
Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of **USC**

[9/6/2024]



COMMUNITY MESSAGE

FROM THE DESK OF INTERIM DEAN YANG CHAI

Dear Trojan Dental Community:

Welcome back! I hope you all got the chance to relax, reset and spend some quality time with your loved ones during the trimester break. The Fall 2024 Trimester has arrived, and I can't wait to get started.

Last week, we were excited to welcome the **DDS Class of 2028** to the Trojan

Dental Family. Throughout the week, the cohort of students participated in a number of trainings and orientation sessions meant to get them up to speed on life here at Ostrow. They were also supplied with their scrubs and equipment/materials for the first trimester — a rite of passage for all new dental students. I really enjoyed getting to meet the group during our orientation session. Here's a little more about our DDS Class of 2028:

- The class of 144 is 53 percent female and 47 percent male.
- They come to us from 61 undergraduate universities. Top feeder schools include UCLA, UC San Diego, UC Irvine, USC, UC Riverside and UC Santa Barbara.
- The students are academically diverse, with 36 different majors represented. The most popular majors include biology, biochemistry, chemistry, health, psychology, sociology, history, psychobiology, biomedical science, public health and natural science.
- Six members of the incoming class hold master's degrees, and all of them hold a bachelor's degree.
- The group is also regionally diverse, coming to us from 20 other U.S. states as well as Washington D.C. In all, we received more than 2,600 applications from 46 states.

Please join me in welcoming these new students to our school. They will join the **ASPID Class of 2026** on Sunday, September 15 at Bovard Auditorium for the White Coat Ceremony, where they will put on their white coats for the first time and take their solemn oaths as healthcare providers. I'd like to thank the **Office of Admissions**, the **Office of Academic Affairs**, the **Office of Technology Services**, and the **Office of Student Life and Well-Being** as well as all the others who participated in orientation for their hard work in setting this class up for success. It's no easy feat, but everyone came together and did their part, and we appreciate your efforts.

As the university moves away from Blackboard to Brightspace for our learning

management services needs, our **Office of Technology Services** has been hard at work helping to facilitate the transition for our community throughout the summer. Their efforts will continue into the fall as they have announced that they will host regular open office hours throughout the fall semester for faculty, staff and students to drop in to get answers on all things Brightspace. You can drop in to their [virtual office](#) on Mondays, 2:30-5 p.m.; Tuesdays, 2-5 p.m.; Thursdays, 2-5 p.m.; and Fridays, 2:30-5 pm) or reach out to them directly. Thank you, **Ben Creighton** and **Cathy Tomlin**, for your tireless work with this software transition.

Finally, we're happy to share that **James Tom** was recently appointed to serve on the CODA Board of Commissioners as the dental anesthesiology commissioner, a position he will hold for four years beginning in February 2025. In assuming the role of a commissioner, Jimmy becomes only the third Trojan Dental Family member to hold such a title (we've had many site visitors on our faculty), behind the late **Raymond Melrose** as well as **Glenn Sameshima**, who currently serves on the Board of Commissioners. For those of you who might not know, commissioners oversee the dentistry-specific review committees — composed of site visitors and site visit directors/lead site visitors — that visit each dental educational institution and make their recommendations regarding accreditation status. It's a prestigious position that is generally responsible for the educational direction of the dental profession here in the United States and, to a degree, to our neighbor to the north, Canada. Congratulations on the appointment, Jimmy!

To truly start the Fall Trimester off right, we will hold a welcome-back lunch on Thursday, September 12 from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. on the West Lawn, where students, staff and faculty are invited to enjoy tacos and churros on a sunny late summer day. I look forward to seeing you there! Make sure to [RSVP here](#).

Fight on!

Yang Chai, DDS, PhD
Interim Dean

Associate Dean of Research
George and MaryLou Boone Chair in Craniofacial Molecular Biology
Director, Center for Craniofacial Molecular Biology
University Professor of Dentistry, Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative
Medicine, and Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery



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Our mailing address is:

925 W. 34th Street DEN 202
Los Angeles, CA 90089

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