

Fall 2015

Lasting Impressions, Fall 2015

College of Dental Medicine

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NSU lasting Impressions

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HEALTH PROFESSIONS DIVISION

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.
HPD Chancellor

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Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P.

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FOLLOW NSU



Message from the Dean



Community is one of NSU's Core Values, and a major part of the CDM's vision statement. So it is no surprise to see our students, faculty members, and alumni focused on improving the oral health of their communities, as illustrated in this issue of *Lasting Impressions*.

The article on public health shows how students and faculty members apply a Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degree to their particular field of dentistry. Pursuing an M.P.H. degree along with a Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) degree is what I call the "gifted and talented" program for dental students.

Our NSU Mission United partnership with the United Way of Broward County led us to discover that many veterans needed dental care. As a result, the Atlantic Coast District Dental Society and the Broward County Dental Society joined with us to successfully improve veterans' oral health. This program would not be possible without the generous contributions of time and talent by local dentists.

We also highlight how our team-leader model of clinical instruction enhances the education and professional growth of third- and fourth-year dental students.

Additionally, *Lasting Impressions* introduces a few of the CDM's student leaders, alumni, and faculty and staff members—all of whom demonstrate a community approach to their professional roles.

Finally, I am saddened to report that Seymour Oliet, D.D.S., founding dean of the NSU College of Dental Medicine, died in August. We pay tribute to Dr. Oliet's dedication and the scholarship created to honor his commitment to dental education.

The engagement and enthusiasm of the CDM community provide a sense of energy I feel each day when I enter the College of Dental Medicine. As I complete my second year as dean, I continue to be honored to serve in this role. I am humbled by the accomplishments of our students, faculty members, and alumni as they work tirelessly to improve the health of the people they are privileged to serve.

Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P.
Dean and Professor
College of Dental Medicine
Nova Southeastern University



Dentistry and the Public's Health

BY MICHELLE F. SOLOMON

Before entering NSU's College of Dental Medicine, Ashleigh Weyh worked in radiation oncology with cancer patients in Detroit. "I saw the difference in outcomes between those who were rich and those who were poor, those who had insurance, and those who were uninsured," she said.

She'll receive her D.M.D., but will also have the designation of M.P.H. (Master of Public Health), when she graduates in May 2016. "Getting the M.P.H. opens doors and creates a difference in how you view dentistry. As a dental student, you learn to treat the patient in your chair. In public health, you're given a broader view. You learn to treat all patients—in your community, in your state—and it makes you contemplate how the decisions you make as a professional can affect everyone," Weyh said.

NSU's College of Dental Medicine was founded based on the need for oral health care in various populations in South Florida. Since it opened in 1997, there has been a commitment to provide opportunities for dental students to work with underserved and special needs populations. While the medical profession has focused on public health historically, dentistry



"It's the new paradigm in public health where all services are provided."

has been slower to catch up, according to Ana Karina Mascarenhas, B.D.S., M.P.H., Dr.P.H., associate dean of research and a dental public health specialist at the College of Dental Medicine.

There's now a growing body of evidence and recognition that poor oral health—particularly periodontal disease—is linked to several chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. There also are studies being done that link premature births and low birth weight to poor oral health in pregnant women. "Public health is now a pressing issue that will present opportunities for those educated and trained in this sector," said Mascarenhas. Students in the College of Dental Medicine who want to pursue their M.P.H. receive the degree from NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine.



FUTURE OF DENTISTRY

The future of dentistry is public health, according to Cristina García-Godoy, D.D.S., M.P.H., CCRP. "We're moving toward the prevention era in dentistry," said Godoy, the director of Clinical Research at the College of Dental Medicine, who pointed out that many of the clinical trials conducted in her lab are focused on preventive care.

As course director for the College of Dental Medicine's Primary Care and Public Health since 2012, she's charged with giving dental students what she said is their "first, big public health message. It motivates them."

Godoy, who received her M.P.H. from NSU in 2011, said she became interested in pursuing the degree while doing a survey study as part of her research. "It was not clinical; it was with students, from NSU. It was a three-year study with predoctoral students, and we wanted to see what their reaction was in treating HIV/AIDS patients. I would visit our care resource clinic in Oakland Park, and I became very involved."

Her interest in public health started earlier than that, however. It was an introduction by her father—Federico Garcia-Godoy, D.D.S., M.A., a pediatric dentist in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—and a study he was conducting that would peak her public health interest initially. Her father's study and subsequent health promotion was to instruct pregnant women in the importance of caring for their own teeth to help prevent early



At top, dental student Ashleigh Weyh, right, picks up packets of toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss from Danka Plemovic in the CDM's Dispensing Department. The packets will be given out during public health hygiene workshops. The CDM's commitment to public health includes special needs clinics, above, and community events, such as Give Kids A Smile Day, left.

childhood decay in their children, a topic she said she is still extremely interested in.

"Much is changing in the field and future dentists are going to be more exposed to public health issues. Dentistry is moving away from focusing on the individual being treated and more on working with the collective community." The message is clear, she said. "We need to build our public health workforce."

Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., dean of the College of Dental Medicine, emphasized the importance of the commitment the college has to training dental students in the area of public health. "Our students continue to have rotations at community locations that provide dental care for patients with HIV, for children who are both healthy and medically complex, and at the Henry Schein Special Needs Clinical Suite," she said. "Our students learn to care for medically and physically complex patients. As graduates, they continue to provide care to these patients."

IN THE FIELD

The Caridad Center in Boynton Beach—which operates free medical and dental clinics that provide health services to the uninsured, working-poor families of Palm Beach County—recently reestablished its affiliation with NSU's dentistry residency program.

Pediatric residents arrive at the clinic two days a week, according to C.B. Wohl, M.P.H., clinic director at the Caridad Center. "NSU dental residents have enabled us to increase the number of pediatric patients we see," she said. "We have close to doubled our capacity in pediatric dentistry, and that is in large part being attributed to NSU students being here."

Dental education is vital at Caridad, and not just for the clinic's patients. Preventive measures are discussed with families who arrive at Caridad, and children are on a six-month check up schedule. "When the dental residents are here, they are gaining this kind of access to treating and educating a population they might never see when they go into private practice. When they are in a public health environment, they are learning the tremendous value that they provide. It might spur them to want to continue on this track," said Wohl.

Karen McKenzie, D.M.D. ('07), said one day she'll return to NSU for her M.P.H. The director of dental services for Central Florida Health Care, a federally qualified health care facility that services the uninsured and underinsured in Florida's Polk, Highlands, and Hardee counties, said

that she'll pursue the degree when she becomes fully staffed and can delegate some duties. But for now, there are other more pressing matters, such as the new Winter Haven dental facility that she's opening with funds provided by Polk County, and an Access Point Grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) that will help open a clinic in Mulberry, Florida.

"When these opportunities come to you to provide more help, you need to strike while the iron is hot," said McKenzie, who began at the central Florida health care clinic in 2007 after an introduction to the clinic by another NSU graduate, Marilyn Rilly, D.M.D. ('06). "She asked if I could come and help out for a year, and I'm still here," she said.

The clinic services central Florida's migrant communities. And because of its rural location, there are challenges, said McKenzie. "The demand is great, but we don't have enough hands to see all the patients, so we do what we can. When I'm discussing salary, I tell dentists, 'I can't compare with private practice, but what I can offer you is the chance to make a huge difference in a community.'" Mostly, the dentists she employs are "just out of dental school and will sign a two-year contract, get the experience, and then go into private practice" or professionals who are seeking retirement, but don't want to give up practicing dentistry entirely. "They've made their money and now they want to give back," McKenzie said.

Patient care is funded by Medicaid or by Polk County. The county pays for those who can show proof of residency, and then requires the patient to pay \$25 out of pocket.

She shares a letter exchange that she has just had with a prospective candidate where she lays out what her subsidized clinics can offer. "I know that we can't match any monetary offers that you may be considering; it's the intangibles that I'm hoping make a difference in your decision—the opportunity to work at an HRSA Accreditation and Patient-Centered Medical Home, a federal recognition initiative that supports health centers working toward 'better care



and lower costs' for patients. It's the new paradigm in public health where all services are provided—mental health, dental, obstetrics, pediatrics. I can offer the opportunity to work in relative autonomy, to collaborate in a group setting, but mostly build a practice that serves a community and builds a relationship with that community," McKenzie's letter states.

She then reads the prospective candidates response. "It is indeed the intangibles that made my decision easier. I will be joining the team this year, and I'm excited to take the next step in my development."

STARTING YOUNG

The American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) states that "the prevention of early childhood oral diseases requires an interdisciplinary approach, given the present low rate of dental attendance in early childhood, and that such prevention should commence in the health care networks that already service children."

"It is well known that oral diseases have a direct and devastating effect on the health of children and have a serious impact on children's readiness for school and their ability to succeed," said Mascarenhas. NSU's College of Dental Medicine is at the forefront of advancing preventive programs, especially in South Florida schools.

A \$55,000 grant from the Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation that funds projects or programs related to the health needs of the residents of Miami-Dade County was renewed with the College of Dental Medicine for the fourth year. "This was the first grant we received, and it was recognition by the foundation that oral health is an issue in schools in Miami-Dade County. The award allows us to provide preventive dental services and oral hygiene instruction to underserved and uninsured elementary school students in the North Miami Beach area," said Mascarenhas.

Smiles Across America® (SAA), an Oral Health America (OHA) program, is providing \$25,000 for the College of Dental Medicine to supply preventive services to children enrolled in the North Miami School District. There is also a new grant in the amount of \$300,000 from The Children's Trust in Miami-Dade County to train school nurses on how to perform oral health screenings for children in Miami-Dade County schools.

"They do vision screenings, BMI screenings, and now we will instruct them on how to perform oral health screenings. It won't be to diagnose, but to refer children in need of treatment to a dentist," said Mascarenhas. They

will also be trained to provide oral health counseling and administer a fluoride varnish application. The CDM's Give Kids A Smile program is nationally recognized. (See story on page 19.)

Mascarenas believes this training offers a window into a bigger picture for the future of the interdisciplinary practice of dentistry and public health. "There's more opportunity to screen for chronic diseases in the dental office with the new tools we have. Family care physicians can hire hygienists, and we can hire nurses and put them in our big clinics," she said. "We can help medicine and engage in chronic disease management—diabetes and hypertension, for instance—in the dental office."

Diane Ede-Nichols, D.M.D., M.H.L., M.P.H., said a new name change in her

department reflects the importance of public health education in dentistry. She's chair of the Community Dentistry and Public Health Sciences for the College of Dental Medicine.

Ede-Nichols, who is also director of the Institute for Special Needs Dentistry, received her M.P.H. from NSU in 2010. I do want people to know that the achievement of getting the [M.P.H.] degree is great, but everyone can contribute at some level, even without the degree," she said.

As a professional in the area of public health dentistry for most of her career, she found that working on the master of public health degree had numerous benefits. "It validated everything I had already done, but it also helped me to understand the principles and the concepts and to understand that there is a network of people in public health that you can rely on and go to—people out there doing similar things and confirming what you're doing," Ede-Nichols said.

The interdisciplinary aspect of the Master of Public Health program added yet another element of learning for Evren Kilinc, D.D.S., Ph.D., associate professor in the College of Dental Medicine's Department of Cariology and Restorative Dentistry. Kilinc will complete her M.P.H. in summer of 2016.

"The education covers everything from large-scale crisis prevention to how to create an overall screening activity. It gives insight into all of the coordination that goes into even the smallest project, which requires so many different professional disciplines with different expertise," Kilinc said. "Once you start taking these courses, no matter where you are in your career, it's almost like putting a different hat on. It helps you to see the whole picture and, without a doubt, changes your view of everything." ♦



"Dentistry is moving away from focusing on the individual being treated and more on working with the collective community."

Message from the Chancellor



Each academic year, we look forward to welcoming future health professionals to NSU's Health Professions Division. This semester, 1,500 new students began their studies at HPD; 126 have entered NSU's College of Dental Medicine. Although the DIs focus is gaining the knowledge needed for graduation, most do not realize that they already are a member of a distinguished community of graduates, the CDM Alumni Society and Friends.

As alumni, you are an important part of our community. Your ideas and opinions are of great interest and help to our college, and we invite you to stay involved and stay connected through our alumni sponsored events, programs, and through participation in the CDM Alumni Society and Friends. Being a member of our society affords you many opportunities for continued growth, networking, and development, and we hope that you will continue to remain involved.

(A message from Chris Phelps, president of the College of Dental Medicine Alumni Society and Friends is on page 23.)

Please share news of your continued academic, personal, and professional success by reaching out to our CDM Alumni Relations Office at <http://dental.nova.edu/alumni-relations>. Visit our website often to stay up to date with current happenings. To connect, email Bart Whitehead, D.M.D., at walbert@nova.edu.

Since the Health Professions Division was founded, we have experienced great success, and that success is due, in no small part, to the quality of our students. Our diverse and dedicated students not only contribute to the college, but to the NSU community and to South Florida. I hope you enjoy this issue of *Lasting Impressions*.

I thank you for your continued commitment to NSU as alumni.

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.
Chancellor, Health Professions Division

HPD CHANCELLOR GETS HEALTH CARE HEROES AWARD

Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., chancellor of NSU's Health Professions Division, was honored as the 2015 Individual of Merit during the 18th annual Health Care Heroes® Awards.

The Health Care Heroes® Awards program recognizes individuals, institutions, professionals, students, volunteers, and programs, who, through their individual or collective actions, have made an extraordinary impact in the South Florida health care community.

Lippman was selected for his leadership in the South Florida community and beyond, particularly in the areas of health and well-being. He is currently responsible for overseeing seven colleges at NSU, including dental medicine, health care sciences, medical sciences, nursing, optometry, osteopathic medicine, and pharmacy—some of which he helped create. Lippman has made it his priority to enhance interprofessional relationships and understanding, increase programs for health care careers that are in demand, and focus on educating future health care practitioners on the importance of providing care in underserved areas of the population, including rural and homeless communities.

A community pharmacist for more than 20 years, Lippman also served as a member of the Florida House of Representatives from 1978 to 1998, where he was widely respected for championing legislation to protect children and senior citizens and to improve Florida's health care system. One of his many accomplishments was to introduce the country's first law mandating the use of child safety seats, and a law mandating the use of seat belts in vehicles. He is also widely known as the "father" of Florida's Area Health Education Center program, which works to improve the supply and distribution of primary care in medically underserved areas. ♦

BUILDING

HOPE

BY MICHELLE F. SOLOMON

Research will
change the lives
of children born
with cleft palate.

The work and research that Umadevi Kandalam, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry, is doing today will one day change the lives of babies born with the second most common congenital birth defect in the world—cleft palate.

But if you ask Kandalam if she believes her research is visionary, she offers a simple answer. While the researcher does hope that her work will someday make a difference, there are two reasons why she began investigating bone regeneration as a way to help correct the deformity. "I'm a biologist and working in pediatric dentistry—I found the subject interesting from both these perspectives. The long-term goal of our research is to repair cleft palate," said Kandalam.

Cleft palate affects one in 700 children in the United States every year. Cleft lip and cleft palate—commonly called "orofacial clefts"—are congenital defects that occur when tissues in the baby's facial structures don't form correctly. Cleft palate is formed when the left and right portions of the palate are not joined and results in the formation of a gap between the mouth and nasal cavity. While the causes of a cleft are largely unknown, both genetic predisposition and environmental factors are believed to play a role in their development, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Correcting the congenital deformity is not merely cosmetic, but functional, since cleft palate creates difficulties in feeding and with speech production, and,



CDM assistant professor Umadevi Kandalam's research investigates bone regeneration as a way to help correct cleft palates.



as Kandalam said, "When the hard palate is missing, the maxillofacial growth is affected." The research being done in

her lab could alleviate many of the challenges that those born with cleft palate face very early in life.

Kandalam and her research team have established isolation procedures of stem cells from various tissues including gum tissues, which can be used to regenerate bony tissues in the cleft palate. "Our ongoing project involves investigating different biomaterials conducive for the stem cell growth and differentiation. Use of appropriate stem cells and scaffold materials facilitate development of safe and clinically effective approaches to bone regeneration," she said.

Currently, the study involves expansion of stem cells in culture, their differentiation, and investigation of key regulatory factors that enhance bone growth. Other research being conducted by Kandalam and her pediatric dentistry residents is a way to overcome the immune barrier in stem cell therapies by developing immunocompatible models.

"Dr. Kandalam is an excellent representative of the depth and scope of research being done at the College of Dental Medicine. Her work will mean the difference in quality of life for millions of children," said Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., dean of the CDM.

As a professor and researcher, Kandalam is looking forward to Nova Southeastern University's future growth as a research university, especially with the addition of the Center for Collaborative Research (CCR), the 215,000-square-foot facility that is expected to open in spring 2016 at the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus. The CCR will provide wet labs for many of NSU's researchers, as well as a general clinical research center.

"I see NSU's excellence, not only as a teaching university, but in the research area as well," said Kandalam, who joined NSU's College of Dental Medicine in 2008 and began her cleft palate project in 2011. Previously, she was in NSU's College of Pharmacy.

She and her team are also working on procuring more grants—"foundation grants and eventually federal grants," Kandalam said. Her research does receive funding from internal NSU grants. "In the past, we received a grant from the Cleft Palate Foundation," she added.

While her research is a source of pride, the opportunity to mentor pediatric dentistry residents is yet another. Kandalam makes a point to mention that the work of one of her postgraduate residents was a finalist in a competition. The abstract by Reem Almashat, D.D.S., is in a competition conducted by the American Association of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) and the 2015 NuSmile Graduate Student Research Award. (See story on page 33.) "This is a novel area in which we are working, so this is quite an achievement," Kandalam said proudly. ♦

Student Impressions

CDM Gives an Education in Dentistry and Community Service



BY DAVID A. SCHWARTZ

Community service plays a big part in the lives of students in NSU's College of Dental Medicine (CDM).

Fourth-year student John Aylmer, 25, sees community service as an important and valuable part of his dental education. "I enjoy giving back," said Aylmer, the current American Student Dental Association (ASDA) president for the CDM. He was part of a mission trip to the Dominican Republic during spring break in his second year at the CDM, when he and approximately 20 other students treated more than 700 people.

Aylmer also participated in the College of Dental Medicine's Give Kids A Smile Day, in which students and faculty members provided pro bono dental services for children in the community. He experienced Dentist Day on the Hill, lobbying state legislators in Tallahassee about student loan reimbursements and ways to improve Floridians' oral health.



John Aylmer wants to practice general dentistry in Florida after he graduates with his D.M.D. in May 2016. As president of the American Student Dental Association for the CDM, Aylmer, left, brings Linda Nissen, CDM dean, up to date on the organization.

Impressed with the CDM's good works, two years ago Aylmer and Drew Williams, a fellow second-year student, launched the Swinging For Smiles Charity Golf Tournament. Aylmer was ASDA social chair and Williams was ASDA community service representative when the two organized the event.

The one-day golf outings at the Davie Golf and Country Club in 2013, and the Bonaventure County Club in Weston in 2014, raised a total of about \$10,000 for missions and Give Kids A Smile Day. The 2015 Swinging For Smiles tournament was held November 7, 2015, at the Bonaventure Country Club. (For more information on the tournament, visit www.swingingforsmiles.com.)

"I always liked helping people," Aylmer said, relating how he decided during his junior year in high school that he wanted to be a dentist. Now, he said, giving back to the community has made him look at dentistry a little differently and realize how lucky he is to have opportunities to take care of the people "who take care of you."

"John has a huge role in representing our class," Williams said, talking about Aylmer's ASDA work. "He's extremely committed when it comes to those leadership roles. He puts in a lot of extra hours. He's done a great job."

Community service is a part of the curriculum—and a core value of NSU—and every student is responsible for fulfilling requirements, said Casey Lynn, D.M.D., a 2015 CDM graduate who preceded Aylmer as president of ASDA at the college. "It just becomes ingrained in you. You can use what you know to help so many people." The College of Dental Medicine builds "a strong culture of everyone working together and having a great time while we're doing it," Lynn added.

Aylmer worked with Ian Lieberman, D.M.D., a 2015 CDM graduate, who was the president of the CDM Student Government Association (SGA). They planned the Shark Social at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino that was part of alumni weekend activities last February. The networking event gives current students "an understanding of how [the CDM] prepares us to enter dentistry," Aylmer said. The 2016 Shark Social is planned for February 2016, again at the same location.

While growing up, Aylmer played hockey in a youth league. And during his first year as a dental student, he even found time to play hockey in an adult league in Coral Springs. "It was a good study break," he said.

The affable Aylmer, who also enjoys diving and spear fishing, said he wants to practice general dentistry in Florida "somewhere near the beach." Not surprising for someone who grew up near Cocoa Beach, where he enjoyed surfing. As a practicing dentist, Aylmer plans to play hockey and surf. "You've got to stay active," he said. ♦

Student Impressions

Dental Care Has Never Been Far from Daniella Godoy's Family Life



BY JOHN THOMASON

Like many children, Daniella Godoy didn't like brushing or flossing her teeth, and she still winces when thinking about her pediatric dentist. But growing up in a "dental home" in Venezuela, she didn't have much say in the matter. Both her parents were dentists, and some of her earliest memories revolve around teeth.

"My dad's a maxillofacial prosthodontist, and whenever he would put presentations together for lectures, I would sit with him and he would practice with me—a 5- or 6-year-old little girl seeing these cases. It always amazed me how you could change somebody's life just by putting a smile on their face," said Godoy, whose mother, Mairaelina Godoy, D.D.S., is a retired dentist who practiced more than 16 years in Venezuela and is now on the staff at NSU's College of Dental Medicine, coordinating the extramural rotations for the fourth-year dental students. Her father, Antonio Godoy, D.D.S., is a professor at the college.

From an early age, Godoy knew she would follow her parents into the field. As she put it, "I never considered another option. I knew dentistry was what I wanted." She immigrated to the United States at age 17, attending Erie Community College in Buffalo and then the UT Health Science Center in San Antonio, where she earned her bachelor's degree in Dental Lab Science.

She decided to continue her dental education at NSU's College of Dental Medicine to be near her parents, who moved to Florida in 2007. But the CDM impressed her on its own. "I fell in love with the facilities. The faculty

Daniella Godoy grew up listening to the lectures of her father, Antonio Godoy, D.D.S. (left), now a professor at the NSU College of Dental Medicine. Daniella Godoy will graduate in Spring 2016 with her D.M.D. degree.

here is amazing. From the time you walk into this place and meet them, they're open-minded and fun and caring," she said. "Everybody has an open-door policy, and everybody has a smile on their face. For me,

that was very important, because I consider myself a happy person and a social person. I didn't want to come to school every day and be in a place where everybody has a straight face."

Godoy, 31, will graduate in spring 2016 with her D.M.D. degree. By the time she graduates, she will have completed more than 120 advanced procedures in NSU's Dental Clinic, including crowns, fillings, dentures, bridges, and partials.

Along the way, her confidence has grown alongside her skills. She still remembers the first patient she saw at CDM. "My hands were shaking," she recalled. "I was nervous, but I had an amazing patient. He was really nice, and he told me that the reason he was here was that he wanted his case to be a teaching experience for the students. But I didn't stop shaking until at least my fifth procedure, I would say. [Working with patients] is different from working in the sim lab on a mannequin head. Now you're here in the clinic, and you get a real patient, and you realize the responsibility."

A resident of Davie with her husband and newborn, Godoy considers the experience at the CDM very valuable. "It's a privilege for us to be able to see and to treat patients," she said. She will take that privilege to what she hopes is a career in pediatric dentistry, bringing with her a more careful, compassionate touch that she believes is a major part of her future profession.

"Behavior management is key when it comes to seeing kids," she said. "In my opinion, not everybody can handle



that. It requires a lot of patience and dedication to sit there and have a child, who's screaming, actually trust you enough to let you see inside his or her mouth. It's a scary situation for them. It's even scary for some adults, so for kids, it's even more so," Godoy added. "I've been shadowing a pediatric dentist for the past year and a half, and that's how I've been feeling a little more comfortable."

Godoy's dual sense of geniality and humility has helped endear her to her professors, including Thomas Dwork, D.M.D., one of her former team leaders. "She has a type A personality where everything must be perfect, but she has what some students don't possess, and that's an incredible warmth, interest, and concern for her patients," Dwork said about Godoy. "She has a genuine tenderness and sincerity that her patients, no matter what age, respond to. She has a keen empathy with people in general that few people possess, and it can't be faked. Children know if you are sincere, and she is the real deal."

Another NSU faculty member who is surely proud of Godoy's talent is none other than her father, Antonio Godoy, D.D.S., who teaches prosthodontics.

"I've worked with him in the clinic setting, which is an honor for me," she said about her father. "We try not to get into situations where he has to grade me, to avoid conflict of interest. But we work very well together, and I feel he's a little harder on me than some of his other students, because he pushes me a lot." This makes sense: She's had quite the head start. ♦

INFOC

EQUIPMENT PUTS STUDENTS IN THE PICTURE

BY WALTER VILLA



The future is in focus for NSU's College of Dental Medicine (CDM) students, who are using the latest in technology.

Four DSLR cameras are now available for clinical use by third- and fourth-year dental students because of an initiative by the college's Student Government Association (SGA). Additionally, two intra-oral cameras will soon be available and five more DSLR cameras will be purchased once additional funding is secured. The cameras are vital for dental students because clinical photography documents the procedures, educates the patients, and assists with treatment planning.

SGA's purchase of the cameras was spearheaded by its president Alex Verga. "I saw this as an excellent opportunity to broaden the scope of our

US

education and learn vital skills, which will be valuable to our students when they reach private practice," said Verga, a fourth-year dental student set to graduate in May 2016. "The College of Dental Medicine focuses on teaching students the most relevant technologies available," added Verga, who is applying for orthodontic residencies.

The purchase of DSLR cameras, optimized for dentistry (with macro lenses and ring flashes), allows students to obtain images with greater clarity and color accuracy. Furthermore, the new intra-oral cameras are wand-like devices that display a live image on a computer screen. This technology can be used to communicate issues that are difficult to illustrate to patients.

In clinic, CDM third- and fourth-year students are divided into eight teams. Each team is overseen by two faculty leaders, and each of the four intra-oral cameras will be shared by two teams.

Amandeep Chadda, a third-year dental student, has a DSLR camera for his personal use and is thrilled that he and his fellow students will be able to use these advanced tools in clinic. "I am excited that we will get to use the skills we will need when we enter private dentistry," said Chadda, a native of Daytona Beach, who is set to graduate in May 2017 and hopes to have a career in general dentistry.

"This will be so much better for everybody—students and patients. For the students, this will help greatly in the communication of data and the collection of data. Photography is very rich, able to quickly discern subtle differences in tooth color, for example," said Chadda. "Ultimately, if we take good clinical photos, we can go back and measure things in a more standardized and reliable way. This will help us deliver a better product to our patients."

The technology will help patients manage their own health care. "Instead of telling a patient what is going on



Opposite page, Alex Verga, president of the CDM's Student Government Association, spearheaded the purchase of DSLR cameras for clinical use by third- and fourth-year dental students. Above, Verga demonstrates the camera's use to dental students Jared Gibby, left, and Kyle Allen.

in his or her mouth, we can show them," Chadda said. "Photography is a powerful tool to convey information."

A clinical photography program will instruct students on using the cameras. Second-year students generally get an online seminar for photography and a PowerPoint presentation from a professor. Hands-on training begins with second-year students taking pictures of each other.

Stanley Hack, D.D.S., assistant professor at the CDM and the course director of the clinical photography program, said the cameras' costs are often beyond the reach of dental students. "This initiative to obtain modern equipment is to be greatly admired," said Hack, who has organized large seminars on the subject in his native South Africa.

Verga believes students will benefit from Hack, who will tailor his NSU course to the new technology. "Dr. Hack has a passion for photography and a wealth of experience. We will be learning a vital skill, which we will use for years to come," said Verga.

Funding for student organizations and professional development opportunities come from NSU SGA allocations, student-organized fund-raising, and generous donations. To assist CDM student activity fund-raising endeavors, the Pay It Forward Fund was created.

A gift to the Pay It Forward Fund assists the college in providing financial assistance for student activities and student travel to professional meetings. The Pay It Forward Fund is designated only for supporting dental and specialty graduate program student activities.

To learn more about the program, contact the CDM Alumni Relations Office at (954) 262-1495; for online donations, visit www.nova.edu/giving. ♦

For Alumnus, Giving Back Is Part of His Practice



Anil J. Idiculla's concern for his patients has earned him the title "Top Orthodontist" by the Denver city magazine 5280 for several years.

BY JOHN DOLEN

One of Colorado's most recognized and successful orthodontists said, "Teeth are fine, but I love the real meaning that I find in my job." That may seem a little inscrutable unless you know more about Anil J. Idiculla, D.M.D., who graduated from NSU's School of Dental Medicine in 2004. If you do, it makes perfect sense.

"I was always premed," he said, "until one summer when I got a chance to shadow my aunt, a pediatric dentist, and my uncle, a periodontist." Idiculla thought at the time: "This is pretty sweet, to get to lead a team of employees."

So now Idiculla has his own teams, and he is elated. He has his team of 13 who staff his five state-of-the-art orthodontic centers in Colorado. He has teams of children (patients), who he coaches about their dental health, and, most importantly, philanthropy.

"Teachers get 50 kids for a year, but I'm given 80 kids a day," Idiculla said. "And it's not just about their smiles, but it's the chance to be a true role model, to make an impact on their lives."

There are also the teams from his staff who are going out every month to volunteer at schools. And finally, the Philadelphia-raised orthodontist with Indian roots has the team that he leads to Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), India, each year. There, he dispenses free dental care to "untouchables." The two-week program, organized by his church and for which he raises funds, typically encounters scores of the poorest of the poor who have never been seen by a dentist.

What makes this all possible is Idiculla's success in his field. Success such as he enjoyed at the NSU College of Dental Medicine (NSU CDM), the school that he said, "gave me a shot." Gave him a shot? "Yes, NSU gave me a shot—I don't take this for granted—I'm eternally grateful. If a dental school only has a hundred slots, that means that many applicants will not get in. NSU chose me," Idiculla said.

got into NSU CDM. I will be forever grateful to him," Idiculla said. The years at NSU, he added, were some of his favorite years in his entire life. In 2011, he was honored with Nova Southeastern University's prestigious Alumni of Distinction Award.

From NSU, Idiculla returned to the University of Pennsylvania, where he did his undergraduate work, for his two-year orthodontic residency.

Idiculla's practice employs the dental technology of "now." For example, the practice has done away with the "goopy impressions"—stuffing lumps of clay in your mouth to get the shape of your teeth. Now they simply scan teeth digitally.

"We scan teeth with a laser scanner," said Idiculla. "It is like HD images of the teeth. The itero scanner is the one that I use and recommend. Within one hour of scanning a patient's teeth, the patient's file is in Costa Rica being analyzed by my Invisalign technician."

He can have the trays back to the patient in five to seven days from the initial scan. "It is amazing," said Idiculla. "The trays fit so much better, and the results are more predictable than before."

The website for his practice (*i-Orthodontics*) notes that it is "one of the only Invisalign Elite Level providers in the country, a distinction reserved for the top 3 percent of all Invisalign providers nationwide." Invisalign is a treatment that renders braces virtually invisible.

He also was handpicked to be a member of the Invisalign faculty to teach courses about the treatment across the country and in Costa Rica.

"I am honored to be the only doctor in Colorado to be selected to join Invisalign's faculty," he said. "I offer Invisalign at all of my locations, in addition to traditional and lingual braces."

SETTING AN EXAMPLE OF GIVING BACK

The philanthropy in Kolkata and the school volunteer program for his staff are only a portion of how his practice gives back. Concerned about school budget cuts, Idiculla decided businesses should chip in. His practice



Above: one of the five state-of-the-art orthodontic centers in Colorado that Anil J. Idiculla owns

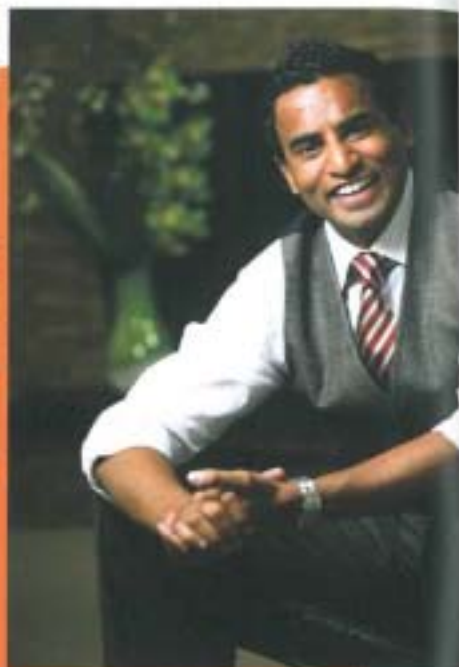
One would say the school made a good choice, since he ended up being number one academically in his graduating class. He is particularly grateful for the guidance of professor Robert A. Uchin, D.D.S., former CDM dean, and associate professor Clark Galin, D.D.S. "NSU offered a great balance of academics and social life that led to a well-grounded education," said Idiculla. "Mentors and teachers had open-door policies. The relationships then, since it was a newer school, were amazing."

Idiculla cites Uchin for his leadership and inspiration. "It is because of [Uchin] that I have gotten very involved in the AAO (American Association of Orthodontists)," Idiculla said. "He is the reason for my passion for organized dentistry and protecting our profession."

He also thanks Galin, primarily for taking a chance on him. "It is because of him and his mentorship that I

Alumni Impressions

Anil J. Idiculla was honored with NSU's prestigious Alumni of Distinction Award in 2011. He believes in a commitment to community service.



has donated more than \$150,000 to local schools and has treated hundreds of children who, otherwise, could not afford orthodontic treatment. In doing so, Idiculla has formed partnerships with Kids in Need of Dentistry, The Colorado Orthodontic Foundation, TeamSmile, and others. He is also a clinical instructor at the University of Colorado Health Science Center, Department of Orthodontics.

Idiculla said small business owners such as himself, who by virtue of their hands-on contact with the community, are uniquely qualified to set the example. "Any small business owner has a team, a team of 10, a team of 20, whatever it is," Idiculla said. "And we can be invaluable as coaches."

This kind of coaching has made an indelible mark on those with whom he works, according to Amanda Grenfell, 32, who has been on his team for seven years and is now one of his treatment coordinators. She first asked for a transfer from another dental office when she saw how much fun her patients were having whenever the orthodontist came in. He had a "very bubbly and positive personality," she said, noting that he made the patients "feel special." That was of course "Dr. I," as they call him.

In seven years, Grenfell found there was yet more to Dr. I's philosophy. "In addition to the fun and hard work—Dr. I lectures around the world—what I take most from the experience is to have more of a philanthropic heart," she said. "It was something I didn't grow up with."

As Idiculla said, "When we think back to a job or a team we were a part of, do we remember what we were paid? Or should we remember something else? I

always want to inspire my team to do bigger and better things. It's the magic of our practice. Teeth, to me, are just the medium, my ship to something greater," he added.

The ship he guides at *i-Orthodontics* includes dental assistants, clinical assistants, and clerical staff for the five locations. In 2011, the *Denver Business Journal* included him in a "40 Under 40" list. Then 33, he told them that when he interviews job candidates, he focuses on personality as well as skill level.

As for his own know-how, Idiculla credited it to growing up in Philadelphia, where he said he learned to walk fast, talk fast, and work fast.

It's not difficult to see why people consider this an exceptional practice. The city magazine in Denver—5280 (named for the city's elevation)—has chosen Idiculla "Top Orthodontist" every year since the practice started. He was chosen by a vote of his peers, both dentists and orthodontists.

Idiculla said he looks forward to seeing NSU alumni in Denver at a gathering at the upcoming American Dental Association (ADA) convention in 2016. And, he also looks forward to this year's service in Kolkata. On his last trip, he said they went to five different slums to treat the untouchables.

"It was incredible. Never underestimate the power of physical touch in this world," Idiculla said. "Just imagine if you were never allowed to be touched by someone else?" Certainly something to ponder. "I cannot wait to return and hug every one of them." ♦

CDM Impressions

NIESSEN JOINS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., dean of NSU's College of Dental Medicine, has joined the board of directors of Vigilant Biosciences, Inc., a leading innovator and developer of solutions that aid in the early detection and intervention of cancer.

"We are thrilled to welcome Linda, an esteemed dental professional and educator, to our board of directors," said Matthew Kim, founder, chairman, and CEO of Vigilant Biosciences, Inc. "Her background and accomplishments are impressive and will bring enormous value to Vigilant Biosciences. Additionally, [her] leadership roles and extensive knowledge in this space will be important as we continue to advance our oral cancer risk assessment system." ♦



NSU'S "GIVE KIDS A SMILE DAY" TAKES NATIONAL AWARD

The American Dental Association (ADA) has selected NSU's CDM event as the national kick-off for the annual Give Kids A Smile program. The event will be held February 5, 2016, at the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus. A reception for university and community leaders and dental association officials will be held February 4, 2016. The CDM's Give Kids A Smile Day program has won national acclaim. The ADA Foundation recently named the CDM program one of only seven national winners of the E. (Bud) Tarrson Dental School Student Community Leadership Award. NSU's Give Kids A Smile program is the only such event to win the \$5,000 award. Additionally, CDM student Jason Watts was selected to serve on the ADA Foundation's national Give Kids A Smile Advisory Committee. ♦

CDM RECEIVES \$300,000 GRANT FROM CHILDREN'S TRUST

Students miss more than 51 million hours of school annually in the United States because of dental-related illness, according to "Oral Health in America: Report of the U.S. Surgeon General." A majority of these absences could have been avoided if these children had access to preventive dental services.

The Children's Trust in Miami-Dade County has awarded a \$300,000 grant to Nova Southeastern University's College of Dental Medicine to be used to train 200 medical staff members associated with The Children's Trust's HealthConnect program to perform oral health screenings for children in Miami-Dade schools. The screenings will evaluate children for dental cavities; provide oral health counseling and a fluoride varnish application; refer children in need of treatment to a dentist; and monitor the program.

"It is well known that oral diseases have a direct and devastating effect on the health of children and have a serious impact on children's readiness for school and ability to succeed," said Ana Karina Mascarenhas, B.D.S., M.P.H., Dr.P.H., associate dean of research of NSU's College of Dental Medicine. "NSU is grateful to The Children's Trust for recognizing this issue is preventable in many cases and supporting efforts to enhance the oral health of children in Miami-Dade County."

HealthConnect is a comprehensive, three-tier, quality-driven health initiative, spearheaded and funded by The Children's Trust, with the goal of having the healthiest children possible in Miami-Dade County. The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County.

In addition to this grant, NSU's College of Dental Medicine provides children from select Miami-Dade County schools with oral health services either at the school or at NSU's North Miami Beach Dental Clinic located at 1750 NE 167 Street. ♦



Team Leader System

A COMPREHENSIVE CARE APPROACH TO DENTAL EDUCATION

BY MARY HLADKY

At NSU's College of Dental Medicine, it takes a team. Actually, there are eight teams. Third- and fourth-year students are divided into the eight teams and each team is overseen by two faculty team leaders.

The team approach to treatment accomplishes two goals: To facilitate students as they apply what was learned in didactic and preclinical laboratory courses to their patients, and to ensure delivery of continuous, comprehensive treatment.

"We are active participants of an evolving system that marries didactic knowledge, clinical skill development, patient management and student mentorship in dental education," said Elaine Lara, D.D.S., who partners with Evren Kilinc, D.D.S., Ph.D., to lead Team 4.



Opposite page: Third-year student Thebis Alvarez, standing, discusses treatment options with her patient, while fourth-year student William Zengia goes over radiographs with Professor Elaine Lara, seated, during a team session.

Left: Fourth-year student Benjamin Byington and third-year student Aman-deep Chadda are treatment planning with Professor Ewen Kilinc.

Below: Fourth-year student Liam Nguyen and Professor Kilinc evaluate a patient's bite using dental models, while fourth-year student Abelardo Daya Attie treats his patient.



The concept, launched in 2011, came together as a result of the CDM's strategic planning in which efforts were made to improve integration in dental education and communication. This process coincided with initiatives from national organizations such as the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) and the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA).

What emerged from the CDM and other changes occurring in dentistry was simply a rethinking of how the system could better benefit both students and their patients. "The team leader concept allows dental students to have direct, one-on-one mentoring with their team leaders, who facilitate and support the students' learning of clinical dentistry and provision of comprehensive dental care," said Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., dean of the CDM. "In addition to clinical dentistry, the team leaders provide practical insights when caring for patients and role models for the professional behavior required for the successful practice of dentistry."

The team leaders mentor and advise in a one-on-one relationship with a relatively small group of 16 third-year and 16 fourth-year students.

Personalized Education

The team leaders identify their students' strengths and are available to assist them in areas in which they may require additional support.

"It allows a more personalized teaching environment for the student," Lara said. "You develop a close relationship with your students and the lines of communication are open," added Kilinc.

Each student examines his or her patients to make proper diagnoses. This oral examination and diagnostic process is designed to bring faculty members, students, and patients closer together to ensure that treatment meets the needs of

all patients. Students use that information to sequence at least two treatment plans (and sometimes more) for their patients.

Patients, in turn, have the option to choose the plan that best serves their needs. The team leaders get to know their students' patients better as well, making them more effective in overseeing treatment plans developed by the students and in supervising their execution. "You can manage the treatment better if you are familiar with the patient and the case," Kilinc said.

"We are implementing the integration of knowledge early on," Lara said. "We (team leaders) are the bridge on how to apply everything they have learned into the clinical setting."

In the past, numbers were a big part of the system. To graduate, students were required to do a certain number of restorations, crowns, and so forth. Students could become so focused on meeting the requirements that they could lose sight of comprehensive patient treatment. "Now, we make sure the patient is the center of attention for the student," Lara said.

Each fourth-year student is paired up with a third-year student, and they share the same patient family. When the fourth-year student graduates, treatments that are in process are continued by the rising fourth-year student with whom the patient is already familiar. This is designed to ensure a smooth transition as treatment is completed. "There is

continuity," Kilinc said. "The patients are not going through many changes, and they know who we (team leaders) are."

Students see advantages to the team system—they have bonded with each other and enjoy working together. "We genuinely like each other," said fourth-year student Sana Abdel-Jabbar, a statement that was echoed by recent 2015 graduate Erinne Kennedy, D.M.D., M.P.H.

Students also derive satisfaction from helping one another, as when a fourth-year student serves as an instructor, providing some advanced concepts to a less experienced student; or when a student assists another during a dental procedure.

"It's a rising tide that lifts all boats," said Lara.

All teams are organized to be diverse, providing other perspectives and experiences, including that of international students and faculty members who had exposure to dentistry in other dental schools. This diversity is reflected in Team 4. Recent graduate Khoi Le was born in Vietnam and came with his parents to Orlando when he was six. Fourth-year Litza Lefebre was born in Cuba, coming to the United States at age eight when her father won a visa lottery. Abdel-Jabbar, whose parents are from Palestine, was born in the United States, but identifies as Palestinian. Fourth-year Abelardo Daya Attie is of Syrian descent and was born in Venezuela, where he earned a dental degree.

Lara, an assistant professor in the Department of Prosthodontics, and Kilinc, an associate professor in the Department of Cariology and Restorative Dentistry, add to the mix. Lara is Venezuelan, earning her dental degree there and a Certificate in Prosthodontics from NSU. Kilinc is from Turkey, where she earned her dental degree, as well as her Ph.D. in Prosthodontics. She will soon earn an M.P.H. from NSU.

Another positive is having two team leaders who are consistent and also care and respect each other's input. Both are approachable, said the students, and have an open-door policy. "There are times I text at 9:00 p.m., and they are more than happy to answer my questions," said Le, now pursuing a one-year residency in Fayetteville, Arkansas. "They go above and beyond in helping us out."

Aaron Goodwin, a 2015 dual-degree D.O./D.M.D. graduate, expressed how his team leaders facilitated getting back to the clinic after his medical rotations, allowing him to stay on track with his patients. "I think it is beneficial working with two team leaders" said Casey Lynn, D.M.D., also a 2015 graduate, who is now pursuing a pediatric residency at the University of Florida—Naples. "They bring different perspectives. It is very good to get the two perspectives," added fourth-year student William Zenga.

The students see ways the system could be improved. Many agreed that the number of students in each team could be reduced so each can have greater access to the team leaders. Some want a better distribution of patients so that each student gets to tackle a wider range of dental challenges. They acknowledge these issues are relatively minor compared to the complaints they hear from students at other dental colleges.

Lynn has heard about shortcomings at other dental schools such as an inadequate number of patient dental chairs and severe limits on how many patients students are permitted to treat each year. Such prob-

lems, he said, do not exist at NSU's CDM. "When you hear that, you say NSU is killing it," Lynn said.

Lara and Kilinc are open to additional changes, however they are convinced that the team system has improved dental education. "We believe in the system," Lara said. "We believe it works," added Kilinc. ♦

THE EIGHT CDM TEAMS ARE EACH OVERSEEN BY TWO FACULTY TEAM LEADERS.

TEAM ONE

Mauricio Guerrero, D.D.S./Ariela Notzer, D.M.D., M.S.

TEAM TWO

Antonio Godoy, D.D.S./Rick Vogel, D.D.S.

TEAM THREE

Virginia Noce, D.D.S./Rashondia Gaines, D.D.S., AEGD

TEAM FOUR

Elaine Lara, D.D.S./Evren Kilinc, D.D.S., Ph.D.

TEAM FIVE

Martha Gutierrez, D.D.S./Panayotis Papatizimas, D.D.S.

TEAM SIX

Tulia Gonzalez, D.M.D./Michael Patten, D.D.S.

TEAM SEVEN

Steven Milhauser, D.D.S./Thomas Leonard, D.M.D.

TEAM EIGHT

Randy Lichtman, D.D.S./Vic Rampertaap, D.D.S.

CDM Alumni Society Is Growing



Dear Fellow Alumni and Friends,

"For Alumni, By Alumni" was selected as our tagline for the College of Dental Medicine Alumni Society and Friends, and it has been an incredible year for our group. We are starting to see a steady growth in our society's membership. We are continually seeking new and exciting ways to promote the society and to keep you engaged with NSU.

In this past year, we have had outstanding success with society events. The recent Graduate Symposium and the inaugural CDM Alumni Society and Friends Weekend had a record of more than 300 participants in attendance, a great start to our annual events. These important events reconnect you with classmates and the CDM, and allow you to meet new friends in the dental community.

As the society moves forward, we understand the importance of keeping up with current technology. We are always updating our alumni website, and recognize that for most, social media is the best resource for promoting events, reconnecting with friends, and learning how you can make an impact—a *lasting impression*. Our goal is to improve online networking so alumni can continue getting the right information at the right time. Please feel free to reach out to us with any ideas or suggestions for improving your experience with the CDM Alumni Society and Friends. To connect, email Bart Whitehead, D.M.D., at walbert@nova.edu or Rosalie Marin at rosalie.marin@nova.edu.

On behalf of the CDM Alumni Society and Friends' board of directors, we hope you have an amazing year and become an active member of an amazing story—the CDM Alumni Society.

Fins Up!


Chris Phelps
President
CDM Alumni Society and Friends



REACHING VETERANS

COMMUNITY PROGRAM BRINGS DENTAL RELIEF

BY ARNIE ROSENBERG



When Mission United—part of United Way of Broward County—approached Nova Southeastern University about 1½ years ago looking for a way to help military veterans with pressing dental needs, there was no question the College of Dental Medicine would step up and become a partner.

Now the college is a key participant in Give Vets a Smile, a program that includes referrals, free screenings, and pro bono treatment for Broward County veterans by a network of volunteer dentists. Helping fill the gap in veterans' dental care was a natural step for the college, said Robert Uchin, D.D.S., former CDM dean and now special assistant to the dean.

"It's involvement in the community," Uchin said. "We're teaching social responsibility to the dental students as well as technical responsibility. We're trying to produce the most humane, caring, well-prepared individuals to practice health care relief in the dental field."

And involvement with the community is one of NSU's Core Values. "Social responsibility and communal responsibility are part of being a professional. That's part of our culture," Uchin said, "to teach by example and participation."

CDM SCREENING

The CDM's role is critical to the program, which is part of Mission United, United Way's effort to help veterans and their families reacclimate to civilian life.

During a Mission United Advisory Board meeting in 2014, Ray Ferrero, J.D., NSU chancellor and a former marine, and Kimberly Durham, Psy.D., chair of the Department of Justice and Human Services in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Services, worked together to come up with a plan. Ferrero and Durham, both

advisory board members, called the initial meeting with Thomas Ellis, senior director of Mission United; Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., CDM dean; Uchin; Michael Patten, D.D.S., professor; and others. Ellis and Durham drew up the structure of how the referrals would work.

The group quickly moved from "Why is this needed?" to "How do we implement it," Ellis recounted. Veterans face a gap in getting dental care, explained Ellis. After they're discharged, there's just a small window of time when they qualify for Veterans Affairs (VA) dental care. Then they're quickly left with nothing, unless it's provided by an employer or they buy expensive insurance on their own.

The first contact for a veteran in need is Mission United, which completes basic intake information and refers the veteran to Patten, a CDM faculty member in prosthodontics. Patten does an initial, 30-minute screening, and the veteran is referred to one of 32 volunteer dentists.

REACHING OUT

So far, about 20 veterans have received help through Give Vets a Smile. "For us, it's a way of reaching out to the community," said Patten, an Air Force veteran. "I can't ask a dentist to do a \$10,000 or \$15,000 job for somebody, but the dentists can help a patient get out of pain and get his smile back."

That was the case for Fred Roger (B.S. '10, M.B.A. '12), 32, a Marine Corps veteran from Fort Lauderdale, who suddenly had excruciating pain in a tooth this summer while on a trip to Chicago. "A dentist there gave me pain medication, but said I needed to see a Florida dentist. I don't have dental insurance, and it was going to be a \$2,600, multistep process," Roger said.



Fred Roger, who received dental care through the Give Vets a Smile program, discusses the College of Dental Medicine's role in the project with April Coan, a former marine who is working on her Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Roger, executive director of the Veterans Trust, knew to call Mission United. A general dentist referred him to an endodontist, also a member of the pro bono network, who performed a root canal, prepared a temporary crown, and then a permanent crown—all at no cost to Roger.

The program “restores faith in society among the veterans community,” Roger said. “A lot of people want to say, ‘Thank you for your service.’ A program like this gives them an opportunity to give back to the ones who served.”

SUPPORT FROM NSU

Give Vets a Smile is one of the newest veterans programs in which Nova Southeastern University takes part, and the list continues to grow, according to Durham, who has been coordinating NSU’s efforts for veterans for years.

“NSU became interested in veterans several years ago,” Durham said, pointing to a program that helped returning Broward County veterans deal with post-traumatic stress disorder. Since then, the university has worked to offer mental-health services, and the Shepard Broad College of Law has partnered with Legal Aid and United Way to provide free legal services to veterans. “We have complete support, a real culture developing at the university,” Durham said. “You can never find anyone who says no when it comes to veterans.”

WILLING VOLUNTEERS

It wasn’t difficult to build the network of pro bono dentists, according to Patten.

He used his contacts as past president of Atlantic Coast District Dental Association to line up volunteers. Articles went into the association’s monthly newsletter and at every

monthly dinner meeting of the Atlantic Coast District Dental Association, he’d talk up the program, ask for volunteers, and pass around a sign-up sheet.

Likewise, Uchin drew on his contacts as past president of both the Florida Dental Association and the Broward County Dental Association, and he knew which dentists to contact at the Greater Hollywood Dental Society, which serves southern Broward County.

For his part, Ellis envisions Give Vets a Smile as a program that can be copied and scaled, larger or smaller, in other communities. Mission United expanded earlier this year to Orlando and to Miami-Dade County, and he hopes Broward County’s program can be simply copied, adjusted for the size of its veterans’ population, and put into place.

“That’s the beauty of Broward County,” said Ellis. “It’s a wonderful community where relationships prevail, and those relationships can really cut through a lot of red tape. People want to support one another, and they want to support the community. It’s atypical in a county our size.”

Uchin believes in Give Vets a Smile, calling it “something that’s truly a professional responsibility. To me, it’s the way things should be for all people.”

But Roger, the veteran who benefited from the Give Vets a Smile program, has a different take: “It shows how many people actually care for veterans. It restores my faith in patriotism,” he said. ♦

GIVE VETS A SMILE

Give Vets a Smile has more dentists than it has referrals, but the program always is looking for additional Broward County dentists to join the pro bono network, according to Thomas Ellis, senior director of Mission United.

Volunteer dentists are asked to take on one case per year, Ellis said.

In addition, veterans who can’t afford needed dental care should call United Way of Broward County to begin the intake process. Veterans and volunteer dentists both can call United Way 24 hours a day, (954) 486-4833.

CDM Impressions



CDM RECEIVES \$3.39-MILLION GRANT

Dentists and other health care providers who treat patients with autism spectrum disorder require special training to understand the skills and techniques needed to care for this growing population.

Romer Ocanto, D.D.S., M.S., CAGS, chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at NSU's College of Dental Medicine, has secured a \$3.39-million grant from the Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide this training to pediatric dentistry and advanced education in general dentistry residents over a five-year period. This is the third grant Ocanto has received from HRSA. Previous funding totaled approximately \$3.5 million.

The program will include the development of a curriculum addressing the transition of children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder to adult dental care and aims to increase access to dental care for children and adolescents with special health care needs such as autism. "This funding will allow us to partner with community organizations and general dentists in Florida and throughout the Southeastern U.S. to enhance dental services available to patients with autism," said Ocanto.

Currently, the CDM has pediatric special needs dental clinics at NSU's Mailman Segal Center for Human Development in Davie (shown above); NSU Dental Care at Kids In Distress in Fort Lauderdale; and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida; along with an adult special needs dental clinic in North Miami Beach. NSU has existing relationships with Broward Health Medical Center, the South Florida Autism Charter School, and the Autism Consortium/Broward County Public Schools to provide additional dental services to the special needs community. ♦

This project is 100 percent financed by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number D88HP20126 and Postdoctoral Training in General, Pediatric, and Public Health Dentistry and Dental Hygiene for \$3,398,452. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.

ENDODONTIST HONORED FOR COMMITMENT TO UNDERSERVED PATIENTS

Cameron Howard, D.M.D., M.Sc.D., was honored with the Spirit of Service New Practitioner Award for 2015 by the American Association of Endodontists (AAE).

The award is presented to an individual with less than 10 years in practice who has shown commitment to providing dental treatment to underserved patients in the United States and abroad.

Howard first began his work with dental mission trips as an undergraduate, observing and assisting dentists as they performed fillings and extractions at an orphanage and refugee camp in Kyrgyzstan. He went on several other missions throughout college, dental school, and endodontic training to serve patients in Kenya, Honduras, and Mexico.

After completing his endodontic training at NSU's College of Dental Medicine, Howard moved to Tampa and began volunteering with Mission Tampa and its Mission Smiles mobile dental unit that provides emergency dental care to the homeless and underserved. Concerned that many savable teeth were being extracted, Howard met with the board of Mission Tampa and received approval to add endodontic treatment to the mobile unit's services. Howard then reached out to corporate partners and secured \$8,000 in donated and discounted endodontic equipment.

Howard received his D.M.D. degree from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry in 2008 and earned his Certificate in Endodontics from Nova Southeastern University's CDM in 2010. He has been involved with the AAE since his endodontic residency. He is currently a trustee for the AAE Foundation. ♦

Being a Patient Made Student Become a Better Practitioner



BY LONA O'CONNOR

Michelle Palmer-Español's career might have gone in several directions. She loved to dance—teaching jazz, tap, and hip hop at her mother's studio in Deland, Florida. With an undergraduate degree in mathematics from the University of Florida, she seemed headed for a degree in engineering.

However, a common occurrence for many middle-school-age children—her braces—lead her on a different path altogether. "I was a shy, nerdy girl," recalled Palmer-Español, M.S., D.M.D. "It wasn't just my teeth, it was also my glasses."

Her parents sent her to Richard Dunn, D.D.S., an orthodontist in Longwood, Florida, near Palmer-Español's hometown. This turned out to be a life-changing period. Dunn corrected her malaligned teeth and crossbite, giving her a smile that now lights up the room. He also gave her life its trajectory.

Palmer-Español's decision to become a dentist came between her sophomore and junior years of undergraduate school at the University of Florida. Although she had begun studying mathematics, she asked Dunn, her orthodontist and childhood hero, if she could shadow him in his practice. That was in 2004. As a result, she chose NSU's CDM.

"I have a lot of young patients who act like they're interested, but not too many that follow through," said Dunn. "It's a pleasure to see that she's done it."

A 2010 graduate of NSU's College of Dental Medicine, Palmer-Español completed her residency in 2012, specializing in orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics. She also holds a master's degree for her research regarding orthodontic treatment outcomes according to the standards of the American Board of Orthodontics. She has researched bonding materials and enamel preparation protocols, among other topics, as well.



Michelle Palmer-Español, a 2010 CDM graduate, specializes in orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics at her Boynton Beach clinic where she speaks with Sheldon Turner, left.

Palmer-Español recently joined the CDM's alumni board, working to keep graduates connected to the college. Colleagues and friends say that she is uniquely qualified for her new position on the alumni board. She is someone who easily engages her classmates and encourages others to work for the benefit of the college.

Developing strong bonds with her classmates and teachers at the CDM, Palmer-Español considers many of them friends and mentors. That includes Jorge Coro, D.M.D., M.S., an orthodontics professor at the CDM and the father of her friend and classmate, Ivette. They own a father and daughter practice in Coral Gables. "She's always been passionate about orthodontia. She loves what she does and she loves to help others," said Ivette Coro, D.M.D., M.S., about Palmer-Español.

EDUCATED DECISIONS

During her undergraduate years at the University of Florida, Palmer-Español developed an open bite. She decided that when she entered dental school, she would see if she could correct it. Jorge Coro had studied a non-surgical technique for correcting open bite. Ivette Coro, who was then a resident, did the work under the supervision of her father.

Palmer-Español now brings that same level of care and concern for her own patients. She joined Lawrence Hier, D.D.S., as a partner in his Boynton Beach orthodontic practice in April 2014. Their patients are of all ages, including children with apnea caused by palates that need expanding and a 78-year-old fitted with Invisalign plastic (clear) braces.

Because of her own experiences as an orthodontic patient, Palmer-Español finds it easy to identify with her patients, who place a great deal of importance on the changes that treatment will bring and who sometimes can

also be impatient to see results. "I understand their pain," Palmer-Español said.

NSU's CDM not only changed her life professionally, but also personally. She met her husband, Francisco Español, D.M.D., at the college. He had practiced dentistry for three years in Colombia, but came to the United States in 2000, choosing NSU on the recommendation of friends who had a high opinion of its dental school.

He became a teaching assistant and tutored her. But soon she was helping him master technical terms he struggled with in English. They both entered the Omicron Kappa Upsilon dental honor society, which considers only the top 20 students in a class. They began to spend more time together studying for tests.

"She was a great student," Español recalled. "I owe my specialty to her. She pushed me to study harder." The couple has been married for two years. Though they work in different practices, they think as a team, said Español.

"Every position we take, we discuss it as a couple," said Español. "We always come to each other about everything we are doing. Working hard together for those dreams is amazing."

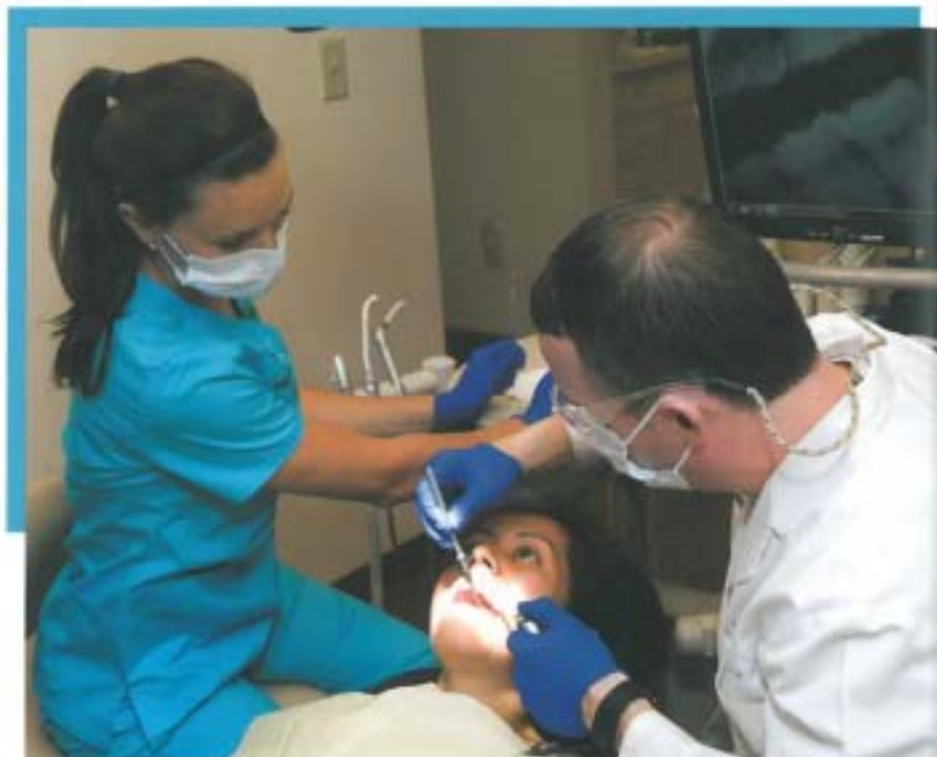
Over the years, Palmer-Español has been able to connect her varied interests and life experiences into her orthodontic practice. "There is a lot of engineering, biology, art, and esthetics in dentistry," said Dunn. "She has to bring a lot of different aspects to her work."

She and Hier can adjust and refine their patients' tooth positioning at work or at home. A self-described perfectionist, she sometimes works well into the night trying out alternate scenarios on specialized computer programs.

Recently, after attending a dance recital for some of her patients, Palmer-Español decided to carve out some time to return to her first love. She has begun teaching dance again once a week at a studio near her office.

Not only is dance a passion, but she sees a correlation between choreography and orthodontic treatment. "Like choreography, you have to plan the treatment step by step, that's my favorite part," she said. "Then you see the final amazing result." ♦

A Career of Giving Back Has Its Own Rewards



Timothy Case's private practice in Chattanooga, Tennessee, focuses on preventive and basic restorative care. He has been honored with NSU's prestigious Alumni of Distinction Award for 2015.

BY SANDI DRAPER

Timothy Case, D.M.D., 2001, is a living example of the adage: "To whom much is given, much will be expected." Case's tuition to NSU's College of Dental Medicine was covered by a Health Professions Scholarship, which he repaid with military and community service after graduation. He has stayed on the path of giving back ever since.

While completing his undergraduate degree from Mississippi College, Case began thinking about his future and asked himself: "Where can I best help other people?" His contemplation led him to research dental schools, where he was able to speak to administration and staff coming on board at the then-new Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine.

"The faculty and staff had a more collaborative approach than I found at other dental schools," Case said. "At NSU they actually saw the students as 'doctors to be.' Students were treated with respect and required to be responsible. The school had a collaborative attitude that was very positive and that was a distinguishing factor."

Another factor in his choice was that NSU also tied in a variety of dental specialties early by exposure to both clinical and coursework. Some of the people who mentored him were dentists. "The experience allowed me to come to a conclusion about where I would have the most positive influence on patients," Case said.

During the first couple years of dental school, Case and fellow students did a lot of community outreach in Fort Lauderdale. "That really touched me, and I feel like my approach has not changed," he said. "It's a way for me to impact more people in the way I provide care." His interest in community service continues today.

His graduating class of 2001 was the first to complete all four years of curriculum at NSU CDM. (The first graduates were international students who transferred in and completed their training a year earlier.) "Timothy is one of the nicest people you could ever meet," said Peter Keller, D.D.S., executive associate dean for finances and administration at the CDM. "We had to have special students initially; we were looking for pathfinders and 'rugged individualists.' Tim can start an event, finish an event, and survive. That's what we were initially looking for."

This inclination for following through on a vision was seen early on when he first set foot on campus. "When I was interviewing at NSU, there was no physical building yet. But I believed in myself, and I believed in the faculty members," Case said. "There were a lot of faculty members coming on board, and I spent time with them. I came to believe that this was an endeavor that I wanted to undertake. That type of faculty-student collaboration was not mainstream. Most schools at the time had more of an adversarial approach. At NSU, we were learning to become competent clinicians and caregivers. I think most patients would want their health care providers to learn in that environment."

During his second year in dental school, he unexpectedly lost his father in an automobile accident. Case got the terrible news, took a scheduled radiology exam, returned home for services, and was back in class the next Monday. Reflecting on the difficult time, Case said that "to say my dad's passing was devastating would be

an understatement, but I also knew he would want me to carry on and obtain my dental degree."

MILITARY SERVICE STILL AN INFLUENCE

After graduation, he spent three years stationed with the U.S. Army at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. At the time, the United States was gearing up to go into Iraq. "I had a series of assignments that broadened my horizons. Reserves from around the country were coming in. We needed to get them ready for deployment from a dental readiness standpoint," Case said.

While on active duty, Case served in various capacities including acting company commander, chief of oral surgery at Taylor Dental Clinic (where he received the Army Commendation Medal), chief of endodontics Taylor Dental Clinic, and member of the dental forensics team. Today, his private practice maintains a commitment to see military patients and their families. After military service, Case joined the National Health Service Corps and worked with a Federally Qualified Health Center in Northwest Georgia to form its dental clinic. "It was a very underserved community. I've always been interested in community health care and gravitated toward those most in need," he said. He spent two years there.

In 2006, Case entered private practice, founding Case Dental Care at the base of Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His practice focuses on preventive and basic restorative care. "We develop a comprehensive diagnosis, build a treatment plan, and encourage implementation and follow up." Case is a three-time winner of the A.C.E. Award, given by the Tennessee Dental Association for high levels of approved continuing education. He also served two terms as chair of the Community Dental Health Committee of The Chattanooga Area Dental Society. After leaving that post, his office was contacted by Head Start centers in



Alumni Impressions

the Northwest Georgia area for help in completing preschool dental exams.

"My staff and I take instruments and equipment to the centers and set up makeshift screening areas where parents allow us to perform an initial screening so their child can start preschool on time and in good dental health. We do this at no charge to the school, nor the parents," Case said. "Many times, the visit to us is the child's first exposure to a dentist."

While they don't perform on-site dental work, they do arrange for children to see specialists if they are found to need a higher level of care. "We've been going to the centers for nine years, and are honored to give back to our community," he said.

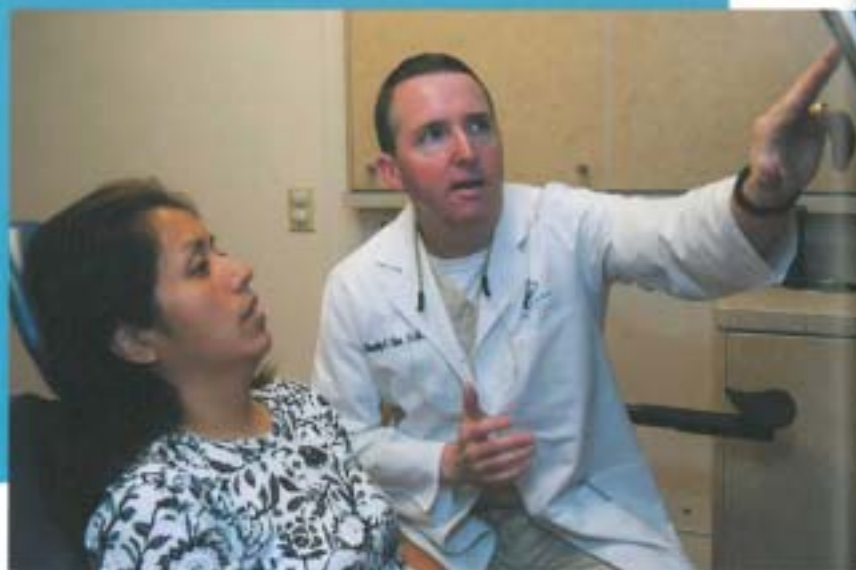
Giving back has its own rewards. "There are two big things that make you feel alive. One is growing your self-potential and the other is helping others get to a better place," Case said.

"Over the last five years or so, as I look back on my early years, I have become more aware of the need for health care professionals to also have a mechanism to improve the care of their personal finances. I have come to appreciate that philanthropy doesn't operate in a vacuum," Case said. "Giving back to others implies you've completed the rigorous financial homework to take care of yourself, your family, and your long-term goals and dreams," said the NSU alumnus who has been married for 20 years (his wife, Karla, is also an NSU graduate, with a master's degree in elementary education), and has three daughters (Margaret, 16; Anna, 14; and Paige, 11).

Case is talking with fellow dentists and physicians about ways to build financial stability. "Due to the necessity of time constraints, we aren't exposed to many strategies of personal finance in our medical education. But with the changing face of health care, pressures on our bottom line are coming from many angles. The best way I can sustain individual philanthropy is to be attentive to financial planning," he said. Within the year, he hopes to be launching an online resource focusing on private financial planning needs for medical professionals. "The heart of every provider is there (in giving back), but more is required. The understanding and application of

proven financial principles is paramount to unlocking your full giving potential," Case added.

The alumnus, who was honored with NSU's prestigious Alumni of Distinction Award for 2015, has not forgotten where his dental career began. He is a member-at-large on the college's Alumni Society Advisory Board. "I think it's important that we grow our alumni network by providing value to members," Case said. "My involvement with the board itself stems from my awareness and appreciation of the dental school. I love to encourage



In addition to his successful practice, Timothy Case is a member-at-large on the College of Dental Medicine's Alumni Society Advisory Board.

alumni to come back and see for themselves the new and great things the school is doing."

He cites advancements in care, expansion of outreach, and the CDM being on the forefront of research. "Like all of medicine, dentistry has seen a profusion of scientific changes ranging from nano-science to molecular biology to synthetic bone materials. There are changes in diagnosis and more minimally invasive and conservative forms of treatment. Dentistry is at the forefront of that evolutionary continuum," Case said.

Case attended last February's alumni weekend and was happy to see fellow alumni tour the school's "Give Kids A Smile" weekend in which student dentists offered free dental care to underprivileged children. "There was so much energy and excitement among the dental students and patients! I was inspired," he said. ♦

CDM Impressions

RESIDENTS RECEIVE AWARD

Oral and Maxillofacial Residency Program residents from NSU's College of Dental Medicine won the Second Annual Resident and Fellow Research Day competition sponsored by Florida International University's Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. The team received a \$2,000 grand prize for its presentation "The New Paradigm in Medical Modeling: Utilizing Consumer-Level Desktop 3-D Printers," beating out other groups of residents and fellows from FIU, Cleveland Clinic, Memorial Regional Hospital, and Broward Health. ♦

PROFESSOR HONORED BY DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Sharon C. Siegel, D.D.S., M.S., professor and chair in the Department of Prosthodontics in NSU's College of Dental Medicine, has received a Chair of the Board of Directors Citation from the American Dental Education Association (ADEA). Siegel was honored for her years of service to the association, having served for the past nine years as an officer in the Prosthodontic Section of the Council of Sections, as a member of the Administrative Board of the Council of Sections, and as the 2015 Annual Session program chair for the American Dental Association's meeting. ♦

STUDENT ASSOCIATION WINS A STUEY

The American Student Dental Association was honored as the Graduate Organization of the Year 2015 during the 16th annual Student Life Achievement Awards, which are also known as the STUEYS. The STUEYS celebrate Nova Southeastern University's core values by recognizing achievement in academic excellence, student centered, integrity, innovation, opportunity, scholarship/research, diversity, and community. ♦



POSTGRADUATE STUDENT HONORED WITH AWARD

An abstract by Reem Almashat, B.D.S., received the Graduate Student Research Award 2015 in a competition conducted by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) and NuSmile.

Almashat, a postgraduate student at NSU's College of Dental Medicine, was one of eight pediatric dental residents to receive the award that honored "excellence in research enhancing the specialty of pediatric dentistry."

Since 2005, NuSmile has sponsored the Graduate Student Research Awards, presented during the AAPD annual session. Since the company's inception in 1991, NuSmile has been an active supporter of the AAPD and Healthy Smiles Healthy Children, a national, community-based initiative established in 1987 that provides access to care for children. ♦

Seymour Oliet, D.D.S.

FOUNDING DEAN REMEMBERED FOR EXPERTISE, COMPASSION



College of Dental Medicine



Retirement never stopped Seymour (Sy) Oliet, D.D.S., from seeking another challenge. A plan to start the first new dental school in the United States in 25 years was just the kind of opportunity he embraced.

Oliet, who was appointed the founding dean of Nova Southeastern University's College of Dental Medicine (CDM), passed away on August 26, 2015. He was 88 years old.

During his five-year tenure at NSU CDM, Oliet established a reputation for community involvement and visionary leadership that propelled the fledgling college. Following his retirement as CDM dean and until his passing, Oliet continued teaching and mentoring endodontic residents as a professor in the graduate program.

Oliet is fondly remembered by faculty members, who recall that he used some unconventional techniques to recruit them. Former student Steven M. Kelner, D.M.D., M.S., remembers that Oliet told him that he needed to come to the CDM "so I could be a better son and be closer to my mother in Florida." To others, "Dr. Oliet took the approach of 'What? Retire? You still have much to contribute to dental education and the profession,'" said Kelner, now associate dean of Institutional Affairs at the CDM.

Colleagues and former students agreed that Oliet was a man to whom it was difficult to say no. Adam Stabholz, D.M.D., a former student and now dean of Hebrew University, Jerusalem, said: "Dr. Sy Oliet was a great man with a golden heart—kind, generous with his knowledge, and always ready to help, often going beyond the call of duty for others."

Peter Keller, D.D.S., executive associate dean for finances and administration at the CDM, remembered Oliet's caring demeanor. "Once you spent time with Dr. Oliet, you had a lifelong friend who could never do enough for you," Keller said.

"Sy was a visionary clinician, academic, and leader in the dental industry whose work had a tremendous impact on the oral health community. He leaves behind an impressive legacy founded on his passion for education," wrote Stanley M. Bergman, chairman and chief executive officer of Henry Schein.

Raised in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, Oliet spent most of his adult life in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Rutgers University in 1949 and received his Doctor of Dental Surgery with distinction from the University of Pennsylvania in 1953. He was a prolific researcher and author,

a teacher, and a practicing endodontist. He served on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine, where he was instrumental in establishing the school's department of endodontics and post-graduate program in endodontics. After his retirement, he was named as a professor emeritus of the School of Dental Medicine.

Oliet published articles, mentored many endodontic residents, and cared for patients in his three successful endodontic practices in the Philadelphia area.

"Dr. Oliet was a true pioneer in dental education and the specialty of endodontics," said Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., the third and current dean of NSU's CDM.

Oliet's involvement with NSU began in 1994, when he was called out of retirement by Arnold Melnick, D.O., M.Sc., who became the founding dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine. Melnick asked Oliet to chair a committee to discuss starting a new dental school at NSU.

Immediately, Oliet began setting up committees, identifying benchmarks, and learning about the oral health

needs in South Florida. NSU's Board of Trustees voted to approve a College of Dental Medicine in March 1996. Oliet was appointed as dean. The CDM opened in 1997.

Past president of the American Association of Endodontists (AAE), Oliet was the recipient of the AAE's Edgar D. Coolidge Award in 2008, among his many honors.

His contributions continue at the CDM. The Dr. Seymour Oliet Scholarship Fund has been established at NSU CDM in his memory and to honor his commitment to dental education. "A scholarship will allow future dentists to honor the legacy of Dr. Oliet at the college he helped establish," said Niessen.

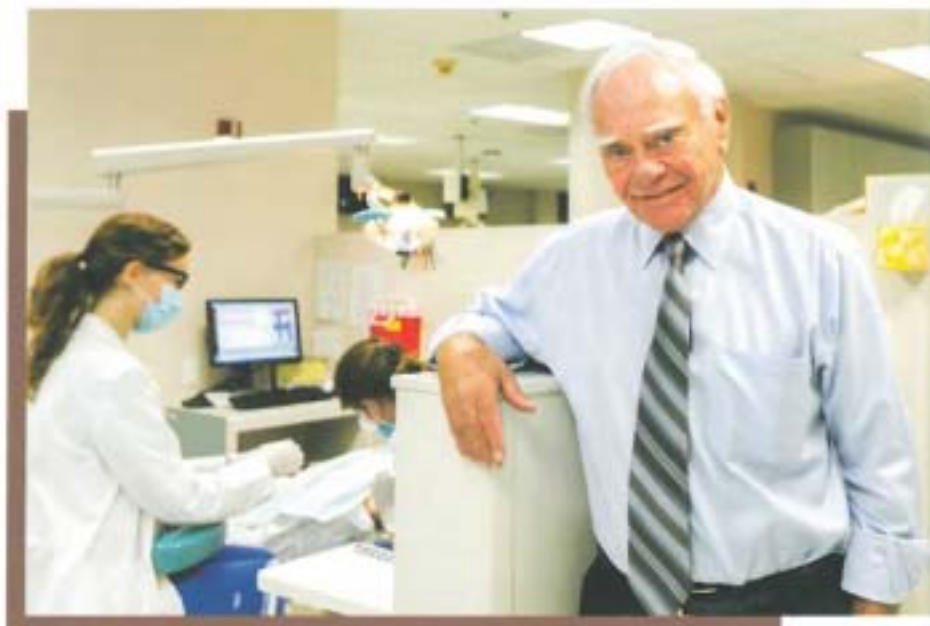
Donations may be sent to the Division of Advancement and Community Relations, Nova Southeastern University, Health Professions Division, Terry Building 1518, 3301 College Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33314-7796.

Oliet is survived by his wife of more than 60 years, Sherry Oliet; a son, Eric Oliet, and his wife, Mary; a daughter, Amy Heller, and her husband, David Heller; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Condolences may be sent to Sherry Oliet c/o Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine, Department of Endodontics, 3200 South University Drive, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33328-2018.



Seymour O. Oliet, seated, with his predecessor Robert Uchin and current dean Linda Niessen

The CDM's Founding Father of Orthodontics Stays Active



BY MICHELLE F. SOLOMON

Malcolm Meister, D.D.S., M.S.M., J.D., remembers when he interviewed candidates for the Graduate Program in Orthodontics at the NSU College of Dental Medicine that would begin in August 1997.

"We stood on an area of green grass proposed as the future site of the dental school. I told them there was going to be a building here, and they believed me. We were able to select an excellent group from the applicants who had outstanding academic records and a bit of the adventurous spirit," he recalled. Their learning began at the Broward College of Dental Hygiene, recalls Meister, before the building was completed. "In January of 1997, when the College of Dental Medicine opened, we moved into the new building."

Meister was chairman of the department of orthodontics for 10 years when he retired in 2007 and remembers the first few years getting the program on its feet. "There were many established programs throughout the country that already had a reputation. We were the new kids on the block and had to demonstrate our ability to offer a good education. We assembled an outstanding faculty by finding and recruiting retired academicians and exceptional Florida orthodontists who were willing to participate. We circulated our new beginning in the dental journals, and because Orthodontics is a small, but popular, specialty of dentistry, our presence and availability grew rapidly. We've been able to select very bright and interesting men and women, which made it very interesting for me," said Meister, who adds that in his 18 years at CDM—10 as chairman and 8 as a lecturing professor—he's been privileged to watch the applicant pool grow.

Today, the application pool for the Orthodontic Residency Graduate Program exceeds 300, of which, 7 are selected to enter. The applicant pool



Malcolm Meister, opposite page and center, with dental students Ben Christman, left, and Kirk Bean, says that CDM students keep him energized and involved at NSU.

for the NSU CDM not only has grown, but Meister will continue to be a part of the college's future. The Dr. Malcolm Meister Endowment Fund has been established with the intention of enhancing the educational experience of the orthodontic residents.

The fund is in "recognition and celebration of Dr. Meister's contributions to the education and achievements of countless orthodontic professionals throughout the world. The endowed fund will be used to support research, travel to professional meetings, and encourage professional development for our residents," said Abraham Lifshitz, D.D.S., M.S., professor and chairman of the CDM's Department of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics.

"The fund named in his honor will continue Dr. Meister's legacy of residency education, support, and intellectual development," said Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., dean and professor at the CDM.

FROM DENTISTRY TO THE LAW

Building NSU's orthodontics program came seven years after Meister sold the North Miami Beach practice he shared with his brother, Daniel, for 31 years. But in between retiring and becoming orthodontics program chairman, Meister earned another degree. At the age of 62, he decided to get his law degree.

"I didn't like retirement at all. I finally said I was going to do what I had wanted to do for a long time—I was going to law school," said Meister, who started at NSU's Shepard Broad College of Law in 1992. After he graduated from law school, he worked in the Miami public defender's office. That ended, he said, because soon after he started, NSU contacted him. So he went back to orthodontics—this time in higher education. "While I was chairman, dentists or orthodontists would ask me my opinion about contracts, and I would review them, so I did some of my law work that way," he said.

Today, Meister, a nationally known expert in dental jurisprudence, lectures on law, ethics, and medical errors at the College of Dental Medicine.

Law and orthodontics share some of the same attributes, the professor and former practitioner explained. "I found orthodontics to be very challenging academically," he said. "It is a thinking man's specialty. Orthodontics offers analytic challenges for the residents and professors alike. We deal with growth and development, biology, pathology, esthetics, etiology, treatment mechanics, and the collision of disparate forces (malocclusion) that sometimes cannot be stabilized to achieve long-term stability."

At 85, he stays active in the world of educating future orthodontists because of the challenges of the specialty. "Nothing is cut-and-dried," according to Meister, "but it is so satisfying because you're dealing with aesthetics. It's very creative."

The relationships Meister continues to build with students also keep him energized and involved at NSU. He said he still keeps in touch with many of his students who have now gone on to have successful practices of their own. "I have enduring relationships with students that have lasted many years. With residents who have graduated recently, I have developed the same kind of relationships," he said.

The Dr. Malcolm Meister Endowment Fund will remain a legacy to the "father" of the department of orthodontics at CDM. "I think that I did accomplish something and that I worked hard to help create a good program," Meister said.

Meister hopes the program and his teaching creates future orthodontists who excel in the craft of orthodontics, and are well-rounded individuals. "Graduates of the program are enjoying a challenging profession that is more passion than profession. I tell my students to dissect everything carefully. They challenge me, too. Each time I'm around my students, I learn something new," he said.

For more information on the Dr. Malcolm Meister Endowment Fund, contact Denise Goldson Rau at dgoldsonrau@nova.edu or at (954) 262-2163. ♦

Staff Impressions

Assistant Dispenses
Advice, Encouragement
to Dental Students



Danka Premovic makes sure dental students have the right instruments and materials, as well as offering encouragement. This past year, the senior class voted her Assistant of the Year for 2015 for her dedication and kindness.

BY ELLEN WOLFSON VALLADARES

Spend a few minutes with Danka Premovic, and you'll quickly understand why this cheerful, Yugoslavian-born dental assistant who works in the Dispensing Department is indispensable to the predoctoral students who practice in the NSU College of Dental Medicine's dental clinic. It's not only that she goes out of her way to make sure they have the right instruments and materials, but also because she is always there with a smile, an encouraging word, even a hug, if needed.

"Danka always has a smile. She is never in a bad mood. And because of her experience, she even takes the time to explain things to you or make suggestions about ways to do things. She goes that extra step," said Alexis Otero, a third-year dental student who is president of her class.

For instance, Otero said that Premovic recently went above and beyond to help her with the task of ordering the 245 safety gowns she needed to get in two days. "She was right next to me helping me, writing out names, and typing up a list for me," Otero said. "That's a perfect example of how awesome she is."

Premovic is also there for the students, helping ease the stress that comes with working on real patients for the first time, Otero said. "She gives you that extra little boost you need," Otero added.

Her dedication and kindness has not gone unnoticed. This past year, the senior class voted Premovic Assistant of the Year for 2015. "It felt good," Premovic said. "But I am rewarded every day because I am here for the students, and every 'thank you' is an award."

Working at the CDM for 10 years, Premovic says she now understands why her first supervisor described dispensing as the core of the predoctoral clinic. That "little cubicle," as Premovic calls the dispensing area, houses all the materials that the students need to perform their daily procedures on patients. And, Premovic gets to know the students as they visit on a regular basis to collect what they need.

"You make connections. We become like a family," she said. "They come to the window and they may cry, or they have had a hard day, or they may tell me the crown didn't fit. You are a shoulder to cry on. I feel like 'mom' to them."

For the students who are just learning, Premovic is the one who often helps them figure out just what it is they need. "Sometimes they come and say they need that green cement thing," Premovic said with a chuckle. "I tell them, 'Let's start from the beginning. What exactly are you doing?' Then I get them what they need."

LEARNING ON THE JOB

Everything she knows about dental materials and dispensing has been learned on the job. Premovic was new to the field of dentistry when she took the job at NSU. "I learned everything the hard way," she said. "I am still learning every day."

Today, Premovic knows every inch of her dispensing area and rarely comes across a request she cannot answer. "I am very resourceful. I find my way," she said.

That has been true her whole life. Premovic grew up on a farm in what was then Yugoslavia. She remembers it as a beautiful country where she enjoyed a wonderful family life and a good education. Still, when she came to the United States for a visit in 1989, she never left. "I had one visa, got a second visa, and then an extension. Then I decided to stay," she said.

She soon met and married Mike, now her husband. They have been married 25 years and have two children, Bojana, 22, and Danilo, 19. Premovic says she cherishes her family and is thankful that she could stay home while her children were growing up. When her children were older, Premovic decided to take a dental assistant

training course. She received a certificate and then scoured the newspapers for a job.

"I just decided I was to going to work. It was one of those mad moments, I guess," she laughed. She applied for the job at the NSU dental clinic and, in 2005, started her work in dispensing. Since then, Premovic has made it her job to improve dispensing and help create a system that functions better and faster for faculty members and students. While things have continually changed throughout the years, the one constant is Premovic's dedication to the students and the CDM.

Sharon Siegel, D.D.S., M.S., professor and chair of the CDM Department of Prosthodontics, has worked closely with Premovic during the past decade and says both the faculty and students are lucky to have her. "We couldn't do our jobs without her," Siegel said. "She has

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—Sharon Siegel, D.D.S., M.S.

NSU CDM's best interests at heart in everything she does. I don't know a more dedicated, conscientious employee. She makes sure all the materials are up to date," Siegel added. "If she doesn't understand something, she takes the time to visit faculty members to ask

questions and make sure we get exactly what we need. Plus, she is always smiling and has a great attitude. The students love her and the faculty loves her."

Premovic is humble, Siegel added. "She does all this from a place of conscientiousness and has an ethic of hard work, not because she wants kudos or awards. She truly takes pride in her job and in doing well for the university."

For Premovic, some of the highlights of the past 10 years have come at times when she was able to offer something more than dental materials. She remembered running into a first-year student who was feeling very stressed. "He said, 'I can't do this.' I told him, 'You can definitely do this. You are here for a reason. You've already conquered a lot just by getting into this school. You can totally do this.'"

The student went on to finish all four years, plus a specialty in endodontics. "Those are the important moments for me," Premovic said. ♦

NSU Impressions

THOMAS TEMPLE NAMED SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT



H. Thomas Temple, M.D., is now the senior vice president of translational research and economic development, a new position created to support NSU's faculty members in developing their innovative ideas, discoveries, and technologies.

In this role, Temple is responsible for building the connections, resources, and entrepreneurial energy for the commercialization of NSU's research activities. Temple will be establishing partnerships with companies, investors, and entrepreneurs interested in using NSU's vast wet and dry lab space in the Center for Collaborative Research (CCR) to conduct research and develop technologies benefiting the global community.

Additionally, he will be leveraging the resources of the CCR to further support the cutting-edge research conducted at NSU's Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography, headquartered at the Guy Harvey Oceanographic Center Building. Temple's position represents a partnership with Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) East Florida hospitals, where he has been granted privileges and will maintain a surgical practice, complementing his role with NSU.

Temple brings to NSU his long-established reputation as a successful surgeon, researcher, and leader spanning nearly three decades. He joined NSU from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, where he served as chief of the Orthopaedic Oncology Division, director of the University of Miami Tissue Bank, professor of orthopaedic and pathology, and vice-chairman of the Department of Orthopaedics.

Temple earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard University and his Doctor of Medicine from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. He completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and his musculoskeletal oncology fellowship at Harvard University/Massachusetts General Hospital/Boston Children's Hospital in Boston. He is board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. ♦

NSU RESEARCHERS RECEIVE \$800,000 GRANT TO RESEARCH GULF WAR ILLNESS

Paula A. Faria Waziry, Ph.D., assistant professor at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine and researcher at the Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, and her research team have been awarded an \$805,882 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs to investigate the genomic and cellular mechanisms that cause Gulf War illness. The study is titled "An Integrated Genomics and Cell Biology Approach to Correlate Novel GWI Indicators of Infections and Neuroinflammatory Mechanisms with Targeted Drug Therapy."

"It is our duty to help those who served their country in any way we can, and this is one way we can make a major difference," said Waziry.

She will serve as primary investigator. The research team also consists of faculty members from the College of Osteopathic Medicine's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, including Lubov Nathanson, Ph.D., assistant professor and genomics expert; Nancy Klimas, M.D., professor of medicine and director of the institute; Mariana Morris, Ph.D., professor and director of Gulf War illness research; and Gordon Broderick, Ph.D., professor and director of computational biology. ♦

This work was supported by the Department of Defense Gulf War Illness Research Program under Award No. W81XWH-15-1-0163.

NSU RECEIVES UP TO \$4.3 MILLION

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences of the National Institutes of Health awarded NSU's Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness an initial \$590,000 with a recommended total award of up to \$4.3 million over a five-year period to continue the Project SEAMIST (South East Area Marine Industry Safety Training) and enhance its offerings.

"Project SEAMIST provides training so that vessels and seaports can function safely and efficiently, supporting an important economic component of Florida and the Gulf Coast," said Stephen Grant, Ph.D., primary investigator of the grant and associate professor of public health, NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

This new addition to Project SEAMIST will be spearheaded by a co-collaborator, Kristi Messer, M.S.W., M.P.H., assistant project manager at the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness, and assistant professor for Master of Public Health and Disaster and Emergency Preparedness, at the NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine. ♦

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A young woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing teal scrubs, stands on the left side of the page, smiling warmly at the camera. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

Become a part of an extraordinary story.

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The chain of events started as you applied to NSU. It continued as you became a student at the College of Dental Medicine, and then graduated to become a member of the dental profession. You are a vital part of the NSU family.

Make your voice heard by becoming active in the new CDM Alumni Society. We also are accepting nominations for the newly formed CDM Alumni Society Advisory Board.

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For the latest information, visit our website at www.dental.nova.edu. You can update your personal information at www.dental.nova.edu/alumnirelations.

For more information on becoming involved, email Bart Whitehead, D.M.D., at walbert@nova.edu, or call (954) 262-1495.





College of Dental Medicine
3301 College Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314-7796

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