Spring 2018

Lasting Impressions, Spring 2018

College of Dental Medicine

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Team 8’s Challenge

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M.B.A., 2008

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Shepard Broad
College of Law
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**ON THE COVER:** Third-year CDM student Krysten Johal is a member of Team 8.
Each day, our students and faculty and staff members make a difference. This issue of Lasting Impressions highlights the contributions our faculty members and students are making to improve health and change lives.

Our annual Give Kids A Smile program provided dental care to more than 200 children at no charge. This year, our successful student-run program worked with the NSU colleges of pharmacy, optometry, and osteopathic medicine to create an interdisciplinary environment in which children and their families learn even more about health and wellness.

This issue launches a new feature on how our clinical teams are making a difference. The NSU College of Dental Medicine is honored that patients come to our dental school for care. We are featuring Team 8, whose members helped a patient change his smile. While the patient achieved his goal, faculty members had the opportunity to educate students on advanced aesthetic dentistry. Team 8, and our other teams, again prove that our students improve their patients’ health as they learn.

Our research efforts continue to grow as more faculty members seek and receive grant funding. Student research also contributes new ideas that can impact policy changes. Pediatric residents have identified criteria that contribute to children with autism spectrum disorder being able to successfully receive dental treatment. This research has identified how insurance and Medicaid funding should change to reflect the increased time required to care for these children. Additionally, orthodontic residents have identified an important role for orthodontists to play in recommending the HPV vaccine to parents for their children.

Dental education is about making a difference—educating and preparing our students for a career as dentists, professors sharing their knowledge and experience to prepare our students, and staff members supporting our students and faculty members. I continue to be extremely proud of our College of Dental Medicine team of dedicated and outstanding faculty and staff members and our talented students as they make a difference in people’s lives every day.

Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P.
Dean and Professor
College of Dental Medicine
Nova Southeastern University
Third-year student Karen Ben-Elazar thinks she has found the perfect career fit in dentistry. “I can’t think of a better way to spend my career than helping people look and feel better,” said Ben-Elazar, who plans to graduate with her D.M.D. in 2019. “As a dentist, you get instant gratification when you see a patient smile with confidence after receiving a treatment.”

She is especially intrigued by the different aspects of practicing dentistry. “I once heard dentistry described as the perfect blend of art and science, integrating the wisdom of a doctor, the aptitude of a surgeon, and the creativity of an artist, and that resonated very strongly with me,” she said.

Ben-Elazar plans a career in pediatric dentistry. “I want to apply these skills by working with children to help instill good oral health habits and preventive techniques for a healthier future and a friendlier, more comfortable dental experience.”

During the past year, she received several awards and scholarships. These honors include

- **GREAT EXPRESSIONS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**
  $5,000 award to third-year students for academic excellence and leadership achievement; Ben-Elazar submitted a paper titled “The Ethics of Dental Overtreatment on Patient Care”

- **ADEA/GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER HEALTH-CARE PREVENTIVE DENTISTRY SCHOLARSHIP**
  supports predoctoral dental students who have demonstrated academic excellence in preventive dentistry

- **DENTSPLY-SIRONA STUDENT CLINICIAN RESEARCH AWARD**
  recognizes a student’s dedication to research
  The honoree receives an invitation to present research at the American Association for Dental Research meeting. Umadevi Kandalam, Ph.D., nominated Ben-Elazar for the award.

- **2017 AAWD/COLGATE RESEARCH AWARD**
  Ben-Elazar was honored for her research titled “A Study to Measure Awareness of Prenatal Dental Development in Expectant and Current Mothers.” Sharon Crane Siegel, D.D.S., M.S., M.B.A., was the project’s principal investigator.
Assistant professor Diego Araujo Dalla Bona offers guidance as third-year dental student Krysten Johal (right) treats a patient with dental assistant Ebun Cercone.
Pedro Codo has a full-time job in the marketing and product-placement department with a Fortune 500 company. And the 24-year-old’s passion is inspirational public speaking. However, the North Bay Village, Florida, resident said self-consciousness about his smile was holding him back.

His two front teeth were discolored after he fell as a youngster, and one of the teeth required more advanced care at the time of the accident. While growing up in São Paulo, Brazil, he went through a series of procedures, including a root canal on the broken tooth. “I was about 10 years old,” he recalled, “and I hit the ground face first.”

His parents took him to several dentists in Brazil to get his tooth reconstructed. Before the procedure was completed, however, the family moved to the United States. As an adult living in Orlando, Florida, he continued to seek treatment.

“I did find a Brazilian dentist, but she didn’t do a good job. She altered both of my front teeth in an attempt to match them; however, the colors and sizes were different from the others,” he said.

After a move to Miami, and a chance meeting during a church service in North Miami, Codo became friendly with Diego Araujo Dalla Bona, D.D.S., Ph.D., a visiting assistant professor at NSU’s College of Dental Medicine. Dalla Bona is a clinician leader for Team 8 in the CDM’s patient care center on the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus.

Team 8 is one of eight teams where third- and fourth-year students design treatment plans and provide dental services in a clinical setting under the mentorship and supervision of faculty group leaders. The students also learn the importance of teamwork with other students.

“Pedro told me he had posed for some professional photographs, but he wasn’t very confident,” remembered Dalla Bona. It was because of that discolored right tooth that Dalla Bona invited him to the NSU dental clinic for a consultation.

The challenge for Team 8 was to match the cosmetically altered teeth to the rest of the patient’s natural teeth. “The smile is the most difficult [of the aesthetics] to do,” said Randy H. Lichtman, D.D.S., assistant professor and Team 8 coleader.

The team leaders assigned Codo’s case to Derek Stallard, a fourth-year dental student and a Team 8 member. “At the end of this case, Derek would have a more exceptional experience learning the importance of aesthetic dentistry.”
Dalla Bona said. “We wanted to make sure Derek experienced a challenging aesthetic case before he graduated in May.”

Codo said that at first, he was skeptical about having treatment done in a clinic setting at the local dental school. “I wondered if maybe I was a trial or a subject for a student project, but I quickly realized they viewed me as a patient who needed to be taken care of. They also had a caring nature.”

His meeting with Stallard assured him. “Right away, he was friendly and attentive. He made me feel comfortable and confident that he could navigate any potential difficulties we may encounter,” Codo said. “He told me that no matter what we might come up against, he would be able to work out a solution.”

GETTING STARTED

The team had many hurdles to overcome before any work could begin on Codo’s smile makeover. Which material would they use to mask the dark tooth and match the other tooth? How would they accurately communicate the correct colors, shapes, and dimensions to the laboratory technicians when face-to-face communication is not possible?

“This case was special,” said Stallard, who will join a private practice in Saint Cloud, Florida, after graduation. “Pedro was the youngest patient I’ve dealt with, it was cosmetic, and his overall appearance was important because of his current and future ambitions.”

The team had another problem to solve, because one tooth had been subject to root-canal treatment and had an existing metallic substructure. “We needed to do something that could mask the metal post in the tooth, which made the tooth look dark. We decided to work with newer, metal-free materials that would disguise that color, while still maintaining the natural transparency in the crown,” Lichtman explained.

After the history, oral examination, and diagnosis—a comprehensive treatment care plan performed on every patient in the clinic before work begins—Team 8 began Codo’s treatment. They used shade tabs to make sure the
new front teeth matched the color of the patient’s other teeth. "We put the tabs against his teeth and then took photographs in order to show the lab exactly what color we were looking for," Dalla Bona said.

Additionally, Stallard made a wax model to make temporary crowns for the patient to evaluate with a trial run. Once Codo approved the look of the temporary crowns, they were photographed and copied—to show the laboratory the desired shape and length for the new crowns. The team sent all this information to the lab to help perfect the precise color, size, and shape for Codo’s new teeth.

In addition to color and shape, the dentists decided they needed to change how the teeth function. “Previously, the repaired teeth were bulky and thick looking, and Pedro was biting on these teeth exclusively. We redesigned the back sides of the crown to correct his bite,” said Stallard. “We redesigned the functional anatomy of the crown and made sure everything was cosmetically appealing.”

This challenge represents a real-world experience CDM students receive daily—making them customize treatment plans—a skill necessary in their careers. “The team needed to figure out a different way to achieve its goal, and Team 8 took the challenge,” Lichtman said. “I always tell my students that everything is a stepping-stone to their next case, and it was nice that the entire team was interested in following this case from start to completion.”

The team’s approach resonates with the students. “I couldn’t be more grateful to be part of a team that cultivates a sense of unity and passion and an environment to receive the best dental education,” said Justin Hosseini, a fourth-year student and a Team 8 member.

For Codo, the treatment was more than just a stepping-stone. He could now deliver his inspirational messages on the public-speaking stage and feel confident. Just a day after the dentists completed their work, Codo was having dinner with a friend. “She told me I had perfect teeth,” he said.

Third- and fourth-year students are divided into eight teams, and faculty leaders oversee each team. The team approach to treatment accomplishes two goals: To facilitate students as they apply what they learned in didactic and preclinical laboratory courses to their patients and to ensure delivery of continual, comprehensive treatment.

The concept, launched in 2011, came together because of the CDM’s strategic planning in which efforts were made to improve the integration between preclinical simulation and the clinical care of patients.

Below are the teams and their faculty leaders.

TEAM 3: Jeffrey Garber, D.M.D., and Virginia Noce, D.D.S.
TEAM 6: Tulia Gonzalez, D.M.D., and Michael Patten, D.D.S.
TEAM 7: Francisco Jimenez, D.M.D., and Steven Milhauser, D.D.S.
TEAM 8: Randy H. Lichtman, D.D.S., and Diego Araujo Dalla Bona, D.D.S., Ph.D.
The CDM’s Dental Medicine Patient Care Centers offer comprehensive and specialty care within a university setting. Services are available to adults, children, adolescents, and elderly clients. All dental treatment provided in the student or resident clinics is supervised by faculty members.

Patients can choose from the student clinic, the resident clinic, and the Faculty Practice Clinic. The clinics provide preventive, cosmetic, and restorative dental care, as well as care in the specialties of orthodontics (braces), pediatric dentistry (children’s dentistry), endodontology (root canal therapy), periodontics (gum disease, implants), oral and maxillofacial surgery (extractions, implants), and prosthetics (complete and removable partial dentures, crowns, bridges, and implants).

Patients have access to a full range of dentists and services, such as

- **STUDENT/RESIDENT CLINICS**
  - where dentists-in-training and residents provide care under faculty supervision
  - where adults and children can get general dentistry and specialty care
  - where there may be longer appointment times
  - where there are reduced prices

- **FACULTY PRACTICE CLINICS**
  - where experienced faculty members provide care
  - where adults and children can get general dentistry and specialty care
  - which are not teaching clinics

- **URGENT CARE CLINIC**
  (Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus only)
  - where service is first-come, first-served
  - where patients with swelling, acute pain, or urgent dental needs can receive care
  - where service is walk-in only (no appointments)

- **LOCATIONS AND PHONE NUMBERS**
  (Some services are not offered at every location.)
  - Fort Lauderdale/Davie (Main Clinic) . . . . (954) 262-7500
  - North Miami Beach Campus . . . . . . . (305) 949-4000, ext. 4
  - Broward Health (Oral Surgery) . . . . . (954) 355-5703
  - Joe DiMaggio (Pediatric Clinic) . . . . (954) 262-2187
  - NSU Pediatric Dental Clinic on the Broward County campus of Kids In Distress in Wilton Manors . . . . (954) 567-5650
NSU’s Health Professions Division (HPD) has evolved into one of the largest and most comprehensive health care education institutions in the United States, comprising 8 unique colleges and more than 60 degree and certificate programs.

In late January, NSU announced the attainment of significant financial gifts, which resulted in the renaming of two HPD colleges. The College of Allopathic Medicine became the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, while the College of Nursing was renamed the Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing. This altruistic trend continued in February 2018 when a significant gift from Martin and Gail Press resulted in the renaming of the HPD Library.

From our newest college—the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine—to our oldest—the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine, each one provides high levels of innovation and distinctiveness that enhance NSU’s esteem. The allopathic college, which is already in the process of matriculating its inaugural class, will offer students an innovative model of teaching and practicing medicine.

The osteopathic college, established in 1979, is distinguished by its hallmark D.O. program, but it also consists of one bachelor’s and five master’s degree programs—with more on the development horizon. Similarly, the Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences has experienced explosive growth, with 10 distinct health care disciplines and 29 degree programs represented among its academic offerings.

The College of Pharmacy continues to push the innovation envelope. To provide its students with the most up-to-date training, the college is launching a new Pharm.D. curriculum in August that will focus on patient care and drug delivery and integrate leadership and professional development principles.

To provide its students with the best hands-on training possible, the College of Optometry upgraded its Ophthalmic Optics/Contact Lens Lab and the Pediatrics/Low Vision Lab. Its Procedures Lab also was transformed with new exam rooms that include electronic presentation capabilities and video slit lamps, as well as a room with procedure simulation equipment.

In 2017, 12 students and 2 faculty members from the College of Dental Medicine were inducted into the Omicron Kappa Upsilon Chi Psi Chapter—the national dental honor society. (See story on page 16.) Additionally, CDM faculty members are conducting cutting-edge research in areas such as diseases that develop bone lytic lesions.

The Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing has much to be proud of as well. Its Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Program achieved a 100 percent pass rate on the state licensure exam in the 2016–2017 academic year, while its Entry B.S. in Nursing Program has an average state licensure exam rate of 98 percent.

These ongoing achievements enhance our growth, visibility, and position in the health professions marketplace.

Irving Rosenbaum, D.P.A., Ed.D., M.P.A.
Interim Chancellor
Health Professions Division
ORAL HEALTH A TOPIC AT SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

The importance of oral health and the future of dentistry were the subjects of several seminars and discussions held this past semester at NSU.

Sibel A. Antonson, D.D.S., Ph.D., M.B.A., professor and director of clinical research for the CDM’s Department of Cariology and Restorative Dentistry, discussed “Restorative Dentistry Update: Contemporary Restorative Materials and Technologies” as part of the NSU Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine’s monthly seminars. Before joining the CDM faculty, Antonson served as a clinical professor and director of dental biomaterials at the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine in New York and worked as a director of education and professional services at Ivoclar Vivadent.

She was simultaneously involved with teaching, research, and practice at the University of Florida’s Department of Dental Biomaterials (1997–2000) and at NSU’s CDM (2001–2008).

In 2000, Antonson was appointed new products manager at Dentsply Caulk, where she invented and launched PoGo—the first one-step, composite, finishing and polishing device.

Antonson was president of the International Association of Dental Research, Dental Materials Group in 2007–2008 and currently serves as councilor. She has authored book chapters and peer-reviewed publications and lectured nationally and internationally on dental biomaterials, as well as prosthodontic and restorative techniques.

Additionally, nationally known author and health care journalist Mary Otto guest lectured at the Distinguished Speaker Series hosted by NSU’s Farquhar Honors College. Otto is the author of Teeth: The Story of Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America and has dedicated her career to highlighting the disparities in dental care for impoverished people in the United States.

Now working as an independent journalist and oral health topic leader for the Missouri School of Journalism-based Association of Health Care Journalists, Otto began writing about oral health at The Washington Post, where she covered social issues, including health care and poverty.

In 2007, Otto’s stories about Deamonte Driver—a 12-year-old Maryland child receiving Medicaid benefits who died from complications of an untreated dental infection—spurred Congressional hearings, a revamping of Maryland’s Medicaid dental system, and increased attention to oral health access for poor children nationwide.

After leaving The Washington Post, Otto spent an academic year studying oral health at Harvard University as a Knight Science Journalism Fellow. In 2010, she received the Gies Award, presented by the American Dental Education Association, for outstanding achievement for her contributions to oral health and dental education.

PROFESSOR INDUCTED AS AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS FELLOW

Steven I. Kaltman, D.M.D., M.D., FACS, professor and chair of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and assistant dean for extramural and hospital affairs, was inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons during its annual meeting in San Diego, California.

The American College of Surgeons fellowship admits only those surgeons whose professional activity is devoted to surgical practice and who agree, without compromise, to practice by the organization’s professional and ethical standards. This surgical accomplishment is rare among those who practice oral and maxillofacial surgery and recognizes Kaltman’s outstanding contributions as an educator and scientist, as well as his expertise as a surgeon and mentor.
Continuing education (CE) courses for dental professionals—a cornerstone of NSU’s College of Dental Medicine (CDM) since 2000—are vital in the ever-evolving oral health industry. These courses help improve knowledge, refine techniques, ensure the best possible patient care, and keep licensure up to date.

The CDM is recognized as an American Dental Association Continuing Education Recognition Provider (ADA CERP)—the gold standard for continuing dental education. With ADA CERP recognition status, CDM courses are approved by the Florida Board of Dentistry and accepted by the Academy of General Dentistry for fellowship and mastership credits. The courses have become so popular with professionals that they fill up almost as quickly as they are announced.

“Traditionally, our CE courses have been ‘sign up, show up, hear a lecture’ or ‘sign up, show up, hear a lecture, then do hands on,’” said Joel B. Slingbaum, D.M.D., director of information and instructional technology and director of continuing education at the CDM.

The college’s continuing education program will be getting a reboot during 2018 with the addition of digital classes. “We’re striving to take the CE department to the next level, keep the brick-and-mortar programs that have been very successful for us, but, at the same time, add a digital component,” he said.

Already underway is cataloging, then digitizing, approximately 8,000 videotaped podium lectures and live surgeries that were donated to the CDM by Brad Engle, D.M.D., a periodontist practicing in Naples, Florida. “It’s a way to start building our library and make it available to everyone,” Slingbaum said. Additional plans for continuing dental education include recording current and upcoming on-site lectures and adding those to the library.

There is also ample opportunity to expand upon CE courses beyond general dentistry topics. While in-person instruction has addressed practice management, pediatric dentistry, and emerging topics in the fields of implant and cosmetic dentistry, the online offerings can host an even wider platform to expand the subject matter.

“We’re analyzing what the needs and wants are for faculty members and practitioners,” Slingbaum said. “We’re open to suggestions on what we can offer.”

The robust digital presence will include teledentistry/telementoring and an extremely active and visible social media component. It has a goal of reaching those in the dental profession who, for one reason or another, whether it be distance or time constraints, are unable to attend an on-site continuing education course, Slingbaum said.

“We have alumni all over the world, and we want to provide opportunity. Whether it is by watching a lecture via computer or getting CE credits by participating in an online course, our goal is to provide easy access to professional development,” Slingbaum added.

To learn more about the continuing education program at the College of Dental Medicine, email dentalce@nova.edu or call (954) 262-5327.
The patient receiving dental services from Sanket Rathod, a first-year CDM Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) resident, had been through unspeakable horrors as a victim of human trafficking.

Typically, the sound of the drill and the feeling of needles during dental treatment cause anxiety for many people, let alone a human trafficking survivor, noted Rathod, who has treated several survivors. “These survivors have already lived in fear for most of their lives,” he said. “Providing dental services that sound scary was the challenging part of the entire treatment process.”

Rathod put into practice the training he received through NSU’s CREATE (Coalition for Research and Education Against Trafficking and Exploitation) program. “Despite all they have been through, these survivors show so much concern for others. I never expected that,” he said. “Many have not been able to go to the dentist. They show a lot of appreciation and are thrilled to finally be able to get their dental issues taken care of.”

Two Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences professors—Brianna Black Kent, Ph.D., program director and interim chair, and Sandrine Gaillard-Kenney, Ed.D., assistant dean—founded CREATE in January 2015. The program is headquartered at NSU’s Miramar Campus.

Human trafficking can encompass prostitution, child pornography, bonded labor, domestic servitude, and organ trafficking. “Most trafficking victims come into contact with a health care professional who, in not knowing the signs of trafficking, might view the person as a victim of interpersonal violence,” Kent said.

Funding from the Community Foundation of Broward has enabled Kent and Gaillard-Kenney to raise awareness...
of human trafficking within and outside of NSU. The program can provide direct services in dentistry and optometry, as well as up to a year of mental health services, all at no cost.

CDM, CREATE COLLABORATE

CREATE treatments are offered at the CDM’s North Miami Beach clinic because it already serves special-needs patients. “The dentists there are familiar with treating sensitive patients,” said Diane E. Ede-Nichols, D.M.D., M.H.L., M.P.H., professor and chair of community and public health sciences at the CDM.

Adel Khatib, D.D.S., AEGD program director and assistant professor of community and public health sciences in the CDM, said Kent and Gaillard-Kenney initially drew in the CDM by holding a session about raising awareness of trafficking, the effects of abuse, and trauma-informed care.

“Victims may not be very cooperative or may be triggered by something,” Gaillard-Kenney said. “We have a patient who we suspect is disassociating. She seems to be falling asleep in the chair, but she’s not really asleep—she’s dealing with the trauma. We make sure the providers know these are our patients and to be sensitive.”

Typical dental problems survivors have include missing teeth, gum disease, gingivitis, cavities, malnutrition issues, and diseases of the mouth from sexually transmitted diseases, said Kent. She added that some have gone without dental care for decades or never had it.

Survivors are transported to the North Miami Beach clinic by victim advocates to ensure someone is with the survivors through the check-in procedure. The victim advocates also provide comfort against anxiety regarding dental work and take the patients home after an extensive procedure.

Ede-Nichols noted that, while the survivors get the same dental services as any other patient, “the patient management requires a little bit more effort and energy to make the patients feel comfortable, to explain what they’re doing; and to try to alleviate some of their fears and establish trust,” she said.

“Some of the patients’ back stories are complicated, so we address the dental issues and the patients in a way that is respectful of them,” Khatib said. In one case, the rubber dam used for isolation of the teeth triggered an emotional response in a patient, reminding him of a time his mouth was covered during a traumatic event. “The patient started to panic, so we modified our treatment and our approach,” he added.
While the patients “need extra TLC and more time in certain areas for processing things or establishing a comfort level and trust, the tendency is to want to coddle them,” Ede-Nichols explained. “We’re not going to treat them as if they’re disabled in any way.”

Some survivor interactions have pleasantly surprised Ede-Nichols, such as when a survivor who had been abused by a man became comfortable receiving dental services from a male resident. Ivonne Duarte, a second-year AEGD resident, noted that while providing services to a survivor was initially challenging, “after the first appointment, I felt I was with a good friend.”

To date, 15 survivors have received services through CREATE. “The numbers seem low, but we look at it in terms of impact, because each person needs so much,” Gaillard-Kenney said.

“Research shows employment can be based on a first impression. If someone has a poor smile or unhealthy oral health, that can take the person out of some entry-level jobs,” Kent said. “A healthy smile can make that person feel more confident and comfortable.”

One survivor had missing teeth because of the violence to which she had been subjected, requiring significant dental reconstruction. The woman’s victim advocate said the survivor’s self-esteem was low because of her missing teeth. “Afterward, the woman was so grateful that we were able to provide some help so she can begin healing and going on with her life,” Gaillard-Kenney said.

THE FUTURE OF CREATE

The CREATE organizers hope to expand its services, especially since Florida has the nation’s third-highest number of victims. “Florida lends itself to a lot of quick movement of people,” Gaillard-Kenney noted. “We have tourism, agriculture, and a lot of low-paying jobs. There is still this myth that trafficking—which is human slavery—doesn’t happen in the United States.”

Nationally, an estimated 17,000 people a year are brought in from overseas for trafficking, although Gaillard-Kenney said she believes that number is most likely higher.

Gaillard-Kenney and Kent work with victim advocates referred from the Broward Human Trafficking Coalition, Camillus House’s human trafficking victim advocacy program, the International Rescue Committee, Kristi House, and U.S. Homeland Security. CREATE has a number of community partners, including the Southern District of Florida Miami U.S. Attorney’s Office.

Gaillard-Kenney said she views the CREATE program as receiving a “huge powerhouse of resources” from NSU. Plans call for expanding to the NSU colleges of osteopathic medicine and allopathic medicine, as well as the education school, to help survivors get their GED, and the law school for pro bono help in legal issues.

“Our chief goal beyond what we are doing now is to continue to seek grant funding so CREATE becomes self-sustaining and grows beyond where we are now,” Gaillard-Kenney said. She and Kent seek to create internships and add staff while continuing to conduct research and awareness trainings for students on all academic levels.

The CREATE-CDM relationship will be an important part of that future.

For more information about the program, contact CREATE at create@nova.edu.
The education and commitment to community involvement that students learn at the NSU College of Dental Medicine are career builders. For a select number of students, membership in the Chi Psi chapter of the national dental honor society Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU) is also an important part of their future.

“OKU induction is one of the highest honors a dental student can achieve. The benefits of induction into the fraternity include national recognition and acknowledgment of highest achievement in the student’s career,” said Harvey A. Quinton, D.D.S., who serves as secretary/treasurer of the CDM’s Chi Psi chapter and is an assistant professor in the Department of Cariology and Restorative Dentistry.

Quinton, who was inducted into OKU in 1992 as a Columbia University faculty member, knows firsthand that the honor continues when students become professionals. “I will never forget being recognized by OKU and being brought into the organization,” he said.

Each year, approximately 15 senior dental students earn induction into the Chi Psi chapter. “In working with the students here at NSU over the past 14 years, I get to work with the cream of the crop, and you tend to gravitate toward those students,” Quinton said.

“For me, it’s a big honor to find these students. I’ve asked them if I could do their introduction. It’s a good bonding type of situation among the students and the faculty,” he said.

Jason Portnof, D.M.D., M.D., FACS, agreed. Inducted in 2002 after he graduated from the CDM, Portnof called it a “mark of distinction” earned through high grades and participation in extracurricular activities. “There’s the benefit of networking,” said Portnof, now director of pediatric craniomaxillofacial surgery at the CDM. “Dr. Quinton and I get to meet the top students in the graduating class who are inducted into the fraternity.”

Omicron Kappa Upsilon had its inception with the class of 1914 at Northwestern University Dental School in Illinois. “A committee from this class submitted a petition to the faculty that stated it wanted to organize and found a national honorary fraternity,” Quinton said. “The Omicron Kappa Upsilon society was organized to encourage and develop a spirit of emulation among students in dentistry and to recognize, in an appropriate manner, those who shall distinguish themselves by a high degree of scholarship.”

Quinton pointed out that the society’s name and key symbolize the ideals for which the dental profession is striving: conservation of teeth and health. Of the 70 chapters that have been chartered, 58 are active.
The NSU Chi Psi chapter was established in 2000 as the 68th chapter and has 200 members in the categories of alumni, honorary, and faculty. Alumni members consist of senior students from the upper scholastic 20 percent of the class. “From this group, no more than 12 percent of the entire senior class are selected who, in addition to scholarship, have demonstrated exemplary traits of character and potential qualities of future professional growth and attainments,” Quinton said.

FACULTY HONORED

Approximately every five years, at least one faculty member is inducted. During 2017, the chapter honored two faculty members—CDM Dean Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., and Ana Karina Mascarenhas, B.D.S., Dr.P.H., M.P.H., associate dean of research.

“Dr. Niessen is the type of professional who we, as educators, hope our students will become,” said CDM professor Michael A. Siegel, D.D.S., M.S., who nominated Niessen for OKU induction.

Siegel also pointed out that Niessen teaches predoctoral and postgraduate students and mentored three generations of women dentists individually and through her American Association of Women Dentists leadership.

The NSU chapter also has a unique footnote in OKU. Michael A. Siegel and CDM professor Sharon Crane Siegel, D.D.S., M.S., M.B.A., are the only husband and wife to rise to the presidency of the Omicron Kappa Upsilon Supreme Chapter (national chapter) in the 100-year history of the honor society. “It’s an especially noteworthy event for the Chi Psi chapter,” Quinton said.

For more information on OKU, alumni may contact Brian Suzuki. He can be reached by mailing P.O. Box 5472, Plymouth, Michigan 48170, by calling (734) 335-2844, or by emailing okusupremechapter@gmail.com.

CDM DEAN NAMED FELLOW BY NATIONAL SCIENCE ORGANIZATION

Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., CDM dean, was named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). She was elected to receive this honor by her AAAS peers.

Niessen is one of 396 AAAS members who were chosen by their peers for “scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications.” Specifically, she was lauded for her distinguished contributions to the field of dental public health, particularly geriatric oral medicine, dental services, and health policy, as well as access to oral health care. She was inducted as a Fellow during the AAAS annual meeting in Austin, Texas.

“It is truly an honor to be named a Fellow by this prestigious group of peers,” Niessen said. “The AAAS promotes scientific discovery, translational research, and science education throughout the world. The interdisciplinary nature of the members of AAAS advances and strengthens the field of dentistry by supporting research and discoveries that will ultimately benefit patients around the globe.”

Niessen, who joined NSU in October 2013, previously served as a clinical professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry at Texas A&M University’s Baylor College of Dentistry. Her research interests include geriatric oral research and education, epidemiology of oral diseases in older adults, and oral health public policy.

She received her bachelor's degree in chemistry (Phi Beta Kappa) from the University of New Mexico and her Doctor of Dental Medicine, Master of Public Health, and Master of Public Policy from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Reasons to Smile!

BY OLIVE H. COGDILL
No one could miss the many smiles of the young patients and their families, nor the dedication of the students and faculty members, during the College of Dental Medicine’s 15th annual Give Kids A Smile (GKAS). This year, about 230 children and young adults ranging in age from 2 to 21, including special-needs patients, received free dental care from more than 200 CDM students, 100 CDM faculty and staff members, and alumni.

GKAS is a national program launched by the American Dental Association Foundation in 2003. Unlike many universities, however, the CDM’s program is student led and organized. CDM faculty members are on hand to supervise the dental students.

Third-year student Joanna Theodorou and fourth-year student Victoria Gandarillas, best friends since ninth grade, were codirectors of the 2018 event. “Give Kids A Smile is just as important to the patients we treat as it is to us students,” said Theodorou, who also is secretary of the CDM’s Pediatric Dental Club. “It shows us there really is a tremendous need for oral health care in our community.”

Third-year dental student Maria Rojas, and her team of CDM volunteers and predental students from Florida Atlantic University and Florida International University, decorated the clinic in the theme Into the Jungle. The previous evening, the

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students had to wait until the last patient left before hanging bright green and yellow streamers from the ceiling, as well as adding assorted balloons and Mylar animals throughout the clinic.

“Our hard-working team puts a lot of effort into planning creative, kid-inspired themes and characters and organizing interactive activities to make the children’s experience both educational and fun,” said Gandarillas, who also is a member of The President’s 64.

Students from the College of Pharmacy, the College of Optometry, and the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine also were on hand to provide additional health advice.

In addition, mascots such as NSU’s Razor the Shark and Timmy the Tooth, university cheerleaders, and balloon artists entertained the children, many of whom danced to the music provided by student disc jockeys from NSU’s Radio X.

GKAS sponsors include the American Student Dental Association, Colgate, Henry Schein Inc., and NSU College of Dental Medicine’s Student Government Association.

The Give Kids A Smile program is one of the world’s largest oral health charitable programs. The program annually provides dental care to more than 350,000 children from low-income families across the country.
Student research is a requirement in several advanced education programs at the CDM, but many students tackle work that goes beyond the university. Student research of topical, trending subject matters could prove to be important contributions to dental professionals and public health.

CDM student research includes the orthodontists’ role in discussing vaccinating children to prevent the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV) and studies about the use of silver diamine fluoride to treat cavities in children who cannot cope with traditional drill-and-fill procedures.

Debora Shapiro, D.D.S., M.S., became interested in the human papillomavirus vaccine during a clinical skills class when she was pursuing her Master of Science in Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics at the CDM.

“For a mini-research project, my group decided to look at how informed dental students were about the HPV vaccine, and if they would feel comfortable or prepared to talk to their patients about it,” Shapiro said. “We created a mock curriculum focusing on how dental students could be better prepared to speak about HPV to their patients.”

When Shapiro began working on her thesis seven years later, she looked at the role of the orthodontist in recommending the vaccination. She collected data from 253 adolescent patients being treated at the CDM postgraduate orthodontic clinic. The survey assessed, among other information, perceptions about HPV and parents’ willingness to allow their children to receive the HPV vaccine.

In developing her thesis, Shapiro worked with Richard Singer, D.M.D., M.S., director of the master’s degree program and postgraduate orthodontic and dentofacial orthopedics at the CDM. “In order to do this kind of study, you need someone who is going to properly guide you,” said Shapiro of Singer, who was chair of her thesis committee.

“Dr. Singer was a great mentor and resource because he has such an interest in public health studies.”

Students such as Shapiro often mention how passionate they are about the subject of their research. That kind of enthusiasm propelled Kelly Cundy, D.M.D., a pediatric dental resident at the CDM. Cundy focused on children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the use of silver diamine fluoride (SDF)—a minimally invasive treatment option for dental caries. She surveyed parents of children with ASD who attended NSU’s Baudhuin Preschool at the Mailman Segal Center for Human Development about their acceptance of SDF.

Mitchell Miller, D.D.S., also a CDM pediatric dental resident, conducted his research on nonspecial-needs children at NSU’s two pediatric dental clinics for the underserved. Miller surveyed 100 parents whose
children were treated at the NSU clinics located at Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital in Hollywood, Florida, and at the Broward County campus of Kids In Distress in Wilton Manors.

“I wanted to see if parents were willing to accept SDF as a treatment option for their children,” Miller said. “SDF is a hot topic right now.”

In October 2017, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry issued the first evidence-based guideline on the use of SDF. The academy’s systematic review of research, on which the guideline was based, found no significant adverse effects. The guideline has faced resistance from parents, however, because the downside of SDF is it turns cavities black.

Treating cavities in young children, and especially those with special needs such as autism, often involves sedation or general anesthesia in an operating room setting. “SDF gives pediatric dentists a way to not have to sedate the child, which has additional health risks,” Cundy said. “With SDF, we can stop the cavity from getting bigger, which buys us time.” She added that the restoration may be done eventually, but SDF keeps the cavity in check until then.

Cundy found that the parents she surveyed were college educated, which seemed to lessen their acceptability to SDF. “The dark color is not very aesthetic. Also, in the autism community, fluoride has a negative connotation,” she said. “When you mention fluoride, the parents shut down.”

Cundy referenced studies in the past five years that linked fluoride consumption to contributing to autism. The accuracy of those studies has never been proven.

Cundy doesn’t know if her research will result in more acceptance from parents of special-needs children. However, she does believe it will make an impact. “The survey introduced them to a great tool on the market, and with more knowledge and education, I believe it might become an option,” she said. “Every time you bring something up to parents, they go home and look it up. ‘Doctor Google’ tells people everything, so they start talking about it in their parent groups, for instance, and then the information is out there.”
Unlike Cundy, Miller’s findings concluded that if a child already needed sedation or general anesthesia to treat a cavity, the parents were more likely to choose SDF as a treatment option.

“Basically, if these parents and children had been through the trauma of that, they would accept SDF despite its unaesthetic appeal. The [parents of] children who were cooperative, and had white fillings, would not choose the treatment. It was interesting to see those results.” Miller’s survey was conducted at the two clinics, where a sizable percentage of the child patients are Medicaid recipients.

Cundy and Miller are discussing combining their results to compare the differences in acceptance of SDF between parents without special-needs children and those who have children with autism or other neurodevelopment disorders.

“We are going to make the world a better place if we can better educate dentists on how to treat patients, especially if there are access-to-care issues, such as patients with autism or the working poor,” said Judith R. Chin, D.D.S., M.S., pediatric residency program director.

Chin cited a study conducted by CDM graduate Noah Turk, D.M.D., M.S., about educating dentists on treating children with autism as another example of the impact student research could have on a larger scale. Turk, now a pediatric dentist in Toronto, Canada, is hoping his research opens the door to educate dentists without a pediatric specialty to be more willing to treat young autistic patients.

“Autism is on the rise, and it’s important that not just pediatric dentists, but general dentists, are able to treat these patients,” Turk stated in his research, which took place at the dental clinic at the NSU Mailman Segal Center for Human Development.

Turk examined how many visits a child with autism required for the dentist to complete treatment. His research found it sometimes took up to five visits, and that the positive responses came from the dentist explaining “what they were doing, showing them instruments, and approaching them at a calmer, slower pace. The characteristics we identified would allow general dentists to have a grasp on how to treat children with autism,” he stated. The research was presented at the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) “with rather good feedback,” he added.

Romer Ocanto, D.D.S., M.S., M.Ed., chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and principal investigator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, said Turk’s research is important on several levels.

“A concern of dentists on the use of applied behavior analysis (ABA) is the potential number of visits it will take to desensitize the patient, especially in children with ASD who may have speech delay and intellectual or developmental delay,” Ocanto said. “Publishing Dr. Turk’s results will assist policymakers to advocate for the need to increase reimbursement for behavior guidance and encourage general and pediatric dentists to successfully provide treatment to ASD children using ABA.”

“In order to do this kind of study, you need someone who is going to properly guide you. Dr. Singer was a great mentor and resource because he has such an interest in public health studies.”

—Debora Shapiro

Singer believes presentations such as Turk’s to groups such as the AAPD, and publishing the research, are as important as the work itself. Singer said he is committed to being a mentor, with the expectation that the work be published within 12 months of graduation. He keeps up with his graduating students, he said, to help them reach that goal.

“The students are doing studies on topics that are of current interest. Yet, even the most outstanding research has no potential for impact if it doesn’t get disseminated to a wider scientific community,” Singer said.

Shapiro has hope for her studies, and those of her colleagues, that the topics will have life after the thesis is completed.

“As with any topic in public health, there are always several barriers. I believe my research and my colleagues’ research will turn on the light switch and get people aware, get the wheels turning,” she said. “Even if my research doesn’t cause a direct change, I’m confident it will lead to some other research or some other policy think tank that will cause change. Who knows? Maybe this is what starts it.”
For Peter R. Pugliese, D.D.S., retirement brought a move to Boca Raton, Florida, and days filled with a variety of activities, such as bicycling, running, playing tennis, and enjoying the outdoors. Something, however, was missing.

On one particular bike ride, he noticed a sign for an organization of retired dentists. During his conversation there, he mentioned that retirement had left a void in his life. It was suggested he contact the newly opened NSU College of Dental Medicine.

“I was more than willing to just volunteer at the new college,” said Pugliese, who had retired after 35 years in private practice in Cleveland, Ohio. “It was just to be connected again to the profession.” He began to volunteer, donating his services in the Predoctoral Clinic before being offered a paid position as an adjunct, which then turned into a part-time position. For the last 12 years, he has been a full-time professor.

Pugliese, who turns 82 in September, said teaching at the CDM “is the best thing for me at this stage in my life. I’m still able to use my talent in something I’ve done all of my life. The students are refreshing,” he added. “I learn from the students, because they are always asking me challenging questions. I admire my colleagues and learn from them every day.”

He also enjoys being part of the fast-paced evolution of dentistry. “This is not like dentistry when I was in practice and amalgam was the only game in town,” Pugliese said. “The students are doing cases now that many dentists on the outside would be very happy to have the opportunity to do. This profession is evolving with the new 3-D printing and CAD/CAM [computer-aided design, computer-aided manufacturing].”

Pugliese said he is fortunate to be with the students from the first day they enter dental school. He teaches dental anatomy and operative dentistry to the first-year students in Integrated Restorative Dental Sciences and connects with them all the way through their four years. He also teaches in the Predoctoral Clinic during their third and fourth years when they are treating patients.

“When I give a lecture during the first week of dental school, they look so young to me. When I look at them working in the clinic, they’ve matured. They look like dentists. The transition over four years is amazing. I am honored to be able to be a part of their journey in our profession,” said Pugliese, who received the Golden Apple Award in 2016 and the Apollonia Award in 2017 in recognition of his outstanding dedication and commitment to educating CDM students.
Pugliese teaches in the CDM’s Postgraduate Operative Dentistry Program—a two-year course consisting of four students each year who do more complicated cases and advanced phases of operative dentistry. Pugliese also is involved in the International Dental Graduate (IDG) Program in which dentists from non-U.S. dental schools work to obtain a U.S. dental degree within three years. He said the program accepts five to eight international dental graduates from among dozens who apply, having practiced in their native countries, but desiring to live and practice in the United States.

The international dentists are interviewed and must pass a bench test. The few who are chosen then take the summer-term IDG course, which is integrated with their other sophomore courses, before they go into full swing in August, Pugliese noted.

Pugliese said he appreciates the efforts the international dentists undertake to reach their goal in becoming licensed U.S. dentists, including working as hygienists or dental assistants for a U.S.-licensed dentist or taking other jobs unrelated to dentistry, such as a valet parking cars.

“What a humbling experience after being a dentist in your country and seeing patients in your own practice; it’s very emotional,” he said. “They tell me stories of how they got here. Some had to escape from politically unstable countries and came here by raft or had to go through three or four countries before they could get here.”

Not surprisingly, Pugliese’s colleagues notice his work with students. “As director of the International Dental Graduate Program, I see his students when they enter the clinic,” said Rick Vogel, D.D.S., assistant professor in the Department of Cariology and Restorative Dentistry. “They all are very well prepared when they start treating patients. Dr. Pugliese is universally respected by faculty and students alike.”

Pugliese is dedicated to the students, frequently staying after hours in the CDM’s Simulation Lab and coming in on weekends to help students prepare for upcoming exams, Vogel said.

Pugliese also serves on the CDM admissions committee, helping to choose 125 first-year dental students from more than 2,500 applicants.

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Teaching at the CDM has extended his professional involvement, but also has enriched Pugliese’s social life, because he meets with other NSU faculty members and students who share his passion for fitness, including biking. He pointed to a photograph of NSU faculty members taking him out for his birthday. “You can’t put a value on this,” he added.

Vogel noted that as highly as he regards Pugliese on a professional level, “My respect for him personally continues to grow. Despite being at a life stage when most give in to inertia and the mileage of many trips around the sun, soft-spoken Dr. Pugliese seems to get stronger and more vital each year and shows no signs of stopping,” he said.

Vogel pointed to Pugliese’s participation in half marathons and working out at the RecPlex with students a third his age as he goes through the weight stacks and circuit training. Pugliese also is an avid traveler. Pulling out a photo album in his office, Pugliese pointed to photographs of the Himalayan excursion he did with other faculty members and a 2017 trip to Italy where he cycled 350 miles.

“At the CDM, we’re fortunate to have many faculty members with diverse backgrounds and life experiences,” Vogel said. “As someone who respects life experience and regards it as the ultimate classroom, I’ve been enriched by knowing Dr. Pugliese and look forward to the next adventure he will share with me.”
She’s known around the College of Dental Medicine as “the lady in red.” That’s because for the last 15 years, Rashondia Gaines, D.D.S., has worn her red scrubs every day she is in the clinic. “If I don’t have them on, no one recognizes me, or if they do, they ask where my red scrubs are,” Gaines said.

But the “lady in red” is known for so much more than the color of her scrubs. In addition to her scrubs, Gaines wears a number of hats: assistant professor, director of faculty practice, director of the evening clinic, team leader for the predoc clinic, community volunteer, mentor, mission leader, and mom to two busy children. With more than 18 years at the CDM, Gaines is recognized today not only for all she does, but also for her passion for inspiring others inside and outside the classroom.

For Gaines, the reward has been watching her students grow, blossom, and succeed over the years. “I’ve had students shadow me, then when I see them go on to dental school and graduate, I feel like a proud mom,” she said.

In a way, Gaines, who was born and raised in Fort Pierce, Florida, has come full circle since she started shadowing an oral surgeon in tenth grade. While her father hoped she would follow in his footsteps and pursue a career as an attorney, Gaines knew from an early age she was much more fascinated with teeth than with the law. When she convinced her father she was serious about dentistry, he asked an oral surgeon friend if his daughter could shadow him. The oral surgeon wound up hiring Gaines as an assistant.

“On my first day there, I was holding the head of a patient, standing very still with my knees locked. You know, it’s your first day, and you’re trying not to mess up. All of the sudden, the room started to get dark, and I passed out,” recalled Gaines with a laugh. “It wasn’t because of the blood, though. I hadn’t eaten breakfast that morning. They took me into the recovery room, I ate something, and that afternoon I was good to go. I’ve never had a problem since.”

In fact, Gaines continued to work with that oral surgeon through her third year in dental school, spending her college summers and holidays in his office. It solidified her path to becoming a dentist.

“I thoroughly enjoyed the patient interaction and getting to do so many procedures. I thought I would go into oral surgery since that was what I was exposed to, but once I
was in dental school, I decided I liked general dentistry,” she said.

Gaines attended Hampton University in Virginia, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry, and then went to dental school at Virginia Commonwealth University. She did her residency at the University of Missouri—Kansas City School of Dentistry.

Along the way, her involvement in teaching developed unexpectedly. “When my clinical instructor, David Sarrett, approached me about considering academia, I said absolutely not,” she said. Her instructor, however, didn’t give up that easily. In her fourth year of dental school, he made her a lab instructor for dental anatomy, teaching first-year students.

“I actually kind of enjoyed it,” Gaines said. “Lo and behold, that’s what I’m doing now.” She continued teaching as a clinical instructor during her residency and realized she loved working with students. When she moved back to Florida in 1999 and was looking for a job, NSU’s new dental school seemed to be the perfect fit.

“The college hired me right away,” Gaines said. “What I enjoyed most is that the CDM was so receptive to new ideas. That was the bonus of being here pretty much in the beginning. I’ve been here all this time now. I’ve been through every dean, every department chair of restorative dentistry, and so many students who I still have a rapport with and stay in contact.”

Nicole Lamb, D.D.S., who recently opened her first dental practice in Miramar, Florida, is one of Gaines’ former students. She graduated from the CDM in 2013 and remains in touch with Gaines, whom she considers “a mentor and lifelong friend.”

“Dental school is tough, and she kept me motivated and focused,” Lamb said. “She made a lifelong impression on me and helped me become a better clinician and overall person. She is always giving and finding ways to help.”

Lamb said Gaines also was an inspiring role model. “As an African American woman, which I am too, it was so great to watch her just doing it all and seeing how she was so well respected by her colleagues and students.”

Francesa Pietri, a third-year dental student who shadowed Gaines every Friday and Saturday for more than four years, said Gaines was instrumental in her decision to
pursue a career in dentistry, mainly because “She believed in me and my abilities.”

“Some people only shadow for a short time, but I enjoyed it so much I kept going,” Pietri said. “I looked forward to spending time with Dr. Gaines, seeing her with the patients and interacting with faculty. It was an amazing opportunity to witness and experience dentistry firsthand and to see someone who was living my dream.

“She inspired me. I remember I wanted to be just like her—I still do—smart, talented, well-liked by her patients, and always professional,” Pietri continued. “I am forever grateful for all she has taught me, and especially for her confidence in me. She teaches from the heart, leads by example, and inspires greatness in others. She’s simply the best.”

REACHING OUT TO OTHER COUNTRIES

Gaines’ impact as a dentist and instructor reaches far beyond the walls of NSU. Since 2000, she has been taking dental students to places such as Guatemala, Jamaica, and Nicaragua to provide dental care and education to people in those countries who cannot afford it. They join other delegations from NSU’s osteopathic medicine, optometry, and nursing colleges as part of the Women of Hope program. Her first trip included only 2 students and 1 colleague, but has continually grown, with 36 students participating in the trip to Jamaica last summer.

“The greatest need in Jamaica is dentistry,” she said. “The people will get up at 5:00 a.m. to wait in line to see us. They come back every time, looking for us.”

She and the students provide extractions, fillings, oral hygiene, and other restorative dental services as needed. “It’s extremely rewarding. The people are so welcoming and appreciative. I’ve watched these little girls, who were four or
five when we first started coming, grow up. I look forward to seeing them every year. I enjoy that aspect,” she said.

Closer to home, Gaines also mentors at-risk teens in the Women of Tomorrow program at McArthur High School in Hollywood, Florida. She meets with a group of young women monthly, leading discussions and bringing in guest speakers to talk about professions and life experiences. She also participates in an annual holiday event called Meet the Doctors where people in the community gather for a mixer to meet doctors from various fields and donate toys to nonprofit organizations.

She is also devoted to her children—15-year-old daughter Nyree, an all-star competitive cheerleader who attends NSU’s University School, and 11-year-old son Aiden, who dives competitively for the Plantation Dive Team and attends McNicol Middle School.

For fun, Gaines is passionate about the Miami Dolphins and traveling. She even combined the two last year by traveling to London to watch the Dolphins play there. “I made a promise to myself last year to do more of the things I love to do, and that included a lot of traveling,” she said.

In 2017, she kept that promise, traveling almost every month to some place new, such as Aruba, Cuba, Jamaica, Las Vegas, and Nicaragua. She has more plans for 2018, too, including a trip to the Greek Isles and a Mediterranean cruise. She also plays tennis and is learning to speak Spanish.

As Gaines has come full circle, enjoying a fulfilling life and career, she loves watching her students do the same. “I had a student, Deisy, who shadowed me for years and then got into the dental school and was assigned to my team. I had the honor of hooding her at graduation recently. That was so cool. I loved that.”

Gaines hopes to continue advancing in her academic career and focusing on her patients and students. “I just want to be the best clinician and instructor I can be, and hopefully continue to impact the students and foster their passion for dentistry,” she said. ♦
The Personal Touch

TAMPA PERIODONTIST CONTINUES A LEGACY

BY JODI NODING

It was a natural progression that periodontist Mark Abdoney, D.M.D. (2000, Certificate—Periodontics), ended up in the dental profession.

“Dentistry is in my blood. I had a great-grandfather who was a dentist, and, more importantly, my father is an orthodontist,” said Abdoney, who was a member of the first class of periodontists to graduate from the NSU College of Dental Medicine. And, the affiliations don’t stop there. An uncle and his two brothers are also in dentistry, and his nephew, Robby, recently started his studies at the CDM, continuing the family tradition.

“I spent lots of time in my father’s practice and found myself drawn to the profession,” he said.

Abdoney returned to his hometown of Tampa, Florida, to set up a bustling solo practice that features a range of procedures, including periodontal surgery, connective tissue grafting, and dental implants.

After receiving his undergraduate and D.M.D. degrees from the University of Florida (UF), Abdoney was accepted at the CDM, where he became one of three residents in the charter class of the Department of Periodontology. “It was an amazing experience. I couldn’t have asked for a better overall set of circumstances between the timing and the composition of the faculty there at the time,” he said.

Being a pioneer in a new program was exciting. “We were taking courses with the other specialty programs. There was a real camaraderie there,” he added.

Because there wasn’t an oral-surgery program, the periodontal residents also received all the surgery time, which is just what Abdoney wanted. “We were the only residents who could do surgery and implant dentistry,” he said.

“I have always loved surgery and have always been intrigued with biology and anatomy,” he added. “I love the biology behind it. There’s an art form behind it. I love how it all comes together.”

His CDM education shifted his focus and drive. “When I was at UF, I was very involved in student government, so by the time I got to the CDM, I had a singular focus of developing myself. I wanted to learn as much as I possibly could,” said Abdoney, who was president of his fraternity, a member of Florida Blue Key, and president of his dental class when he was at UF.

Abdoney and his wife, Wendy, a prosecutor for the Broward County State Attorney’s Office, lived across from the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus in 1997 during the three years they were there. “My amazing wife supported us while I was a resident. I wouldn’t have made it through without her love and support,” said Abdoney, who also credits his parents for their help.

Abdoney said he quickly felt a part of the NSU family. “It was a great opportunity. So many great clinicians made the dental college special. Professionals who had been in private practice were very generous with their time,” he said. “They had a love for academia and their specialty and, frankly, a love for us that made our program uncommon.”

He recalled how former CDM associate professor Clark Galin, D.D.S., went out of his way to help him. “When I
was called to be down there, he drove my wife and me around South Florida one weekend, showing us the area,” Abdoney said. “During my time at the CDM, he was kind of like a father to me.”

The personal touch—a hallmark of NSU and the CDM—was just what Abdoney needed. “I will always be grateful for the people who took care of me while at the CDM. Histology with Dr. Sig Stahl [D.D.S., M.S.] was one of my favorite classes,” he recalled. “Dr. Stahl is brilliant. A line of questioning could lead you to right thinking, or at least question what you thought you knew.”

Abdoney remembers several CDM professors, such as Jeffrey Ganeles, D.M.D., “who mentored me. He had, and still has, a huge impact on me as a surgeon.” Mark Forrest, D.M.D., and Lenny Garfinkel, D.D.S., “were both terrific listeners and very encouraging. My fondness and support of the CDM started with these professors, but has been sustained by some newer faces since my time there,” he said.

Joining a new dental college appealed to Abdoney. “One reason the CDM interested me was because it was brand new,” he explained. “We knew many successful clinicians were devoted to starting this dental college. So, you went into it with some faith. I had that faith because of the quality of dentists who were putting it together.”

In his Tampa practice, Abdoney follows the example of dentists who give back to their colleges and their communities. He’s president-elect of the Hillsborough County Dental Association, immediate past president of the Florida Association of Periodontists, and has served since his graduation on numerous boards and committees that support dentistry.

He is a Fellow in the American College of Dentists and has been inducted into the International College of Dentists. He’s also an associate clinical professor at UF and hopes to take on a similar role at the CDM.

Maria A. Hernandez, D.D.S., associate professor and chair of the CDM’s Department of Periodontology, said alumni such as Abdoney are crucial to the college’s success. “Dr. Abdoney’s service to our profession and community is endless, and his integrity is solid. It is quite refreshing to know we can count on someone like Dr. Abdoney,” she explained.

In addition to his time, Abdoney is a financial contributor to his alma mater. “His contributions have enabled us to send residents to various educational opportunities, such as the meetings of the Florida Association of Periodontists or prestigious study clubs, or to purchase state-of-the-art equipment,” Hernandez said.

Abdoney said that devoted professors such as Hernandez and William Parker, D.D.S., associate dean for postgraduate education, are among the reasons the CDM continues to build on its solid reputation.

“Dr. Parker and Dr. Hernandez have done a fantastic job building on what was started back in 1997. They are extremely accomplished and capable, yet very friendly, down to earth, and accessible, which is so unique,” he said. “They are committed to excellence.”

The profession’s continuing success is a central concern to Abdoney. “Dentistry is a community of schools, students, practitioners, and organized dentistry. For the profession to continue to grow in a positive way for the greatest benefit of our patients, we have to remain a community,” he explained.

“Dental schools and students need to be well connected and to have the ear of private practitioners,” he added. “Private practitioners should be getting involved, giving their perspectives, and giving back their time. They are the barometer of what is going on in the profession.”

Back at home, Abdoney has four daughters who often accompany him to his dental practice. It’s too soon to tell if any of them want to be dentists, he said. But he’s helping to ensure the profession will be a healthy one for dentists and patients alike when the time comes.
All in the Family
NEPHEWS JOIN UNCLE IN PRIVATE PRACTICE

BY ARNIE ROSENBERG

Matt and Mike Rolfes didn’t grow up wanting to be astronauts, firefighters, or cowboys. From an early age, they knew they wanted to be dentists. A big part of that ambitious goal was a dentist very close to them—their uncle, John Schwerer, D.M.D.

Schwerer not only nurtured the idea of a dental career in his young nephews, he talked with them about one day joining his practice in Fort Pierce, Florida. And it was far from just talk. After each earned his D.M.D. degree from the NSU College of Dental Medicine—Matt in 2015 and Mike in May 2017—Uncle John brought both into his practice as associates.

“To be able to mentor these kids, it’s going to be fun for me,” said Schwerer, himself a University of Florida College of Dentistry graduate. “We’re looking forward to all of that. And to be able to have this in my profession before I’m no longer involved makes me feel really, really good.”

Schwerer truly is building an “all-in-the-family” practice. Matt and Mike are his second and third associates, and their sister, Maria Rolfes, is the hygienist. Schwerer’s son, John, a
junior at Clemson University, has his sights set on dental school, too, with the same goal after graduation—joining his dad and cousins in the practice.

Schwerer admits he knew little about the CDM before Matt began studying there. Both brothers followed the same academic path by graduating from Indian River State College and the University of Florida before coming to the CDM. It was at the 2016 Florida Dental Convention that Schwerer met the CDM’s dean, Linda C. Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P.

“I told her I thought what she’s doing there is exemplary in preparing students to go out and begin their careers,” Schwerer recalled. “They have a tremendous foundation to begin with, which really catapults you into your practice.”

Matt’s and Mike’s “preparations” really began long before they set foot on the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus. They grew up around their uncle’s dental office, and early on knew what they wanted to do.

“It’s just a cool career with a lot of flexibility, and you earn a good living. You deal with different people daily, and it’s the perfect blend of art, science, and engineering,” Matt said. Mike added, “I remember telling people in high school that I was going to be a dentist, and that’s what I was going for in school. That helped me a lot progressing through college, knowing I had a goal.”

Both brothers also have interests aside from dentistry. Matt’s passion is the water—fishing, scuba diving, and free diving. This year, he plans to get his pilot’s license. Between graduation and beginning in the practice, Mike took a month-long surfing trip to Indonesia and Thailand.

Despite the family ties, it was still a bit daunting for Matt to walk into the office on his first day of work. “It was intimidating,” Matt admitted. “I was confidently a little nervous, if that makes sense. When you come in here, the most valuable thing is your time, shared time, time with the patient, how can you be profitable?”

But that’s all part of the learning process, according to Schwerer, who sees his continuing role as mentor to his nephews. “We have a daily meeting, and we discuss all the cases that were more difficult. They knew a lot when they got here,” he explained. “The CDM prepares its students really well, in my opinion. I’ve had associates before Matt and Mike, and the knowledge they came here with was quite impressive.”

Through his nephews, Schwerer has gained more of an appreciation of what he considers the CDM’s strengths: operative dentistry and its surgery department. The college,
he said, also instills its graduates with “a good, general knowledge of all the other specialties.”

Judging from at least one of his Fort Pierce patients, Matt had little to worry about when he began putting his dental education to use. Janet Farnan-Dyer already was familiar with Schwerer’s office, so when one of her front teeth cracked and broke, two days before she was to officiate at her son’s wedding, she called. Matt Rolfes, she was told, had a spot available in his schedule.

“I thought, ‘Uh-oh, I’ve got a young one. I hope he knows what he’s doing.’ Now, I wouldn’t go to anyone else. I’ve referred people to him. He’s got the talent, obviously, but he’s got the bedside manner to put you at ease and not make you feel angst about what’s happening,” Farnan-Dyer said.

To be sure, a dentist always is gratified by return visits from a patient and referrals, yet there are small things that say you’ve developed a special rapport with a patient. How does Matt know he’s got that kind of doctor-patient relationship with Farnan-Dyer? “I make her crowns, and she makes me ice cream cake,” he said.

A little thing, perhaps, but it’s indicative of the environment and culture Schwerer has created in his practice, and how he’s making his nephews part of it. “We have a ball,” he said. “The office culture begins with excellence, but there also needs to be balance, making sure you’re balanced and not overworked, that you’re having fun, that your family is important to you, that time off is important to you.”

“We have a blast,” Matt agreed. “But we also have a unique dynamic to keep it professional, too.”

So, what’s it like around the family Thanksgiving table? Do the doctors talk extractions and crowns around the grill on the Fourth of July? “It’s almost impossible to be around other dentists and not talk dentistry,” Matt admitted.

“We don’t talk business, but we do talk about the exciting parts of dentistry,” his uncle admitted. “It can be things that are fun, a good cosmetic case he might have done. He’ll take photos of it and show me, and we’ll talk about it.”

Both Matt and Mike recognize, and appreciate, the foundation they acquired at the CDM. “Academics and clinical experience are the two major areas where the CDM really excels,” said Mike. “It definitely prepared both of us for what to expect on the outside once we got out from under the umbrella of NSU. But we still have a lot to learn. Every day is going to be a learning experience in dentistry.”

For Schwerer, he’s enthusiastic about where his nephews are professionally today, and the contributions he sees them making in the future. “They bring a new energy,” said their proud uncle. “They’re hungry for information. They’re more apt to have initiative and the desire to go out and get all the new information that’s available.”

He also said, “We owe it all to NSU and the CDM. I think NSU’s really been a wonderful thing for them. I would say all of the students I’ve met through Matt and Mike, they’re hungry, they’re smart, they’re not laying back. They’re go-getters.”

—I John Schwerer
Outstanding alumni are among NSU’s best assets. The university’s annual Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards recognize those NSU graduates who advance the university’s values and goals through their contributions to their professions and communities. The distinguished alumni represent the university’s more than 183,000 graduates serving diverse communities around the world.

Michael Scherer, D.M.D. ('07), was the College of Dental Medicine’s honoree. Scherer is an assistant clinical professor at Loma Linda University in California and a clinical instructor at the University of Nevada—Las Vegas. He also maintains a practice limited to prosthodontics and implant dentistry in Sonora, California.

A Fellow of the American College of Prosthodontists, Scherer has published articles and created DVD training series and fully online courses related to implant dentistry, clinical prosthodontics, and digital technology, with a special emphasis on implant overdentures.

An avid technology and computer hobbyist, Scherer’s involvement in digital implant dentistry led him to develop and use new technology with CAD/CAM (computer-aided design, computer-aided manufacturing) surgical systems and implement interactive CBCT implant planning and radiographic imaging concepts. He maintains five YouTube channels on standard and narrow diameter dental implant procedures and digital dentistry. ◆
Postdoctoral Dental Matching Program Ensures Success

CDM graduate students receive postdoctoral training at a variety of clinics, hospitals, and universities. Postgraduate matches in Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD), General Practice Residency (GPR), Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMS), Orthodontics (ORTHO), Pediatric Dentistry (PED), Periodontics (PERIO), and Prosthodontics (PROS) include:

- Tasnova Ahmad, two-year PED at New York University (NYU) Lutheran—Tampa, Florida
- Lauren Alfred, one-year GPR at the Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center, Bronx, New York
- Ketan S. Bedmutha, one-year GPR at the Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York
- Deeva K. Bhatt, two-year PED at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
- Domenic E. DiGioia, three-year PERIO at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
- Rachel A. Dorfner, one-year AEGD at NYU Lutheran—Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California
- Ka’ynn M. Foster, 2½-year ORTHO at St Louis University, St Louis, Missouri
- Victoria Gandarillas, two-year PED at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Sandra E. Ghorbrial, one-year GPR-CAN (Canada) at Sinai Health System, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- Jaime Gonzalez, 2½-year ORTHO at Seton Hill University Center for Orthodontics, Greensburg, Pennsylvania
- Jonathan Journo, two-year ENDO at Texas A&M University, Dallas, Texas
- Zehab Khan, one-year GPR at the Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York
- Dorette Lacroze, one-year AEGD at NYU Lutheran—Miami, Miami, Florida
- Navid Lajevardi, one-year AEGD at NYU Lutheran—Metropolitan New York, New York City, New York
- Vinicius J. Lima, one-year GPR at Tufts University, Boston, Massachusetts
- Tiffany Lu, 27-month ORTHO at Loma Linda University School of Dentistry, Loma Linda, California
- David Luther, two-year PED at NSU College of Dental Medicine
- Omar Y. Mirza, one-year GPR at Roswell Park Cancer Institute/SUNY—Buffalo, New York
- Zohaib Munaf, two-year PED at NYU Langone Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York
- Christopher Naglieri, one-year GPR at Kings County Hospital Center, Brooklyn, New York
- Sarah Y. Naon, two-year AEGD at Tufts University, Boston, Massachusetts
- Shivani Parikh, one-year GPR at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, New Brunswick, New Jersey
- Noura Rezapour, two-year PED at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada
- Jon-Michael Scalercio, one-year AEGD at NYU Lutheran—Bradenton, Bradenton, Florida
- Jesse M. Schwartz, one-year AEGD, Idaho State University, Meridian, Idaho
- John Tawadrous, two-year PED at University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
- Benjamin M. Yanowitz, one-year GPR at Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York
- Brandon Zipper, 26-month ORTHO Certificate/M.S. Oral Biology at Temple University School of Dentistry, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Postdoctoral Dental Matching Program is administered by National Matching Services Inc.
NSU’s College of Dental Medicine wants to hear about your favorite CDM memory. Maybe it’s a professor whose mentorship helped you make a career decision. Or, maybe you were active in an organization. Was it late-night studying at the library? Did you meet lifelong friends, or your spouse, while at the university? And, if you have a photo of your days at the CDM, please include it. Send your favorite memories of your time at the CDM to Rosalie Marin at rm1147@nova.edu.

ALUMNI RECEPTIONS SCHEDULED

The CDM invites alumni, family, and friends to attend the mix-and-mingle receptions it hosts during dental conferences. Upcoming events sponsored by the CDM include the following:

- **June 21–23, 2018**: Florida Dental Convention at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Kissimmee, Florida. The CDM will host its annual alumni reception on Friday, June 22, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

- **October 8–13, 2018**: American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons in Chicago, Illinois. The CDM will host its annual alumni reception.

- **October 27–30, 2018**: American Academy of Periodontology in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The CDM will host its annual alumni reception.

For more information, contact Rosalie Marin at rm1147@nova.edu.

PROFESSOR HOSTS IADR SEMINAR

Toshihisa Kawai, D.D.S., Ph.D., above, hosted an International Association of Dental Research (IADR) Faculty Development Seminar in conjunction with the annual IADR meeting in Fort Lauderdale. Kawai discussed the mentor-mentee relationship for the academic career development of junior faculty members in a special symposium. Kawai is a professor in the CDM’s Department of Periodontology and a senior investigator at the NSU Cell Therapy Institute at the Center for Collaborative Research.
NSU SURPASSES $250-MILLION FUND-RAISING GOAL

NSU is a step closer to fulfilling its vision to be the South Florida destination for health care education thanks to two significant financial gifts. One will support the allopathic medicine college, while the other will support the nursing college. Combined, these gifts helped the university achieve the $250-million goal for its Realizing Potential Campaign three years ahead of schedule.

A $25-million gift from the Drs. Kiran & Pallavi Patel Family Foundation, Inc. resulted in the renaming of the College of Allopathic Medicine to the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine. The gift will help provide scholarships for students needing financial support to attend medical school.

This latest gift comes on the heels of the Patels’ previous financial commitment of $200 million in September comprising a $50-million gift. The additional $150 million is funding a real estate investment to develop a new site for NSU’s Tampa Bay Regional Campus in Clearwater, Florida, which will provide an additional location for NSU’s osteopathic medicine program.

“The cumulative generosity of the Patels’ contributions, and all the other philanthropic gifts we have received since 2016, brought us very close to our $250-million goal,” said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer. “Then, Ronald Assaf, our Board of Trustees chair, and his wife, Kathy, stepped up with their own gift, which put our Realizing Potential Campaign over the top three years ahead of our 2020 target date.”

To honor the Assafs’ gift, the College of Nursing was renamed the Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing. The $250-million Realizing Potential Campaign goal is the first philanthropic campaign in the university’s 54-year history. It is also, by far, the largest philanthropic campaign of any sort in Broward County.

The Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine and the Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing are two of eight distinctive colleges in NSU’s Health Professions Division. The others are the College of Dental Medicine, College of Medical Sciences, College of Optometry, College of Pharmacy, Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine, and Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences.

These colleges—with many of them producing the state’s largest number of graduates in their specialty each year—offer more than 60 degrees and provide myriad opportunities for interprofessional interaction at the university.

Upon receiving preliminary accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education in October 2017, the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine began recruiting students for what is now the 8th M.D. program in Florida, and 1 of only 149 in the United States. The college’s charter class of 50 M.D. candidates will matriculate in August 2018.

The new college’s educational program will be taught in an interdisciplinary fashion in conjunction with the other colleges in NSU’s Health Professions Division, using existing renovated space to accommodate the new M.D. student class and the college’s hybrid case- and problem-based learning curriculum. To meet demands in its medical, health care, and life science programs, NSU plans to build a 250,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art, integrated, medical-education building to complement its health professions facilities and health care centers.

The Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing offers B.S.N., M.S.N., and doctoral programs at NSU campuses in Fort Lauderdale/Davie, Fort Myers, Miami, Palm Beach, and Tampa. The unique clinical training provided in each of these programs gives NSU nursing graduates a definite advantage in the clinical workplace.◆
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.

The chain begins and continues with you.

For the latest information, visit our website at dental.nova.edu. You can update your personal information at dental.nova.edu/alumni-relations.

For more information on becoming involved, email Rosalie Marin at rm1147@nova.edu, or call (954) 262-7317.
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