

UF College of Dentistry and St. Petersburg College kick-off capital fund-raising campaign

Dentistry partners with St. Petersburg College to offer Pinellas residents clinical services and dental education from SPC's Seminole campus.

By LINDY McCOLLUM-BROUNLEY

The University of Florida College of Dentistry may soon join the university's colleges of Business and Pharmacy in offering classes from St. Petersburg College's University Partnership Center located on SPC's Seminole campus.

The University Partnership Center is an unprecedented collaboration between several Florida universities and SPC, offering university degree programs from the SPC Pinellas County campus. Already, students at SPC can earn degrees from UF in business administration and pharmacy through the University Partnership Center.

Educational programs offered by dentistry on the SPC campus will include: Expanded advanced education in general dentistry and foreign-trained dentist programs; continuing education for area dentists; and, expanded educational opportunities for students enrolled in the SPC dental hygiene program. Development of a dental lab technology program is also under consideration for the SPC campus.

Dentistry's addition to the mix, however, depends on the success of a capital fund-raising campaign to put a roof over its programs at SPC.

"We've identified about three-fourths of the money needed to complete the capital construction for the project," said dentistry Dean Teresa A. Dolan, "and we will be engaged in a fund-raising

campaign to secure the remaining money to make this partnership a reality."

The \$4-million building project, when completed, will house the colleges of Dentistry and Pharmacy in a two-wing building with a shared atrium. Phase one of construction, scheduled to be completed August 2004, will result in an 8,500-square-foot pharmacy wing featuring classrooms and mock pharmacy. Phase two, expected to be finished in 2005, will add dentistry's 14,000-square-foot wing with clinics on the first and second floors and classrooms on the third floor.

The new clinic space will more than double the patient capacity of the existing clinic—increasing patient visits from 7,000 to as many as 20,000 annually.

"The relocation of the St. Petersburg clinic is an exciting opportunity for the college," Dolan said. "The clinic relocation, combined with partnerships with Community Health Centers of Pinellas, Inc. and other organizations, will significantly expand our capacity to provide indigent care to the residents of the Tampa Bay area."

Once dentistry's Seminole building is completed, the new clinic space will replace UF's existing clinic, located at 960 Seventh Avenue in St. Petersburg. ●

Image courtesy of St. Petersburg College



Architectural rendering of the UF dentistry/pharmacy compound at St. Petersburg College in Pinellas County.

In this issue....

Message from the Dean 2

Development Update 3

Dentistry on the Road 4

AJS Foundation 6

Red Hair, Pain and Gender 7

Project HEAL 8

Profile in Leadership 10

Gator Bytes 11

Calendar of Events 13

Class Notes 14

Summer 2003



message from

the dean

As many of you may have heard, university Provost David Colburn announced my appointment as dean of the University of Florida College of Dentistry this May. I could not be more pleased.

Serving as dean of this college is a great honor and a fabulous opportunity to combine my interests in academic dentistry, health services re-

search and public health into the administration and oversight of an institution that has the ability to advance science, provide care and to improve access to care, and advance health policy issues related to dentistry.

With the assistance of the strategic planning committee under the direction of Dr. Henry Gremillion, our college will continue implementation of its strategic plan with a five-year goal for full implementation.

We've already come a long way, especially in terms of physical plant. We have spent about \$9 million in the past seven years upgrading the dental building and we will continue to work on renovations to facilitate growth in research and enhance educational opportunities for students.

The college's effort to achieve a sustained level of national excellence in its academic programs is demonstrated by the high caliber of its students. Every member of the class of 2003 passed the National Dental Board Part II Exam this spring. That is a phenomenal achievement for any institution, but we will continue to pursue excellence in education to prepare exceptional dentists to serve the state of Florida.

We believe the key to ongoing growth in research and research awards is to continue to recruit outstanding faculty to focus on core research initiatives, such as infectious diseases in dentistry, bone biology, pain and neurosciences, and translational research to improve approaches to clinical dental care.

Service to Florida through provision of care for indigent, underserved and medically compromised residents also is a major component of the college's strategic plan. The college is one of the state's largest providers of low-cost dental care, and we will continue to work toward enhancing our capacity to provide oral health care to the needy.

The declining state budget remains our greatest challenge and threat. We are working hard to inform legislative leaders about the importance of the college and our need for appropriate funding to maintain our status as one of the best dental colleges in this nation. I thank our alumni and friends who have supported the college. Your gifts have become increasingly important as our state support diminishes.

Despite our budget challenges, our college has a bright future fueled by talented students and outstanding clinicians and scientists. I look forward to working with our alumni and friends, faculty, staff and students to continue to advance the College of Dentistry.

Sincerely yours,

Teresa A. Dolan, D.D.S., M.P.H.
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Gator Dentist Today

Summer 2003

Published fall, spring and summer
for the alumni, faculty, staff,
students and friends of the
University of Florida
College of Dentistry

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Development update

By CATHY JENKINS, Development Director

What a terrific year this has been for fund-raising in the College of Dentistry! Special thanks to all of you who have made gifts or gift commitments, whether for our new General Dentistry Endowment Fund, to a program or department special to you, or through your support in making your membership donation to be a part of the Academy of Alumni and Friends. Your support makes all the difference to the success of the college's mission in achieving excellence in education, research and service.

Our good news includes the more than \$103,000 committed to establish the General Dentistry Endowment Fund. This great start is the result of the outstanding generosity and hard work of the Charter Class members. We have already requested our first 50 percent match, which will add another \$50,000 to the endowment, and that, coupled with \$266,000 in new gifts, brings our total to date to \$419,000! I hope many of you will earmark personal bequests for this endowed fund so that over the years it will grow to a level that will provide the College of Dentistry with the certainty of having necessary resources in perpetuity to maintain the current quality and excellence in all aspects of our mission.

The inaugural year of the Academy of Alumni and Friends as a combined organization is also off to a wonderful start with membership donations in excess of \$48,000—that compared to the approximately \$41,800 donated last year. If you have not sent your membership donation (using fiscal year January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003), please do soon!



The Three-in-Three Fund is a commitment from the three 2003 graduating ortho residents to donate \$3,000 each over a three-year period to establish an endowment for orthodontics—with the hope that the tradition will continue with each set of graduating residents. Three-in-Three Fund founders (in gowns from left to right), Dr. Jeremy Albert, Dr. Arvind Vakani and Dr. Brett Lawton, with Dr. Timothy Wheeler (second from left). (Photo - L. M. Brounley)

These funds are an important source of unrestricted dollars that can assist current unbudgeted needs of the college, as requested by the dean and approved by the Academy of Alumni and Friends board of directors.

Other good news includes Dr. Tim Wheeler's orthodontic renovation campaign, which now has a total of approximately \$325,000, and a new "Three in Three Fund" started by this year's graduating residents (see inset above); Dr. Hank Towle is off to a great start with the periodontal renovation fund with \$424,000 in commitments; Dr. Bob Primosch will be kicking off a pediatric renovation campaign in the fall, already with \$67,000 in gifts received; Dr. Bill Williams recently celebrated the opening of the new Craniofacial Center; Dr. Frank Vertucci started an annual fund for endodontics, which currently is in excess of \$19,000; Dr. Frank Dolwick is working with development in establishing an annual fund for oral surgery with a kick-off in the fall; Dr. Nelson Logan is planning the second "Summer of Learning" program with a generous lead gift of \$20,000; Mrs. Harold Stanley has put a \$100,000 endowed fund in place in memory of Dr. Stanley to honor his wishes of use within oral pathology; Dr. Henry Gremillion has raised \$103,550 to start an endowment fund for the Parker E. Mahan Facial Pain Center; Dr. Ruskin has raised in excess of \$146,000 in continuing funding support for the Implant Center; and, Dr. Margaret Hartwig, with members of the Class of 1988, has established an endowed scholarship in memory of classmate Claire Pitts Brown.

YOU, our alumni and friends, make a tremendous difference with your support of the College of Dentistry. Thanks to many of you for your time, leadership and generosity! ●



The daughters of UFCD Craniofacial Center donor, Evelyn Grader, received bouquets from grateful center patients during the May 22 open house of the center's new office and clinical laboratory renovation. From left to right, center patients Tyler Stukes (14), Heather (9) and Jonathan (7) Rice, Emily Leedy (10) and Ulrica Diamond (12) and Mrs. Grader's daughters, Lynn Johnson (left center) and Lee Kleppel (right center). (Photo - Sam Brill)



Above: Nereyda P. Clark, D.M.D., stands in front of the ACORN—or, Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs—clinic in Brooker, Fla. (Photo - Jeff Knee)

“By finding and treating dental problems early, we definitely reduce chronic diseases and help to prevent many emergency room visits,” Clark said.

Community based programs take

dentistry on the road

Confident smiles are the most visible outcome of a six-year-old University of Florida College of Dentistry outreach program that brings quality dental care to low-income adults and children statewide, from Miami to Tallahassee.

By ARLINE PHILLIPS-HAN

Pain relief is a more important issue to many of the patients who typically have seen a dentist only once or twice—or not at all—during their lifetime. They relish the chance to get professional help to regain the ability to live without constant toothache.

Among the 87,359 patient visits recorded in the 18 community locations, where UF dental faculty, students and residents-in-training provided care during 2001-02, was a man who told the clinic staff he wanted his teeth repaired as soon as possible so he could smile for pictures at his upcoming wedding.

Another patient said she had not smiled in years because she didn't want anyone to see her teeth, and another said he hadn't been able to eat solid food or sleep through the night “for a very long time because of pain in my mouth.”

Nereyda P. Clark, D.M.D., the dental school's associate dean for extramural programs, orchestrates the Statewide Network for Community Oral Health, which brings dental services within reach of impoverished Florida residents.

Dean Teresa Dolan, D.D.S., M.P.H., said the network is an important part of the college's mission to address the “urgent need to provide oral health care to the most vulnerable citizens of Florida.”

Dolan noted that Florida is home to 2.2 million people with little or no access to dental service, and that more than 80 percent of the 87,000 adults and children reached by the network last year have incomes at or below 200 percent of the poverty level.

“By finding and treating dental problems early, we definitely reduce chronic diseases and help to prevent many emergency room visits,” Clark said. “We're expanding every year—our success stemming from effective networking, sharing of university and community resources, and volunteer services provided by more than 140 community dentists and many more clinic staff.”

Participants in the cooperative effort include the dental school, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Dental Association, philanthropic clinics, community health centers, dental public health units and community colleges, the state- and federally-funded Area Health Education Centers, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons and homeless shelters.

Clark ventured into her statewide leadership role 11 years ago when then Dean Donald Legler, D.D.S., Ph.D., was developing a satellite dental clinic to serve a largely Hispanic population in Hialeah. Clark's Cuban heritage suited her well for organizing the clinic. She helped hire new faculty and develop the dental program while also directing the dental school's supplemental education programs for foreign-trained dentists.

In 1997, when Frank Catalanotto, D.M.D., came into the deanship with the idea of building a statewide network of community dental services, he didn't have to look far to find a natural leader. Clark was primed for the assignment. She set out to make each connection a “win-win deal” to bring dental care to community residents and give the college many more real-world training sites for dental students and resident trainees.

Clark notes that the college's campus-based dental clinics in Gainesville and its

full-time satellite dental clinics in Jacksonville, St. Petersburg and Hialeah cater primarily to urban populations, whereas the 18 community outreach clinics are staffed on a rotating basis to deliver care to predominantly rural residents and migrant workers.

Services were extended for the first time in November to provide free dental examinations to about 1,000 school children in Gadsden County, one of Florida's poorest incorporated areas. By joining forces with Colgate-Palmolive to use its dental van and with support from the Florida Dental Association, the dental school and the Florida Department of Health, UF faculty and students provided the services over a three-day period.

More recently, the UF network team used the Southern Baptist Convention's mobile dental van to provide primary dental care to 90 adults in Gadsden and Leon counties. The patients reached during this four-day visit lack the ability to pay for dental care and do not qualify for dental coverage under Medicaid. Much of the treatment provided these patients involved surgically removing abscessed teeth that were causing severe pain.

"There is definitely a disparity in oral health-care access in our state and our country," said Kimberly Jones-Rudolph, D.M.D., a clinical assistant professor who is the driving force behind UF outreach services in Gadsden and Leon counties. "Unlike medical care, all you have to do is open a person's mouth to see what economic resources have been invested in

his oral health," she said.

Next targets for expansion of the dental services network are the Tampa Bay area, which is experiencing rapid and ethnically diverse growth in all age categories, and the critically underserved region of the Florida Keys.

Linda Kubitz, coordinator of the dental school's distance education program, travels Florida highways often, videotaping scenes of patient care, research and education, which she later incorporates in orientation programs and videotapes for presentations to volunteers and partners in the outreach program.

"This program doesn't work according to the principle you may have heard—if you build a clinic, the people will come," Kubitz said. "The creation of our clinics starts with getting to know the people who will be helped—their lifestyles, economic challenges, health-care needs and interests. Then we organize a clinic to address their needs. What works well in one town wouldn't necessarily be effective in another community."

Patient-care providers and clinic staff find gratification in the special ways patients express their appreciation.

One middle-aged woman who had undergone extensive dental reconstructive work at the ACORN Clinic in Brooker (northeast of Gainesville), walked out through the lobby smiling and exclaiming to everyone in sight, "Just look! I've been crowned." ●

Jacksonville dental clinic is UF's shining Starr

Jacksonville Dental Clinic wins reaccreditation, with nine commendations, through outstanding administration and leadership from Director Cliff Starr - *By Lindy McCollum-Brounley*

For the administrators of dental education clinics, reaccreditation, like the seven-year itch, can be prickly business.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation—or, CODA—is the arm of the American Dental Association charged with ensuring programs adhere to nationally-accepted standards in delivery of dental education and patient care. CODA site visitors review clinics every seven years and issue reports based on their findings. Report recommendations are bad, suggestions are neutral and commendations are good.

This past February, the CODA site visitor who reviewed UF's Jacksonville clinic had nothing but good things to report, noting nine commendations for the clinic and zero recommendations or suggestions.

Reaccreditation commendations noted the quality and collegiality of the faculty, staff and students; the outstanding educational experience for residents, including treatment planning, practice management, and outcome assessment; program support from the local dental community, many members of which were also courtesy

faculty; and, the availability of new technology and quality of clinical experience for the residents.

Much of this program success can be directly attributed to clinic Director Clifford B. Starr, D.M.D., and Assistant Director Nancy Jacobson, D.M.D. Their backgrounds, while very different, are complementary—Starr is a retired Air Force colonel with a spit-n-polish approach to dental education and Jacobson's forte is clinic administration.

"It all comes down to people," said Starr. "If you've got the right people in place, attempting to do the right things, the outcomes are likely to be successful." ●



Photo - L. M. Brounley
Jax clinic's Starr and Jacobson.

Fulfilling a promise

The Andrew J. Semesco Foundation donates \$3,000 to UF College of Dentistry

By ANDRA PARRISH

His eyes crinkle a bit at the corners to make room for a smile that spans the entire width of his face. Beaming into the camera for his high school senior photo, Andrew J. Semesco has the kind of warm smile that reflects his intense enthusiasm for life.

He will go to Florida State University, initially with hopes of becoming a dentist like his father. He will stay close with his best friends from high school and frequently visit the ones going to UF. He will leave a lasting impression on each person he meets.

And he will die at age 21 from oral cancer.



Andrew J. Semesco

Andrew was diagnosed with oral squamous cell carcinoma at the base of his tongue on October 29, 1998, during his third year in college and he passed away just a few months later on April 1, 1999.

After his death, the Andrew J. Semesco Foundation was born to fulfill a promise seven of Andrew's closest friends made to him.

A promise to do all they could to prevent others from developing oral cancer like Andrew did.

Formed January 4, 2001, the non-profit foundation's purpose is to fund and promote scientific research and methods for prevention, detection, treatment and cures for often-fatal oral cancers.

UFCD student Jeffrey Fleigel, the foundation's 24-year-old president and founder, says it's not always clear what causes oral cancers to develop, but several factors increase the risk, primarily tobacco and alcohol use, prolonged exposure to ultra violet light and constant irritation to the oral cavity.

Right now, the AJS Foundation's main target is to get the word out about smokeless tobaccos like dip and chewing tobacco.

"We recently donated \$3,000 to UF's College of Dentistry because of a program they're working on to inform the population about the dangers of smokeless tobacco and its link to cancer," Fleigel said. "There are a lot of misconceptions about smokeless tobacco out there."

According to a study by Oral Health America's National Spit Tobacco Education Program, 9.9 percent of male high schoolers surveyed in Florida used smokeless tobacco at least once during the 30 days preceding the survey.

If Fleigel and the other foundation members have their way, these numbers will soon decrease. They hope others will take the foundation's messages to heart and not have to go through the suffering that Andrew did.

Fleigel often speaks to middle and high school groups on behalf of the AJS Foundation and he always begins by telling the group about Andrew, his best friend.

"I could count the times Andrew used dip on my hands; it wasn't often. It was just normal teenage activity and I did it too," Fleigel says to them.

"It may or may not have contributed to Andrew's cancer. But it's just one of those things. Do you want to be the one to find out what your limits are?" Fleigel asks them.

Fleigel hopes this question will make young people stop and think before deciding to try tobacco products, specifically chewing tobacco and dip.

Andrew's mother, Peggy Semesco, wants people to know that Andrew, the most positive person she's ever known, never gave in and never got angry about his illness.

"I know big things will come from the foundation. While Andy was sick he always said that he knew good would come out of it all. The foundation will always be a legacy to his memory and to the love of his friends who want and hope to make a difference."

For more information about the AJS Foundation and its oral cancer prevention and fund-raising efforts, visit www.ajsfoundation.org. ●



Above: Juddson Reed, Jeffrey D. Fleigel, Dr. Scott Tomar and Dean Teresa Dolan display the AJS Foundation's donation to UFCD's oral cancer prevention and education activities. (Photo - Sam Brill)

Pink pills are for girls, blue pills for boys...

New research in gender differences in pain management may lead to sex-specific medications.

By LINDY McCOLLUM-BROUNLEY

A potent painkiller appears to work better in women who carry a gene associated with red hair and fair skin, report University of Florida and McGill University researchers.

The study, published in the March 24 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, is the first to link the presence or absence of a specific gene with differences in how men and women respond to a painkilling drug. The findings lend credence to the idea that scientists could someday maximize the effectiveness of prescription medicines for patients on the basis of specific genes.

"We've known for some time that there appear to be differences in the way men and women respond to certain painkilling drugs," said Roger Fillingim, Ph.D., an associate professor in UF's College of Dentistry and a study co-investigator. "The findings of our study are significant because we have now demonstrated that there are, indeed, different biological pain modulation processes at work in women than in men and that a specific gene seems to control these processes."

For many years, physicians have anecdotally reported that redheads are more difficult to anesthetize and effectively manage with drug therapies.

"Clinicians will tell you there is something different about the way redheads respond to drugs," Fillingim said.

Until now, however, scant scientific evidence existed to support those notions, he said.

In the study's initial stages, researchers used a sophisticated statistical method to identify, or map, a gene that might be responsible for affecting how female mice respond to pain. The gene, melanocortin-1 receptor, or Mc1r, has long been identified as the gene responsible for red hair and fair skin in humans.

The study focused on a strain of mutant mice that carries the Mc1r gene, expressed by a distinctive yellow-orange coat. The sex differences in the painkilling effect of certain drugs in normal "wild-type" mice already were established.

"We also had identified the basic location of the gene in the mouse genome that may be responsible for this sex difference," said Jeffrey Mogil, Ph.D., a neuroscientist at Canada's McGill University and the study's



UF nurse, Toni Glover, injects the pain-killing drug, pentacozine, into redheaded test subject Laura Hepting's (22) IV. Using the gauge held in her right hand, Hepting will rate the severity of her pain on a scale of 0 - 20 as the arm cuff is incrementally tightened over a period of 15 minutes. (Photo - Andra Parrish)

lead investigator. "The Mc1r gene is in the area, the end of chromosome 8, of the gene we were looking for, so we thought about using these mutant mice in our study."

The scientists studied how these genetically unique "redheaded" mice responded to a painkiller similar to the drug pentazocine, comparing their reactions with those of other mice who did not carry the Mc1r gene.

Researchers found the drug had the expected sex-differentiated effect in normal mice and the male mutant mice, but that the mutant female mice with the variation of the Mc1r gene did not respond in the same way as the normal female mice. The next step was then to test the drug in humans with variants of the human Mc1r gene.

UF researchers recruited 42 healthy men and women on the basis of their hair color and skin type. Twelve men and nine women were categorized as nonredheads, and an equal number were redheads. Study participants were asked to rate the severity of their pain on a scale of 0 to 100 after receiving brief, repeated impulses of heat on their forearms before and after receiving an injection of pentazocine, marketed in the United States under the trade name Talwin. They also rated the intensity and unpleasantness of their pain on a scale of 0 to 20 at 60-second intervals while a blood pressure cuff was tightened around their left arm for up to 15 minutes.

Researchers discovered that redheaded women who carried two versions of the Mc1r gene experienced much greater pain relief from the drug compared with all other test subjects.

Currently, doctors select the drugs they prescribe and their dosages on the basis of a patient's weight and medical problem. This approach does not take into account various other factors that may influence a patient's response to a drug,

Continued on page 15



Photo - Jeffrey Mogil

Researchers studied how genetically unique "redheaded" mice (at lower left in photo above) responded to the painkiller, pentazocine.

Project HEAL

Filling a gap in health care,
UF dental students visit
Ecuador

By SARAH CAREY

A cool March week in Ecuador spent providing dental care to needy villagers, obtaining additional hands-on experience in routine as well as difficult procedures, and experiencing the beauty and challenges of another culture left a group of seven University of Florida dental students feeling "over the moon" with gratification and awe.

"We worked Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday seeing 20 to 40 local tribes or indigenous populations who traveled three or four hours by bus to Quito for our services," said third-year student Laura Habner, who led the dental group's trip. "We were able to provide fillings, tooth extractions, root canals and pulpotomy to very grateful children and adults."

The students paired up and worked side-by-side with dental students from the University of San Francisco de Quito, which sponsored the trip, during the first official "Project HEAL." Seventeen professional students from the UF Health Science Center colleges of Dentistry, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, along with a handful of Health Science Center faculty members, participated in the venture, known formally as Project Health Extension and Learning. The dental students stayed for a week and the other two groups stayed for two.



HEAL participants, left to right: Laura Habner (kneeling), USFQ's Dr. Poncho, Eduardo Falla, Jossette Vo, Tahir Uddin, Rafael Urbino, Aaron Carroll, Dr. Gustavo Leal, John Raulerson, Jodi Prine, and USFQ's Fernando Sandoval. Photo at upper right: Jodi Prine of dentistry and Daphne Miller of veterinary medicine enjoy the Andean skyline from the rustic village of Culitipo.



Photo - Sarah Carey

Dental College Dean Teresa Dolan was instrumental in planning the dental aspects of the program, and she visited USFQ in 2001.

"I was very impressed with the warmth and hospitality extended to me by the officials of USFQ," Dolan said. "The administration and faculty are sincerely committed to providing a high-quality educational opportunity for their students in the health professions, including dentistry." Dolan added that UF has since hosted two USFQ dental students in its periodontology and oral and maxillofacial surgery programs.

Habner had nothing but positive things to say about the UF group's most recent experience.

"We always had plenty of time to ask questions and discuss dentistry," Habner said. "The dental school dean, Dr. Fernando Sandoval, made it clear that if there was anything he could do to make our educational experience more profound, he'd arrange for us to spend time to enhance our learning." In fact, two dentistry group members, Aaron Carroll and Josette Vo, had expressed a special interest in orthodontics, and spent a half-day observing as well as assisting in the treatment of such cases. When Habner expressed an interest in endodontics, she was told she could return to Ecuador and perform as many root canals as she desired to.

"He said they have an open-door policy for anyone from UF," Habner added.

Although the work schedule was intense, students were encouraged to have fun and experience the local culture, Habner said.

"We actually were given all of Wednesday off, and the dental students from USFQ had all of their classes cancelled so that they could accompany us wherever we wanted to go," she said. "The students took us to local restaurants to experience local food; they took us out for lunches. Everything we needed, they provided."

Carroll, a third-year student, said the UF group learned how to use a technique known as cephalometric tracing – a type of software that uses geometry to aid in decisions about how to

adjust the maxillary or mandible arch in order to achieve proper oral functioning.

The UF students also left boxes of donated supplies provided by Henry Schien's dental company for the USFQ program to use as needed to offset the cost of care to local people.

The students stayed in a hotel during their stay in Quito and took a city bus each day to USFQ, where they worked from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the evening, the Ecuadoran dental students would visit the hotel and the group would make plans. Typically, the group would discuss some of the differences between UF and USFQ's clinical approach to dentistry.

"It was an incredible and enlightening experience to see the similarities and learn from each other," Habner said.

On the second night of the group's visit, the dental school dean, Dr. Sandoval,

invited the UF students to his private dental office for hors d'oeuvres. He introduced the goals of the trip, what they hoped would happen, and told them about the history of this private dental school and how much the education



"I would love to ride with the veterinary students for a half day and see some of their cases," Habner said. "Can you say interesting dentistry – absolutely!"

there has improved. Then he presented a token gift to the group's professor, Gustavo Leal, D.M.D.

Many of the indigenous people seen by the dental students during their clinical work in Quito came from isolated communities.

Leal, the lone dental faculty member on the trip, recalled that one day at the Quito clinic, wealthy women volunteers had prepared sandwiches for participants.

"They offered one to the chief of the tribe, and he took it," Leal said. "But then they tried offering a sandwich to a little boy who was next to the chief, and the child refused to take it. The chief said it was because the child had never seen a sandwich before and had no idea what it was."

Habner said the trip opened her eyes and mind to the humility and kindness all people possess, and the importance of appreciating cultural differences. She hopes future Project

Heal trips will offer even more opportunities for networking and brainstorming projects with students from other health-related disciplines.

Dolan said she was thrilled that the UF students were able to reap such positive benefits from the partnership with USFQ and were able to both provide care and experience the Ecuadorian culture firsthand.

"I know that they benefited personally and professionally from this experience," Dolan said. ●



Photo - Laura Habner

A perspective from the field - *By Laura Habner*

"One unique aspect of our HEAL mission experience was the abundance of Fluorosis noted in one village of children. Their water supply must have been loaded with (naturally occurring) fluoride. Esthetically, the population was affected; the teeth have mild to moderate brown discolorations, random but generalized throughout the dentition. My observation was that of reduced dental caries and when a lesion was noted, it was certainly incipient. I do believe further observation is needed to decipher the source, perhaps a research project lures our future attention.

Another interesting aspect of the trip is that these kids had a high pain tolerance, perhaps because they knew they needed the dental care and had limited opportunity to receive it. But, remembering that they are children, is significant. Very rarely were we exposed to crying. If there was pain, the child would raise his hand—it was that simple—and we would administer (additional) anesthesia."



Fluorosis is apparent in the discolored areas of this child's tooth enamel.
(Photo - Laura Habner)

profile

in leadership

Dr. Tim Wheeler guides UF dentistry's orthodontics department in finding new solutions to old problems in straightening teeth

By ARLINE PHILLIPS-HAN

Parents concerned about having their children's teeth properly straightened—and the dentists who provide the treatment, have for many decades asked when is the best time to start orthodontic treatment? Should you start putting retention braces on the teeth when the child is only 8 or 9 or wait until all adult teeth are in?

Timothy Wheeler, D.M.D., Ph.D., chairman of the orthodontics department at the University of Florida College of Dentistry, has found the answer through a dozen years of federally funded clinical studies that have brought him international recognition.

"I was very surprised, and so was everyone working with me, to discover it doesn't make any difference whether you start orthodontic treatment early in childhood or wait until the teenage years," Wheeler said. "Through the research we've conducted since 1990 in more than 300 children with the most common form of buckteeth, we have found that regardless of which of these time frames you choose, you can achieve the same good results in terms of the way the teeth fit together and in the amount of change of the jaws."

Even before the final data appears in upcoming journal articles, dentists worldwide are hearing about Wheeler's research and asking for more information. Consequently, he has stepped up his professional travel agenda to meet requests for presentations to dental groups around the country and abroad. At the same time, he and his colleagues are continuing follow-up studies on the patients to better evaluate long-term stability of their realigned teeth. Grants from the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research continue to fund the project.

The studies also have put UF's faculty dental clinic on the national radar screen as a referral site for patients with complicated orthodontic problems and/or allergies to conventional orthodontic appliances. Wheeler, whose academic background in both immunology and dentistry aid his ability to treat difficult problems, cares for 50 or more patients in clinic every week, and his colleague Cal Dolce, D.D.S., Ph.D., sees an equally large number. This doesn't include the patients participating in clinical trials.

"I was very surprised, and so was everyone working with me, to discover it doesn't make any difference whether you start orthodontic treatment early in childhood or wait until the teenage years," Wheeler said.

orthodontics a key factor in the College of Dentistry's seventh-place ranking among 55 U.S. dental schools in grants from the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research.



Photo - Andra Parrish

In addition to his almost-completed studies of malocclusion treatment in children, Wheeler is in the third year of an industry-supported clinical study of "invisible" clear plastic aligners, which are increasing in popularity because of their cosmetic advantage over conventional metal brackets. The study involves 100 patients who are being evaluated closely to determine the effectiveness of certain new attachments on tooth movement with the new aligners, as well as the effects on tooth roots, gum tissues and the temporomandibular joint.

"One of the nice findings so far is that we've noted that many of the patients have experienced improved periodontal health during treatment," Wheeler said. "The apparent reason is that these clear plastic braces are easy to remove when you want to clean your teeth, so the patient doesn't have as many 'plaque traps' in the mouth." He noted that the braces, produced by Align Technology, Inc., also can be removed while eating.

Clinical studies make up only a small part of the department's broad spectrum of research aimed at improving care for patients of all ages. Faculty scientists garnered \$1.9 million in research grants in 2001-02, making

Continued on page 15.

Faculty News



Anusavice lands top job with AADR

Through a direct vote of membership, the American Association of Dental Research elected Kenneth J. Anusavice, Ph.D., D.M.D., active president during its annual meeting this March in San Antonio, Texas.

Anusavice, University of Florida College of Dentistry professor, associate dean for research and chair of the college's Department of Dental Biomaterials, has been a faculty member in the college since 1983. He is also an adjunct research professor for the university's Department of Material Science and Engineering, and is the director of the college's Center for Biomaterials.

As this year's AADR president, Anusavice hopes to live up to the organization's goals of providing advanced research and increasing knowledge for the improvement of oral health, giving support and representation to the oral health research community and effectively communicating and applying the organization's research findings.

"It is a great honor to serve as president of the AADR," said Anusavice. "My primary focus during the year will be to expand research and training opportunities for our 4,500 members. I will seek to build a stronger, more unified community of dental scientists and educators."

The AADR is the largest division of the International Association for Dental Research, and is committed to advancing dental research and communications.

Catalanotto president-elect of ADEA

Access to care and dental education have long been a passion of Frank Catalanotto, D.M.D., dean of the University of Florida College of Dentistry from 1995 to 2002 and now a faculty member in the college's pediatric dentistry department. As the newly elected president-elect of the American Dental Education Association, Catalanotto will have ample opportunity to devote service to those issues. One of his first duties as president elect was to travel to the nation's capitol in



April to meet with Bush administration health policy advisors to discuss dental health care, dental education, access to care for the under served, forgiveness of student loans and expansion of Title VII training grants.

Selected by ADEA House of Delegates during its March 2003 Annual Session and Exhibition in San Antonio, Texas, Catalanotto, an ADEA member since 1980, will serve his term as president-elect in 2003-2004. Catalanotto is comfortable with this role as a national leader and has been extensively involved in national dental education issues throughout his career, including pediatric dentistry education, basic and clinical research and community service.

In addition to his president-elect duties, Catalanotto chairs the ADEA Legislative Affairs Committee, which advises and lobbies on federal policies and appropriations related to dental education and practice. Catalanotto is also the vice president for Deans of the Board of Directors of ADEA.

The ADEA is the leading national organization for dental education and serves the mission of promoting and improving excellence in all aspects of dental education.



Turner appointed director of prosthodontics graduate program

Glenn E. Turner, D.M.D., will become director of the Advanced Education Program in Prosthodontics effective July 1, but will serve as acting director beginning with the June 15 retirement of the program's director of four years, Carl A. Hansen, D.D.S.

Turner has served as the director for Maxillofacial Services at the University of Florida since 1984 and will continue in this role providing prostheses for otolaryngology, plastic surgery, and oral and maxillofacial surgery.

A 1970 graduate of the University of Alabama, Turner completed specialty training in prosthodontics in 1980 and a one-year fellowship in maxillofacial prosthetics in 1981 to earn a master's of science in dentistry from the University of Alabama.

Turner is the secretary-treasurer of the American Association of Maxillofacial Prosthetics, and has served as a member of the AAMFP board of directors for the past 12 years. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Prosthodontics, a fellow of the American College of Dentists, International College of Dentists and the American College of Prosthodontics. He is past president of the Florida Prosthodontic Association.

Benson and Haddix named teachers of the year

Mel Benson, D.M.D., and James Haddix, D.M.D., were awarded the college's 2003 Teacher of the Year Award. Benson (basic science) and Haddix (clinical science) were selected to receive the award based on their excellence, innovation, and effectiveness in teaching in the basic sciences. Haddix is also the recipient of the Florida Dental Association's 2003 Dental Educator Award recognizing individual excellence in dental education.

Continued on page 12

Faculty Retirements

Arnold S. Bleiweis, Ph.D., officially retired Jan. 31 of this year after a distinguished career of 35 years at UF, 16 during which he served as chair for the Department of Oral Biology. Bleiweis continues to teach and contribute to laboratory operations, and he was recently appointed Graduate Research Professor Emeritus status.



Carl A. Hansen, D.D.S., will retire from the college this June. Hansen was director of the Advanced Education Program in Prosthodontics for four years, a former chair of the Department of Prosthodontics, and a faculty member since 1993. Hansen has been the recipient of several teacher of the year awards and a 2003 UF Superior Accomplishment Award. He has just received an appointment as

Associate Professor Emeritus and plans to conduct lectures and tour the country with wife, Barbara, in their RV.

Nikzad Javid, D.M.D., will also retire in June. Since coming to the college's Department of Prosthodontics in 1980, Javid's main interest has been teaching. He began teaching at the University of Tehran in 1969, where he published more than 30 articles and eight books over a 10-year period and eventually served as dean. Javid has been recognized as "Teacher of the Year," "The Best Teacher," and "Distinguished Professor of the Year"—honors he has received seven times in the past eight years. Javid is recently appointed to Professor Emeritus status.



Faculty Departures

Jonathan L. Gray, D.D.S., is leaving UF's Department of Periodontology after four years of service as director of the Graduate Periodontics Program. Gray earned his dental degree at University of Illinois College of Dentistry and certificates in both periodontics and oral medicine at the Navy's postgraduate school in Bethesda, Maryland. Gray and his wife will reside in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Faculty Arrivals

Indraneel Bhattacharyya, D.D.S., has been appointed assistant professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Diagnostic Sciences in the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology section.

Bhattacharyya assumed his duties at UF in May, and comes to the college from the College of Dentistry at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where he has taught oral pathology and medicine for the past six years. He has won several teaching awards for his efforts at Nebraska. His primary responsibilities at UF include teaching oral and maxillofacial pathology to the undergraduate and graduate dental programs. He will be actively involved in further developing the oral tissue biopsy service at UF.

Bhattacharyya earned his doctor of dental science from University of Nebraska and his master's degree in oral and maxillofacial pathology from Indiana University. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, and has published numerous articles and contributed to several books on the subject of oral pathology and oral medicine. His principal research interest lies in oral carcinogenesis and in the clinical and microscopic aspects of various oral mucosal diseases. Bhattacharyya is especially interested in the relation between tobacco use and the development of oral lesions. He has worked extensively in the past with schools, county health departments and other non-profit agencies in increasing awareness of the effects of tobacco use.

Bhattacharyya and his wife, Anu, are the proud parents of a 3-year-old son, Rudra, and they look forward to settling into the Gainesville community. The Bhattacharyyas are eager to travel within Florida and will enjoy the mild winter weather here after braving several rather harsh winters in Nebraska.



Student Awards



Senior **Mike Barbick** was awarded the Pierre Fauchard \$1500 Scholarship.

Freshman **Michelle Ortega** was awarded the Outstanding Student Abstract award for Behavioral Sciences Research Group of the American Association for Dental Research

Freshman **Jason J. Sotto** was awarded the Hispanic Dental Association's P&G Scholarship.

Student Awards (continued)

Two UF dental students win Hinman Scholarships

The Hinman Dental Society presented University of Florida dental students—**Kevin O'Shaughnessy** (left) and **Juddson Reed** (right)—with scholarships from the Thomas P. Himan Dental Society. The awards were presented at a special luncheon held at the 91st Hinman Dental Meeting in Atlanta on March 22. The Hinman Dental Society awarded \$190,000 in scholarships this year to dental, hygiene and laboratory technicians at 39 colleges and universities.



Senior **Stephanie Reeder** was awarded the American Dental Education Association \$2,000 Listerine Scholarship for preventative dentistry and leadership. Reeder also received awards from Florida Section of the American College of Dentists, the International College of Dentists, and the Academy of Alumni and Friends - A. Lewis Leo Outstanding Student Award.

Senior **William E. Richardson, II**, (right) received the L. D. Pankey Award, presented by Dr. Henry Gremillion (left).



High Honors and Honors

High Honors were bestowed on graduating seniors **Anissa Ahmadi**, **David Beach**, **Kelley Borders** and **Kerri-Ann Graham**.

Linda Ness Barry, **Michael Gorman**, **Valerie Minor** and **Laura Negormireanu** graduated with Honors.



Honors Court (from left to right): Valerie Minor, Linda Ness Barry, Anissa Ahmadi, David Beach, Kerri-Ann Graham, Kelly Borders, Laura Negormireanu, and Dean Dolan. (Photo - Sam Brill)

mark your calendar...

Florida National Dental Congress

June 12 - 14

Stop by the UFCD exhibit booth at FNDC to visit some of your favorite faculty and gather information about upcoming continuing education and alumni programs. Plus, join us for the UFCD alumni and friends reception on June 13 at 5:30 pm and meet the new dean, Terri Dolan. Are you a member of the Sigma Class? Your classmates want to see you at a reunion dinner in the Marriot's Mikado Steakhouse Friday night at 7:30 pm. Contact the alumni office for registration information.

UFCD White Coat Ceremony

July 19

Thank you to our alumni and friends for sponsoring this professional coating ceremony for our rising junior class signifying the students' transition into patient care.

Senior Convocation

September 12

Another event made possible by support from our alumni and friends recognizes our senior students and prepares them for the transition from student to professional. This year's event will be held at the Savannah Grande on September 12 and each senior student will be presented with a Merck manual engraved with their name.

Pediatrics Renovation Kick-off

October 10 - 11

Join us for the inaugural fall continuing dental education program for pediatric dentistry on October 11 at the UF Hotel and Conference Center. Dr. Fernando Borba de Araujo will speak on "Contemporary Approaches to Operative Pediatric Dentistry Supported by Scientific Evidence." Look for registration materials this summer.

Dental Fall Weekend

November 7 - 8

Come home to Gainesville for Homecoming Weekend Nov. 7 and 8 at the Sheraton Hotel. Join us Friday for a continuing education presentation by Dr. Avishai Sadan, associate professor of prosthodontics at LSU School of Dentistry. Friday evening enjoy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails and then, if you are a member of the Gamma or Theta Class, join your class for a reunion dinner. Also, plan to attend the alumni barbecue on Saturday to reminisce with old classmates and friends. A small number of football tickets will be available for purchase. Look for registration materials this summer.

Need event info? Contact the alumni office at (352) 392-4384, e-mail tsiler@dental.ufl.edu or visit www.dental.ufl.edu/alumni

class notes

Sigma Class of 1993

Robert En Lai's general dentistry practice in Boynton Beach is so successful that he has decided to open another office in Lake Worth this summer. Robert jokes that his 7-year-old son has already started learning how to do Class I prep.

Watching their family grow in Coral Gables are **Robert Perdomo** and wife, Arev. The Perdomos were expecting their first son in May to go along with their three girls, Nicolette (7), Christin (5), and Bridget (2). Robert says he stays busy coaching the girls' soccer team.

Barbara Vermost Reed reports that life is good in Naples, where she purchased an orthodontic practice last year.

For the last two years, **Daniel Savett** has been stationed at Misawa Air Force Base in Japan. He and Paulina have a 20-month-old daughter named Hannah. Daniel enjoys his amateur radio hobby and thinks their next stop will be somewhere in Europe.

Adam Strimer is an endodontist in the U.S. Navy at Parris Island, South Carolina. He says most of his time is spent being dad to Lauren (6) and twin girls, Emily and Sydney (3). Adam is also studying for Part III of the Endodontic Boards, brewing beer and trying to play golf.

Rob Van Etta's general dentistry practice now consists of partners C.K. Owens and Laurie Kitson. Fellow UFCD alumnus J.R. Taylor also spends some time in their Fernandina Beach office placing implants.

Finally settling down are **Jimmy Wilson** and wife, Casey, who were married in December 2002. Jimmy opened his own periodontal practice in Tampa three years ago.

David Ferlita is finishing his last year on the ADA's Committee on the New Dentist. He cherishes the fellowships in the American College and International College of Dentists and is currently secretary of the Atlantic Coast District Dental Association. But perhaps most importantly, David and Christine enjoy going to Gator games with their daughters Taylor (3) and Bailey (2).

Omega Class of 1999

Henderson, Nevada (just outside of Las Vegas) is the home of **Ilya Benjamin**'s thriving new multi-specialty practice, which he has built from the ground up. Even with the demands of his new practice he still found time to travel to London, Spain and France last fall!

Mike Hartley and wife, Bobbie, are now the proud new parents of baby Douglas Clifford, born on March 17, 2003. He weighed 9 pounds, 6 ounces!

Stephanie Holsey is still working at the Health Department in Jacksonville, but will be moving to the Washington D.C. area in September as her husband will be

stationed at the Pentagon. Son, Joshua, is now 10 years old, and Jordan is 3.

Henry Knowles has bought a house and opened a practice in Marianna, Florida. Henry and wife, Kelly, now have two boys to keep them busy! Baby Henry was born in August 2000, and baby Benjamin was born in February 2002.

Pam Miller and husband, John Ottesen, are both working for Indian Health Services at Fort Apache Reservation in White Mountains, Arizona. She spends her free time doing yoga, hiking, camping and quilting.

Ed Oxer and wife, Monique, are living in Lake Placid, Florida, where he entered into a general practice partnership. Son, Tanner, is now 4 years old, and daughter, Melina, is 2. He just traded his old airplane for a Piper Comanche, and has recently been skiing in Tahoe and whitewater rafting in Clayton, Georgia.

Joseph Joyce and wife, Lauren, are the proud parents of 2-year-old son, Joseph Caleb. The Joyces are stationed in Bethesda, Maryland, where Joseph is working in a residency program with the Navy. Joseph had been assigned as the dental officer on the USS DUBUQUE LPD-8 for the previous two years, and his ship was one of the first to put sailors and Marines ashore to fight the Taliban in Afghanistan after the 9-11 attacks.

Ellen Stone and husband, Danny, are now calling Manhattan home! After a year or two in California, Ellen is now finishing up her first year at NYU as a pediatric dentistry resident.

Irma Tassi is now practicing at Bay Pines VA Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida. She has been busy working with Dr. Scheitler preparing to open an AEGD residency program there this July.

Mauricio Tijerino completed a GPR in Birmingham, Alabama, after dental school and now works in a group practice with UFCD grads Scott Kenward and Oswaldo Mayoral. He just bought a condo in Miami and has been studying at the Pankey Institute.

Julie Vavruska is still working at a community health center in Sumterville, and she and her husband just bought five acres in Brooksville where they will soon build a house.

Class of 2001

In May, **Lee Cohen** completed the examination process and is now a diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology. Cohen has also been appointed a clinical faculty position in the surgical clinic of the Department of Periodontics and Implant Dentistry at the University of Florida, while maintaining a private practice in Boca Raton, Florida.

Don't see your name here? Feeling left out?
Take a moment to update us on what you've been doing...
Go to our alumni Web site, located at
www.dental.ufl.edu/alumni,
to fill out a "Stay In Touch" form, or e-mail
tsiler@dental.ufl.edu.

Current basic science projects include investigations of the basic biological processes involved in tooth movement and bone remodeling, as well as the origins and progression of chronic facial and jaw pain.

"Orthodontics has advanced on the basis of using biomechanical forces to move teeth the way we want to move them so that they will fit together well and function properly," Wheeler said. "Usually, we can do a good job of inducing tooth movement by exerting physical pressures on the teeth with braces, but the future control of tooth movement will be even better by controlling the biologic process of tooth movement.

"Now, with support from the National Institute for Dental Research, we're investigating oral tissues at the cellular level to better define the process of bone turnover and tooth movement," Wheeler said. "We have Dr. Dolce and Dr. Shannon Holiday doing this research to see if it might be possible to control tooth movement with the use of chemical agents that would turn off the production of substances that cause bone tissue to break down."

Wheeler said his department's expanded focus on facial pain includes both old and new programs that integrate the talents of researchers in neuroscience and neurology, oncology, oral biology, general surgery and maxillofacial surgery, molecular biology, biochemistry, orthodontics, orthopedics and rheumatology. Collaborative studies are carried out largely through two UF centers that are housed in orthodontics and work synergistically:

- The Parker E. Mahan Facial Pain Center, founded in 1984 under the guidance of Distinguished Service Professor Parker Mahan, D.D.S., Ph.D. The center provides a multidisciplinary team of health-care specialists who treat a variety of painful conditions affecting the head and neck. Patients with complicated pain conditions come from all over the United States. Now directed by Henry Gremillion, D.D.S., the center is expanding studies of muscle involvement in facial pain.
- UF's Comprehensive Center for Pain Research, founded in 2001 under the direction of Robert Yeziarski, Ph.D., as a partnership between the dental college and UF's McKnight Brain Institute. The center involves more than 30 scientists from various disciplines campuswide, who collaborate in studies of various forms of chronic pain. A new faculty member, arriving in July, will bring additional expertise in facial pain.

Outside research and patient care, Wheeler said a chunk of his time goes to overseeing a "very competitive residency training program in orthodontics," involving the enrollment of nine residents each year from a field of about 150 applicants. He also is assistant dean for advanced and graduate education at the college, where a total of 75 students are now enrolled.

Wheeler is increasingly tapped for international leadership in his profession. His current roles include president-elect for the Craniofacial Biology Section of the International Association for Dental Research; director of the North Atlantic Section of the Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontics; councilor of the Orthodontic Section of the American Dental

Educators Association, and consultant to the Commission on Dental Accreditation.

Workdays typically stretch from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., but Wheeler said he enjoys the specialty he chose and likes the academic life where every day brings different challenges.

In managing a rapidly growing department, Wheeler said he derives the greatest pride from "seeing how all of our clinical and basic researchers, all of the clinicians, support staff, residents and fellows interact with each other well and appreciate what each brings to the department. We have had a lot of success, and in my view, it is due to this factor: the way our people work together."

Outside the workplace, Wheeler enjoys spending time with his wife, Janet, a private practitioner of orthodontics in Gainesville, and their four children, including 5-year-old Lynna and 8-year-old Morgan, whose current top interest is in horses. The older children include 22-year-old Jennifer, who soon will graduate from Flagler College in St. Augustine, and 24-year-old son Tim Jr., an independent journalist currently working in Bogota, Columbia. ●

Pink pills are for girls....Continued from page 8.

Mogil said.

"Our study indicates pharmacogenetics — or the way genes affect drug response — can provide prediction of drug response in patients given the status of a relevant gene," Mogil said. "This means, in the future, we may be able to look at a person's genetic characteristics to prescribe drugs that work best for that individual patient and at doses most appropriate."

"The ultimate goal," said Fillingim, "would be to do a blood test on somebody, look at their genetic makeup as well as other chemical, biological and physical characteristics, plug all that information into a computer, and the computer would print out a sheet that says, 'Okay, this drug, at this dose, is going to provide this patient the best relief from pain'."

Study researchers already are examining the sex-specific effects of a more commonly used group of morphine-like drugs called mu-opioids on redheaded mice. Morphine-like drugs are the type most commonly used to treat severe pain.

"We have preliminary evidence in mice that the Mc1r gene is relevant, in a sex-specific way, to morphine," Mogil said.

Human studies are under way to further explore the relationship between the Mc1r gene and sex differences in drug responses. ●

The University of Florida College of Dentistry Class of 2003



Well Done and Good Luck!

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