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Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[1/12/2024]



DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear USC Dentistry Community:

Happy New Year to one and all! I hope that you had a restful break, with lots of opportunities to spend time with your loved ones before coming back ready to kick off the spring trimester. I am excited to commence this next trimester, where our Class of 2024 will complete their studies and eye the next chapter of their professional journeys.

While most of us were enjoying our holiday break, there was a cohort of Ostrow staff members working to ensure a number of renovations were completed by Jan. 3. Over the break, the building underwent continued updates to its waste piping replacement and paging speakers. Additionally, we replaced the furniture in the West Lobby. Later this month, we will be installing additional security cameras throughout the building. I'd like to offer a sincere thank you to our **Office of Facilities** team, including **Marshall Miller-Barber** and **Jill Yoshimi**, as well as **Mei Tse** for their hard work and determination to see these projects through.

Another team that logged some hours during our break was the **Office of Technology Services**, led by Chief Information Officer **Ramon Enachescu**. During the holiday, our Office of Technology Services completed several upgrades to Axiom as well as existing digital infrastructure to enhance the security and reliability of these services. Additionally, **De'Juan Parrish** was incredibly involved with a technological upgrade to the A/V system in the Blair Rooms. Please join me in congratulating our Office of Technology Services for their successes over the break. Thank you for all you do to ensure an efficient learning environment here at Ostrow.





Dream a Little Dream With Me

In honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday, January 15, the **Student National Dental Association** (SNDA) has put together a table in the East Lobby celebrating the life, times and poignant quotes of the late Civil Rights leader. The student group encourages Ostrow students, faculty and staff to share their own sentiments regarding Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream. Thank you to the SNDA for this opportunity to learn more from Dr. King and to reflect on how to continue his work in present day. The Assistant Dean for Diversity, Access and Inclusion Kim Austin will be sending out university-wide Martin Luther King Jr. events as well as events for Black History Month, so be on the lookout.

You might have heard over the break that we lost an icon. **Dean Emeritus Harold Slavkin**, who led the school from 2000 to 2008, passed away at the age of 85. You can't overstate the profound impact that Hal had on the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC. One of the world's leading authorities on craniofacial development and genetic birth defects, Dr. Slavkin created USC's Center for Craniofacial Molecular Biology in 1989 and served as its first director until 1995. His own passion for scientific inquiry was instrumental in sharpening Ostrow's laser focus on research. It is in part because of his leadership and forward-thinking that today the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC is the third highest-funded dental school by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, one of the National Institutes of Health. At USC, he founded the first graduate program in craniofacial biology in the United States. We are forever in Dr. Slavkin's debt, and I wish peace of mind to his family members and loved ones.

As you know, we are transitioning from Blackboard to the Brightspace Learning Management System effective Summer 2024. Next week, staff from USC's Learning Management System Transition Team will hold a hybrid presentation here at the Norris Dental Science Center, showcasing the platform's features and preparing faculty to begin creating courses. The presentation — hosted by **Yaara Berdan** and **Reyes Enciso** — will take place Wednesday, January 17 at 12 p.m. in 163C. If you are unable to attend in person, you can join remotely by following [this Zoom registration link](#). I'd like to thank **Ostrow's Brightspace Transition Team** — led by **Mariela Padilla** and staffed by **Bobby Boyer, Ben Creighton, Ramon Enachescu** and **Cathy Tomlin** — for ensuring our faculty members are ready to go come Summer 2024.

Fight On!

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