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Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[4/14/2023]



DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear USC Dentistry Community:

Last week, after three years of hard work, we welcomed the CODA accreditation team to conduct the site visit for the DDS/ASPID program as well as six of our advanced programs. By design, these site visits are meant to be rigorous and intense, and I am so proud of the work that our faculty, staff and students did throughout the three-day visit. Thanks to all who had a hand in this endeavor, no matter how big or small your

contribution. It is particularly impressive that we were able to succeed given how hard Los Angeles County was hit by COVID the past few years, impacting nearly everything we did. I would especially like to commend **Mahvash Navazesh** and **Jill Yoshimi** and their teams for their efforts. A big shout-out to **Alexander Alcaraz**, **Kian Kar**, **Mariela Padilla**, **Cheryl Park**, **Rafael Roges** and **Glenn Sameshima**, who led their programs through a successful visit. I am also grateful to **Mona Albatniji** and **Abdulrahman Alkhatib** (ASPID and DDS Class Presidents) for their continued support. As a thank you to all who participated, we hosted a “Sip, Sip, Hooray!” celebration with coffee, cookies and treats on Friday, April 7.

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A few weeks ago, we held our annual Friends of Dentistry Scholarship Recognition Dinner, where we bring together our generous donors with our scholarship recipients. It's always such a special evening, and this year was no different, taking place at the Skirball Cultural Center nestled in the Sepulveda Pass. We were proud this year to have awarded more students than ever before with scholarships. If you would like to see photos from the event, check out the [photo gallery](#). I'd like to thank the **Office of Admissions** for their work matching students with scholarship funds. I'd also like to recognize the **Office of Development and Student Life**, especially **Christie D.C. Van Paepeghem**, for their tireless work in putting this event together. And, of course, thank you to our **Friends of Dentistry** for your continued support of our students. It certainly doesn't go unnoticed or unappreciated.

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SCENES FROM THE SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION DINNER

Want to see all the images taken during the 2023 Friends of Dentistry Scholarship Recognition Dinner, visit our [photo gallery](#).

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We also recently held our annual Research Day, one of the only days across the university devoted exclusively to scientific inquiry. This event is also always special to me because it's moving to see the passion and excitement on our students' faces as they share their research findings. Every year, we are joined by our colleagues at the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and the USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy, which makes the day even more interesting with the different professions represented. The importance of research cannot be overstated; it's the foundation of our profession, today and tomorrow. Consuming research is essential to staying at the cutting edge of our ever-changing disciplines, so it's really heartening seeing so many of our students interested in it. This year, we had an all-time high number of research posters displayed. Thank you to all who participated and thank you to **Yang Chai**, **Parish Sedghizadeh**, **Donna Castillo** and the **Student Research Group** for your work in putting together this successful event. And if you missed your chance to check out the award-winning *The Explorer*, you can [view it here](#).

Speaking of research, one of our leading researchers, **Janet Oldak**, was honored with a 2023 USC Mentoring Award for Faculty Mentoring Graduate Students. The award is meant to recognize individuals who foster an engaging, supportive and inclusive academic environment by mentoring colleagues and graduate students. What makes this award even more special is that recipients are chosen by a group of mentors who had been previously recognized with this award, so these judges really know what makes a great mentor. Please join me in congratulating Janet for receiving this prestigious award.

Finally, our **Associated Student Body** recently held a Road to Residency event, where DDS and ASPID students were able to explore the possibility of pursuing a residency. The annual event consisted of a series of Q-and-A panels with current USC residents as well as the directors of all USC dental residency programs. I'm told there was record turnout, which is quite exciting. A special thanks goes out to ASB Executive President **Deena Fatehi** and ASB Executive Vice President **Brian Zahab** as well as **Corey Berry** from the Office of Admissions for their work in organizing this successful event.

With that, I wish you all a relaxing trimester break. I look forward to seeing everyone back again on May 1 to kick off the Summer Trimester.

Fight On!

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