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## Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[2/19/2021]



### BI-WEEKLY DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear USC Dentistry Community:

Last week, our on-site students, faculty and staff finished their second dose of the Pfizer vaccine. Each day, we had student volunteers arrive at the Lyon Center — at times, really early — to help keep the operation running smoothly, doing everything from answering questions to keeping the lines of people organized to sitting with patients after their shot to make sure there were no immediate side effects, all under the direct supervision of **Dr. Mahvash Navazesh**. We had 85 students volunteer

their time — some working multiple four-hour shifts, despite all of the everyday demands of dental school. Of the 4,214 total vaccinations administered over the past month, Ostrow students were on-site volunteering for nearly 3,200 shots. I'd like to thank all of these students — and, of course, Dr. Navazesh — for so selflessly giving their time to the effort and getting to be part of something pretty historic.

As you know, we have several mobile clinics stationed not too far away from the UPC Campus, providing free oral care to children and their parents at the To Help Everyone (T.H.E.) Wellness Center in South Los Angeles. I had the honor of dropping by the site last week with Interim Chair of the Division of Dental Public Health and Pediatric Dentistry **Dr. Piedad Suarez** to meet with our students, faculty and staff to see all the amazing work they were doing. We both felt so proud to see firsthand all of their work — from providing comprehensive dental treatment to distributing oral health kits for Give Kids a Smile Day Month (!). This passion for giving back to the community is what being a Trojan Dental Professional is all about.



**L-R:** Dr. Sunny Fereshteh, Dean Avishai Sadan, T.H.E. Wellness Coordinator Miguel Topete, T.H.E. Chief Development and Communications Officer Cheryl Trinidad and Dr. Piedad Suarez

Photo: Gus Ruelas/USC

This week, we completed the last step of the review of our Craniofacial Biology (CBY) PhD program by the University Committee of Academic Review (UCAR). This rigorous process, which takes place every 10 years, is a thorough, multistep, internal and external evaluation process of the quality and rigor of the program under review. I am very proud to report that our CBY PhD program was, once again, cited as one of the most premier and eminent PhD programs in the field by the external site visitors. I want to acknowledge and thank **Dr. Michael Paine**, our PhD program director, for his exemplary leadership and hard work and everyone who participated in preparing our PhD program for this site visit. Among the many accolades the program received, Dr. Paine himself was cited as being an outstanding mentor to our PhD students.

You might have seen that we are proceeding with a virtual Research Day this year, taking place on May 26, 2021 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. This day, dedicated exclusively to scientific inquiry, is always one of my favorites. It was disappointing that we were not able to hold the event last year, but I am really excited to see all of the research that has taken place at Ostrow — including from the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and the USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy — over the past year. In addition to the regular showcasing of research posters and the awarding of prizes to brilliant young researchers, the day will feature a panel discussion about lessons that our research team, which has been really productive throughout the pandemic, have learned throughout 2020 and how to improve our research support for future challenges. Kudos to **Dr. Yang Chai, Dr. Mary Lawlor, Dr. Lori Michener, Dr. Parish Sedghizadeh, Dr. Bridget Samuels, Ms. Donna Castillo and Ms. Linda Hattemer** for finding an innovative way to host this event this year, despite the ongoing pandemic. If you plan to participate, you can submit your abstracts, which are due by March 19, 2021, via their [online portal](#). Be on the lookout for more information in the weeks to come.

On March, 6, our **Office of External Relations and Student Life** will be hosting a virtual Business Symposium for current students and recent alumni. Now in its third year, the event — which is being keynoted by **Mr. Paul Guggenheim**, Western Region President of Patterson Dental — gives students the opportunity to learn from presenters and alumni, who will talk about student-requested topics, including practice management, law and ethics, marketing and much more. Students, be on the lookout for an invitation and registration link for this free event in your e-mail soon. I'd like to thank the Office of Student Life and Well-Being, the Century Club Alumni Association and Patterson Dental for sponsoring this virtual event, taking place from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on March 6. And a special thanks to **Ms. Kim**

**Eeles, Ms. Danielle Barr** and **Ms. Mariam Agazaryan**, who have been instrumental in putting together this incredibly informative symposium.

With that, I wish you a great weekend. Stay safe, healthy and, as always, fight on!

*Avishai*

Avishai Sadan, DMD, MBA

Dean

G. Donald and Marion James Montgomery

Professor of Dentistry

Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC



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**Our mailing address is:**

Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC  
925 W. 34th Street, DEN 201, Los Angeles, CA 90089

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