

TRODENT



CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD

USC'S INTERNATIONAL DENTISTRY PROGRAM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS



"A Global Welcome to All"
A gift from the DDS Class of 2018

දෙමසින්
ОГИЯ
சா திலாந
STRY
STOMATOLÓGIA
دندان سازی
ယတယမ်ပီယာဂူၼ်တူၼ်း
PAGPAPAGALING NG MGA NGIPIN

ZOBĀRSTNIECĪVA
치과 ODONTOLOGIA
FIACLÓIREACHTA
દંતશાસ્ત્ર
ZAHNMEDIZIN
齒科

WELCOME ONE AND ALL

East lobby visitors — including prospective students coming in for interviews — are now greeted by a 6-foot-by-3-foot symbol, showcasing how much the dental school treasures its diverse student population. The work of art, titled “A Global Welcome to All,” features the word *dentistry* in 29 languages, reflecting the mother tongues of the DDS Class of 2018, who gifted the piece to Ostrow. “We hope the artwork will inspire all future Trojans to have the same passion for Ostrow that we do,” said Ambika Parti DDS ’18, Class of 2018 president.

PHOTO BY [HANNAH BENET](#)

DEAN'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the Fall 2018 issue of *TroDent*!

In this issue, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Advanced Standing Program for International Dentists (ASPID). In 1969, USC conferred its first international doctor of dental surgery degrees to seven foreign-trained dentists who had fled Cuba following the Cuban revolution. The program — the first of its kind in the United States — gave these foreign-trained dentists the skills necessary to begin practicing in America. Since then, USC's ASPID program has re-launched the careers of nearly 1,200 foreign-trained dentists, giving them the opportunity to pursue their dream careers in the U.S. We're incredibly proud of our ASPID program and will celebrate its golden anniversary at our next Scholarship Recognition Dinner on Feb. 8, 2019 at the California Science Center.

Speaking of pride, Ostrow's Associate Dean of Research (and an ASPID alumnus, I might add) Yang Chai PhD '91, DDS '96 was elected to the prestigious National Academy of Medicine earlier this year. It's an honor reserved only for those at the pinnacle of their profession. In fact, there are only nine current USC faculty members who are members of this organization, which aims to improve health by advancing science, accelerating health equity and providing evidence-based and trusted advice across the globe. Read all about Chai's election on [p. 5](#).

In this issue, we also showcase our Pediatric Dental Clinic, which is now funded by the L.A. County Department of Health Services ([p. 6](#)); take you into the mobile dental clinic at Hollenbeck Palms retirement community where our students are gaining essential experience treating older adults ([p. 30](#)), and remember Professor Emeritus Raymond Melrose who passed away in early October ([p. 38](#)).

As the clock winds down on the Fall 2018 semester, I'd like to wish all of our Trojan Dental Family members far and wide a happy new year! I look forward to seeing you all in 2019 for another terrific year at the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC!

Enjoy the issue and as always fight on!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Avishai Sadan".

Avishai Sadan DMD, MBA
Dean
G. Donald and Marian James Montgomery Professor of Dentistry
Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

Stay connected!

facebook.com/deansadan



twitter.com/Dean_Sadan



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

ASPID TURNS 50 | 20-29

USC conferred its first international doctor of dental surgery degrees in 1969 to seven Cuban refugees who had fled their country after the revolution and needed to make a living in the United States. Almost 50 years later, the program has awarded nearly 1,200 degrees, helping re-launch the careers of foreign-trained dentists from around the world.

FEATURES

SMILING AGAIN | [18-19](#)

Louis “Kengi” Carr was apprehensive about getting back into a dental chair after losing several teeth in 2017. Ashamed of his smile, the professional photographer sought the services of the Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic and is once again flashing those pearly whites.

GOLDEN YEARS | [30-33](#)

By 2030, there will be more elderly adults than children, making learning how to treat this medically complex group a necessity for today’s dental students. With clinical rotations at Hollenbeck Palms and the Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic, Ostrow students are learning how to keep seniors’ mouths healthy long into their golden years.

OUNCE OF PREVENTION | [34-37](#)

Did you know that 70 percent of dentists complain of musculoskeletal disorders every day and that these aches and pains are one of the top reasons dentists give for early retirement? An interdisciplinary partnership with the USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy aims to improve the ergonomics surrounding the dental chair, eradicating pain and prolonging careers.

DEPARTMENTS

News [5](#)

Yang Chai elected to National Academy of Medicine

News [6](#)

LAC+USC Pediatric Dental Clinic gets long-term funding

News Briefs [8](#)

Secret Lives [9-10](#)

Parish Sedghizadeh DDS '01

Odd Jobs [12](#)

Gary Laine '71, DDS '73, PROS '77

Ostrow's Got Talent [14](#)

Ivan Lee DDS '21

Five Things [16](#)

Pinghui Feng

Remembering Raymond Melrose [38](#)

Memorials & Tributes [39](#)

Inspired [40](#)

Maryet Babrood DH '14, DDS '18



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



MARYET BABROOD DH '14, DDS '18
INSPIRED COLUMNIST

Maryet Babrood shares with us what inspires her to work in the dental profession in this issue's "Inspired" column ([p. 40](#)).

What would you say was the greatest experience you had in dental school?

Not only learning about dentistry, but getting to know my patients and treating them with care, compassion, honesty and respect. I carry an enormous pride and honor as a USC dentist.

What's next for you now that you've graduated?

I currently practice as a general dentist and plan to run my own dental office in the near future.

What was it like writing Inspired for this issue?

As I sat down to collect my thoughts, I replayed my childhood and the past six years of dental hygiene and dental school and remembered all the amazing learning experiences. Every smile, every thank you, every tear of joy my patients shed was worth all of the challenges and obstacles I encountered.



GARY LAINE '71, DDS '73, PROS '77
ODD JOBS COLUMNIST

In this issue's "Odd Jobs" column ([p. 12](#)), Gary Laine takes us into the long-gone world of a sorority hasher (food server).

What made you want to become a dentist?

I am from a dental family: My mom's dad is a 1913 Nebraska grad, and my dad is a 1945 USC grad. As a youngster, I hung out at my dad's office and was fascinated by what he did as a pedodontist (the first one in Pasadena, I might add).

What do you like to do in your free time?

Perform volunteer work, travel the world, photograph sports and such, write and enjoy my grandsons.

Catch your classmates up on your life since graduation.

Finished residency, remarried and helped raise two beautiful daughters who attended USC. Stayed in shape by running intervals, followed the Trojan football team, traveled and had a great 40-year career in Palo Alto, Calif.



DANIEL TEVRIZIAN '70, DDS '74
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After more than 40 years, Daniel Tevrizian's coming clean about a classroom antic involving a housefly and a ribbon in "Larry Did It!" ([p. 11](#)).

What was it like writing this piece for the TroDent?

It was actually not a difficult task. Funny life stories like these *need* to be retold, and there are many more to share. Never shield the truth if it leads to a happy outcome.

What's been the highlight of your career in dentistry?

The *people!* The interpersonal relationships I've developed with my patients, employees and like-minded colleagues made the journey worth traveling.

Catch your classmates up on your life since graduation.

Married, three children, living in San Diego North County, semi-retired, happy. Still proud to be a 1974 class member. You can reach me at drdanielt@gmail.com.



Live PDF
 Click links for additional content

DEAN
AVISHAI SADAN DMD, MBA

EDITOR
JOHN HOBBS MA '14

DESIGN/PRODUCTION
GARETT YOSHIDA
JOHN HOBBS MA '14

CONTRIBUTORS
MARYET BABROOD DH '14, DDS '18
KATHARINE GAMMON
JOHN HOBBS MA '14
GARY LAINE '71, DDS '73, PROS '77
MICHELLE MCCARTHY
CALEN OUELLETTE MBA '18
YERANDY PACHECO '21
YASMINE PEZESHKPOUR MCM '16
DANIEL TEVRIZIAN '70, DDS '74
JAMIE WETHERBE MA '04

PHOTOGRAPHY
HANNAH BENET
BRANDON BUSA
LOUIS "KENGI" CARR
PHIL CHANNING
GLENN MARZANO
RINZI RUIZ PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT
ROBIN RANDOLPH

COVER ILLUSTRATOR
NATALIE NELSON

ILLUSTRATOR
MURPHY LIPPINCOTT

PRINTED BY
GREENS PRINTING
GREENSPRINTING.COM

TRODENT
 HERMAN OSTROW SCHOOL
 OF DENTISTRY OF USC
 925 W. 34TH STREET,
 DEN 202
 LOS ANGELES, CA
 90089-0641
 (213) 740-0428

**CONTACT US WITH
 STORY IDEAS AT:
[OSTROW.COMMUNICATIONS@
 USC.EDU](mailto:OSTROW.COMMUNICATIONS@USC.EDU)**



DENTISTRY.USC.EDU

Yang Chai elected to National Academy of Medicine

NAM membership is considered one of the highest honors in the health and medicine field.

BY JOHN HOBBS MA '14

Ostrow Associate Dean of Research Yang Chai PhD '91, DDS '96 has been elected to the **National Academy of Medicine** (NAM), a membership which is considered one of the highest honors in the health and medicine field.

“Your election reflects the high esteem in which your peers and colleagues regard you,” NAM President Victor J. Dzau said in a notification letter. “You are now part of a group of truly distinguished individuals who have made important contributions to health, science and medicine.”

NAM is a nonprofit institution that advises national and international governments on issues related to health, medicine, health policy and biomedical sciences.

As a member, Chai will help the institution work toward its mission of improving health by advancing science, accelerating health equity and providing evidence-based and trusted advice across the globe.

This year, NAM elected 85 new members — 75 in the United States and 10 internationally. Chai is the only dental professional of those elected this year.

To be eligible, a candidate must have made distinguished contributions to health and medicine; have demonstrated continued involvement with issues of health care, disease prevention, education and research; and have exhibited a willingness and ability to help NAM with its mission. Candidates must be nominated by two current NAM members.

“We are so proud of Yang for this distinc-



PHOTO BY PHIL CHANNING

tion,” Ostrow Dean Avishai Sadan said. “The contributions he has made to the research community here at Ostrow, across the university and for the dental profession are legion. I can’t think of a better way to honor him for a lifetime of scientific achievement.”

LIFETIME OF SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT

Chai earned his doctor of dental medicine degree from Peking University before relocating to the United States. He completed his doctoral degree in craniofacial biology and his doctor of dental surgery degree at USC. In 1987, he joined the USC dental faculty as an instructor.

Chai is internationally renowned for his scientific investigation into the genetics, cellular signaling and development of craniofacial structures, including understanding the causes of and finding potential preventive measures for craniofacial deformities, including cleft lip, cleft palate and craniosynostosis.

In 2013, the Ostrow professor was elected Chair of the **National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research** Board of Scientific Counselors. Other accomplishments include earning the **International**

Association for Dental Research Distinguished Scientist Award in 2011, the **National Institutes of Health** MERIT Award in 2010 and having been elected a Fellow of the **American Association for the Advancement of Science** in 2011.

Chai is the director of USC’s **Center for Craniofacial and Molecular Biology**, a research laboratory that has made significant discoveries in areas including the molecular genetics of tooth development, the molecular basis for cleft lip and palate and stem cell-mediated craniofacial tissue regeneration. He is also holder of the George and Mary Lou Boone Chair in Craniofacial Biology.

USC currently has nine faculty members who have been elected NAM members. The last USC dental faculty member to be elected was Harold Slavkin '61, DDS '65 in 1995.

LISTEN



USC Stem Cell interview with Yang Chai
tinyurl.com/yang-chai



Live PDF
Click links for additional content



PHOTO BY RINZI RUIZ PHOTOGRAPHY

LAC+USC Pediatric Dental Clinic opening in 2016

LAC+USC Pediatric Dental Clinic gets long-term funding

The Department of Health Services funding source provides \$1.3 million annually to the Pediatric Dental Clinic.

BY JOHN HOBBS MA '14

With its funding source sunseting earlier this year, the LAC+USC Pediatric Dental Clinic faced an uncertain future — possibly even closure — until the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors stepped in.

On June 6, the Board voted unanimously to permanently subsidize the dental clinic, providing it an annual budget of \$1.3 million through the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.

“At LAC+USC, we have the unique opportunity to provide programs that improve the health and prosperity for all residents,” said First District Supervisor **Hilda L. Solis**, one of the clinic’s founding partners. “I want to thank DHS and [Ostrow] for working together

to ensure continued delivery of pediatric dental services to our community’s most vulnerable children.”

The clinic is part of a medical village at the **LAC+USC Medical Center** that provides comprehensive health care treatment to the community’s most vulnerable children, including those with developmental disabilities.

FOSTER CHILDREN IN NEED

Borne out of a partnership between Solis, Ostrow and the nonprofit Violence Intervention Program, the clinic was opened in 2016 to provide dental treatment to L.A. County’s foster care children.

“For the longest time, foster children have had an unmet need for dental care. It is often the first or second most-cited need,” said Roseann Mulligan MS '87, associate dean of community health programs and hospital affairs, in 2016. “This lack of care is due in part to the frequent moves from family to family that foster children undergo, which does not allow for the discovery and building of a relationship with a nearby dental office.”

Since opening, the Pediatric Dental Clinic, which is staffed by Ostrow faculty, staff, residents and students, has bridged the gap to dental care access for 2,300 foster children per year.

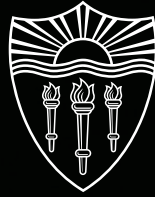
“The LAC+USC Pediatric Dental Clinic is much more than dental care; it is about delivering better health care to those who need it most,” Mulligan said. “We want to thank Supervisor Solis and DHS for their partnership as we look to find ways to improve the lives of all residents surrounding LAC+USC.”

The Pediatric Dental Clinic had been funded by the \$18.4-million Children’s Health and Maintenance Program grant, provided by **First 5 LA** from a 50-cent tobacco tax meant to pay for health care, education and child development programs. That grant ended in July.

Ostrow has long been dedicated to providing dental treatment to underserved communities. With the country’s largest fleet of mobile dental clinics, a number of satellite clinics (including two on L.A.’s Skid Row) and a number of community partnerships, Ostrow’s Community Oral Health Programs provided treatment to nearly 72,000 underserved individuals last year.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



ENDEAVOR · EMBARK · EXPLORE

OUR GREATEST MISSION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2019

2019 SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION DINNER

CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER - SPACE SHUTTLE ENDEAVOUR PAVILION

COCKTAIL RECEPTION ~ 7:00 PM | DINNER & PROGRAM ~ 8:00 PM

Recognizing Dr. Eddie Sheh, Director of Advanced Standing Program for International Dentists, recipient of the 2018 USC Associates Award for Excellence in Teaching

Celebrating 50 years of the Advanced Standing Program for International Dentists

INVITATION TO FOLLOW

Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of **USC**

NEWS BRIEFS

■ SADAN REAPPOINTED DEAN FOR FIVE YEARS

Earlier this year, Dean Avishai Sadan was offered another five-year term as leader of the USC dental school after a comprehensive review process, which included feedback from Ostrow's faculty and staff. "Throughout the review process, Dean Sadan was commended for his leadership, vision and dedication to the Ostrow community," read a memo from USC Provost Michael Quick. "Under his leadership, the school has seen improvement in school rankings, graduation rates and first-time pass rates on license exams." Quick also noted Sadan's willingness to embrace new technologies, commitment to diversity and inclusion and prudent management of school resources. Sadan became Ostrow dean in 2009. Academic deans are subject to comprehensive review at least once every five years.

■ OSTROW STUDENT RECEIVES \$20K ADA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

Angelica Chaghouri DDS '20 has been awarded a \$20,000 **ADA Foundation** scholarship, making her the first Ostrow student to earn the scholarship since it was increased from its previous value of \$2,500. The Robert B. Dewhirst Dental Student Scholarship was established in 2008 to honor USC or UCLA dental students. It is just one of the ADA Foundation's scholarships that award students who are strong academically and demonstrate outstanding promise in leadership, public service, volunteerism and/or research. "Dental school is the hardest thing I've ever done and to be recognized for your work feels good," Chaghouri said. "It motivates me to keep working hard." The last Ostrow student to earn the scholarship was Mishaun Sahebi DDS '17 in 2014.

■ SLOTS NAMED HONORARY MEMBER OF AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PERIODONTOLOGY

Professor Jorgen Slots has been named the 2018 Honorary Member of the **American Academy of Periodontology** (AAP). The distinction is meant to honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to periodontology. It's the latest in a number of awards honoring Slots' decades-long research career. In 1990, he received the AAP's prestigious William J. Gies Award. He was also recognized by the **California Society of Periodontists** in 1995 and at the AAP's annual meeting in 2013. Slots is internationally renowned for his research contributions to antibiotic therapy, antimicrobial agents, oral microbiology and oral immunology. In addition to teaching periodontology and microbiology at Ostrow, he is the editor-in-chief of **Periodontology 2000**, which was ranked No. 1 in its category by the 2018 Clarivate Analytics Journal Citation Report. This annual report measures citations to analyze the performance of peer-reviewed journals. *Periodontology 2000* has an impact factor of 6.22.

■ OSTROW ADDS TWO GRADUATE PROGRAMS

This year, Ostrow introduced two new innovative master's degree programs to its curriculum. The master of science in **biomaterials and digital dentistry** provides dental professionals with in-depth knowledge of dental material properties, characterization, biological interactions of dental adhesive systems, composite resins, ceramics, implants, 3-D printing, digital scanning and CAD/CAM. The second program, the master of science in **biomedical implants and tissue engineering**, is designed to provide students advanced knowledge of clinical and scientific studies involving dental implants and related procedures required to regenerate oral and craniofacial tissue. Both programs are full-time and take two years to complete.

■ USC DENTAL ALUMNUS TO LEAD CDA

R. Del Brunner DDS '73 is slated to take the reins as president of the **California Dental Association** in 2019. The Ostrow alumnus has been involved with the CDA in several capacities over the years, including as a chair for the CDA Presents Board of Managers, a director for the CDA Foundation Board of Directors and a member of the CDA Board of Trustees. He's also sat on the organization's Finance Committee, the Government Affairs Council and has chaired many task forces. The CDA is a professional organization of 27,000 dentists across the Golden State that is committed to enhancing the professional lives of its members. Brunner ran a private practice in Ventura, Calif., for nearly 45 years and today is semi-retired, living in Indio, Calif.

■ TWO OSTROW STUDENTS EARN PRESTIGIOUS FULL-RIDE SCHOLARSHIPS

Eumi Choi DH '17, DDS '21 and Thomas Nguyen DDS '21 have earned the highly competitive and prestigious National Health Science Corps scholarship. Awarded by the **U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration**, the scholarships provide full tuition, fees and equipment payment along with a monthly stipend of \$1,300 to those in primary health care disciplines. In exchange, the scholarship recipients have committed to providing treatment to populations in underserved communities (rural, urban and frontier areas) for a length of time corresponding to the scholarship's duration. For Choi, it means three years, and for Nguyen, it means four. Last year, the NHSC program awarded nearly 190 scholarships, totaling almost \$40 million, to students training to become physicians, dentists, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives and physician assistants.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

FRONT DESK

SECRET LIVES, ODD JOBS, GAMES AND MORE!



SECRET LIVES

Parish Sedghizadeh DDS '01

Wing Chun Martial Artist

While some might know this Ostrow faculty member is accomplished in parkour, few know that he's also trained in one of the toughest forms of martial arts.

continued on [page 10](#) »

PHOTO BY [HANNAH BENET](#)



Sedghizadeh practices a thrusting sidekick meant to strike an opponent's chest or chin.

PHOTO BY HANNAH BENET

« continued from [page 9](#)

BY YASMINE PEZESHKPOUR MCM '16

You don't want to mess with Parish Sedghizadeh DDS '01.

Thanks to his training in Wing Chun kung fu, he can land 10 punches in a single second — not that the affable associate professor of clinical dentistry would ever practice the potentially deadly art outside the dojo.

But when Sedghizadeh isn't performing research or teaching at Ostrow, he's perfecting his skills and training others in the ancient form of kung fu.

Sedghizadeh was first introduced to Wing Chun by his best friend Maytri and his cousin Paul when they would spend time hanging out after school as teenagers.

"One day, Paul introduced us to family friend and Kung Fu Master Wong Wah (Tom Wong) who had come to America from China and was starting to teach a few select students Wing

Chun," Sedghizadeh says.

Master Wong is one of the original disciples of the traditional style of northern Wing Chun kung fu known only by a select few in the world.

Wing Chun kung fu was first developed more than 300 years ago by a Buddhist nun who taught it to female villagers so they could protect themselves. It is one of the deadliest forms of martial arts and was the type practiced by the late Bruce Lee.

Master Wong began teaching Maytri and Paul elements of Wing Chun in their yard each day after school.

"It was so interesting seeing the upper body movements and lightning-fast strikes of Master Wong," Sedghizadeh says.

"I really wanted to learn Wing Chun, but they said it was a very technical and dangerous form of fighting, not to be taught to just anyone," he says. "So, Master Wong initially was not willing to teach me."

Still, Sedghizadeh would join them and observe their training every day. Seeing his persistence, Master Wong finally took him on as a student.

Despite his natural athleticism and Tae Kwon Do training, it took Sedghizadeh some time to

get acquainted with the body movements and control necessary for Wing Chun.

"The hardest thing to learn initially was that I had to relax and actually try not to use all my muscle strength to deliver an effective blow," he says.

"If the muscles are tense, the speed of a strike decreases, and we all know speed kills — just think of a bullet thrown at you versus speeding out of a gun."

Even though Sedghizadeh has been practicing and teaching Wing Chun for more than 25 years, he admits he still gets nervous before martial arts competitions.

"For competitions, you often wait around all day before you know who you are fighting," he says, "but you know it's likely a total stranger, and you have no idea what their skill level is until you go."

Nerves aside, he finds the discipline and commitment associated with the practice tremendously rewarding.

"The training has helped me in all aspects of life and work," he explains. "Wing Chun has taught me my own limits in both body and mind, and given me the patience to deal with anything thrown at me with poise and perseverance."



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



LARRY DID IT!

BY DANIEL TEVRIZIAN '70, DDS '74

The statute of limitations has clearly expired.

After 47 years of living with this guilt and shame, I seek forgiveness for being an “accomplice” to a major academic code of conduct violation that occurred in Spring 1971.

Let me emphasize this: *Larry R. was the true perpetrator*. It was totally his idea. I only sat next to him in the Rutherford Lecture Hall.

It was lunch time. I was innocently sitting in my pre-clinical lab seat, eating lunch while sorting through a mixed jar of extracted teeth for the perfect tooth for my weekly operative assignment, when Larry summoned me to his desk.

He informed me that, minutes earlier, he had captured a pesky fly and put it in a mason jar, along with a cotton gauze saturated with ether-solvent. The fly in the jar wasn't dead, he said. It was under general anesthesia. While the fly was under, Larry cut a nine-inch piece of lightweight, reflective Mylar ribbon and super-glued it to the fly's tail.

With the fly's fate still undetermined, we headed upstairs to our histology class with the mason jar, so we could continue to monitor the results of this experiment.

Histology, taught by Dr. John D. Soule, was a very challenging class. Dr. Soule was an institution. He had taught this class for years and had a reputation for being no-nonsense and asking the most difficult test questions. He demanded complete attention and permitted no interruptions.

That's when it happened! As Dr. Soule turned his back to the class to write something on the blackboard, the now-awake fly made a concerted effort to fly! Still weak and not realizing that it had a nine-inch ribbon attached, it crashed to the floor! Some of the other students in the class seated closely behind us witnessed this unusual site, but Dr. Soule didn't. Minutes later and deeper into Dr. Soule's lecture, the fly got up from the floor and took off again!

It flew toward the ceiling light, with light shimmering off its reflective Mylar ribbon — all while the entire class (except Dr. Soule) watched. As if this exercise was precisely choreographed, every time Dr. Soule turned to write something on the blackboard, the fly flew around the lecture hall toward the lights, causing students to burst into spontaneous laughter! Unaware of the source of this laughter, Dr. Soule was becoming more and more irritated. This went on for minutes until finally Dr. Soule discovered the exhausted fly as it landed on his lecture desk, its reflective tail hanging over his coffee cup.

Who did this?! Dr. Soule barked out!

Unlike the classic *Spartacus* scene when the identity of Spartacus is about to be revealed and he is to be punished, and everyone, one by one, claims to be Spartacus, there was dead silence. With that, Dr. Soule left the lecture hall mad as hell.

Thanks Larry, that was a good one!
“Bite On.”

ILLUSTRATION BY MURPHY LIPPINCOTT



Q&A

FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

When Jay Solnit DDS '86 isn't practicing endodontics, he's one of five Beverly Hills Traffic and Parking Commissioners who help manage the traffic flow in and out of one of the nation's glitziest cities.

What does the Beverly Hills Traffic and Parking Commission do exactly?

We advise the city council and the police chief about how to improve any traffic and parking issues within the city.

What made you want to serve on the commission?

It seemed like the best way to continue volunteering and to give back to the city.

Does the Trojan Dental Family connection get us any breaks on parking tickets?

(Laughs) People ask me if I can fix tickets all the time. We actually have nothing to do with citations.



Live PDF
Click links for additional content

ODD Jobs

GARY LAINE '71, DDS '73, PROS '77

Hasher

I am fortunate to be part of three generations of Trojans and dentists (105-plus consecutive years — and counting). During my pre-dental stage, I worked at the Faculty Club for a year as a waiter. Luckily, I was on an “M and D (mom- and dad-funded) scholarship,” but I wanted to decrease my food expenses. So prior to entering dental school in 1969, I inquired about sorority hashing jobs. Basically, this involved being a food server for lunch and dinner during the school year. Connections through friends on the staff informed you of any openings, and then an interview with the house mother followed. I became a “four-year” letterman from 1969 to 1973 (Kappa for one year and Delta Gamma for three). Unfortunately, the hasher job no longer exists because the women now serve themselves.

The evening shift accommodated my schedule, and it was mostly formal (except Fridays) — particularly Monday night chapter. Arriving at 5 p.m., we would set the tables (glasses, silverware, etc). Then the cook would signal us to prepare the plates, serve and pour the drinks. Dessert would follow. After that, we cleared the tables, cleaned the dishes and swabbed the kitchen floors and counters. About two hours of work, and we were paid with a meal.

Best job ever! As one Kappa said, “The hashers were always such fun! They kind of became our buddies, brothers, good friends — and some dates, too. They were always part of our sorority lives.” I actually met my first wife while working as a hasher. Alas, the marriage did not endure.

Our group of seven guys became a fraternity of sorts. We were always invited to parties and pulled many pranks on the job. Throwing food was epic as dinner rolls were tossed around as if performing baseball double plays. Jell-O was our favorite in the kitchen — out of Mother Fern’s watchful eye, of course. After one dinner, she ventured into the kitchen and caught one in the face. Fortunately, we were not fired!

Our Hobart garbage disposal was nicknamed, “Igor.” It was a blast (literally) dropping broken glasses and ketchup bottles down the grinding blades! Another night, “Igor” swallowed 20 artichokes, blocking up the overflow drain valve. Hence, the entire first-floor plumbing of the sorority was backed up.

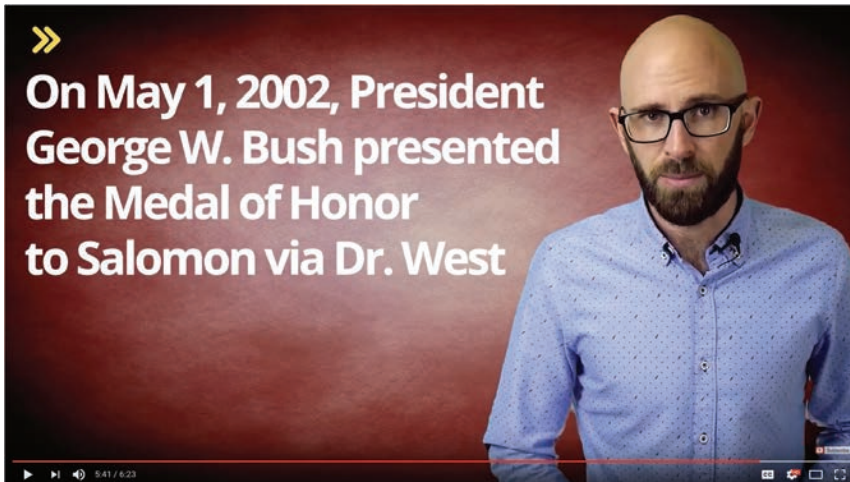
With my hashing days behind me, my career as a prosthodontist spanned 40 years in Palo Alto, Calif. I am now semi-retired and enjoy photography, traveling, collecting sports memorabilia and writing. Those hashing jobs taught me great life skills: socialize, analyze, organize and energize.

Believe it or not, I still serve and clean up the dishes in our house just like I did as a hasher, with one big exception: I no longer toss broken glasses down the disposal!



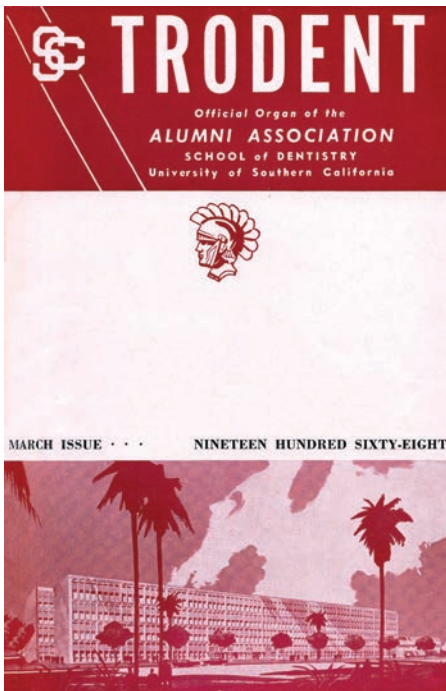
PHOTO BY [BRANDON BUSA](#)


Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



The Hero Dentist

It's the stuff action heroes are made of. When U.S. Army Captain — and military dentist — Ben Salomon's medical aid tent came under attack in Saipan during World War II, the USC dental alumnus (DDS '37) and surgeon-on-duty sprang to action. As one enemy soldier after another invaded the packed-full medical tent, Salomon kicked, shot, bayoneted and butted his way through them — taking out 98 in total — giving ailing U.S. soldiers the cover necessary to evacuate. Nearly 60 years later, the dentist's heroic actions were honored with a Congressional Medal of Honor (currently on display in the Norris Dental Science Center's west patient lobby), giving Salomon the distinction of being one of only three USC graduates ever to be honored so. Learn more about the hero dentist at tinyurl.com/ben-salomon.



FLASHBACK 1968

The Spring 1968 issue of *TroDent* looked forward with much anticipation to dental school renovations, which would add three floors to the existing one-story structure on 34th Street. The building would become known as the Norris Dental Science Center. Other highlights included celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Dental Alumni Association, the election of Charles B. Door to Century Club president and the third-place win of Richard Newcomer '59, DDS '68 at the American Dental Association national convention for research, showcasing techniques used at USC to restore broken down teeth.

IN THE NEWS



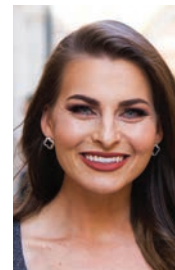
“It’s so rewarding when you teach and can see your students understand — they picked up on something, they made a breakthrough. It really does keep you young and energized.”

— Professor of Clinical Dentistry Eddie Sheh DDS '91, PROS '99, in a *USC News* article about his Associates Award for Excellence in Teaching. Read more at tinyurl.com/eddie-sheh.



“You really have to be your own advocate. Is the recession something that you have pain associated with? You can take it upon yourself to go see a periodontist.”

— Associate Professor of Clinical Dentistry Alon Frydman PERIO '06, in a *Tonic* article about the hazards of gum recession. Read more at tinyurl.com/alon-frydman.



“It can cause inflammation of the joints to a point where you can't chew foods properly or even speak and smile without discomfort.”

— Orofacial Pain Resident Laurel Henderson DDS '17 debunks the “science” behind Jawzrsize, a small rubber ball guys are chewing to give them more defined jaw lines, in a *MEL Magazine* article. Read more at tinyurl.com/laurel-henderson.



Live PDF
Click links for additional content

Ostrow's got Talent

IVAN LEE DDS '21

Pop Violinist

Scroll through his Instagram feed ([@ivanleemusic](#)), and you'll find Ivan Lee, violin and bow in hand, putting his spin on some of pop music's greatest hits from the past few years.

There's Calvin Harris' "This is What You Came For," Mike Posner's "I Took a Pill in Ibiza" and The Chainsmokers' "Don't Let Me Down." The one that earns him rave reviews is Sam Smith's "I'm Not the Only One."

It's a newfound passion for Lee borne out of a trip to South Korea, where he spent four months alone to learn Korean.

"When you're alone, you can really reflect on what you truly love," Lee says. "It really gave me some time to think about what matters the most to me."

Though the passion may be new, violin has been part of Lee's life since his early teens.

He first picked up the instrument in the eighth grade — mostly at his parents' urging. "They wanted to give us the opportunity to pursue music," explains Lee, who has two brothers, both of whom are also musically talented. "They didn't get that chance growing up because they weren't well-off."

Lee discovered he had some real talent for violin, regularly playing lead violin in more than 10 youth orchestras throughout high school and college.

The youth orchestras gave the young violinist the opportunity to circle the globe, playing high-profile venues like New York City's Carnegie Hall, Berlin's Berliner Philharmonie and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Downtown L.A.

After graduating in 2016 with a business degree, Lee decided to pursue a dental career. "I just found dentistry to be the best for me just because of the hand skill I have from playing violin," he says.

As a first-year dental student, he's not got the time he once had for violin — but he still manages to steal moments when he can.

"In the middle of studying for midterms or finals, I'll just pick up my violin and play," he says. "It's the most therapeutic thing I can do for myself to cope with all the stress of dental school."

PHOTO BY [HANNAH BENET](#)



MATCH GAME

OSTROW COUPLES EDITION

Dental school can be an intense experience, so it's no wonder that so many lifelong relationships (both romantic and non-romantic in nature) tend to bud in the halls, labs and classrooms of the Norris Dental Science Center. Match the alumni couples with the ways in which they first met at Ostrow:

- 1 Their first date was spent in Malibu, where she watched him surf. Afterward, he took her to dinner in Brentwood, where he asked her to split the bill. Though she was annoyed by the request, she forgave him the next day when he had a bouquet of pink carnations sent to her.
- 2 They had seen each other throughout the school year, but it wasn't until a year-end school celebration that he walked up to her mid-conversation to ask her to dance. They both admit they instantly felt a lasting connection.
- 3 They first caught each other's attention working in the mobile clinic that was then supervised by Charlie Goldstein. Their first official outing was a double date, though they weren't each other's dates. Still, he had her laughing the whole night.
- 4 The location of their first-ever encounter was at the Dockweiler State Beach for their class pre-orientation barbecue, where they became instantly inseparable. Years later, he included the location as part of his marriage proposal scavenger hunt to recount where it all started.



A David Grant DDS '03 and Bao-Thy Grant '98, DDS '04



B Nehi Ogbevoen '11, DDS '15, ORTHO '18 and Sienna Palmer Ogbevoen DDS '15



C Charlene (Gonzales) Zettel DH '69 and David Zettel DDS '68



D Scott Rees DDS '83, PERIO '86 and Marcie Rees DH '83



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

ANSWERS: 1A, 2C, 3D, 4B



FIVE THINGS

Pinghui Feng
Professor

Earlier this year, Pinghui Feng left behind the Keck School of Medicine of USC, where he served as a professor of molecular microbiology and immunology, for the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry. Here, he intends to broaden his research focus, working with a number of well-known investigators, and leading Ostrow's new infection and immunity section. Here are five more things to know about the new Ostrow researcher:

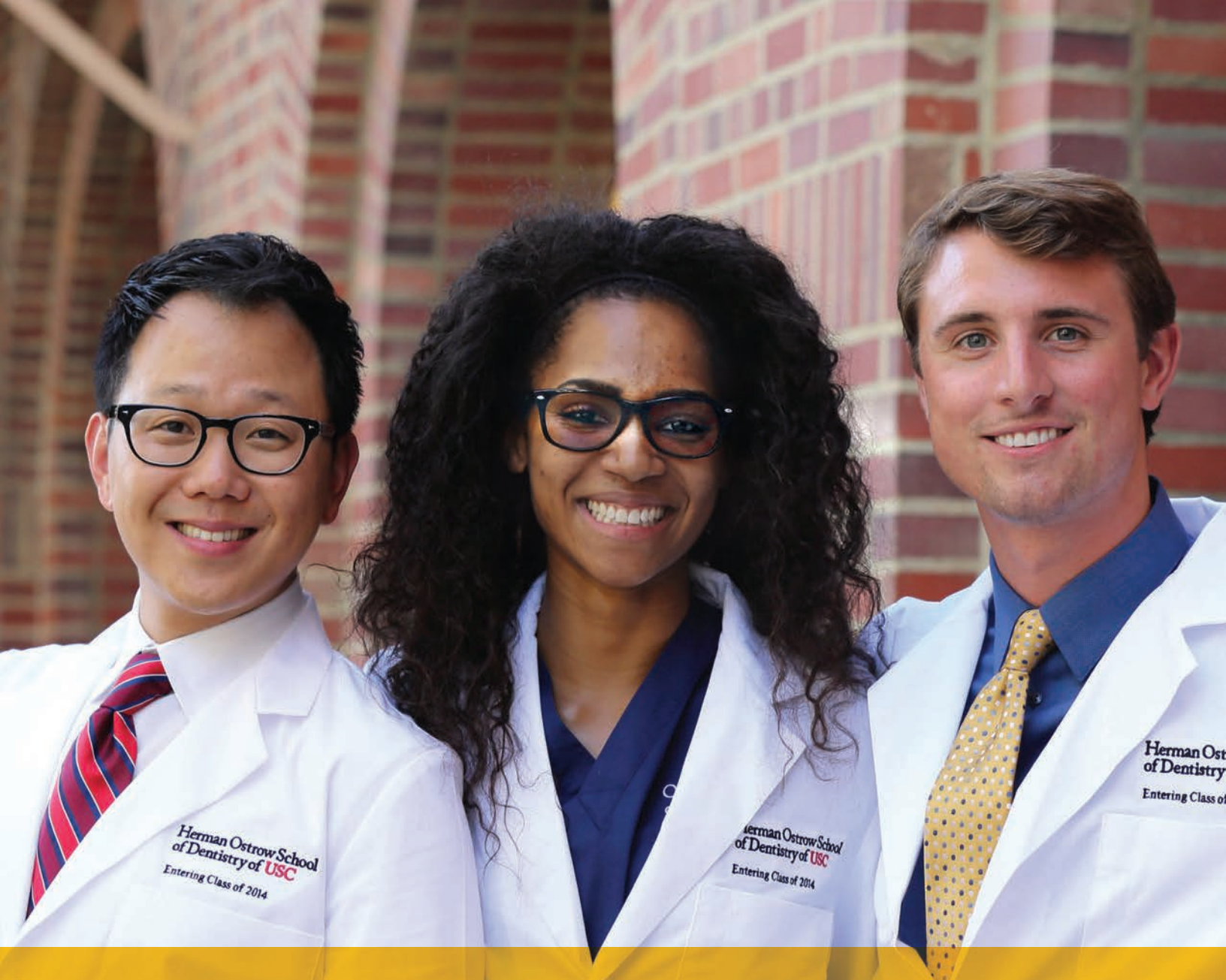
- 1 A microbiologist by trade, Feng brings a unique perspective to researching oral disease.**
Feng's research focuses on the ways in which oral microbes interact both with each other and their host environment to shape the mouth's health — or lack thereof. Ultimately, he hopes his insight leads to better ways to treat and prevent oral disease.
- 2 Until now, Feng has largely focused on the herpes virus.**
“I am fascinated by how microbes manipulate the host cell to achieve infection and pathogenesis,” he says, explaining how the herpes virus exploits weaknesses in our defense mechanisms to create persistent infections.
- 3 Though he's new to Ostrow's faculty roster, he's no stranger to many of the school's researchers.**
Before coming to Ostrow, Feng had ongoing collaborations with many of the dental school's researchers, including Associate Dean of Research Yang Chai PhD '91, DDS '96; Jian Xu; Jianfu Chen; and Jiang Zhong MS '02, PhD '03.
- 4 Feng first got into research after watching family members fight serious illnesses.**
Feng's mother had developmental issues in her right ankle, and his father had eye infections for decades. “It is painful to see your loved ones suffer on a daily basis,” he says. “When we know what happened or caused that disease, we can find a way to fix it.”
- 5 On weekends, Feng trades in his white coat for an apron.**
“Research takes years to see your finished product — a published paper,” Feng says. “With cooking, you see your final product in just a few hours, and family and friends can enjoy it. These two passions complement well, don't they?”

Herman Ostrow School
of Dentistry
of USC



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

PHOTO BY HANNAH BENET



CHAMPIONS OF STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

USC Dentistry alumni are committed to helping students have an exceptional educational experience inside and outside of the classroom. Make a gift to the Century Club Alumni Association Student Opportunity Fund to help expand student access to unique experiences like humanitarian service and participation in organized dentistry.

SUPPORT OSTROW STUDENTS AT
[IGNITE.USC.EDU/OSTROW](https://ignite.usc.edu/ostrow) OR TEXT **CCAA TO 71777**

PHOTO BY [GLENN MARZANO](#)



Smiling Again

Once missing several teeth, photographer Louis “Kengi” Carr used to hide his smile from friends and clients. But now he’s no longer afraid to flash that megawatt smile, after receiving treatment at the Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic. BY JAMIE WETHERBE MA '04

PHOTO BY [LOUIS “KENGI” CARR](#)



Throughout my childhood and most of my adulthood, I loved going to the dentist,” Louis “Kengi” Carr says. But something changed during a 2017 dental appointment.

While being treated at a nonprofit health care organization for the LGBT and HIV-positive communities, a dentist explained to Carr that he needed to have four molars extracted.

“I had no idea why,” Carr says. “The teeth she removed weren’t even bothering me. When I asked [the dentist], she didn’t really explain anything, and I was left without a clear plan and holes in my mouth.”

When the same dentist suggested another tooth removal — a procedure that couldn’t be done there in that clinic — Carr was referred to Ostrow’s **Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic**.

“That tooth is still in my mouth,” Carr says. “If she’d been able to pull it, I don’t know where I’d be.”

THE ANTIDOTE TO FEAR

In addition to providing quality dental care for those with physical, psychological or medical disabilities, the Mulligan Special Patients Clinic treats individuals with complex medical histories like Carr, who is both HIV-positive and in remission from cancer.

Every USC dental student completes a week-long rotation through the Special Patients Clinic and then has the option to return and continue treating patients.

It was during this rotation that Onik Chowdhury DDS ’18 was first introduced to Carr.

“I felt a connection with Louis right away,” Chowdhury says. “You can tell when a patient is going to be open with you, and he was.”

While Carr was apprehensive about more dental care after what he had already experienced, he was quickly put at ease at USC, he says.

“Onik saw my camera, and that created an immediate connection,” says Carr, a freelance photographer who often shoots red-carpet events. “The experience from start to finish was amazing; I fell asleep a couple of times in the chair, I was so relaxed.”

Sensing Carr’s initial anxiety, Chowdhury worked to establish trust right away. While in the chair, Carr revealed his fear of needles, so Chowdhury gave Carr his first shot slowly, explaining each step.

“Communication is key, even with patients who aren’t afraid of the dentist,” Chowdhury says. “That way patients understand what’s happening

to them and their bodies — it helps with the fear of the unknown.”

Chowdhury also reminds patients that communication goes both ways. “Patients should speak up, so providers can modify treatments,” he says. “Patients fear pain, but ultimately our goal is to get you out of pain so you can achieve better oral health. A dentist is like any health professional — we’re here to help you.”

SMILING BIGGER THAN EVER

Over the course of a year, Chowdhury performed several procedures for Carr, including a crown preparation, a wisdom tooth extraction and the construction of a removable appliance.

“I think that’s the treatment he’s most thankful for,” Chowdhury says of the upper removable partial denture.

For more than a year, Carr had only been able to use his front teeth to chew. “I felt like I was just swallowing food or eating things I shouldn’t because they were softer and easier on my teeth,” he says. “It really affected my quality of life.”

In addition to restoring his oral health, Carr was thrilled to get his smile back.

“Even though I’m on the other side of the camera, people would look at me and see these holes in my mouth,” he says. “Friends, public relations people and celebrities I photographed would say, ‘You don’t smile as big anymore,’ and I would tell them I’m growing out my beard or something. Now people tell me my smile is back — I finally have teeth in my mouth!”

For Chowdhury, who completed Carr’s treatments before graduating, caring for Carr from start to finish was a cornerstone of his education.

“It was the highlight of my career at dental school,” Chowdhury says. “Helping him and seeing the outcome reminds me of why I got into this profession. That experience made me want to become a better clinician and provide better care to every patient I come across.”

The feeling is mutual for Carr. “I felt like I gained a friend from this,” he says. “I actually took Onik’s graduation portraits.”

Throughout his experience, Carr says he felt in control of his care, thanks to the communication with his providers.

“Onik wasn’t afraid to ask me questions, and I think that’s what made him a great dentist,” says Carr, who was once a USC student and often photographs events around campus. “The care was excellent; I felt like a person, not just a number. It makes me proud to be a Trojan. Fight on!”

A SPECIAL PLACE

The Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic provides dental treatment to patients with physical, psychological or medical disabilities as well as the frail elderly — all populations that are less likely to be treated by private practitioners. The Special Patients Clinic was founded in 1987, and in 2015 was renamed after an endowment gift made by Assistant Dean of Distance Education Glenn Clark and Associate Dean of Community Health Programs and Hospital Affairs Roseann Mulligan MS ’87. Every USC dental student completes a week-long rotation in the clinic, which provides treatment to more than 700 patients annually.



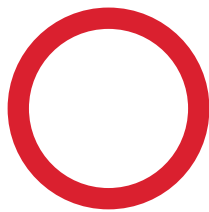
Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

ASPID TURNS



USC conferred its first international DDS in 1969 to seven Cuban refugees who fled their country following the revolution. Nearly 50 years later, it's helped nearly 1,200 foreign-trained dentists re-launch their dental careers in the United States.

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE MCCARTHY
PHOTOS BY **HANNAH BENET**



strow is celebrating a big milestone this year. Nearly 50 years ago, the first class of students, made up of seven Cuban refugees, graduated from its international dentistry program.

Originally called the USC Special Student Program and later the International Student Program, the **Advanced Standing Program for International Dentists (ASPID)** was created in 1967 in response to the Cuban refugee crisis of the late '50s/early '60s, when members of the professional class fled the country after Fidel Castro came into power. The United States government put out a call to schools to take in doctors and dentists to train them to practice here.

At the time, USC's ASPID was the first program of its kind in the nation.

A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

These days, dentists from all over the globe come to USC to learn the knowledge and skills found in the United States.

"It's well known that the U.S. has a very advanced dental education system, and oral health providers are very well-trained in all specialty areas," says Yang Chai PhD '91, DDS '96, associate dean of research and ASPID graduate, who is from China. "It is quite useful to be trained through the American system by attending a program like ASPID at USC."

ASPID is a two-year program that begins with an intensive summer introduction to American dentistry. Afterward, students — who must have already passed the National Dental Board Examination Part I to be accepted into the program — join their third-year colleagues in the regular DDS program. Following eight months of fundamental, technical and academic procedures training, their focus is directed toward clinical training, where they begin working with patients in USC's oral health clinics and community service programs.

"We get trained with the DDS students," says ASPID student Amrita Chakraborty DDS '19, who is from India. "I think that is a huge advantage for us, because we get to learn a lot about the culture."

Chai agrees, and says ASPID's diverse nature is an added bonus. "It's a group of individuals who bring their unique backgrounds into the program," he explains. "We not only learned from the professors at USC, but we also learned from our classmates. That was a really fun part of the program."

Melika Haghighi DDS '20 says her favorite procedure so far is learning about digital dentures, but one ASPID class in particular made a special impact. "Cultural sensitivity was an amazing course," she says. "There were lectures that made me cry because they were so sensitive, and they emphasized the importance of understanding different cultures. USC provides an environment that makes everyone comfortable."

continued on [page 25](#) »

ASPID BY THE NUMBERS

1967

The year the program began; it was the first dental program in the U.S. specifically designed for foreign-trained dentists.

7

Size of the first graduating class; all graduates were Cuban refugees, who had fled their native land following the revolution.

1,195

Number of ASPID graduates since the program began in 1967.

1,000+

Annual number of international dentists vying for one of 34 positions in each year's ASPID class.



Live PDF
Click links for additional content



STUDENT PROFILE

CATHERINE “TONY” BEGAZO DDS '19

Catherine “Tony” Begazo doesn’t have that nagging inner voice telling her what she *can’t* do. After finishing her dental degree at the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru, Begazo moved away from home — traditionally, a Peruvian woman lives with her parents until marriage, she says — to truly experience the world on her own terms. Her first stop was São Paulo, Brazil, where she completed her master’s degree. Afterward, she headed to Amsterdam to earn a doctorate degree before moving to Germany with her new husband. In all, she’s practiced dentistry in five countries. In 2015, Begazo moved to California, where her husband took a job in Sacramento, and she and their 10-year-old son, Yurac, moved to L.A. The long distance leaves much of the parenting on Begazo’s shoulders, even while she works toward her DDS. But it doesn’t faze her. “This is my passion,” she says. “There’s nothing better for me than doing what I love.”

—John Hobbs MA '14



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



STUDENT PROFILE

RENE GACIVES VEGA DDS '19

Dentistry doesn't pay in Cuba — at least it didn't for Rene Gacives Vega, a practicing orthodontist, who was earning less than a taxi driver. Living on the communist island that's had an adversarial past with America, Gacives Vega couldn't just pack up his family and leave. He had to wait for a passport through an invitation from his Cuban-American relatives. Even more difficult, he had to make the journey without his wife and children. He learned about USC's international dentistry program from fellow Cuban Kent Toca DDS '92 and decided to apply, crediting the decision as one of the best he's made. Two and a half years later, he was able to bring his wife and children to join him. After graduating, he wants to give back to the community. "I've found a generous country that welcomed us, and I think that is the least I can do," he explains.

—Yasmine Pezeshkpour MCM '16



Live PDF
Click links for additional content



STUDENT PROFILE

GAUEN LEE DDS '20

Gauen Lee isn't one to let gender hold her back. In South Korea, she was among the best and brightest, receiving her dental degree from Seoul National University and then becoming the first-ever female oral surgery resident at a South Korean hospital. Despite her professional success, she felt fettered by gender limitations. Lee left behind her successful practice to pursue a dental career in the United States. At USC, she shines both as a student and an experienced dentist. She no longer stresses over questions about how she manages to run a successful practice despite being a woman or why she and her husband don't have children. Instead, she is able to focus on her dream of providing dental care to people from all walks of life. "Living and working in Southern California is a dream come true," she says.

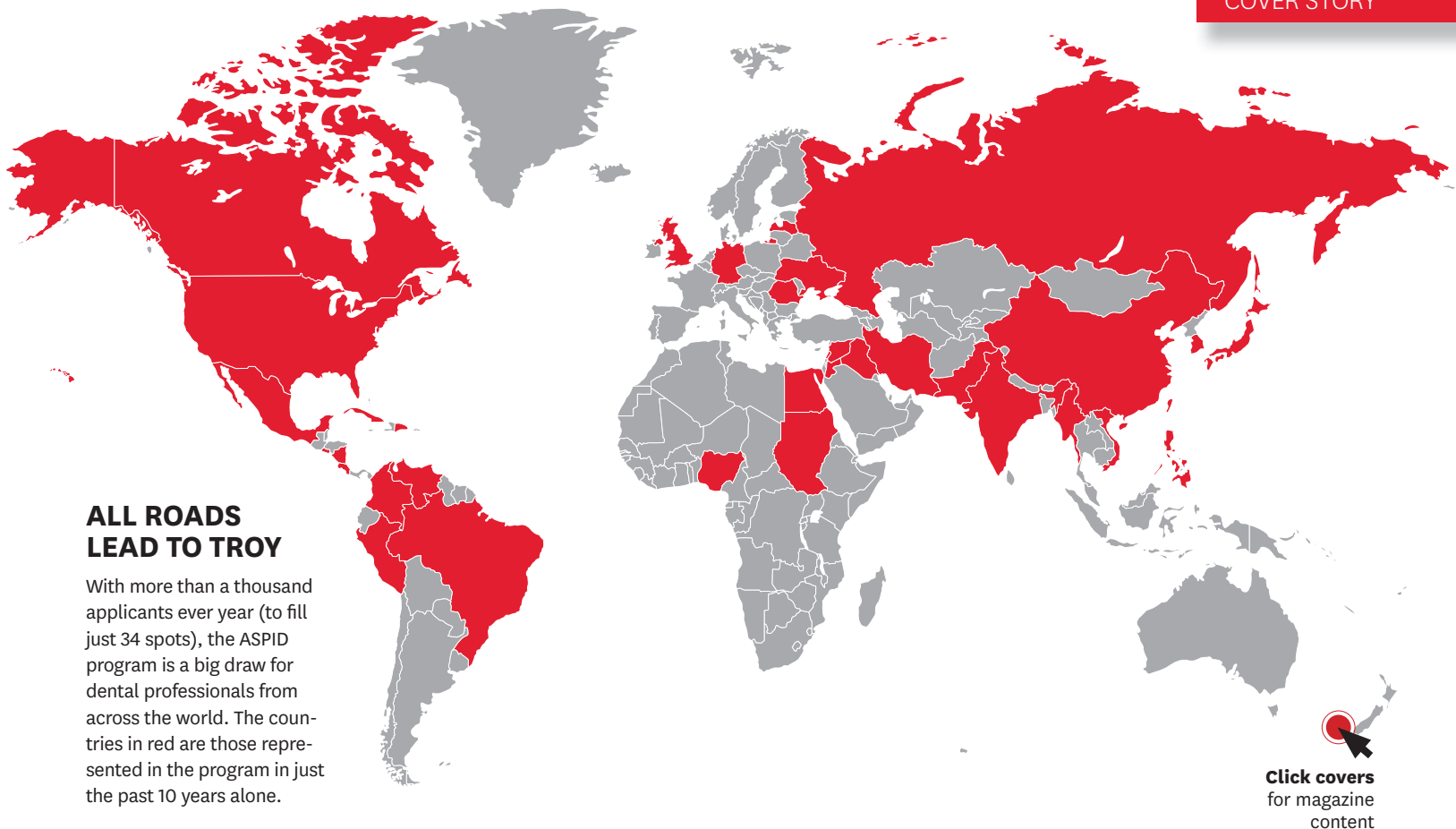
—Yasmine Pezeshkpour MCM '16



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

ALL ROADS LEAD TO TROY

With more than a thousand applicants ever year (to fill just 34 spots), the ASPID program is a big draw for dental professionals from across the world. The countries in red are those represented in the program in just the past 10 years alone.



Click covers
for magazine
content

« continued from [page 21](#)

EYE OPENER ON SKID ROW

Haghighi was born and raised in Iran but studied dentistry in Dubai. After graduation, she practiced for a year but felt her environment was too limiting. So Haghighi started researching different countries to see how to take her skills to the next level. She moved to the United States and started volunteering at USC's mobile clinic and the John Wesley Community Health dental clinic on Skid Row, which validated her decision to apply to ASPID.

"My experience working on Skid Row was amazing," she explains. "I witnessed the impact USC has on oral health and the community. I chose USC because, to me, it's more satisfying to have that influential effect on the community rather than in private practice. I saw that USC would prepare me for that."

A HANDS-ON EDUCATION

The challenges international dentists face in the United States are not only cultural. Since every country practices dentistry differently,

dentists who want to earn a DDS need to learn all aspects of standard care. "They need to learn the material," says Eddie Sheh DDS '91, PROS '99, who is not only an ASPID graduate but also its current director. "They need to know the rules and the language. Everything. Just like if you are a doctor, and you want to practice in the U.S., you need to know how we do things."

Sheh was a dentist in Taiwan and says his schooling was vastly different than the hands-on training USC provides to its students. "USC is very strong in practicing how to do it in a simulation lab and then treating many, many patients until you graduate," he says. "Not many other schools in other parts of the world are like that."

In a lot of countries, dental school starts right after high school and is a six-year program. In Taiwan, when Sheh was studying, fifth-year students were allowed to go to the hospital and observe faculty perform procedures.

"If you were lucky, you got to step in and do a few procedures. If not, you just watched," Sheh says. "You might be doing a lot of pedi-

atric dentistry because they're busy, and they need your help. Or you'd just be watching someone do a crown preparation, and you didn't get to touch it. In my case, I never actually completed a crown preparation or a denture. I just watched."

What USC does is simply everything, according to Sheh. Students get clinical training in which they are actually treating multiple patients with differing procedures until they are perfected. "You get to practice what you are trained in," he says. "You know exactly what to do."

STRIVING FOR PERFECTION

ASPID's curriculum is packed with both didactic and practical courses, according to Chai. "We spent a lot of time learning in the classroom and also doing lab work to finish our requirements. It was fun because we're always among friends, joking around and telling stories. It was filled with both theory and practice."

continued on [page 27](#) »



STUDENT PROFILE

SUBASHINI NATARAJAN DDS '20

Subashini Natarajan's story is an unlikely one. The self-described "village girl" grew up in a remote South Indian town to parents who didn't attend college. Despite any limitations, Natarajan graduated from **Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University**, South India's most prestigious medical school, with a master of science in dentistry. "My family being unable to pay for my education helped me ... [accomplish] my goals since there was no other way than working hard and being perseverant to make my dreams come true," she says. After graduation, she and her husband visited the United States, where she met and volunteered for several international dentists. Determined to establish her own career in the United States, she applied to USC's ASPID program. After graduation, Natarajan hopes to give back to the world that has given her so much. "My mission is to serve not only my community but society at large, thus [working] toward a more humane world through more smiling faces," she says.

—Yerandy Pacheco '21



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

« continued from [page 25](#)

Chakraborty notes two main differences between her schooling in India and with ASPID. “Number one, you are trained to become a perfectionist,” she says. “USC teaches you to not do work that is just passable. They teach you to strive to do really good work. Another would be professionalism — how to approach patients, how to explain treatments and basically how treat a patient.”

Treatment planning is the major emphasis of the program, Chai says, and students spend a lot of time learning how to provide a comprehensive treatment plan for patients along with doing procedures.

SELECTING THE WORLD’S BEST

ASPID accepts 34 students each year out of the more than 1,000 who apply. A faculty committee screens the individuals and picks 150 to come in for a two-day interview. The first day, applicants undergo a group interview with faculty and staff. The second day is spent performing a practical lab. “Out of those exams, we pick 34 based on highest grades in different criteria. We rank them from 1 to 100, and the first 34 get to come in.”

The ASPID Class of 2020 is 67 percent female; 63 percent of the class are international students requiring a student visa, 29 percent are U.S. citizens and 8 percent are permanent U.S. residents. One hundred percent of the class has earned a foreign bachelor of dental surgery, doctor of dental surgery or doctor of dental medicine degree.

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

Another obstacle international dentists face when they come here is the feeling of starting from square one. After completing years of schooling and practicing dentistry in their countries, often the only jobs they can secure in the United States at first is as dental assistants.

“You graduate from your own country, and you are called a doctor,” Haghighi says. “Then you come here and you have to repeat everything.”

As an ASPID alumnus, Sheh understands what the students go through. “I understand what they have to endure. That’s the good thing — they know I graduated from the program, and I can tell them what to expect when they complete it.”

The majority of ASPID alumni stay Stateside, Sheh says. “That is why they come here. Unless they have other reasons to go back, like for their parents, I would say 99 percent stay here. That was what the program was designed for.”

Whether students stay here or return to their countries, the training they receive with ASPID is unrivaled.

“USC has such a long history and very strong reputation in the community as one of the leading institutions for educating future dentists,” Chai says. “And naturally, everyone who wants to learn how to practice the best dentistry possible will come to USC.”

ROLE CALL

ASPID Alumni

They not only completed the ASPID program; they went on to shape future generations of USC dental grads by becoming Ostrow faculty members. How did the program help these ASPID alumni become successful dental practitioners in the United States?



“The ASPID program provided a platform for me to establish a network of connections with different experts in the field of dentistry, which has been such an invaluable part of my professional life.”

—**Yang Chai PhD '91, DDS '96,**
Associate Dean of Research



“Joining ASPID was one of the best decisions I have made. I feel lucky that I studied in a dental school with a world-class reputation, excellent educational components and state-of-art equipment and facility.”

—**Mehdi Mohammadi DDS '12, MS '18**
Director of JWCH Dental Clinic



“ASPID was my ‘second chance’ at learning what I could not or did not learn my first round of dental school. And USC just happens to be the best place to learn clinical dentistry in the world.”

—**Eddie Sheh DDS '91, PROS '99,**
ASPID Director



“ASPID gave me great opportunities to learn from world-class clinical educators and prominent researchers. I got to know excellent colleagues from around the world who love dentistry and are determined to continue this professional career in the United States.”

—**Phuu Han OFPOM '09, DDS '12,**
Clinical Assistant Professor

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **MURPHY LIPPINCOTT**



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



STUDENT PROFILE

ARMEN BABAIAN DDS '19

It's finally Armen Babaian's turn. The 53-year-old foreign-trained dentist left behind Iraq — and his burgeoning practice — in 1992 after years of conflict. Fleeing with his wife and their baby girl, Babaian skipped through Jordan and Spain before immigrating to America. Over the years, he's worked as a dental assistant, a dental office manager and a pianist (he's trained on classical piano) to make ends meet. In 2008, as he was about to take his licensing exam, he was diagnosed with stage-3 cancer, temporarily sidelining his professional aspirations. Once recovered, Babaian put his career on hold again to focus on getting his son and daughter through college. Now that they've earned their bachelor's degrees, they encouraged their dad to apply to USC. Citing his sacrifices, they told him, "You have to start thinking about yourself. It's your turn now, dad." And next year, after nearly three decades, Babaian graduates and takes that long-awaited turn.

—John Hobbs MA '14



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



STUDENT PROFILE


**MELIKA
HAGHIGHI
DDS '20**

Melika Haghighi has something to prove. Born to a 16-year-old mother in Iran, Haghighi faced long odds, and those odds got longer when her parents divorced. “Children of divorce are thought to be doomed to failure,” Haghighi explains. Determined not to let that stigma define her, she pushed herself, graduating at the top of her high school class and the top of her class again from the Ajman University of Science and Technology, where she studied dentistry. She then set her sights on USC to further her dental education, with hopes of going on to study oral and maxillofacial surgery. Every accomplishment, every degree, every certificate are in tribute to her mother, who still lives in Iran and went back to school to study psychology. “My mother is the shining light of my life,” Haghighi says. “Watching her work so hard for me motivated me to prove to her that she had succeeded in raising me.”

—John Hobbs MA '14



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



*“They have treated
me like a king ... it’s like
we’re buddies.”
—Norman Beals*

Golden Years

By 2030, older adults will outnumber children, making it more important than ever for Ostrow students to better understand the complex dental needs of this growing population.

BY JAMIE WETHERBE MA '04

PHOTO BY HANNAH BENET



PHOTO BY [HANNAH BENET](#)

Collin Kyongmin Lee DDS '19 and Norman Beals share a laugh.

The night before an important date with his wife, Norman Beals had a dental emergency. “While I was eating, my two front teeth broke,” Beals recalls. “My wife and I were really disappointed, not so much for what happened to me, but because it would upset the plans we had, which were quite big.”

Beals, who recently turned 102, is a resident at the **Hollenbeck Palms** retirement community, which USC partnered with in 2001 to provide dental care to its residents.

“The dentist knew how upset we were, so she came in early the next day to see me,” Beals says. “I walked out of the [clinic] with two front teeth that looked as real as could be.”

Ostrow faculty and students have long provided comprehensive care for the elderly — both at Hollenbeck Palms, a nonprofit long-term care facility, and at the **Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic**, which provides treatment for medically complex cases.

AMERICA’S ELDERLY BOOM

Having a geriatric clinical rotation built into the curriculum gives Ostrow students valuable, hands-on clinical experience with this ever-growing population.

The **U.S. Census Bureau** projects that by the year 2030, one in five residents will be over 65, with older adults outnumbering children.

“Even though students might not specialize in geriatric dentistry, they are going to see elderly patients,” says Lisa Hou ’08, DDS ’12, MS ’17, director of the USC Mobile Clinic at Hollenbeck Palms. “The entire population is aging, and it’s important to understand how to treat geriatric patients safely and effectively.”

During their fourth year, USC students are required to complete rotations at the Hollenbeck Mobile Dental Clinic and the Special Patients Clinic.

“As the population ages, there will be a greater need for dentists who are willing and able to treat these patients safely,” says Bianca

Yau DDS ’19, who recently completed her rotation at Hollenbeck Palms. “It was important for me to gain some experience with this population, which needs more specialized care.”

NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH

Hollenbeck Palms is home to a range of patients: Some are independent and come and go as they please, while others require higher levels of care.

“Students see patients who need different modifications,” Hou says. “The ideal treatment might not work for an older patient, so it’s a lot of problem-solving based on patient history and within the limitations of the clinic itself.”

During their time at Hollenbeck Palms, students are paired up to see more able-bodied patients in the morning. Come afternoon, they often provide bedside care to residents at the Hollenbeck Palms’ skilled nursing facility.

“There’s so much attention to detail — how

continued on [page 32](#) »



Lisa Hou '08, DDS '12, MS '17 prepares Gloria Schwed for an extraction so that dentures can be delivered.

PHOTO BY HANNAH BENET

far to lean someone back in the chair or how loud I need to talk,” Yau says. “We learned how to transfer patients from a wheelchair to a dental chair — something you wouldn’t even think about until you have a patient in a wheelchair. It was really eye-opening.”

Students encounter patients with a range of medical issues from heart conditions to diabetes, and preparations can involve more than treatment modifications.

“If a patient’s diabetes isn’t controlled well, they could have an episode in the chair,” Hou explains. “We try to teach students what to do if something like that happens.”

Older patients often take medications that can affect dental treatments, from prescriptions that cause dry mouth and affect dental hygiene to cardiovascular drugs that can interact with local anesthetics.

“There are so many new medications coming out that I can’t even keep track,” Hou says. “It’s more about making students aware of what they need to look at to treat a patient safely.”

While patients might share a particular

medical condition, Hou stresses to students that there’s no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to treatment.

“I think that in the past, we had a preconceived notion that all older adults were the same,” Hou says. “They all have missing teeth, and they all need dentures. That’s no longer the case. It’s important to look at the patient as a whole and see each individual’s needs, physically and emotionally.”

OVERCOMING PAST TRAUMA

Gloria Schwed, a 95-year-old Hollenbeck Palms resident, is deathly afraid of the dentist.

“When I was very young, 10 or so, a dentist pulled a molar without anesthetic,” she recalls. “Another dentist hit an artery in the roof of my mouth, and I lost eight cups of blood. I’ve had a rather difficult time.”

During certain treatments, which have included extractions and a partial, Schwed requested to be sedated, which can be complicated given her age.

Stephanie Alarcon DDS '19, who treated Schwed at the Special Patients Clinic, used different techniques to treat Schwed safely and comfortably.

“Because her anxiety is so high, we’ve used an oral sedative, and that has worked really well,” Alarcon explains. “We’ve also meditated

with her, and that lowered her blood pressure significantly. It’s difficult for her to stay in the chair because she has back and shoulder pain, so using a pillow helps.”

Alarcon saw a change in Schwed’s demeanor during her most recent appointment.

“We took impressions, and Gloria was very pleasant. Afterward she said, ‘Oh that was easy!’ Alarcon recalls. “I loved that appointment. I’ve been seeing her awhile, and I feel like we’ve developed a trust. I hope that continues.”

Schwed agrees that her anxiety has improved. “[The students] do their best to calm me and pay attention to my fears,” she says. “They’re just so friendly, and they go slowly, explaining each step.”

When it comes to being a good provider to the geriatric population, Hou says students must learn to consider more than patients’ dental and medical needs.

“You have to care about the patient and be empathic,” she says. “It’s about being a good listener.”

When Hou shows students around Hollenbeck Palms, the tour often includes a stop to chat with Beals.

“[Lisa] likes me, and she feels that I have an input that would be of benefit to the students she brings by,” he says. “They have treated me like a king, and at such a nice level, it’s like we’re buddies.”



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

“[The students] do their best to calm me and pay attention to my fears. They’re just so friendly, and they go slowly, explaining each step.”

—Gloria Schwed





Instead of craning the neck downward, Kim suggests maintaining a neutral neckline and hinging from the hips.

PHOTO BY [HANNAH BENET](#)



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

OUNCE OF PREVENTION

An innovative collaboration between USC's physical therapy and dentistry programs leads to work with less pain.

BY KATHARINE GAMMON

Minalie Jain DDS '21 had experienced pain before, but when she started to work in the dental school's simulation ("sim") lab, the shooting pain in her arm caught her attention.

The sim lab involves a lot of fine handwork, with students bent over molds of teeth. The intensity of the muscle contractions left Jain in stabbing and throbbing pain.

Fortunately for her, the dental school and physical therapy program have teamed up for a unique collaboration to use physical therapy skills to help dental students deal with the physical stress caused by dentistry. Jain now does physical therapy to help her in her work.

HUNCHED OVER FOR HOURS

Dental students had always had one lecture on ergonomics from a physical therapy professor, but when Kenneth Kim DPT '11, instructor of clinical physical therapy, took over that lecture, he thought the schools could do more together. "I felt like a lecture once a year wasn't enough — especially because we were seeing so many dental students at the clinic," he explained. "Sometimes the students were getting pretty emotional because of all the pain."

Kim worked with Jin-Ho Phark, associate professor of clinical dentistry, to set up the ergonomics and body mechanics collaboration after the lecture. This is the first year that physical therapy students go to the dental students' sim lab once a week, for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. "We can follow up on body position and patient position, and they have been really receptive," Kim says.

The biggest issues that dental students face are forces on their hands, necks and arms as they work on models of patients. "They sometimes forget to adjust the patient to make their own bodies work more easily," Kim says. "That means that students can stay hunched over, in that position for hours, which causes neck and back pain. We come in and make a small adjustment, which results in a huge outcome."

continued on [page 36](#) »

DENTAL ERGONOMICS TIPS

Did you know that 70 percent of dental professionals report musculoskeletal disorders annually and that these disorders are one of the four top reasons for early retirement? You don't have to take it sitting down. Here are some of Kenneth Kim's tips to ensure you keep your body in tip-top shape while practicing dentistry:

While practicing dentistry, keep yourself grounded with wide base of support.

Keep your feet flat on the ground to create a wide base of support. Maintaining this position allows you to hinge at the hips when bending forward to maintain good body mechanics while working with your patients.

Maintain proper neck and spine alignment.

It's important that you find your neutral spine position. This can be done by experiencing both extremes of spine position to find a comfortable position. Once you understand your neutral position, the goal is to maintain it as best as possible during your workday. Hanging out with forward head posture can lead to neck pain, headaches and temporomandibular dysfunction. Spending hours with slouched lower back position can lead to lower back, neck pain and lots of misery.

Share the wealth in order to save your neck.

Hinge from your hips with neutral lower back position to look down instead of just bending from your neck. Moving from your hips allows for less strain on your lower back and neck.

Keep your elbows by your side and level with the patient's mouth.

The further you keep your elbows from your side, the tighter your pectoralis (chest) muscles will become, putting the nerves that run beneath them at risk for compression. Maintain neutral elbow position while practicing dentistry.

Don't bend down; look down.

Take advantage of the loupes on your head to illuminate and magnify your view into the oral cavity. Bending over for long periods of time can lead to injury.

Practice makes perfect.

Practice can help preserve your body. Practice finding your neutral position, hinge from your hips and adjust your patient position to allow for an easier workday, a pain-free body and a long career in dentistry.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



« continued from [page 35](#)

A WIDESPREAD PROBLEM

Dentists are particularly prone to musculoskeletal disorders: 70 percent of dentists suffer from them, compared to 12 percent of surgeons. That's mainly because dentistry requires lots of repetitive motions, especially by the hand and wrist, as well as sustained postures, Phark says.

Phark explains that students in the SIM lab work on mannequins, learning to use drills inside tooth models. The way they position

their necks forward or slouch their backs can often result in lower back and shoulder pain. "We see that throughout the years students in dental school don't always take care of their posture while they perform procedures," he says. That's hard on a body, especially considering students are working in the same position for eight hours a day.

In addition to the lectures and hands-on help, students can often position themselves better by using their loupes, which allows them to maintain a certain distance from a

patient. "With lenses on the loupes, you can't really adjust them so there is a working length in which they have to position themselves," Phark says.

MIXING IT UP

Kenneth Gozali DH '18, DDS '22 uses his loupes to remind himself to keep a good posture and position with patients. He focuses on sitting straight, having the right chair height and patient height — all of which make



“Dr. Kenny Kim showed me the importance of practicing great ergonomics and building solid habits early on,” says Nicholas Tan DDS ’22 who explained how hours of poor posture in the sim lab began to take its toll on his body.

PHOTO BY **HANNAH BENET**

it easier to do his work. “It was a little strange because I was not all that used to sitting all day, but now I like to switch it up: I’ll sit down for two or three patients and then stand up for the next ones,” he says, adding that in dentistry it’s all about keeping your hands and arms in good working order. “You can’t do much with a bad back or bad arm.”

Phark has used the collaboration as a refresher in his own work: He noticed there were days when he came home in pain. “My back is hurting, my neck is hurting, I have to maintain

a proper posture myself,” he says. “It’s not just preaching; we have to practice ourselves.” He works on Wednesdays in the USC Dental Faculty Practice for 12 hours. “I basically cannot survive the day if I’m not sitting properly.”

A TWO-WAY EDUCATION

The dental students have been very receptive to the instruction and advice, since many of them experience a variety of issues that we can help them navigate and problem solve, whether its pain, fatigue or difficulty visualizing target areas within the mouth, says Ashley Wallace DPT ’19. She has also learned things from the dental students. “I’ve learned the dentistry-specific language in regards to quadrants and tooth surfaces, and how the position of both the patient and dentist change depending on the target surface, procedure and tools required, or whether direct or indirect vision is used.”

Wallace says it’s been valuable to adapt her training to a specific audience like the dental students. “My hope is that if they implement proper body mechanics now, they will have less need for physical therapy down the road.”

THREE WEEKS TO BREAK A HABIT

Kim hopes to continue and expand the collaboration in the coming years. This year, the DPT students are only working in the dental school for five weeks — and they are trying to figure out how to do more in the future. “For the first year, five weeks is pretty good,” he says. “It takes three weeks to break a bad habit, like slouching or stooping. With our presence, we can get them to be more mindful about their posture going forward.”

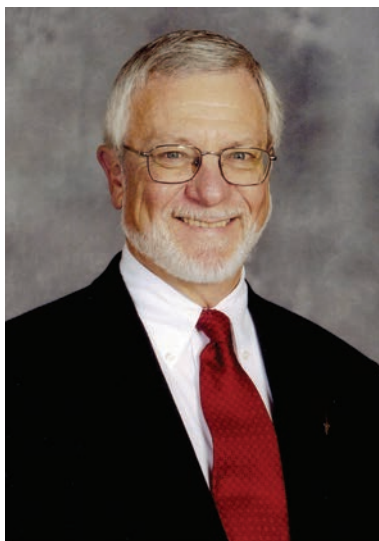
Jain will continue to do physical therapy exercises, which she says are helping her pain. An X-ray showed calcified tendonitis in her rotator cuff, a genetic condition that was exacerbated by her dental school work. She’s grateful for the extra perspective and help she gained from the collaboration. “Ergonomics is very crucial in dental school because forming a bad habit is really easy since it is very difficult seeing in the mouth,” she says. “It is important to keep the back straight and the arms in appropriate positioning so it doesn’t cause strain on it, even for people who do not have arm issues.”

STRENGTH IN ERGONOMICS STUDENT CLUB

Micah Tabanfar DDS ’20 and Nathan Nourian DDS ’20 didn’t want to sacrifice their backs to build dental careers. As first-year dental students who all too often found themselves hunched over their sim lab mannequins, Tabanfar and Nourian set out to perfect their posture, reaching out to seasoned dentists for advice and even beginning yoga to strengthen their cores. Hoping to share their love of ergonomics with classmates, the two began the Strength in Ergonomics Club, which they say is dedicated to prolonging the careers of young dental professionals here at Ostrow. Meetings include lectures from dentists and physical therapy professionals as well as yoga sessions with a certified instructor.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content



Remembering RAYMOND MELROSE

1936-2018

Ostrow mourns loss of Professor Emeritus Raymond Melrose

Professor Emeritus and longtime Ostrow supporter Raymond Melrose passed away on Oct. 8, 2018 at the age of 81.

Melrose served the USC dental community for 35 years as a faculty member, before retiring in 2001. Since then, he and his wife, Director of Dental Hygiene Diane Melrose MA '11, have been steadfast supporters of the Ostrow community and in regular attendance at school events.

Melrose graduated with his doctor of dental surgery degree in 1962 from Northwestern University. Afterward, he completed military service as a Captain in the U.S. Army Dental Corps, serving in the Panama Canal Zone. In 1968, he completed a dental internship and residency in oral pathology at the U.S. Veterans Administration Hospital in Long Beach.

He joined USC's faculty as a special lecturer in 1966, rising to the rank of professor. During his 35 years of service, the tenured professor held a key number of leadership positions within the dental school, serving as the assistant director of continuing education, co-director of the USC/LAC Oral Pathology Residency Program, associate dean of academic affairs, chair of

the Department of Diagnostic Sciences and chair of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.

He retired in 2001 and was named Professor Emeritus in honor of his faithful service and in anticipation of his continued involvement in the USC community.

Since then, Melrose taught at the LAC+USC Medical Center and at the Martin Luther King Jr. General Hospital, providing oral pathology conferences to the residents in oral and maxillofacial surgery at both hospitals and to the Department of Pathology at LAC+USC.

He also remained active in the USC dental community, serving alongside Diane on the school's Friends of Dentistry organization since 2004.

Melrose was very active in organized dentistry, serving presidential terms with the **American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology**, the **American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology** and the **Southern California Academy of Oral Pathology**. He was a member of the **American Dental Association**, the **California Dental Association** and served as a member of the **ADA Commission on Dental Accreditation**. He also served on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology for nine years.

Outside of dentistry, Melrose was a longtime volunteer with the **American Cancer Society** (ACS). He served as past-president of the ACS' California Division, honorary life member of the California Board of Directors and a founding member of the ACS Cancer Action Network, the organization's political arm. Melrose spent his career helping to develop public policy aimed at smoking cessation. He successfully lobbied the L.A. City Council to ban smoking in restaurants and helped develop smoking bans in the nation's airports. He earned a Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award and the St. George Award, which is the highest honor the ACS bestows on a volunteer. In honor of his achievements in tobacco control, the Northwestern University Alumni Association awarded him its coveted Service to Society Award in 2010.

Most recently, Ray and Diane made a donation to establish the Ray & Diane Melrose Faculty Lounge in 2017. This lounge, located on the fourth floor of the Norris Dental Science Center, serves as an enduring tribute to their relationship, which began in the halls of the USC dental school.

Melrose was preceded in death by his son Matthew and is survived by his wife Diane and son Brenden.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

The following are gifts made in honor or tribute to individuals who have made a lasting impact on the USC dental community:

In Honor of the Class of 2018
Health Professionals
Insurance Services

**In Honor of
Ms. Sandra A. Bolivar**
Dr. M. Marlene Godoy

In Honor of Dr. Vivian Chui
Dr. and Mrs. Edward
and Virginia Lew

**In Honor of
Dr. David W. Eggleston**
Ms. Marjorie E. Cavalieri

In Honor of Ms. Jenna Fishman
Dr. Scott A. Fishman

**In Honor of Dr. and Mrs.
Peter and Michele Hansen**
Dr. J. Gabus

In Honor of Dr. Kris Murakawa
Mr. Herbert Kanigher

In Honor of Dr. Carl Rieder
Dr. Frank T. Curry

In Honor of Dr. Eddie Sheh
Dr. Leon F. Unterman

In Honor of Mr. Will Wang
Mr. Brandon Shelton

**In Memory of Dr. Norman C.
Bitter**
Dr. M. Marlene Godoy

In Memory of Dr. William Boyle
Anonymous

**In Memory of
Dr. Donald Curnutte**
Dr. M. Marlene Godoy

**In Memory of
Dr. Clifton O. Dummett**
Dr. M. Marlene Godoy

**In Memory of
Dr. Charles Goldstein**
Dr. M. Marlene Godoy

**In Memory of
Dr. Aleli E. Gonzalez**
Mr. Leonard Bernstein

In Memory of Dr. Robert Hanel
Dr. Mark Collons
Mrs. Najwa L. Hanel

**In Memory of
Dr. William B. Hentosz**
Dr. Derick T. Tagawa

In Memory of Dr. James A. Holt
Dr. Dennis W. Saffro

**In Memory of
Dr. Robert L. Ibsen**
Dr. and Mrs. John J.
and Marcia Lytle

**In Memory of
Mr. John McLaughlin**
Dr. Richard A. Mays

**In Memory of
Dr. Robert S. McNamara**
Dr. R. Andrew Girardot

**In Memory of
Dr. Raymond J. Melrose**
Ms. Sandra A. Bolivar
Dr. Mark Collons
Dr. Robert E. Huntington
Dr. and Mrs. Edward
and Virginia Lew
Dr. Dennis W. Saffro
Dr. Leon F. Unterman

In Memory of Mrs. Loesje Miller
Dr. Mark Collons

In Memory of Dr. Robert Ziehm
Dr. M. Marlene Godoy

This list reflects gifts made between May 2018 and October 2018. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of these tributes, an error or omission may occur. Please contact the Office of External Relations and Student Life at (213) 740-0428 or ostrow.development@usc.edu if such an error has occurred.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

*“Life is not dentistry.
Dentistry is life.”*

PHOTO BY HANNAH BENET

At the age of 7, I extracted my first tooth. I couldn't stand watching my little sister cry from tooth pain. So, I wrapped a string around her lower front tooth and pulled it. She immediately stopped crying and gave me a confused smile.

Maybe it was the fact that she was holding her tooth on a string or that the pain had gone away, but she had stopped crying. I knew in that moment that, just like my uncle, I wanted to be a dentist.

His practice was in a rural area in Iran. I used to watch him relieve his patients' dental pain, and they always left smiling. Unlike my friends who went traveling or camping, I chose to spend summer breaks with my uncle in his practice, learning compassion, kindness, genuine care and the importance of giving back to the community.

Maybe he didn't have the most advanced technological tools, but he taught me how to be selfless, patient and grateful. I knew I wanted to continue his legacy and to let patients know they will be OK.

I came a few steps closer to becoming a dentist when my parents moved to the states. After finishing USC's dental hygiene program, where I gained an immense amount of dental and patient care experience, I worked as a registered hygienist and continued my studies toward a doctor of dental surgery degree at USC.

During my six years at USC, every day was an unforgettable

lesson on its own — especially during all the local and international trips to Mexico with AYUDA to aid people in need of dental care.

But it wasn't until I met a life-altering person, a 13-year-old Hispanic girl, that I felt the same chills my little sister gave me when she smiled. I treated this patient during one of my mobile clinic rotations in Bakersfield. The girl was quite shy and spoke broken English, but I could see her watching me very curiously as I treated her.

After her treatment, she gave me a warm hug and thanked me in English, with a huge genuine smile. After the rotation was over, she was able to find me on social media and sent me a drawing and the following message: “Hello, how are you? I did this for you, but I was ashamed to give it to you. But I was very happy to meet you. And you do a very good job. My respect for you. I also want to be a dentist like you. Congratulations on your work, and thank you for taking care of me so well.”

It was in that moment that I knew I had made my uncle and my parents proud. I could see the same sparks in her curious eyes as I had when I was 7 years old. I was able to relieve her pain, make her smile and most importantly, she wanted to become a dentist too!

Today, as a newly graduated dentist, I understand there is so much more to discover about dentistry. As a general dentist, I look forward to new inspirational moments and learning experiences. I'm humbled and honored to be able to achieve my dream, but I would not be anywhere near where I am without the support of my parents, husband and my Trojan family — especially my mentor Dr. Helia Hooshangi PROS '09, who showed me the sky is the limit. Life is not dentistry. Dentistry is life.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

Thank You

ALUMNI, FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

Our sincere thanks to the **3,398 generous donors** who supported the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry during the historic Campaign for the University of Southern California, which began in July 2010.

Your participation in the largest successful fundraising campaign in dental education history helped to accomplish many amazing things, including:



Together, we created 25 new scholarships, providing more than \$2 million in annual tuition aid to deserving students.



We served 192,558 patients through USC Dentistry's community clinics and partnerships, fixed clinics and the nation's largest mobile dental fleet outside the U.S. military.



We established three new endowed faculty positions to continue attracting the world's best instructors.



We recruited six new faculty researchers who have brought with them nearly \$19 million in government funding to ignite scientific discovery and innovation.



We named the Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic as it celebrated its 30th year serving medically complex patients.



We increased USC Dentistry's endowment from \$54 million to \$160 million, creating a lasting financial investment to fuel the school into the future.



We launched seven new degree programs in orofacial pain and oral medicine, oral pathology and radiology, pain medicine, biomedical implants and tissue engineering, biomaterials and digital dentistry and geriatric dentistry.

Your generosity has ensured that USC Dentistry remains one of the premier dental education institutions by advancing transformative and translational research, hands-on clinical instruction and top-tier patient care. Thank you.

Herman Ostrow
School of Dentistry
of USC

University of Southern California
925 W. 34th Street DEN 202
Los Angeles, CA 90089
dentistry.usc.edu

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

University of
Southern
California

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR TROJAN DENTAL FAMILY

Visit nvite.com/community/uscdentistry



View and register for upcoming events, see past event photos, update contact information and more ...
Questions, contact the Office of External Relations & Student Life at **(213) 740-0428**.



Live PDF
Click links for
additional
content

Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of **USC**