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## Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[11/22/2024]



# COMMUNITY MESSAGE

FROM THE DESK OF INTERIM DEAN YANG CHAI

Dear Trojan Dental Community,

Last week, we announced that we had officially kicked off our search for a new Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs to take the reins from **Doug Solow**, who will be retiring at the end of June 2025. To find someone to fill these very big shoes, we have convened an advisory search committee, headed up by co-chairs **Casey Chen** and **Mahvash Navazesh**, and guided by the search firm

Isaacson, Miller. The committee is rounded out by staff and faculty members **Yaara Berdan, Dan Cheock, George Cho, Lisa Popkoff, Piedad Suarez-Durall, James Tom** and **Jill Yoshimi**. One of the team's first tasks is to conduct a series of listening sessions to gather comprehensive information from our faculty and staff to help us identify the qualities needed for the eventual leader of our clinical education and patient care programs. If you would like to apply or nominate someone, you can do so by visiting the [Isaacson, Miller website](#). I would like to thank Casey, Mahvash and all the other committee members for their tireless work and support in identifying our next Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs.

Earlier this year, Ostrow's Orofacial Pain and Oral Medicine Center opened the doors to the OralCare PreCancer and Pain Clinic, a specialized clinic here within the Norris Dental Science Center, dedicated to treating and managing oral pre-cancer/pre-malignant lesions and cancer-associated oral pain. Open a limited time for now (Mondays, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.), the clinic aims to fill a significant gap in specialized care for those developing oral cancer. Additionally, the clinic offers a number of benefits to Ostrow itself, including enriching the education of our residents and students, serving as a research and education hub that facilitates interdisciplinary collaborations and strengthening relationships with referring clinics. I'd like to acknowledge **Anette Vistoso Monreal**, and the team responsible (including **Dechen Lin** and **Parish Sedghizadeh**) who have spent countless hours to launch this innovative clinic here at the dental school. Thank you, all!

In case you missed it: Ostrow's Research Day 2025 has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 9. We are very excited to return to the USC Galen Center this year for this exciting event to celebrate the success of our research programs.

This month's CDA Student Spotlight — a monthly highlight of students attending one of California's seven dental schools — features fourth-year DDS student **Jason Zheng Zhang**. In a two-minute video clip, Jason shares his most proud accomplishment during dental school, how he unwinds after a long

day and why he is proud to be a part of the California Dental Association. You can watch his spotlight on the [CDA website](#). Fight on, Jason!

This past week, you might have seen that, in addition to the annual Thanksgiving Food Drive being run by the **Student National Dental Association**, there is a table for collecting e-waste. This e-waste drive, spearheaded by the **Ostrow Sustainability Group**, aims to provide our community with an easy, safe and ecologically sound way to get rid of electronic equipment. If you've been driving around with an old printer in your trunk looking for a way to dispose of it, here's your opportunity! The group will hold their next e-waste drive on December 2-3. You can drop off your e-waste in the East Lobby both days. Thank you to the Ostrow Sustainability Group for offering this opportunity to the Trojan Dental Family.

With that, I'd like to wish you all a relaxing and wonderful time with your loved ones over the Thanksgiving Break. For those looking to use the extra time to study up — particularly for those preparing for the upcoming mock exams in December and ADEX exam in January — the Sim Labs will be open Saturday, November 30 and Sunday, December 1.

Happy Thanksgiving, and 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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