

Dear Ostrow Community:

I hope this week's Dean's Message finds you all safe and healthy. It's hard to believe that we're nearing the end of the academic school year — even if March 19, 2020 the beginning of the “Safer at Home” social distancing effort feels like it occurred nearly 10 years ago today. We continue to be in awe of you — faculty, staff, residents and students — for your patience, fortitude and positivity as we work to get back to a semblance of normalcy.

As with the end of any academic year, we take time to celebrate the accomplishments of our outgoing class. Obviously, this year will necessarily look a lot different — with celebrations taking to the web, and an official in-person ceremony being postponed until May 2021. Web-based or not, though, we are ready to honor the graduating **Class of 2020** with a series of virtual events — from a Senior Awards Ceremony slideshow to a special Commencement celebration video. The faculty and I could not be prouder of this outgoing class. They've handled this stressful exit with grace, resilience and positivity. If this class is any indication of what's to come, then the future of dentistry is in incredibly capable hands. I look forward to celebrating all of your accomplishments next week. The virtual events will kick off Friday, May 15 at 8:30 a.m. Be on the lookout for more detailed information early next week. Thank you to the **Office of Student Life and Well-Being** for their efforts in bringing this programming to life.

If you've gone to the website anytime over the past day or two, you might've thought you landed on the wrong page. On Wednesday, we rolled out a completely refreshed, [bold new Ostrow site](#). The last time we updated our website was in 2012, so this latest web refresh was long overdue. Thank you to the **Office of Communications** for their tireless work in bringing this website to fruition in just over a year, which, for those who don't know, is very quick in the web development world. I think this new website really sets us apart from our peers and is very user-friendly for students and patients alike.

I've detailed before the work necessary to reimagine our entire operation (classrooms, offices, patient care spaces and research labs) to ensure that we maintain a safe, healthy work environment, once we are able to return. This week, I would like to again acknowledge our clinical operations task force, composed of Drs. **Winston Chee, Yang Chai, Nam Cho, Sillas Duarte, Joyce Galligan, Roseann Mulligan** and Mrs. **Jill Yoshimi**, who have really gone above and beyond to ensure our patient care spaces will adhere to all of the CDC and University guidelines necessary to get back to the clinic floor. These individuals' expertise has been invaluable to me, and I thank them for all of their advice and efforts for the dental school.

In addition, and for the first time in our history, we have developed and implemented an online orientation to the clinic for the DDS class of 2022. The orientation is one week long, and the **Offices of Academic and Clinical Affairs**, along with faculty, staff and **Group Practice Directors**, should be thanked for their active participation in this collaborative effort.

Finally, I would like to thank **Robin Fox** and **Jennifer Jordan**, who have been incredibly hard at work to prepare reports for the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). As a result of the coronavirus crisis, CODA asked all of its accredited programs to provide it two reports — one report asking for how they've adapted to distance education modalities and another about how the ongoing crisis impacted the content, length and sequence of education for the Class of 2020. With 10 accredited programs, Jennifer and Robin had their work cut out for them, needing to put together 20 reports in total — no small feat. Thank you once again for all of your efforts.

Once again, please be on the lookout for more details early next week regarding our *online* commencement activities. Due to next Friday's celebrations, I will not be sending around my weekly update, but look to share information with you once more on Friday, May 22.

With that, I will sign off this week. Have a great weekend!

Stay safe, stay healthy and Fight On!

Avishai

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Dean

G. Donald and Marian James Montgomery

Professor of Dentistry