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Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[10/08/2021]



DEAN'S BI-WEEKLY MESSAGE

Dear USC Dentistry Community:

And, all of a sudden, it is October! As you likely know, back in mid-August, the University sent out the announcement that all student-facing faculty and staff, who had been working remotely since March 2020, were expected to report

back to their places of employ. Because Ostrow had been running at nearly full-speed (other than a few weeks when our clinics were closed), it wasn't necessary to bring back all of our remote staff at the time. But as this semester wears on, it's becoming increasingly apparent that we need to better align with the university. With that said, we have decided to welcome back our remote staff into our physical spaces, beginning January 3, 2022. We wanted to make sure to give our remote staff as much heads-up as possible. I am so grateful for this cohort, who were suddenly uprooted from their workspaces (like all of us), but they truly didn't miss a beat, setting up offices at their kitchen tables or any quiet nook they could find in their homes and staying right on task. We're indebted to you for all of your efforts this past year and a half, and we look forward to seeing you again in January. Be on the lookout for further details soon.

Earlier this week, our **Office of Student Life and Well-Being** announced the results of the Associated Student Body (ASB) elections. I understand there was a number of highly qualified candidates, which speaks volumes of the type of students we have here at Ostrow. I'd like to congratulate the students who were elected to the ASB Executive Board: ASB President **Ms. Natalie Black**, ASB Vice President-Internal Affairs **Ms. Isatu Malekani**, ASB Vice President-Financial Affairs **Ms. Kristen Gallub** and ASB Secretary **Mr. Berdj Odabachian**. I would also like to congratulate all of the newly elected student leaders for each ASPID and DDS class. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year to ensure all of our students' voices are heard.

Additionally, our Office of Student Life and Well-Being selected the latest group of ambassadors. Our ambassador program is so important in the admissions process, giving prospective students a direct line to our students to better understand life at Ostrow. I've heard many stories from students about how they selected USC, based on interactions with an ambassador. I'd like to congratulate our newest ambassadors and thank our existing ambassadors for all of your efforts. You make us proud. For a complete list of both new class leadership as well as new ambassadors, check out [Ostrow Connect](#).

(continued below)



OSTROW'S GOT TALENT

Earlier this week, our social media channels were abuzz with a feature story on **Taylor Purks DDS '22**, who, outside of dental school, is a threat on the lacrosse field. As part of the inaugural Puerto Rican lacrosse team, Purks recently took home a second-place win at the Pan-American Lacrosse Association (PALA) Sixes Cup. [Read Taylor Purks' story.](#)

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We learned recently that the University has renewed its decision this year to require influenza vaccines for all USC students, faculty and staff. The decision is meant to lessen the likelihood of a “twindemic,” with both influenza and COVID-19 cases raging simultaneously. You must upload either flu vaccination proof or a medical/religious/philosophical exemption request to your [MySHR](#) by no later than November 1. Note: If you receive your flu vaccine at any of the USC Pharmacy locations, your documentation will be automatically uploaded to

your MySHR within 72 hours. If you don't take appropriate action, it could hinder your ability to access campus — including the Norris Dental Science Center. As with all of the other vaccinations or exemption requests, the information will be included on your [USC Trojan Check](#) app, granting (or denying) you access to campus.

This past weekend, I was honored to take part in an incredibly productive **Century Club Alumni Association (CCAA)** retreat where the CCAA executive board and I reviewed our membership model, and set goals for the next fiscal year. Most excitingly, the board voted to update the group's mission statement to include our dedication to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. I'd like to thank the entire executive board for their time, dedication and loyalty to the school; **Ms. Joan Beleno Sanchez** for her steady hand as the CCAA President; and **Dr. Christopher Acone**, who has been leading the charge in codifying our diversity efforts into the group's mission statement. I would also like to thank the **Office of Alumni Relations & Events** for their efforts in organizing this retreat.

We are three weeks out from USC Homecoming & Reunion Weekend 2021, which takes place October 28 through 31, culminating in a match-up between the USC Trojans and the Arizona Wildcats. Earlier this week, our Office of Alumni Relations sent out an e-mail detailing some this year's accompanying festivities — some of which are virtual. Events include a Virtual Trivia Night, a Homecoming Continuing Education series, an in-person pre-game USC Associates Picnic and a virtual 5-K, which can be completed on teams or individually and anytime between October 9 and November 12. You can register for these events by visiting [Ostrow Connect](#) and going to the events tab on the left-hand side of the screen. I hope to be able to reconnect with some of you at these exciting events.

With that, I wish you all a great weekend.

Stay safe, stay healthy and, as always, fight on!

Avishai

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