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Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[4/2/2021]



DEAN'S BI-WEEKLY MESSAGE

Dear USC Dentistry Community:

You might have seen earlier this week that conditions in Southern California are continuing to improve, with both Los Angeles and Orange Counties qualifying for the orange tier, resulting in further easing of restrictions. It's great news — and evidence that all of the health and safety protocols we have implemented

and followed (wearing PPE, physical distancing, hand hygiene, etc.) are effective, so keep up the good work!

Our research community had been given permission to ramp up activity in their labs from 50 percent capacity to 100 percent capacity. Researchers have been instructed to continue adhering to all of the COVID mitigation protocols and are being encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible. This is really encouraging news for our dedicated researchers, who you might remember — led by **Dr. Yang Chai**, — helped set health and safety protocols for the entire university earlier on during the pandemic. I'm really happy they can increase their efforts, full-steam ahead, on their all-too-important work in our labs on both the UPC and HSC campuses. If you have any questions about specifics regarding the new guidance, visit research.usc.edu/coronavirus/.

In other pandemic-related news, Ostrow has partnered with the USC School of Pharmacy to train dental school faculty as well as dental students/residents to actually administer the COVID-19 vaccines at USC sites. This is a really unique experience for members of our community to be a part of the fabric of history, helping to eradicate a once-in-a-century (hopefully) pandemic. I would like to thank **Dr. Joyce Galligan** and **Dr. Mahvash Navazesh** for forging this partnership with USC Pharmacy; **Dr. Richard Dang** (from the USC School of Pharmacy) for providing the training; **Ms. Kim Eeles** and **Ms. Mariam Agazaryan** for moderating the session; and all the students, residents and faculty who took part in last night's training. Whether you wind up volunteering to administer the vaccine or simply help shepherd people through the process and answer their questions, this work to get our population vaccinated is so important, and I'm really proud that our dental community can be a part of it.

I'm also happy to share the news that we recently successfully administered the manikin-based licensure exam for our dental hygiene class. There was a lot of effort that went into making sure our dental hygienists were able to take these exams and get on with the next chapter of their professional lives. I'd like to thank **Ms. Diane Melrose** for all of her efforts in coordinating with ADEX and taking care of all the logistics necessary for the exam. I'd also like to acknowledge **Ms. Michaela Nguyen** and **Ms. Alexandra Ochi**, both of whom held two mock boards prior to the licensure exam to ensure our dental hygiene students were fully prepared for the exam. Finally, I'd like to thank **Dr. Michael**

Mulvehill as well as **Ms. Socorro Gutierrez** and all the other staff members who were on hand during the licensure exam to make sure it went smoothly.

Last week, the USC Asian Pacific Alumni Association honored Ostrow's very own **Dr. Baldwin Marchack** with a 2021 Leadership Award during its virtual Scholarship and Awards Gala. This award is meant to acknowledge members of the Asian Pacific alumni community for their accomplishments in support of USC, the USC Asian Pacific Alumni Association and their professions in general. Dr. Marchack has been a tireless supporter of all that we do at Ostrow. From establishing or helping to fund three scholarships that support our students to being a long-serving member on our Board of Councilors to his work in our continuing education program, Dr. Marchack has made an indelible mark here at Ostrow, and I can't think of anyone more deserving of this award than him. So please join me in congratulating one of our biggest champions for this award.

It was a busy week for scholarship galas as our Friends of Dentistry also hosted its annual Scholarship Recognition Event last week. This event is always very meaningful — bringing scholarship recipients together with their donors to show gratitude for their generosity. But this year's virtual event seemed even a little more meaningful, giving us all a chance to catch up with some friends and colleagues we might not have seen for awhile and feel a connection that can be so elusive during a pandemic. I would like to thank the **Office of External Relations and Student Life** (in particular, the **Office of Alumni Relations and Events**) for the work that they put into making this event special, even though we couldn't do it in person. I'd also like to acknowledge Friends of Dentistry Endowed Scholarship recipient **Mr. Scott Barlow**, who delivered remarks at the event, and the 134 other students who received scholarship funds this year. Congratulations to you all!

With that, I wish all who observe a Happy Passover and a Happy Easter!

As always, stay healthy, stay safe, and Fight On!

Avishai

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