



A COLLEGE UPDATE from Dean A. Isabel Garcia, D.D.S., M.P.H.

To: UF College of Dentistry

Happy Fall!

While the Florida temperatures haven't completely caught up to the season, fall is such a lovely time of year as we enter the holiday months and I know most of us are welcoming the cooler weather to the Sunshine State with open arms. It is hard to believe November is here and that we have been navigating a global pandemic for eight months.

It's impossible to express my gratitude to our faculty, staff, students and residents for continuing to move forward during unprecedented and uncertain times. The level of commitment to our college and the care you have displayed for your patients, classmates, co-workers and colleagues is remarkable.

We are incredibly fortunate to be a part of the UF Academic Health Center, and to have epidemiology experts at our doorstep as UF and UF Health continue to evolve processes and services to meet the changing needs created by COVID-19. UF Health's [Screen, Test & Protect](#) program has provided public health guidance and best practices for our community, while taking steps to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Weekly health assessment questionnaires and testing are available to all UF employees and students, and both play a crucial role in reducing transmission of the virus. More information is included in this issue of Fast Forward, but know that you can log in to [One.UF.edu](#) weekly for the COVID-19 screening questions, and to request a test.

While it seems COVID has dominated conversation and life as of late, we have so much to be proud of within our college. We have settled nicely into our 'new normal' in terms of DMD education; our research enterprise is completely back; and all dental centers are fully operational – with added precautions and safety measures, of course.

The pandemic also created opportunity for our researchers to [make a difference through novel coronavirus research projects](#). Our college [received a \\$1.2 million grant](#) from the Naples Children & Education Foundation to continue caring for the underserved children in Collier County in Southwest

Florida through the NCEF Pediatric Dental Center. We have welcomed 11 new faculty this fall – more about them in this issue.

Finally, we have made incredible, tangible strides towards our diversity and inclusion efforts this fall. This summer, when the brutal indicators of systemic racial injustice in our country once again boiled to the forefront, we pledged to continue to do our part to heal racial divides in our community, to teach one another how to better understand different perspectives and experiences, and to discover ways to bring our community, nation and world closer through kindness and hope.

I would like to thank Dr. Patty Probert for taking the lead on our advocacy and inclusion efforts, for creating our new IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access – Workgroup, for working tirelessly with our faculty, staff and students alike; and for leading a number of efforts at the Academic Health Center and at the UF level. Dr. Probert and her team created a [working document](#) that is posted on our website to detail our efforts. I have also included it at the end of this issue and hope that what you see are strong initiatives to help lead our efforts.

I think we have learned by now that one of the keys to success during COVID-19 is to maintain flexibility through such a fluid moment in our society. More planning, detours, brainstorming and problem-solving are without a doubt in our future as we assess COVID-19's continued ramifications on our programs; we certainly have a solid foundation built through endless hours of work at the onset of the pandemic.

This pandemic will leave an indelible mark in our professional and personal lives. It is my sincere hope that along with the daily challenges and stress, we will also take time to acknowledge the many incredible people who create our UFCD family. Be sure to take care of yourself, and to check in with colleagues, family and friends.

All my best,

NOVEMBER OPEN AFTERNOON

Faculty and staff, please join Dr. Garcia via Zoom on Thursday, November 19, for a special fall Open Afternoon. Meeting ID and passcode to come via email. Cheers!

Open Afternoons

hosted by Dean Isabel Garcia

NOVEMBER 19

12-1:30 p.m.



Please join us for a special virtual Open Afternoon to welcome new faculty & staff, share several updates and, most importantly, to have a little fun!



WELCOME, NEW FACULTY!

Keep an eye on www.dental.ufl.edu as we welcome all new faculty with a brief profile.

An especially warm UFCD welcome to all of our new faculty at the college. Times are a bit unconventional right now, but we are so proud to have such an outstanding group join our college to contribute to the many aspects of our education, research and patient care missions. We hope you feel right at home, and look forward to virtually introducing you to our faculty and staff at our November 19 'Open Afternoon' on Zoom. Visit the links on the right for our new faculty profiles that have been published. More to come.

MEETING OUR NEW FACULTY

- [Dr. Clinio Cerrud](#)
- [Dr. Allison Sley](#)
- [Dr. Sabarathnam Balu](#)
- [Dr. Eric Bauman](#)
- [Dr. Hamad Alharbi](#)
- [Dr. Divakar Karanth](#)
- [Dr. Stephanni Terza](#)
- [Dr. Rutvi Vyas](#)

More to come! We'll officially welcome Dr. Alexandre Cabrera, Dr. Teemar Carey & Dr. Pedro Valdes Hernandez on our website soon!



Miss an email or communication from Dr. Garcia, UF or UF Health Emerging Issues? We've archived every email and important communication through COVID-19 on the college's shared drive at the following mapping:

V:\All
UFCD\Coronavirus
Communications

COVID-19 REMINDERS

As we continue to move through the COVID-19 pandemic, information abounds. We've included some important links to keep you updated on information and resources available for University of Florida faculty, staff and students.

While we are currently in the midst of a slight increase in percent-positive rates, the increase was expected and we encourage everyone to take advantage of UF's weekly 'Screen, Test & Protect' questionnaire, while continuing to follow all directives for masking, hand washing and physical distancing.

Weekly Screening & Testing

- A reminder all UF faculty, students & staff have the option to **complete a weekly questionnaire and to request testing at [One.UF.edu](https://one.ufl.edu)**.

Screen, Test & Protect Website

- The [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) has information and guidance for students, faculty and staff related to testing, quarantining and isolation.
- The Screen, Test & Protect website also has a [Testing Dashboard](#) that reports COVID-19 testing data and positive rates on campus.

UF Health Bridge

- The [UF Health Bridge](#) has a COVID-19 Information and Daily Census section located on The Bridge home page.
- More information is located on the [UF Health Emerging Issues COVID-19 Info & Response](#) site.
- A reminder that you must be on a university device, or logged in on VPN, to visit The Bridge.



MOURNING THE LOSS OF DAVID GUIRGUIS



When most UFCD faculty, staff and classmates remember David Guirguis, DMD class of 2021, they mention his warm, ready smile, his contagious laughter, a consistent positive outlook and a willingness to help whenever and however needed.

We were heartbroken to learn of [David's passing](#) August 7, and continue to hold his family, friends, classmates and all who loved him close to our hearts.

COVID-19 PATIENT SAFETY VIDEO

UFCD has created a [COVID-19 patient safety video](#) for current and future patients to help detail all important safety measures that we're implementing in our dental centers across the state to ensure a safe environment for both patients and providers. Feel free to share as necessary!

2020 HEED AWARD

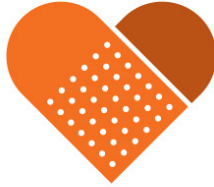
UFCD won the Excellence in Diversity Award for the sixth straight year

Congratulations to Dr. Pam Sandow and her team in Admissions & Financial Aid. They learned last month that our college received an *INSIGHT into Diversity Magazine* Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity, or HEED, Award for the sixth year in a row.

The HEED Award is a national honor recognizing U.S. medical, dental, pharmacy, osteopathic, nursing, and allied health schools that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.



FREE FLU SHOTS FOR STUDENTS & EMPLOYEES



#GatorsFightFlu

Get Vaccinated!

UF students, faculty and staff are encouraged to receive their flu vaccine.

Visit my.shcc.ufl.edu/vaccines

UFHealth
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA HEALTH

The University of Florida is offering flu shots for students and employees **FREE** of charge.

To sign up for your free flu shot, [visit the portal](#) to select from a variety of appointment times and locations on campus.

While it is not possible to prevent all cases of the flu virus, flu shots can prevent you from getting sick and from spreading the virus to others.

Minimizing the number of people who are sick, have weakened immune systems, or have to be hospitalized makes for a healthier community and can ease potential strain on our healthcare systems -- an issue of particular importance during our current COVID-19 pandemic.

LEARN MORE ABOUT BENEFITS

- **UFCD Zoom Benefits Meeting** | Miss the UFCD benefits Zoom meeting? | [Watch the replay](#)
- **UF Benefits Online Sessions** | [Visit here to enroll](#)
- **UF Benefits Webinars** | [Register for webinars online](#)

BENEFITS OPEN ENROLLMENT

UF Open Enrollment is October 19-November 6

A reminder that the university's annual Open Enrollment period is upon us for UF-sponsored plans, state-sponsored plans and Resident/Post Doc GatorCare. Open Enrollment began October 19 and ends November 6 at 6 p.m.

Check out [UFCD Human Resources' Open Enrollment information](#).

To learn more about UF benefits, see three opportunities to learn more about benefits and Open Enrollment.



SPOTLIGHT ON DENTAL EDUCATION

The University of Florida
College of Dentistry's
Spotlight on Dental Education
awards recognize the many
people who contribute to
making the UFCD educational
programs great.

Our 2020 celebration has
looked a little different amid
COVID-19, but join us in
honoring all of our teaching
awardees.

UFCD students selected
Teachers of the Year for
Basic & Behavioral Sciences
and Clinical Sciences, while
the college recognized six
faculty with Excellence in
Dental Education Awards;
three Excellence in Teaching
honors and three Sustained
Excellence in Teaching
awards.

2020 Teachers of the Year



Dr. Indraneel Bhattacharyya
Basic & Behavioral Sciences
Teacher of the Year



Dr. Luisa Echeto
Clinical Sciences
Teacher of the Year

2020 Sustained Exemplary Teaching Awards



Dr. Ana Dias-Ribeiro



Dr. Jacqueline Abranches



Dr. Larry Cook

2020 Exemplary Teaching Awards



Dr. Andrew Corsaro



Dr. Eleonora Bakiri



Dr. Frank Gibson



UF SUPERIOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARD WINNERS

A special congratulations to our
UF-level Superior
Accomplishment Award winners,
Susan Gorman & Christina
Perez. If you'll recall, the college
had a total of NINE faculty and
staff honored at the Division
Level this year. Thank you for
representing UFCD so well!



Susan Gorman
Community Dentistry
& Behavioral
Sciences | Naples



Christina Perez
Human Resources

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access Workgroup

INITIATIVES

OCTOBER 2020

IDEA

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ABOUT THE IDEA WORKGROUP

The Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access Workgroup will ensure the continued cultivation of a model academic and environmental culture in which differences are invited, recognized, appreciated and valued. The workgroup will also foster understanding, collaboration, professionalism and leadership through open communication and positive interactions.

“An exceptional academic environment reflects the breadth of thought essential for preeminence, achieved by a community of students, faculty, and staff who have diverse experiences and backgrounds.”

OCTOBER 2020

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access Workgroup

INITIATIVES

IN OUR COLLEGE

Black Student Advocacy Group

- Immediately following the murder of George Floyd, Dean Garcia and Assistant Dean for Student Advocacy & Inclusion Dr. Patty Probert met with the college's Black Student Advocacy group, which has been in existence for three years and meets at minimum once a semester.
- UFCD offered a safe space to talk about what our Black students were feeling, offer our support and discuss their experiences in the college.

Black Lives Matter in Academia Doc

- Created a living document: [Black Lives Matter in Academia](#), which offers resources to learn about Black history, Black experiences, how to be an anti-racist and more.
- Located on our website and shared to other web pages, like the Academic Health Center Library and the Clinical & Translational Science Institute's diversity page.

STUDENTS, FACULTY & STAFF

Education & Ally-ship Resources

- The Office for Student Advocacy & Inclusion continues to immerse itself in education of ally-ship and resources for Black faculty, staff and students.
- The Office for Student Advocacy & Inclusion, along with HR, Financial Aid and Admissions, received focused training in crisis intervention.

Examine Best Practices for IDEA

- Dr. Patty Probert has collaborated with the Office of Academic Affairs to examine best IDEA practices as it relates to the curriculum and the education of our students.

IDEA

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IDEA WORKGROUP CHARGE:

- Create an educational and work environment where all feel a sense of belonging.
- Build a shared framework for discussions on diversity, inclusivity, equity, gender identification and disabilities.
- Invite dialogue from diverse perspectives in the service of our educational mission.
- Ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities needed to succeed.
- Promote positive and productive relationships between students, faculty and staff.

OCTOBER 2020

Meetings with Black Faculty

- College deans met with Black faculty for an opportunity to hear their impressions of the college climate and changes they would like to see.
- Most feedback indicated a desire for an increase in Black faculty.

Antidiscrimination Statement

- Developed a clearer and direct antidiscrimination statement.
- Dean Garcia and Assistant Dean Probert worked with college leadership and received input from Black faculty, staff and students.
- The statement will be mandatory in every syllabus and handbook in the college, as well as a visible document in our clinics.
- A resource guide accompanies the statement to help those who are targeted, or see an injustice take place, find the right places to talk about what happened and take further action.

Creation of IDEA Workgroup

- Developed a charge for a new workgroup called the Inclusion, Diversity, Access, and Equity (IDEA) Workgroup.
- This group will be comprised of four students -- one diversity chair representative per class -- four faculty, four staff and the Assistant Dean for Student Advocacy & Inclusion.
- This group will create and direct meaningful programming/assessments/research/trainings for UFCD as it relates to inclusion, diversity, access and equity.
- The workgroup's charge and work begins in October.

DMD Class Diversity Chairs

- Every DMD class now has Diversity Chairs to create and promote initiatives and events with the goal of enhancing diversity, inclusion and equity across the College of Dentistry.
- They serve to cultivate college-wide knowledge, awareness and education of diversity and social issues.
- Function as a catalyst for new diversity related initiatives developed in collaboration with UFCD student organizations, committees, and/or workgroups.
- Initiatives include, but are not limited to, forums, lunch and learns and workshops.
- Diversity Chairs will strive to celebrate wide-ranging cultural and social groups through various forms of recognition, such as monthly themed topics.
- Will also collaborate with the IDEA Workgroup.

IDEA

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UF COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY VALUES

We value excellence through high-quality comprehensive dental care, cutting-edge research and learner-focused education. We support a culture of dignity, respect, support and compassion fostered through a diverse and inclusive environment.

UF COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY MISSION

Our mission is to provide innovative dental education and deliver the highest degree of patient-centered care and service, while promoting discovery and the generation of knowledge through research, with strong commitments to community engagement, diversity and inclusion.

OCTOBER 2020

Climate Survey

- We have developed a new and improved climate survey to distribute to students, faculty and staff in order to assess feelings and ideas about our environment this fall.
- We hope the results will help guide us as we move forward with the IDEA Workgroup and as the administration makes decisions impacting the college.

HIGHLIGHTING OUR EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

Cultural Bulletins

- We've added Cultural Bulletins to our college—on the busiest floor and on our social media pages, we will be highlighting faculty, students and staff with a focus on showcasing cultural backgrounds, celebrating our diversity and suggestions for best practices regarding cultural sensitivity when treating patients.

Digital Footprint

- Re-examined our websites, social media and college environment to ensure/improve representation of our diversity.

ADEA Focus Groups

- Worked with American Dental Education Association in focus groups to develop best practices and checklists for our college community.

Patient Rights & Responsibilities Doc

- Currently In the process of updating our patients' rights and responsibilities document to include explicit anti-discrimination language and expectations of patients that seek care in our multicultural clinical environment.

UFCD Admissions

- Our Office of Admissions has strengthened best practices for recruitment of Black students, adding Black student members to the committee and increasing student membership to our Admissions Outreach Ambassadors.

I D E A

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**DIVERSITY IS A
FACT**

**INCLUSION IS AN
ACT**

OCTOBER 2020

First-Year Black Student Outreach

- Before orientation, we individually reached out to our first year Black students to tell them about the Office of Student Advocacy & Inclusion and support we can offer.
- Intentionally increased upperclass Black student presence at orientation and organized immediate connections for our students.

ACADEMIC HEALTH CENTER

HSC Black Faculty Network

- Connected our Black faculty to the HSC Black Faculty Network.

Implicit Bias & Microaggression Presentation

- Dr. Donna Parker from the UF College of Medicine delivered a presentation on implicit bias and microaggressions to our first year students. More of these types of trainings and presentations will be scheduled for our college.

Putting Families First Facilitator's Guide

- UFCD's Dr. Patty Probert developed a facilitator's guide for the Putting Families First course, taken by all first year Academic Health Center students each fall semester.
- The guide focuses on developing a safe environment in the classroom that embraces differences and cultivates respect and understanding of others' lived experiences.

Academic Health Center Diversity Liaisons

- UFCD Assistant Dean for Student Advocacy & Inclusion hosts a monthly meeting of all AHC Diversity Liaisons.
- Recently reached out to the newly formed AHC Student Diversity Group, and they joined the September AHC Diversity Liaisons meeting to talk about their experiences, what they hope to accomplish as a group and how the AHC faculty & staff Diversity Liaisons can support them.

CTSI Collaboration

- Have collaborated with UF's Clinical & Translational Science Institute to develop quality video and podcasts showcasing **Black Voices in Science**.
- A research proposal will be submitted around this initiative as well.



UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA COLLABORATIONS

UF Diversity Discussions

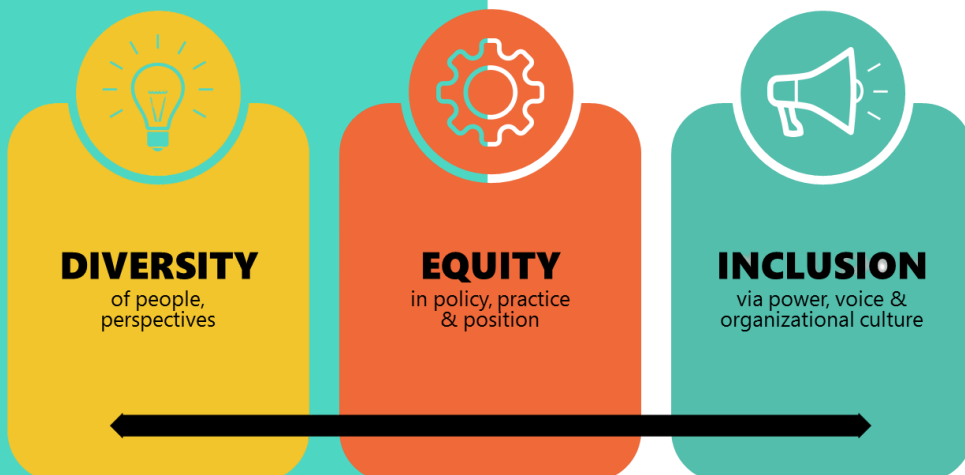
- Discussions and meetings continue at the University of Florida level among diversity liaisons and UF administration.
- Many meetings have led to great new connections to others on campus, and conversations about systemic racism at UF and how we can address and change the culture of the university.

Diversity Initiative Retreats

- UFCD Assistant Dean for Student Advocacy & Inclusion Dr. Patty Probert worked with Human Resources and other resource experts on campus to deliver a retreat on diversity initiatives to the Occupational Therapy Department.
- The presentation focused on implicit bias.
- Dr. Probert participated in the University of Florida campus-wide diversity retreat.

Racial Injustice Seed Fund Proposal

- UFCD's Dr. Patty Probert convened a powerhouse group from the Academic Health Center to develop a proposal for the University of Florida's Racial Injustice Seed Fund.
- The proposal includes a first-year Black student pre-health cohort success program.
- Simply the process of developing the proposal has enriched the group's lives leaving everyone feeling more connected by having meaningful discussions around race that have not previously been had.



OCTOBER 2020