



A college update from **A. Isabel Garcia, DDS, MPH**
Dean, UF College of Dentistry

FAST FORWARD

July 2017

To: UF College of Dentistry,

On June 21, we officially launched the strategic planning process for the college's 2018-22 Strategic Plan during a reception held in the lobby of the UF Biomedical Building. The reception followed two well-attended town halls with predoctoral students and UFCD staff. The following day, we had a very productive meeting with the four workgroups' co-chairs and convened a faculty town hall which provided an excellent opportunity for engagement and listening. Later this summer, we will have a similar listening session with UFCD residents.

Our strategic planning advisor, Bob Berendt, and I traveled to the Florida Dental Convention in Orlando. We met with our Alumni and Friends Board to also gain their insights about the college and what they perceive as the greatest opportunities and challenges for the future and attended a fabulous Gator Dentist Reception on June 23 which drew close to 300 devoted Gator Dentists, family and friends.

Overall, these strategic planning activities were rewarding and illuminating for me. We received thoughtful feedback, perspectives and input. I truly appreciate everyone's efforts and engagement across the board – helping organize sessions, events, leading the groups and continuing to participate earnestly in this important activity.

UF SHPEP



The University of Florida Student Health Professions Education Program, or UF SHPEP, celebrated the end of the first six-week program on June 29. The pilot program included 80 students who learned about professions in dentistry, medicine, nursing, physician's assisting, pharmacy, public health and health professions, and veterinary medicine.

The students, who are rising sophomores and juniors, came from all over the United States.

You can find out more about the program at the link above and [here](#) as well.

continued

Faculty Promotions

If you have additional thoughts or were unable to attend the town halls, please feel free to attend one or more of the workgroup meetings, contact a member of a [workgroup](#) or the [steering committee](#) or email me directly. Your voice is important!

In addition to strategic planning we celebrated our college's [42nd annual commencement](#) on May 19 and our [18th annual white coat ceremony](#) on June 18. These gratifying events help underscore everyone's phenomenal work in supporting and maintaining our top-rate education, research and patient care missions.

UF Foundation Capital Campaign

On October 13, the University of Florida will launch a new capital campaign, "Go Greater." Many efforts are underway to prepare messaging and plans for the campaign which is scheduled to last seven years. Many individuals in our school are working closely with the foundation and 160/90, an agency hired by the foundation to prepare campaign materials. Among the areas of priorities for our college are endowed professorships and scholarships, as well as initiatives focusing on children's oral health and digital dentistry.

The campaign launches on Friday, October 13, with a large gala; the next day the UF football team plays Texas A&M at home.

Scholarships

Two new UFCD scholarship funds have recently been established. Dr. Marc Gale created the Marc Gale Pride Scholarship and you can read more about that in this issue of Fast Forward. In addition, we were overwhelmed by the outpouring of support for a scholarship named for Huy Huynh, DMD Class of 2013, following his untimely passing earlier this month.

If you would like to contribute to either scholarship, you can give online. You can access the [Marc Gale Pride Scholarship here](#) and the scholarship in [Huy Huynh here](#).

Regards,

Dean Isabel Garcia



Tarek El-Kerdani

Congratulations to five faculty members who received promotions effective July 1, 2017, in recognition of the quality and impact of their contributions to UF, the oral health profession and society.

Tarek El-Kerdani, D.D.S., M.S.D., FACP, was promoted to clinical professor in restorative dental sciences.



Monica Fernandez

Monica Fernandez, D.D.S., M.S., was promoted to clinical associate professor in restorative dental sciences.



Nadim Islam

Nadim Islam, D.D.S., B.D.S., was promoted to clinical professor in oral and maxillofacial diagnostic sciences.



Rodrigo Neiva

Rodrigo Neiva, D.D.S., M.S., has been promoted to clinical professor in periodontology. He is also the program director for the periodontology residency program



Rodrigo Souza

Rodrigo Souza, D.D.S., was promoted to clinical associate professor in community dentistry and behavioral science. Souza is the program director for the advanced education in general dentistry program at the UF Health Hialeah Dental Center.

The Gale **Pride** Scholarship

A first of its kind

Breaking barriers, leveling the playing field and easing the path for aspiring dental professionals.

Retired UF College of Dentistry educator Marc Gale, D.M.D., had these objectives in mind last year when he took the initiative to create the first endowed scholarship at the college for students who, by action and advocacy, support human rights, especially those of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning, or LGBTQ, students.

The Gale Pride Scholarship is in its inaugural academic year. The scholarship has been awarded to the first six recipients, all of whom have actively demonstrated advocacy and action for the causes and concerns of LGBTQ students: Byron Amador, Fitz Brooks, Wade Combs, Dana DeLosa, Coty Granatosky and Daniel Popper.

In addition to the college's commitment to cultural diversity, the Gale Pride Scholarship aligns those student LGBTQ advocates directly with the college's values of excellence, integrity, collaboration, courtesy, compassion, diversity and professionalism, which continue to propel students, faculty and staff to successfully fulfill the college's vision and mission.

"For many years, I had considered establishing a scholarship through my estate plan that honored my mother and father," Gale said. "However, the purpose of this scholarship is just as close to my heart, and after the tragic shooting at Pulse Nightclub (an Orlando nightclub where more than 50 people were killed by a gunman), I thought it was more important to build support for a student population frequently subjected to bias."

Gale first retired from the college in 2006 but subsequently returned to continue teaching several times over the years, and he also served as interim chair of the department of restorative dental sciences after his "retirement" as well. As an educator for more than 40 years at UFCD, Gale knows all too well that dental education experience can be tough, and that students need all the support they can get.

From mentoring students and helping guide some to financial resources, he has maintained a rigorous



commitment over the years to tutoring hundreds of aspiring dental professionals. Not one dental student passed through the college's doors without being influenced by Gale's passion and commitment to dental education. In May 2016, he officially retired but his dedication to the college, and to dental education and students, will never fully retire.

Now, his legacy and commitment to education, diversity and inclusion lives on through the Gale Pride Scholarship. The first six Gale Pride Scholarship recipients were endowed by Gale's personal estate designation, while the scholarship funding continues to grow through gifts to the endowment.

To date, the Gale Pride Scholarship endowment has raised \$40,000, with half funded in cash donations and half through pledges.

The scholarship supports a currently enrolled D.M.D. student who is in good academic standing, focused on being a successful practitioner, and who demonstrates thorough advocacy and action for the causes and concerns of LGBTQ students. Gale's personal estate designation will fully endow the scholarship, and every gift added to the endowment will increase the amount available for scholarship support.

To learn more about the Gale Pride Scholarship, or to make a gift, please contact: Megan Poole, Development Coordinator; 352-265-7237 or meganpoole@ufl.edu.

New Residents



On July 3 the college welcomed 38 new residents who began their programs with the University of Florida School for Advanced Dental Sciences. The group was enjoying a New Resident Orientation on their first day before moving on to program-specific training. Together they represent 36 different dental schools with 11 of the residents earning their dental degrees from the University of Florida.

You can learn more about the group on our [online story](#) including where they are from and where they earned their dental degrees.



The new residents who were already Gator Dentists, having earned their dental degrees with us, took a special "class within a class" photo, left.

We are proud that they chose to stick around for their advanced education and we look forward to seeing them for another few years.

Mark Your Calendars

The college's [online calender](#) includes lots of important dates and information for upcoming events, professional development opportunities and more. To add an event, email [Karen Rhodenizer](#).



August 21-25
DMD Break Week

October 6
UF Homecoming

October 13
UF Capital Campaign Kickoff

October 19-23
ADA Annual Meeting, Atlanta

October 23-27
DMD Break Week

November 17 & 18
Dental Fall Weekend

March 17-20
[ADEA](#) in Orlando

March 21 - 24
[AADR](#) in Ft. Lauderdale