
Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[10/11/2024]



COMMUNITY MESSAGE

FROM THE DESK OF INTERIM DEAN YANG CHAI

Dear Trojan Dental Community:

Earlier this week, we made the announcement that Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs **Douglas Solow** has decided to retire effective June 30, 2025. He has generously agreed to ensure his eventual successor is established in their role before his departure — particularly as the **Class of 2025** wraps up their

studies. Doug joined us in 2014, after serving as the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. During his Ostrow tenure, he oversaw clinical operations within our student clinics and the USC Dental Faculty Practice. Some of his notable contributions include re-engineering our clinic structure to include group practice-based scheduling with guaranteed chairs during appointments, elevating group practice directors to provide better oversight of patients and student achievement and instituting new admissions systems for incoming patients. Of course, Doug was instrumental in steering us through the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring a safe and healthy return to operations as quickly as possible after stay-at-home orders were removed. He has been a vital leader who has made an indelible mark here at USC, and we are deeply grateful for his dedication. Please join me in thanking Doug for more than a decade of service to the Trojan Dental Family.

Chief Health Officer **Joyce Galligan** recently announced new guidelines surrounding masking during patient care. As of this past Monday, Ostrow employees and students can choose to wear level 3 surgical masks (instead of N95 respirators) during direct patient care or supervision of patient care for both aerosol and non-aerosol generating procedures. These masks are available at the dental school from all dispensaries as well as at mask dispenser stands throughout the building. Those who would prefer to continue wearing the N95 respirators are more than welcome to do so, but they must maintain annual fit testing, even if they are only using their N95s occasionally. You can [sign up for a fit testing here](#). I'd like to thank Joyce for continuing to ensure we operate in a safe, healthy manner as the pandemic fades further and further into history.

Last month, the **USC Mobile Dental Clinic** partnered with the nonprofit organization Village for Vets for a "Give Vets a Smile" event. During the week-long stop at the Federal Building in Westwood, Ostrow students, faculty and staff teamed up to provide more than 1,500 procedures to more than 100 of our nation's bravest men and women. The procedures ranged from X-rays and exams to root canal therapies, extractions and composite restorations — all of which helped to alleviate dental pain and restore oral healthcare to this often-

underserved group. I'd like to thank all who participated in honoring our service members with a healthy smile. The next USC Mobile Clinic stop is scheduled for next week with our community partner, Young and Healthy, in Pasadena

Speaking of Young and Healthy, we recently found out that USC Mobile Dental Clinic Director **Sanaz “Sunny” Fereshteh** has been honored by the nonprofit organization with a J. Donald Thomas Award for her dedication, perseverance and selfless devotion to the well-being of Pasadena's children. Sunny has been the Director of the USC Mobile Dental Clinic since 2015, working alongside our partner of 30 years Young and Healthy to provide dental treatment to Pasadena's underserved population. Sunny will officially receive the award in November at Young and Healthy's 35th anniversary celebration. Please join me in congratulating Sunny on this honor!

With that, I wish you a nice, relaxing weekend.

Fight on!

Yang Chai, DDS, PhD
Interim Dean

Associate Dean of Research
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