.

Pitt Dental Medicine is ranked number four for National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR).

“This ranking is reflective of our alignment with the goals for research set forth by the NIH. Pitt Dental Medicine has been ranked in the top 10 for almost a decade, but this move into the top 5, at number 4, is significant. It reflects a long-term approach to becoming one of the premier dental research institutions in the country—in the world. It is a powerful statement of our staying power and the decades of hard work toward international acclaim.”

Bernard J. Costello DDS MD Dean

“Pitt Dental Medicine has been engaged in top-notch, world-class research for many years. Being in the top 5 of NIDCR funding is particularly rewarding, though, because it is the major metric of U.S. Dental School research strength. Pitt is now shoulder-to-shoulder with other particularly strong research dental schools. Our research is on the cutting edge and applies state-of-the-art approaches to establish major research programs that, as evidenced by the success in getting grants, are widely recognized by other researchers outside of Pitt. Contributing to our research strength are the many productive collaborations with faculty investigators at Pitt, across the country and worldwide.”

Mary Marazita PhD Director of the Center for Craniofacial and Dental Genetics

“This ranking is important to the dental field, our school, and our basic and clinical faculty, as the new knowledge generated will improve patient care and the health of the whole population. Our cutting-edge research is important to patient therapy—the knowledge that they will receive the most advanced care. Our students and alumni should feel a sense of pride in their Pitt Dental Medicine home.”

Charles Sfeir DDS PhD Associate Dean for Research

“The rankings validate the effort and talent of our faculty and staff and also demonstrate that we, as an institution, are “all in” with our support of the research missions of the dental profession and the University of Pittsburgh. Unquestionably, the new knowledge that our research generates will be important to improving patient care and population health. The “top 5” ranking, while arbitrary, is certainly something that brings attention to our school and will support our efforts to establish a sustainable research infrastructure. Maintaining that status is a worthy goal and one that, ideally, will continue to motivate us to continue achieving at the highest level.”

Robert Weyant MS DMD DrPH Associate Dean for Dental Public Health and Community Outreach

“The School of Dental Medicine’s ranking is an indication of its prominence in both dental research and in the training of new dental professionals. The school’s success reflects our campus-wide commitment to excellence at the University of Pittsburgh. I congratulate Dean B.J. Costello and all of the school’s leadership, faculty, staff and students on this achievement.”

Arthur S. Levine JD Senior Vice Chancellor for the Health Sciences and John and Gertrude Petersen Dean, School of Medicine

![Graph showing Pitt Dental Medicine's ranking in the top five for NIDCR funding from 2003 to 2018.](image-url)
FROM THE DEAN

Dear friends and colleagues,

I am excited to provide this introduction in what is my first issue of our regular print publication. As the new dean of Pitt Dental Medicine, I could not feel more honored to serve our School. Many of you have expressed excitement about our future and, together, we already are hard at work on many initiatives including a comprehensive digital dentistry platform, a major curriculum re-alignment, new communication platforms, a strategic visioning process, new collaborations with the University, and a host of new faculty acquisitions with more to come. You may have noticed our increased presence on social media platforms and if you have not visited them yet, I encourage you to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. On those feeds and posts, you will find additional content and timely updates.

I am fortunate to be carrying on the rich history that began in the late 1800s the eighth dean of Pitt Dental Medicine, and I look forward to the opportunity that we now have to move forward. At Pitt Dental Medicine, we enjoy telling the stories of success that we have collected together and the thought-leaders that will develop the next generation of technologies to take dentistry into a distinctive and completely new era.

Also highlighted in this issue is our successful Research Symposium, at which we celebrated our new ranking of 4th in the NIH funding list for dental schools in the United States. The program featured cutting-edge discoveries from our faculty and students. We also are able to showcase some of the work done by students in our Summer Research Scholar Program, supported by the Dean’s Office.

Celebrating Your Healthiest Self

This past year gave those of us at Pitt an opportunity to focus on our own health and wellness through programming designed to support the University’s Year of the Healthy U. These programs helped bring together not only our own staff, students and faculty, but also those from other schools, most notably the close collaboration that we have with the School of Pharmacy. Next year, we will focus on increasing our global presence and making a global impact with the University through the Year of Pitt Global. This allows us also to reach out in new ways to our local, national and international friends, colleagues and alumni. You will see a number of alumni featured in this issue and news about all that they do to make Pitt proud. If you know of a unique story featuring one of our alumni, please let our Office of Alumni Affairs know. We are proud to tell the stories of our graduates.

We aspire to be the destination for students, faculty and staff who want to be part of a premiere, elite school of dental medicine—one that is driven by innovation and blends clinical expertise with superior research and scholarly activity. We also should be a University-based oral healthcare delivery enterprise that patients choose because our experience represents the high quality and efficiency expected from a premiere University coupled to a world-class health system. It is important that we succeed at these goals so we can be the best resource possible for our community and beyond. I believe that we will succeed most effectively by rewarding and cultivating a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration, diversity, equity and cooperative interdependence. Together, we can work to build that vision into a reality as we develop the future here at Pitt.

You can help us craft a new vision. Contribute your ideas, talents and support to assist us in seizing this opportunity.

Hail to Pitt!

Yours in service,

Bernard J. Costello DMD, MD
Dean and Professor
University of Pittsburgh
School of Dental Medicine

Dr. Bernard J. Costello carries on a legacy begun more than a century ago. Pitt Dental Medicine has been guided by 7 deans over the past 114 years.

H. E. Friesell, BS, ScD, LLD, FACD 1904-1946
Founder of the American College of Dentists

Lawrence E. Van Kirk, DDS, MS 1947-1953

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Lawrence E. Van Kirk, DDS, MS 1947-1953

William F. Swanson, DDS, MS 1953-1961

Edward J. Forrest, DMD, MS, PhD 1961-1983

James E. Smudski, DMD, PhD 1983-1988

Jon B. Suzuki, DDS, PhD, MBA 1988-1999

Thomas W. Braun, DMD, MS, PhD 2000-2018

Dr. Thomas Braun (DMD ’73, PhD ’77) spent his entire education and career at the University of Pittsburgh. Learn more about him and celebrate his many milestones and notable achievements by visiting our website.
LETTER FROM THE DENTAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Pitt Dental Medicine Alumni,

I hope your summer got off to a great start! At the school, our summer began with the successful matriculation and beautiful graduation ceremony honoring the Pitt Dental Class of 2018. And no one can forget about the excitement of welcoming a new incoming class at the White Coat Ceremony each August.

As always, Pitt Dental Medicine continues to attract the best and brightest students from across the country with a competitive curriculum and a commitment to evidenced-based technological advances in dental medicine. In this issue, you’ll find information pertaining to the numerous collaborative projects happening throughout the school. Faculty from the School of Dental Medicine are working closely with advanced research programs in the School of Medicine as well as the Swanson School of Engineering to explore how digital technology, 3D printing, and tissue engineering can advance the field of dentistry. Developments in these areas ultimately will improve not only outcomes for patients, but will help reduce costs and enhance the overall patient experience in all of our offices.

Personally, the advances in 3D scanning technology have greatly improved the patient experience in my office. Not only are the 3D scans completed more quickly than the alternative PVS impressions, but the scanning procedure is more comfortable for the patient, shortens the turn-around time for appliance delivery and results in a better fitting appliance by reducing the number of steps involved in appliance fabrication.

Technology will continue to rapidly improve and Pitt Dental Medicine will strive to stay at the forefront of dental advances. I hope you find the information in this magazine useful and are encouraged to continue to incorporate evidenced-based technology into your personal practices.

Thanks and Hail to Pitt,
Lisa M. Babb, DMD, MSD
Class of 2011
Digital technology is changing the world entirely—from telephones to cars to the ways that all businesses produce, market, and deliver their products and services. Dentistry, of course, is among the professions being transformed by rapidly changing digital technologies, such as intraoral scanners, cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT), computer-assisted design/computer-assisted manufacturing (CAD/CAM), fabrication via 3D printing, and computer-assisted surgical navigation.
The digital revolution presents both challenges and opportunities to the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine. As faculty and students in the school’s subspecialties continue to establish innovative ways to incorporate technology, Dean Bernard J. Costello, DMD, MD, encourages them to think beyond individual technological toys and instead consider progressive ways that these technologies can positively influence the enterprise-wide delivery of patient care as well as beneficially alter the entire workflow within the school.

“Very few dental schools have what we have—a dental school that’s both contiguous with the health sciences but also contiguous with a dynamic university that has all of those other components. It’s very rare. You can literally walk down the street and say, ‘I have a new idea about how to use this technology,’ then take it to the next level without leaving the University.”

—Dean Bernard J. Costello, DMD, MD

“People usually think of the toy or the tool first—before they think about the problems they want to solve. From my standpoint, that’s the classic mistake people make when they think about investing in a technology,” Dr. Costello says. “It’s relatively easy for any school to purchase this equipment. And if they’re smart about it, they can probably accomplish what they want to accomplish—which is teach students how to use an optical scanner, for example, and perhaps teach them how to use a 3D printer to their advantage.”

But the dean wants digital dentistry in Pittsburgh to truly evolve the entire care continuum: making diagnoses; planning treatment; educating patients about their own cases; manufacturing implants and prostheses; capturing, storing, and analyzing data; and planning and performing procedures and surgeries. And he says that faculty and staff at Pitt Dental Medicine have a unique advantage, thanks to the close proximity to and collaborative relationships with the medical school, the UPMC network, the Swanson School of Engineering, the School of Computing and Information, and experts in regenerative medicine and other fields.

“The power of a place like the University of Pittsburgh is that there are so many different platforms and disciplines that we should really be creating new workflows and technologies, or new ways to adapt new technologies that teach students and residents how to take it to the next level so they’re on the cutting edge—so that they are creating the pace, not just keeping pace with what’s out there,” he says. “Very few dental schools have what we have—a dental school that’s both contiguous with the health sciences but also contiguous with a dynamic university that has all of those other components. It’s very rare. You can literally walk down the street and say, ‘I have a new idea about how to use this technology’ then take it to the next level without leaving the University.”

And many faculty are doing just that.

3D Printing a Denture Framework

One such interdisciplinary collaboration is a project with Swanson School of Engineering that uses additive manufacturing (aka 3D printing method) and generative design (the use of computer software and artificial intelligence) to create and test denture frameworks tailored to individual patients.

John Ference, DMD, MPH, a prosthodontist at Pitt Dental Medicine, and Markus Chmielus, PhD, an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science, aim to make stronger products with more accurate fit at lower cost with a method that is radically different from traditional subtractive dental techniques.

“I think this has the potential to shake up the dental profession.”

—Dr. John Ference

“Dentists fabricate dentures in the same way we’ve been doing it for 20 years, or more.” Dr. Ference says. “Traditional methods of fabrication require numerous steps that include making impressions, fabricating models, transporting models back and forth to the dental laboratory, casting metal, adding porcelain, finishing, polishing, and storing casts.”

Dr. Chmielus says the established method leaves much potential for error. “A metal partial dental framework normally gets cast from an imprint made with a gummy material in your mouth. Then another shape is made and out of that shape the metal framework is produced,” he says. “It is a long, fairly complex method and not extremely accurate. The gummy material gets weighted around so it can be removed from the patient’s mouth, then they cast another shape and then another. There are a lot of steps involved where errors can be introduced.”

The research partners propose a new procedure: take digital images of a patient’s mouth, use AI algorithms and computer programming to design a denture framework; then 3D print the product.

They did exactly that for an in vivo proof-of-concept study recently published in the journal Additive Manufacturing. The team compared the mechanical and physical properties of their 3D-printed framework with traditionally manufactured frameworks. They found that the physical and mechanical properties of their denture were very similar to traditional dentures.

Dr. Ference’s work has been recognized by the American Dental Education Association (ADEA), which awarded Pitt Dental Medicine the 2016 Gries Award for Outstanding Innovation by an Academic Dental Institution. The findings have been presented to an engineering audience at the Materials Science and Technology 2017 conference, and Dr. Ference is preparing to submit the work to the American College of Prosthodontists and the Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry. Ultimately, Drs. Ference and Chmielus aim to create a denture framework out of a biocompatible metal, retest the mechanical and dimensional properties, then print and place the dentures in patients. They are working toward a pilot study that will take place in the School of Dental Medicine.

“I think this has the potential to shake up the dental profession,” Dr. Ference says. “Future dental professionals will be able to take a hand-held scan or CBCT scan of a patient requiring a prosthesis, modify and design the prosthesis based upon that scan on a computer, 3D print the prosthesis, and deliver and adjust it before the patient even leaves the operating room.”

Computer-Assisted Surgery

Another facet of digital dentistry is computer-assisted treatment planning and computer-assisted surgery. Richard Bauer, DMD, MD, assistant professor and residency program director for the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, together with colleagues and oral surgery residents, use software every day for patient evaluation, diagnosis, treatment planning and surgery. For example, the school’s faculty use CBCT to collect digital images of patients who are missing teeth and need dental implant therapy, or those who have a craniofacial abnormality or dysmorphic jaw and...
Intra-Oral Scanning

Dr. Bauer also is conducting projects involving intra-oral scanning. He just received grant funding to expand a study that uses intra-oral scanning and CBCT to follow patients for one year and evaluate the long-term results of soft-tissue therapies by examining bone anatomy and soft tissue.

He also is working with the Department of Athletic Training in Pitt’s School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences in a community outreach program that visits underserved city high schools, builds awareness of facial trauma and concussion, and uses intra-oral scanning to create custom mouth guards.

Dr. Bauer’s team is exploring using the same technology to make custom fluoride trays for patients at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center. Oncology patients often have reduced saliva and painful mucositis, which lead to tooth decay. The program, set to begin in 2019, will eliminate the pain these patients experience with traditional tray fabrication, helping them get the treatment they need for oral health.

Intraoral scanners, such as this one from Dentsply Sirona, provide higher quality impressions than traditional methods.

Mining Digital Data

“Digital dentistry is not just limited to patient images, scans, and devices that are printed and manufactured,” Dr. Costello says. “Some of the intrinsic power of our new technology lies in the ability to analyze, manipulate, and understand very, very, very large data sets and their interactions.”

This spring, the University of Pittsburgh’s new School for Computing and Information launched the Modeling and Managing Complicated Systems Institute, which will use computing modeling and AI to mine vast amounts of data and information to uncover new solutions to complicated issues, including the opioid epidemic, national security, cancer, and much more. The institute will pair AI and machine-learning researchers with individuals from academia, industry, nonprofits, and the government to develop algorithms designed to address their specific problems and to use modeling experiments to provide concrete solutions.

One of these projects will involve Pitt Dental Medicine’s Department of Dental Public Health. Collaborators will examine utilization of dental care across large populations. “We have the ability to understand urban and rural dental care utilization and trends based on new ways that we can look at modeling these complex care networks, and the effects that interventions may have over large groups of people,” Dr. Costello says. “Our scientists and clinicians in the Department of Dental Public Health are exploring these new exciting avenues of research.”

Major Changes Lie Ahead

Timothy Erdle, DMD, a clinical assistant professor at Pitt Dental Medicine, has been testing the capabilities of 3D printing since its earliest iterations. He sees practically limitless potential use cases for digital dentistry and 3D printing in the future.

“It provides training and set-up for the surgery, and decreases the overall amount of time the surgery takes, so surgery is easier and more predictable for the resident and the patient,” Erdle says. “It provides training and set-up for the surgery, and decreases the overall amount of time the surgery takes, so surgery is easier and more predictable for the resident and the patient.”

He sees in the future of Pitt Dental Medicine obtaining a cone-beam/3D image of the patient; converting the data into a model using software; digitally augmenting the bone via a surgical guide; printing a mandible or part of a maxilla, for example; performing a trial surgery; and finally, placing the implant in the patient and training students to do the same. “It provides training and set-up for the surgery, and decreases the overall amount of time the surgery takes, so surgery is easier and more predictable for the resident and the patient,” Erdle says. “It provides training and set-up for the surgery, and decreases the overall amount of time the surgery takes, so surgery is easier and more predictable for the resident and the patient.”

To that end, the school had appointed a small group charged with the consideration and planning of a set of institutional goals regarding digital dentistry, including: clinical applications, research, equipment needs, use of existing equipment, training needs, and curriculum changes.

Anitha Potluri, BDS, DMD, MDcs, chair of the Department of Diagnostic Sciences and a member of this specialized group, says that one of their goals is to move toward eliminating traditional plaster dental models at the school by using intra-oral scanners. Some scanners already are in use at the school, and the group is recommending additional acquisitions. With intra-oral scans, dental faculty and students can create whole models, then, for example, use 3D imaging software to print guides for implant and crown placement. “This technology already is being used in medical offices,” Potluri says. “It is becoming a lot more popular than it was. Digital scanning has become a standard of care.”

Potluri feels strongly that going completely digital will help the school improve the patient workflow, create and print products in-house, recruit patients, save time, and reduce costs.
Shown at right is the digital workflow plan for a patient that underwent dental implant therapy to treat two teeth that were lost during a hockey injury. The patient’s CBCT data was obtained and uploaded into surgical planning software. Customized implants were planned in ideal positions for this patient and a surgical placement guide as well as provisional restorations were fabricated.

In addition to considering how to fully incorporate scanning into the school’s day-to-day clinical processes, the group is exploring how to continue to introduce changing technology into the curriculum, whether that involves creating new courses such as electives, tweaking existing curriculum, or taking a hybrid approach, as well as how to keep the curriculum continuously current. Strategies being explored include case-based applications, external speakers and experiences for students, literature reviews, journal clubs, simulation labs, and virtual educational experiences.

Perhaps the most impactful part of the group’s proposal is a central digital dentistry center—a place where all subspecialties at Pitt Dental Medicine can come together under one roof to work collaboratively with advanced equipment, including intraoral scanners, CBCT, robust computing capabilities, software to plan implants and surgeries, and patient chairs. Within this center, all digital data would be launched, stored, reported, and retrieved through a single, school-wide picture archiving and communication system (PACS), wherein every patient’s record would be integrated.

Dr. Potluri sees potential opportunities for a digital dentistry center to boost the school’s research grants and projects. Ultimately, she sees the center as a hub for patient-centered longitudinal and comparative effectiveness research projects that explore the best materials for dental products, applications for regenerative medicine, and further uses for 3D printing and machine learning.

Dr. Potluri says the school has kept up with many changes in technology, and that continued evolution will positively push the boundaries of dental medicine. “It goes without saying that if we are stagnant, then we are not going to be part of the future of dental medicine.

Although he is excited about the potential for digital and 3D technology in many facets of dentistry, he cautions his students and the entire industry to make sure that any advancements are evidence based. “There’s nothing you really can’t do with 3D printing that you can’t do another way,” he says. “But is it something that dentistry needs or not? Is it something that benefits patients?”

He stressed the importance of evidence-based practice and comparative effectiveness research whenever dentistry implements technology, as well as the importance of educating students along the way.

“Some of the students have played with 3D printers in their garages. It’s not a difficult technology to comprehend,” he says. “But there is more to it than it initially appears. We have to revamp our materials courses so students understand the limitations of the dental materials used in 3D printing—how they shrink as items are built.
layer by layer, how they shrink more between layers than within layers, etc. Students need to understand why this happens and what to look for to choose the best materials for specific jobs. And they need to understand digital design. At this time, students have one cursory exposure. They need to develop experience with the software—how to draw on a computer.”

Dr. Bauer agrees that students, faculty, and practicing dentists must have a full understanding of the process to be successful. “If you’re not really well versed in the technology that we’re using, then you may not be aware of potential pitfalls… The residents and students have to think a little bit differently, they have to think about how the technology can alter the way a procedure can turn out,” he says. “Before, the responsibility rested upon you and only you. Now, you may be relying on a lab or a third party to fabricate something. And you need to be involved in the actual design of that. Because as the clinician/surgeon, you’re the ultimate decision maker on the liability and executing. So there’s a whole new conversation that we have to have. While these technologies may make your life easier, you’re also assuming a little bit more liability because others share in the responsibility to fabricate something that suits the patient. Being cognizant of how all of the processes happen behind the scenes is really important. It’s not good enough just to say, ‘I’m going to hit this easy button, and someone will send me something and I will just use it.’ You have to have a thorough understanding of the process.”

Additional Challenges of Implementation

Clearly, the future is promising, but challenges and hard work lie ahead. "Dentistry is never going to be entirely digital because it is something you do with your hands. We don’t want to be entirely digital," Dr. Erdle adds. "But digital dentistry is a great tool to have available." He hopes the school and its faculty can be "cautiously digital," Dr. Erdle adds. "But digital dentistry is a great tool to have. Sometimes those two things compete a little bit. You have to go back and teach students really sound clinical judgment and execution—and sometimes those two things compete a little bit."

—Dr. Richard Bauer

Creating the Curriculum for the Future of Dental Education

"Changes in the curriculum have been happening, and there’s an understanding of the need for further change in the curriculum," Dr. Ference says. "Administrators are open to those ideas. They know it’s necessary if they want to be competitive.”

However, Dr. Bauer summarizes the conundrum faced by academic institutions. "Education has a really interesting dilemma. You want to push the boundaries of innovation and you want to be known for being on the cutting edge of delivering care, but you have to go back and teach students really sound clinical judgment and execution—and sometimes those two things compete a little bit.”

Jean O’Donnell, BSN, MSN, DMD, associate dean for academic affairs, says the school plans to find balance by updating the curriculum, making room for new technologies, and removing outdated procedures. The focus will be on implementing more hands-on experiences with digital techniques through simulation and direct patient care. In the very near future, O’Donnell says, students will have more patient experiences using CAD/CAM, CERAC crowns, and even 3D printing.

Thomas Kunkel, BS, DMD, assistant professor and interim chair of prosthodontics, says that current digital-related training starts as students near the end of their second year and continues throughout the remainder of their education. Students receive didactic coursework, then work in the lab. Their hands-on experience involves taking digital imaging with Omnicam intra-oral devices, then using CEREC MC XL milling machines to create all-ceramic crowns and fixed bridges, then making adjustments as needed. Students also place a dental implant in simulated bone.

Although such experiences are not yet required for graduation (by the school or by the Commission on Dental Accreditation [CODA]), "It’s not going anywhere; it’s prevalent. The students love it and they want to be exposed to it," Dr. Kunkel says. "I believe this eventually will be a CODA requirement. I feel like Pitt is going to be ahead of the curve."

Expansions for the curriculum may include expanding the didactic portion of the digital applications, taking intra-oral impressions, capturing CBCT images, and merging the two to create a surgical Digital workflow for an implant case complicated by minimal space availability.

Building the Digital Dentistry Core

Pitt Dental Medicine is excited to welcome Dr. Suvendra Vijayase to the Department of Diagnostic Science where his expertise in oral and maxillofacial radiology coupled with his interest in computer science, information systems, and artificial intelligence (AI) will help expand our capabilities in computer assisted dentistry, imaging and 3D manufacturing as we enhance and grow new partnerships at Pitt, UPMC and CMU. He will be joining a very talented group of faculty—as noted in our feature story—to create the foundation of the digital dentistry expansion here at Pitt Dental Medicine. He recently was recognized by the ADA with the Ahlstrom Award for his dedication to 3D printing. To learn more about Dr. Vijayase, please see page 35.
University Dental Health Services Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology Biopsy Service

For more than 40 years the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology Biopsy Service has conducted consultation and tissue diagnostic services for the dental and medical communities of Western Pennsylvania. Our board-certified oral and maxillofacial pathologists provide a rapid, accurate diagnosis of your biopsy specimens.

- Call or e-mail to request your free biopsy kits
- Your detailed pathology report will be sent by fax or mail
- The patient will be billed directly

We accept Medicare and many commercial insurance programs, including Highmark BlueCross/BlueShield and UPMC.

dental.pitt.edu/oral-and-maxillofacial-pathology-biopsy-service
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The Story Continues Online

Learn more about Pitt Dental Medicine’s growth in digital dentistry by visiting our web site to continue the conversation about digital dentistry through videos and additional photos to help you better understand these technologies and capabilities.

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I am retired from actively practicing dentistry. However, as the Titusville Campus CDE coordinator, I still may contribute to the effort of providing quality and pertinent material updates concerning current treatment techniques for our area Dental Health Care Professional Teams resulting in the highest level of care that we can provide for our patients.” — Dr. Joseph Kobylinski

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The University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine Edward J. Forrest Continuing Dental Education Center provides quality, timely and innovative continuing dental education programs to dental professionals in the tri-state area.

In addition to the CE Center on-campus, the Center for Continuing Dental Education provides programming at 12 off-campus sites throughout the state of Pennsylvania (including one site conveniently located in Ohio). This is consistent with the Center’s commitment to providing community-based continuing education programs in communities where there may be limited options for high quality continuing education programming.

At each of the 12 off-campus sites, the Center is aided by local dentists who serve as off-campus coordinators, program advisors, liaisons to the community and hosts for CE programs.

HELPING TO BRING LIFELONG LEARNING TO ALL OF PENNSYLVANIA

As professionals, we are obligated to practice the concept of lifelong learning — the society we serve demands nothing less of us.

Annually, the off-campus coordinators come together for a weekend in May to debrief the year and plan for next year. This year, coordinators and their guests were joined by dean, Dr. Bernard J. Costello. Coordinators enjoyed a reception at the Grand Concourse on Friday night before Saturday’s working meeting, which included opportunities for them to review the past year’s events, evaluate speakers, discuss logistic and administrative issues, and begin planning the following year’s courses.

The University of Pittsburgh is an American Dental Association Continuing Education Recognition Program (ADA CERP)–recognized provider. ADA CERP is a service of the American Dental Association to identify quality providers of continuing dental education. ADA CERP does not approve or endorse individual courses or instructors, nor does it imply acceptance of credit hours by boards of dentistry.
Pitt Dental Medicine held its eighteenth annual Research Symposium in May. Research accomplishments and endeavors developed here at Pitt Dental Medicine were on display this year. These accomplishments are testaments to the dedication of our researchers and the vision that Pitt Dental Medicine has for the future. Though their research ranges from core basic science, translational research, and genetic studies to public health initiatives, it all shares an innovative spirit that sets it apart. The annual Research Symposium allows us to gather together to see and support the progress of our researchers and their profound impact on clinical treatments, and through this, recognize the potential at Pitt Dental Medicine for even greater achievements in the future.

Find out more about the 2018 Pitt Dental Medicine Research Symposium online. Visit dental.pitt.edu/research to download the Research Symposium book for details that include presentations, research interests and publications from Pitt Dental Medicine faculty and students.

PITT DENTAL MEDICINE
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2018

PITT DENTAL MEDICINE IS RANKED FOURTH IN FUNDING FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DENTAL AND CRANIOFACIAL RESEARCH (NIDCR).

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Dr. Tim Erdle presents Digital Dentistry at the School of Dental Medicine during the Research Symposium Luncheon.

Dr. Anitha Potluri and Dr. Juan Taboas presented with Dr. Erdle.

For more information about digital dentistry, please see the cover story on page 8.

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PITT DENTAL MEDICINE
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2018

PITT DENTAL MEDICINE IS RANKED FOURTH IN FUNDING FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DENTAL AND CRANIOFACIAL RESEARCH (NIDCR).

The profound research performed at Pitt Dental Medicine is responsible for the steady improvement in rank over nearly two decades—validation of our commitment to exploration, investigation and analysis, and to the quality of the innovation being created here.

Dr. Tim Erdle presents Digital Dentistry at the School of Dental Medicine during the Research Symposium Luncheon.

Dr. Anitha Potluri and Dr. Juan Taboas presented with Dr. Erdle.

For more information about digital dentistry, please see the cover story on page 8.
PITT DENTAL MEDICINE

DEAN’S SUMMER SCHOLAR PROGRAM STRENGTHENS STUDENT DISCOVERY

Casey White, Class of 2021

For Patrick Donnelly, PhD, under the mentorship of Dr. Juan Taboa, being a summer scholar meant building on his PhD in chemistry and applying his well-honed skills to the field of dentistry. Patrick describes his duties: “I spent the summer developing and testing gelatin sponges that were to be used as part of a device for dental pulp regeneration following root canal therapy. The sponges were used in a chorioallantoic membrane model at the end of the summer to simulate cell infiltration as would occur in vivo.” This research resulted in his project, A Chorioallantoic Membrane Model for Dental Pulp Regeneration, which is a clinical application focused in basic science research. “The research helped me to get acquainted with the current research problems in dentistry and the approaches people are taking to solve them,” explained Patrick. Like many of his colleagues, Patrick uses online media, such as LinkedIn and Google Scholar to convey his research findings.

Outside of the basic science wet lab, Andrew Bortot, mentored by Dr. Seth Weinberg, is investigating prenatal androgen exposure and tooth development. As an integral part of the COHRA studies undertaken at the University of Pittsburgh and West Virginia University, Andrew analyzed the distance between the flexion creases on digits two through five. “The digit ratio is an indication of prenatal androgen levels and may give clinicians a quick insight into the best treatment plan for a patient, simply by looking at their hands.” Andrew pointed out. Utilizing current technology, Andrew was able to track patient’s development over many years, through electronic analysis of hundreds of digit ratio scans.

In the clinics, students addressed current protocols used at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine, as they relate to clinical knowledge and patients’ rights. Renee Stevens, under the mentorship of Dr. Sarah Esek Grafton and Dr. Katie Ryan investigated dental treatment planning considerations for patients using cannabis. “The prevalence of marijuana use has been on the rise in recent years, and it is important for dentists to consider the effects of the marijuana use on dental treatment and develop protocols for treating these patients. The purpose of this project is to explore those possibilities,” explained Renee. Her project has the opportunity to change clinical protocol regarding patient consent within the dental school clinics.

Similarly, Andrew Herr, mentored by Dr. Anitha Potluri and Dr. Elizabeth Bledsoe, examined the use of evidence-based dentistry in the dental clinics as it relates to radiograph selection criteria. Andrew explained, “The objective of this study was to assess whether the dental faculty and students were aware of the FDA guidelines, their adherence to these guidelines, and their understanding of the principles of evidence-based dentistry (EBD).” To collect data from students, and dental faculty, Andrew relied on Qualtrics, “…a fantastic survey software which is free for University of Pittsburgh faculty and students.” Qualtrics allowed Andrew to collect data quickly, from many people throughout the dental school, by utilizing this easily accessible and free technology provided by the university.

The Dean’s Summer Scholars explored a wide range of research topics. The group’s diverse interests and previous research experiences resulted in exposure to new opportunities within the field of dentistry. For Cara Maloney, under the mentorship of Dr. Christine Wanskli-Hale and Dr. Zsuzsa Horvath, her summer project meant considering new career possibilities. “[My project] gave me a lot of insight into how the school works before I even started and also introduced me to academic dentistry as an option in my future career,” stated Cara. Arianna Kelly shares Cara’s experience of discovery due to her involvement in a research project coordinated with Dr. Aleksandra Visoara. She explained, “I have gained more knowledge on the topic of caries, namely prevalence, how they are measured, and novel ways to detect and treat them.” This new knowledge has given the scholars a novel perspective in courses throughout their first year curriculum, such as Professionalism and Cariology.

The lasting impact of the Dean’s Summer Scholar Program is evident through the recent reestablishment of the AADR Student Research Group (SRG) within the dental school. This group, which has been rather inactive in recent years, serves to enrich participants’ dental education through research. “Through my work with Dr. Heather Szabo-Roger’s lab, I recognized the important interplay between research and dental education. To me, the SRG is a way to share my summer experience with my peers and ignite a continued interest in research throughout the dental school,” explained SRG President, Casey White, a class of 2021 Dean’s Summer Scholar. The newly established SRGs has over 40 student members, including pre-doctoral and biology graduate students. Club sponsored events feature a welcome event for the newest Dean’s Summer Scholars, as well as a “How to Get Involved in Research” workshop for dental students.

Kaitlyn Frey, mentored by Dr. Fatima Syed-Picard, offered a piece of advice to the newest class of Dean’s Summer Scholars, “Enjoy the summer and take the time to get the most out of your research experience. The program is a great introduction to both Pitt and all that dentistry has to offer. Embrace the opportunity to learn for fun and explore different aspects of dentistry before classes begin.” Whether in academic classrooms, the clinics, or the basic science wet lab, the Dean’s Summer Scholars continue to provide meaningful contributions, while exploring and expanding the current state of knowledge within the dental research community.

Image 1: Cutting Edge Imaging

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2017 STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS

LANGKAMP-ALLISON AWARD
M. Hira Akbar and Ms. Andrea Montoya
The Langkamp-Allison Award recognizes a third-year dental student interested in pursuing a career in dental education.

SCADA AWARD AND DENTSPLY SIRONA STUDENT CLINICIAN PROGRAM AWARD
Dr. Patrick Donnelly
This award recognizes outstanding clinical or basic science research by a first-, second-, or third-year dental student. The recipient receives a bronze plaque and a trip to the AADR meeting to compete nationally.

HINMAN STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM COMPETITION
Meer Ahmed
Competitive national research symposium at the University of Tennessee in Memphis for students involved in clinical and basic science dental research.

AADR – LOCAL PITTSBURGH CHAPTER AWARD
Vera Liu
This award recognizes outstanding clinical or basic science research by a predoctoral, dental hygiene, or graduate student. The recipient’s name will be engraved on a bronze plaque in the Pitt Dental Medicine Learning Resource Center.

SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE AWARDS (A.K.A. Dr. O. Jack Penhall Award)
First place – Ariana Kelly
Second place – Erin Schwoegel
Third place – Cara Maloney
This award recognizes outstanding clinical science research by a dental student, and was initiated by Dr. O. Jack Penhall (DMD ’73), a Pitt Dental Medicine alumnus who is in private practice in Greensburg, Pa., and is a National ADA Student Research Judge.

QUINTESSENCE AWARD FOR RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENT
Sara Barna
This award recognizes an outstanding fourth-year student researcher for their research achievements. The award is provided by the Quintessence Publishing Co., Inc.

AADR STUDENT RESEARCH DAY AWARD
Award recipient will be named at the event
Last year’s award: Jennifer Zhou
This award provides support to participate in the 2018 AADR meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada (meeting registration cost and help with travel expenses).

“[I am happy to share great news that one of our third-year dental students, ByongSoo (Tim) Chae, received the AADR Student Research Fellowship. Tim has been involved in research under my mentorship since last summer. He works on understanding the role of tissue-nonspecific alkaline phosphatase in phosphate signaling. I am very proud of him.]”

-Dobrawa Napierala, PhD
Associate Professor
Center for Craniofacial Regeneration/Department of Oral Biology

The Student Research Group (SRG) has completed an extensive redesign of their website. The site now includes information for students as well as those interested in becoming mentors. To learn more about this very active student group, please visit dental.pitt.edu/srg.
Michael Wahl is the Evaluation Specialist at the School of Dental Medicine. He oversees six courses each term that encompass all dental students through their entire four years in the program. Michael is responsible for ensuring that these students graduate with the requirements for professional and ethical behaviors, productivity, clinical experiences and procedural skills to be successful entry-level dentists. He also runs reporting and data analysis to help identify trends to influence policy and decision-making. Michael has worked for Pitt for almost six years.

His involvement with Staff Council Michael is currently a member of the Operations Committee. Michael has also served in the following capacities: one time vice-chair of the Operations Committee, chair of the Book Fund Committee for a few years, former assistant Staff Liaison, representative to the Senate Benefits and Welfare Committee, representative to the Board of Trustees Property and Facilities Committee, and member of the recent Staff Council Organizational Review. Michael has been a member of Staff Council for five years.

Why did he join Staff Council? Michael says, “I wanted to gain a better perspective of staff life at the University. (In addition), potentially have an impact on future staff members’ quality of life in the work environment by learning about and addressing the major issues staff face. I really enjoy and appreciate the collaborative efforts members make with participation in the aspects of the Staff Council that interest them the most.”

What is Michael’s vision on how Staff Council can impact the University of Pittsburgh? He says, “I’d like to see an increase in the breadth of covered medical benefits for staff, as well as opportunities for the University to make a more concerted effort to invest in the retention and competitive promotion of proven employees. I’d like to see a stronger focus on hiring and compensating competitively from within over external candidates when possible.”

Fun Facts about Michael He says, “I studied abroad in Japan and am looking for opportunities to go back. I have a Master of Philosophy in Social Anthropology from the University of Oxford as well as an MBA. I once won the top prize on a lottery scratch-off. I once interviewed for a position with the CIA, but didn’t get the job because I couldn’t keep it a secret.”

Story reprinted by permission of the Pitt Staff Council Newsletter.
I officially retired from the United States Army on October 1, 2019. In the nearly three years since then, I have become what I would call a ‘professional volunteer.’ I am very engaged in my church where I serve as an elder and on many committees. I devote time to Pitt State - Erie, Belvidere Dental Capital Campaign Committee, helping to raise money for scholarships and increase philanthropy to the university. Also, I am fortunate to serve on the Council of Fellows at Pitt State-Erie, The Behrend College. In this capacity I am able to advocate for the mission, vision and activities of the college, as well as act as an ambassador for the college in Erie.

I am a beekeeper, now, and joined the local beekeeping group to learn as much as I can about this ancient craft. I am a member of the Erie Veterinarian Hospice Guild, the North Coast Striders walking group, and the Jefferson Education and Community Affairs Board of Directors for the Association of Army Dentistry, and I just finished training to become a Veteran’s Ambassador with the Army Heritage and Education Center, through which I will be part of a program responsible for collecting the oral histories of local veterans. This is a rare opportunity to capture the stories and living history of former US Army soldiers, firsthand, from the people who lived it.

And finally, I am continuing my dental career in a small way by working part-time at FORTIS Institute as a clinical supervising dentist in the dental hygiene program. All-in-all, there’s not much white space left on my calendar. I am truly humbled by working at these organizations. I have found that volunteer organizations seek the type of leadership and organizational experience that I earned in the Army and through Pitt Dental Medicine—it is a valuable contribution to my success. I can help them to channel their efforts in ways that are more focused to help organizations reach their goals. I was well-prepared to be a beekeeper and gentrification farmer maintaining a rural property, but it’s an opportunity to learn as much as I can about this ancient craft. I am a member of the Erie Veterinarian Hospice Guild, the North Coast Striders walking group, and the Jefferson Education and Community Affairs Board of Directors for the Association of Army Dentistry, and I just finished training to become a Veteran’s Ambassador with the Army Heritage and Education Center, through which I will be part of a program responsible for collecting the oral histories of local veterans. This is a rare opportunity to capture the stories and living history of former US Army soldiers, firsthand, from the people who lived it.

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The School of Dental Medicine held the 18th Annual Dean’s Scholarship Ball at the exciting Heinz History Center. Guests enjoyed cocktails and sit down dinner, followed by dancing, to celebrate recently retired dean, Dr. Thomas W. Braun and in support of scholarships for students at the school. New School of Dental Medicine dean, Dr. Bernard J. Costello, welcomed all to the event and, after dinner, honored his friend and mentor, Dr. Thomas Braun.

This year’s Dean’s Scholarship recipients are Ms. Katie Alexander and Mr. Brett T. Becker.

Learn more about Dr. Thomas Braun in the Winter 2018 issue of Pitt Dental Medicine magazine, or by visiting our website.
Katie Alexander

Katie Alexander had a dental appointment with a caring, thoughtful and friendly dentist—an experience that had a lasting impact on her.

“...the appointment with Dr. Richard Gradisek was a turning point in my life. His calm demeanor, genuine empathy, and thorough explanation of the dental procedures he would perform made me feel at ease. He talked about the importance of good oral hygiene, how it impacts overall health, and how taking care of my teeth is an investment in my future. His words have stuck with me ever since...”

Dr. Gradisek's encouragement sparked Katie's interest in pursuing a career in dentistry. Her decision was further solidified when she received her first set of direct extractions during the extractions. She felt confident and capable, and her experience motivated her to continue her education and pursue a career in dentistry.
This year, Pitt has been studying, recognizing and appreciating practices that promote good health, showing how a crossdisciplinary understanding of health can lead to better lives. The Year of Healthy U was planned to positively advance our understanding of health in all its forms and to renew our commitment to fostering a healthy community. Over the past few years Pitt has celebrated the Years of Diversity (2016-17), Humanities (2015-16) and Sustainability (2014-15).

To support the University’s efforts, Pitt Dental Medicine has held many events in celebration of the Year of Healthy U including book studies, an international pot luck meal and most recently, an art and writing expo. Photos here are from some of the events where faculty, staff, and students from both Pitt Schools of Dental Medicine and Pharmacy came together to appreciate and celebrate being a healthier University.

**Dr. Suvendra Vijayan**

In an effort to expand our capabilities in computer assisted dentistry, imaging and 3D manufacturing, Pitt Dental Medicine is excited to welcome Dr. Suvendra Vijayan to the Department of Diagnostic Sciences. His expertise in oral and maxillofacial radiology coupled with his interest in computer science, information systems, and artificial intelligence (AI) will help expand our presence in these areas as we grow new collaborations with our partners at Pitt, UPMC and CMU. He also is the recipient of the ADA Ahlstrom Award for his innovative research on 3D printing.

Dr. Vijayan completed his bachelor of dental surgery (BDS) from Mahatma Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Dental Sciences in Pondicherry, India, in 2009. He earned a master’s degree in public health from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston in 2012. He worked as a data management analyst at the University of Texas Health Science Center in research involving student retention, and attrition, and educational methodologies. In 2015, he joined The University of Iowa College of Dentistry and Dental Clinics Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology graduate program where he earned a certificate in oral and maxillofacial radiology and a masters degree in oral sciences. Dr. Vijayan’s research interests include cone beam CT, 3D printing and modeling, segmentation, bone quality assessment, pattern and texture analysis, dental education, informatics, and image processing and analysis.

**Dr. Paul Schwartz**

Dr. Paul Schwartz joined Pitt Dental Medicine this summer as he returns to his roots at Pitt. Dr. Schwartz will be an important addition to our full-time faculty in the Department of Dental Anesthesiology to expand our ability to provide superior anesthesia care for the patients of our community. He also will have an appointment in the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, having trained in multiple disciplines. Dr. Schwartz was a student and trainee at the School of Dental Medicine and considers Pittsburgh his home.

Dr. Schwartz received his undergraduate training at the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy. He completed two postgraduate training programs—one in anesthesia and critical care medicine in 1982-84, and a surgical residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery from 1984-87—at UPMC. He received his doctorate degree in dental medicine in 1982. Dr. Schwartz is board certified by the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS).

Currently, he serves on the executive committee of the Maryland Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and is a founding member and officer of the Patuxent Dental Society, and has served both societies as president. He is past chairperson and consultant to the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Committee on Anesthesia (AAOMS CAN) and a committee member of the American Dental Association (ADA) Committee on Anesthesiology.

Recently, Dr. Schwartz was elected to serve as a director of the American Dental Society of Anesthesiology. This organization provides a national forum for education and research in order to promote safe and effective patient care in anesthesiology. Dr. Schwartz will provide an even more broad platform for the Department of Dental Anesthesiology to fulfill their mission. We are happy to have him return to his Alma Mater.
Dr. Guiseppe Intini

Born in Italy, Dr. Guiseppe (Beppe) Intini earned a degree in dentistry in 1995 from the University of L’Aquila (Italy). In 2000, he received a master’s degree in Oral Sciences from the University at Buffalo (USA), and in 2007 he received a Ph.D in Oral Biology and a certificate in clinical periodontology from the University at Buffalo (USA). From 2007 to 2012 he has been a postdoctoral fellow of Developmental Biology at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and a principle faculty member of the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. He also is a diplomat of the American Board of Periodontology.

Dr. Intini spent the first three years of his post-doctoral fellowship under the mentorship of Dr. Vicki Rosen at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and two years under the additional mentorship of Dr. Charles Lin and Dr. David Scadden at the Massachusetts General Hospital. His postdoctoral research accomplishments were acknowledged by the NIH/NIH-Des with a Pathway to Independence Award (K99/R00 Award). His current research focuses on the biology of the skeletal and periodontal stem cells. The Intini Lab studies the molecular mechanisms that control the “stemness” of these stem cells, their contribution to tissue repair and regeneration, and their role in development of certain bone and periodontal diseases. Additional projects at the Intini Lab focus on the role of cancer stem cells in development, maintenance, and metastasis of osteosarcoma. Dr. Intini has recently been awarded an R21 from the NIH/National Cancer Institute to develop a novel approach to characterize the osteosarcoma cancer stem cells. Since 2010 Dr. Intini has been teaching about bone stem cell biology and bone regeneration in graduate and post-graduate courses. He also developed and directed a new post-graduate advanced education program, The Research Academy at HSDM and Forsyth, which is a joint venture between the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and the Forsyth Institute aimed at providing the opportunity to dentists interested in basic science to perform PhD level research. During his career at Harvard, Dr. Intini was recognized by the 2007 and the 2008 Harvard School of Dental Medicine Dean’s Scholar Award, the 2008 Young Investigator Award from the International Conference on Bone Morphogenetic Proteins, the 2009 American Academy of Periodontology Teaching Award, the 2010 Young Investigator Travel Award from the American Society of Bone Mineral Research, the 2012 American Academy of Periodontology Award for Outstanding Teaching and Mentorship, the 2013 Harvard Medical School Excellence in Tutoring Award, and the 2014 Harvard Medical School Eleanor and Miles Shore Scholars in Medicine Award. In recognition of his achievements, in 2015 he received the Distinguished Junior Faculty Award, the most prestigious award bestowed by the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. In 2016 he was inducted into the American Academy of Dental Science. Dr. Intini has been the PI of 9 grants, including grants from the NIH and the National Research Council of Italy, and supervised 18 trainees, many of whom have obtained a faculty position in dental schools in the US. He has been invited as speaker at national and international meetings and is an associate editor of the Journal of Translational Medicine. He regularly serves as ad hoc reviewer for scientific journals in fields of bone biology, orthopaedics, tissue engineering, and periodontology. As periodontist and attending clinician, Dr. Intini has interest in periodontal regeneration and bone augmentation procedures. Dr. Intini will join us this summer. Please welcome him, and his family, to our family at Pitt Dental Medicine.

Dr. Nyla Balakrishnan

Dr. Nyla Balakrishnan will join Pitt Dental Medicine in the Department of Public Health and contribute to a variety of subjects in the preclinical curriculum, as well as the Department of Restorative Dentistry and Comprehensive Care. She completed her bachelor of dental surgery (BDS) from Pondicherry University, Mahatma Gandhi’s Post Graduate Institute of Dental Sciences, in India, in 2010. In 2013 she earned a master of public health degree at Texas A&M University School of Public Health. She worked as a research data coordinator at MD Anderson Cancer Research Center on various clinical trials and was a mentor to students and postdocs. In 2015, she joined The University of Iowa College of Dentistry and Dental Clinics to pursue a masters in Dental Public Health, and worked on various independent projects including one with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other collaborative projects like the Iowa Fluoride Study and Pittsburgh Orofacial Cleft Studies. She also has a grant from the Delta Dental Foundation that explores the importance or oral health literacy on the elderly population. During her time at the University of Iowa, she was involved in teaching predoctoral dental students in the clinical simulation labs and clinics. Apart from teaching and training students, Dr. Balakrishnan’s interests include oral health and dental-policy integration, and oral health workforce issues. Please welcome her as she joins the Pitt Dental Medicine family and expands opportunities for our students.

Joelle M. Carlo, PhD

Dr. Joelle Carlo joins us from Northeastern University in Boston where she served as an assistant teaching professor within the School of Pharmacy. Dr. Carlo earned her Ph.D. in pharmacology and toxicology from the University at Buffalo (The State University of New York) with a research focus on molecular microbiology. Following graduate school, Dr. Carlo trained as a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine in the Department of Developmental Biology.

In her role at Northeastern, Dr. Carlo made significant contributions to both the undergraduate and graduate curricula in the School of Pharmacy by developing innovative courses and establishing teaching laboratories. Dr. Carlo was an active member of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Student Professional Development Committee, and was the faculty advisor for the Kappa Pi Pharmaceutical Fraternity. Dr. Carlo also held an adjunct appointment in the College of Science where she instructed and designed coursework in their biotechnology graduate program.

Dr. Sarah Grafton

Dr. Sarah Grafton, assistant professor, will take on the new role of Vice Chair for Clinical Efficiency within the Department of Restorative Dentistry and Comprehensive Care, part of a new school-wide effort to increase clinical efficiency and improve community outreach, to improve the patient and student experiences to provide safe, effective and cutting-edge care to a greater number of community members. Recently, Dr. Grafton helped improve the patient experience, increase patient volume and advance efficiency with a new patient screening clinic. Now, her efforts will be directed at refining the clinical module experience by improving the flow and organization of the clinic—including how the modules collaborate with specialty areas in the school. She will work closely with the Office of Clinical Affairs to bridge administrative efforts with the patient experience and improve care. To lead our new efforts across all clinics, Dr. Marnie Oakley, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, will have focused responsibilities including clinical workflow, value measurement in healthcare delivery, quality and safety. Dr. Oakley will help to formulate a new vision for what dental care can be for our community and work to increase our patient volume with our partners in the region.

Pitt Dental Medicine is poised to recreate how dental healthcare is delivered. One of the key goals is to be the model for others in defining superior and more efficient ways to deliver care within a University setting.
The Center for Craniofacial and Dental Genetics (CCDG), director Dr. Mary Marazita, had success funding its research in oral health disparities through the Center for Oral Health Research in Appalachia (COHRA). COHRA received a grant from the Center for Inherited Disease Research (Dr. John Shaffer, PI) for genome-wide genotyping on its datasets, enabling studies of the genetics of early onset childhood caries to proceed. COHRA also received NIH funding to expand its study to include African-American women and children (Dr. Marazita, PI). These two initiatives will allow the researchers at COHRA to study more of the factors that lead young children in Appalachia to have relatively high rates of caries.

Dr. Thomas Kunkel, chair for the Department of Prosthodontics, was accepted into the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Leadership Institute Class of 2019. To support his attendance in the Institute, Dr. Kunkel received the 2018 ADEA/AADR/Colgate-Palmolive Co./Dr. Dominic P. DePaola Scholar in the ADEA Leadership Institute scholarship, $1,500 support for the costs of attending. He also was invited to join the Beta chapter of Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU) for 2018.

Wednesday, April 25, 2018 was National DNA Day—commemorating the discovery of DNA’s double helix in 1953 and marking the 50th anniversary of the successful completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003. A DNA sample from one of the CCDG’s studies of orofacial clefts was the 100,000th whole human genome sequenced at the Broad Institute. This sample is from our studies as part of Gabriella Miller Kids First Pediatric Research Program.

CCDG scientists will use the genome sequencing data to identify the underlying causes of orofacial clefts, as well as identify pathways for potential treatments.

Dr. Paul Moore (DMF ’73, PhD ’77), professor, was appointed an American Dental Association (ADA) Expert Spokesperson on the topic of opioids in dentistry. As ADA spokesperson, he has provided presentations for local and state dental organizations for required CE entitled “Prescribing Opioids in Dentistry: Requirements, Responsibilities, and Alternatives.” He has been invited to speak at the Western Pennsylvania Dental Association’s annual meeting and the ADA annual meeting in Hawaii in October.

At the end of April, she completed the Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health program at the Pitt Graduate School of Public Health and received a master of public health (MPH) degree, along with a certificate in health systems leadership and management. “Completing the program has given me a broader perspective on the practice of dentistry, issues in healthcare, value-based medicine, community health, and health policy and advocacy. I hope to be able to incorporate what I have learned from the program into different aspects of my work at the school,” she said.

She also was selected for membership into the Delta Omega National Honor Society in Public Health, Omicron Chapter, on the basis of an outstanding record of achievement and anticipated contributions in the field of public health. Also this spring, she received a travel grant to attend the 2018 Sex and Gender Health Education Summit in Salt Lake City, Utah. The goal of the conference was to bring healthcare professionals and educators together in a multidisciplinary approach to promote the integration of sex and gender-based medicine concepts and practice into health education curricula.

School of Dental Medicine assistant professor, Dr. Joanne Prasad, recently was appointed Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. “I feel truly privileged to be able to serve in this new role and I look forward to working with the administration, faculty, staff, and students to help enhance the educational programs offered at Pitt Dental Medicine.”

Working on Dental Merit Badges

On November 3, 2017, twelve Scouts from Troop 113 of McMurray, Pa., earned their dentistry merit badges. Hosted by the Pitt Dental Medicine Department of Pediatric Dentistry, the event was coordinated by Dr. Andrea Nave (DMF ’99, Pedo ’14), clinical assistant professor, who began the day with an educational session about tooth and the decay process, oral health, nutrition and potential careers in dentistry. Volunteer dental students from the Class of 2019, along with department staff, then helped the scouts with a preclinical activity session where they were able to place sealants and use a handpiece to “drill” on typodont tooth, take alginate impressions and create stone models of a pediatric typodont arch. “It was a great experience for the scouts to get hands-on learning” said Mark Nave, Assistant Scout Master for the troop.

To see more photos from this, and many other Pitt Dental Medicine events, please visit our Flickr site, user name pittdentalenic, and search for the albums.
ADDITIONAL FACULTY AWARDS AND ACCOLADES 2018

GIVING KIDS A SMILE

The student chapter of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry at Pitt Dental Medicine took their patients “Under the Sea” at this year’s 16th annual Give Kids A Smile Days (GKAS). Student club co-presidents, Morgan Choe and Andrea Montoya, with GKAS coordinator, Morgan Choe, coordinated a very successful event. The Pitt Panther greeted patients and received his annual dental check-up. Dental students, pediatric dental residents, dental hygiene students, and pediatric dental faculty provided care to more than 72 patients. One third-year dental student even dressed as Ariel, Disney’s Little Mermaid, and treated her patients in costume. Follow up care after the event included a pediatric dental patient who was treated under general anesthesia by a pediatric dental resident with services provided by the Department of Anesthesiology.

Pitt Dental Medicine provided more than $150,000 worth of free dental care. “Our primary goal in this event is to promote a lifelong commitment to oral health. We encourage children and their parents to return to the clinic to receive ongoing care,” said Dr. Studen-Pavlovich, professor and program director for the Advanced Residency Program in Pediatric Dentistry.

A special thanks to the Pennsylvania Dental Association (PDA) Foundation for their generous support of the Student Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry for Give Kids a Smile Day, and all of the other community outreach initiatives throughout the year!

Dr. Bernard Costello, dean and professor, is president-elect of the American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association (ACPA).

The University of Pittsburgh has conferred the title of Emeritus Associate Professor upon Dr. R. Donald Hoffman (DMD ’72, PhD ’88) and Dr. L. Gregory Schneider (DMD ’88).
Pitt Dental Medicine congratulates all of our graduates. A highlight of the annual Graduation Celebration luncheon, the senior student awards recognize graduating seniors who have earned recognition within specific dental specialties at the school.

Pitt Dental Medicine is grateful to the Pennsylvania Dental Association for its continued support of the Graduation Celebration.
Presented by Dr. Giana Maria Lupinetti to Leadership Award Care Foundation Student Delta Dental Community Dr. Christine Wankiiri-Hale Presented by Dr. Katherine Ni to Award of Excellence Dental Association American Student Presentated by Dr. Alexandre Vieira to Dr. Sara M. Barna Quintessence Award for Research Achievement to Dr. Katherine Ni Presented by Dr. Lynne Taclet Gerald Orper Award to Dr. Tamara Latif Presented by Dr. Alexandre Vieira Quintessence Award for Research Achievement to Dr. Sara M. Barna Presented by Dr. Alexandre Vieira American Student Dental Association Award of Excellence to Dr. Katherine Ni Presented by Dr. Christine Wankiiri-Hale Delta Dental Community Care Foundation Student Leadership Award to Dr. Gina Maria Lupinetti Presented by Dr. Christine Wankiiri-Hale

For a complete photo gallery of all of the award recipients, please visit our Flickr page at flickr.com/photos/100601931@N02/albums.

Before celebrating their graduation, Dental Hygiene Program students were required to pass both the Dental Hygiene National Board Examination, a computer-based exam, and a regional licensure examination—Commission on Dental Competency Assessment (CDCA) regional examination in Pennsylvania to receive their dental hygiene license. All students passed both sections of the CDCA exam: a clinical exam using live patients and a computer-simulated examination.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PITT DENTAL MEDICINE DENTAL HYGIENE CLASS OF 2018.
Pitt Dental Medicine celebrated the Class of 2018 with family and friends of all 150 graduates. During the annual diploma ceremony, held at Heinz Hall on May 20, 2017, Dean, Dr. Bernard J. Costello welcomed graduates and guests to the convocation. Dr. Arthur Levine, Senior Vice Chancellor for Health Science and John and Gertrude Petersen Dean of the School of Medicine, spoke also to the graduating class as they begin their careers. The 2018 convocation saw 84 students receive their DMD, 29 received certificates in advanced dentistry, 7 students receive advanced degrees in oral biology, and 30 students received certificates in dental hygiene.

After the formal festivities, graduates and guests enjoyed an opportunity to recollect, reconnect and even make plans for their futures together amid generous refreshments in the lobby and patio of Heinz Hall.
Dr. Richard J. Doerfler (DMD ’86, MA ’88, BDS ’81, BS ’93, CPF), clinical assistant professor in the Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics Department, is a proud graduate of the University of Pittsburgh. Just one glance at the wall of his office reveals the many degrees he earned at the school, and he will be the first to praise the quality of his experiences here. According to Dr. Doerfler, the excellent education allowed him to “be competitive in private practice, to make a very good living and provide a good life for his family.” He always has been grateful to the University for the way that it set him up to succeed. So when the opportunity arose for him to return to teach orthodontics and gross anatomy, it was a chance he could not turn down.

Upon his return to the School of Dental Medicine, he was glad to find that an emphasis on a quality education is still a defining characteristic of the program. However, something that had changed since his time as a student was the amount of debt dental students had to take on in order to obtain their degree. The average orthodontic resident, he explained, graduates with an average of four hundred thousand dollars of debt and enters into a far more competitive field than existed when he was a new graduate.

Dr. Doerfler sympathizes with their situation, as many are nearing a life stage where they want to purchase a house, raise a family or open their own practice—all of which require hefty investments. He explained, “It’s a difficult time, because they’re trying to balance all of the things we all want, but without the financial resources.”

Without question, Dr. Doerfler is humble but optimistic about the impact of his work, and believes the orthodontic profession is the best profession to enter into a far more competitive field than existed when he was a new graduate. As a faculty member, it did not take long for Dr. Doerfler to realize that there were many opportunities, such as, national lectures and symposia, program-related travel, etc., that his residents would benefit from, but could not afford. Dr. Doerfler began teaching a year-long course in certified financial planning, making his department the only one in the U.S. with a business of orthodontics course. However, he knew there was a way he could do more. Although he had always given to the school, he saw a serious financial need and knew he could make a bigger impact. His driving goal was to provide the orthodontic residents with the same high-quality experience that he had, years before.

In order to address mounting debt concerns and to provide clinical, educational and professional enrichments for residents of the Orthodontics Department, Dr. Doerfler created an endowed fund. The fund is financed through his significant gift and will continue to grow through support from others in order to ease the financial strain on residents for many years to come.

While the fund is still in the initial growth process, Dr. Doerfler asks his fellow alumni and colleagues to consider making a gift to “Orthodontic Resident Fund” to support the resident’s clinical and educational needs as well as to enrich and enhance their University experience.

It’s nice to return to Pitt Dental Medicine and come full circle. Not that I can do everything, but it has to start somewhere. Someone has to be able to start the process and get the ball rolling.”

Please join Dr. Doerfler in support of this important initiative or the program of your choice.

You may make your contribution by mail or online. Please mail your check, made payable to the University of Pittsburgh and note the Orthodontic Resident Fund to University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine Office of Development; Suite 440 Salk Hall; 3501 Terrace Street; Pittsburgh, PA 15261.

You also may visit giveto.pitt.edu/dental to make your donation.

Please contact Paul Casey at 412-383-7544 or pbc8@pitt.edu if you have questions about showing your support.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS
For up-to-date details on any event listed, please visit dental.pitt.edu.

2018

OCTOBER
OCTOBER 11, 2018
Pitt Dental Medicine Reception
AAOMS 100th Annual Meeting
McCormick Place West
Hilton Chicago
5:30-7:30pm

NOVEMBER
NOVEMBER 1, 2018
Deadline for nomination for Distinguished Alumni Awards, 2019

2019

FEBRUARY
FEBRUARY 15, 2019
14th Annual Winter Academy
Ritz-Carlton
Naples, Fla.
For more information, please contact Paul Casey, 412-383-7544

MARCH
MARCH 2, 2019
Nineteenth Annual Dean's Scholarship Ball
Heinz History Center
6pm

MARCH 7, 2019
Alumni and Friends Reception
Valley Forge Dental Conference
Valley Forge Casino Resort
King of Prussia, PA
4:30-6:30pm

MAY
MAY 17, 2019
Senior Luncheon
11:30am-1:30pm

MAY 18, 2019
Diploma Ceremony
1-4pm