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## Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[3/7/2025]



# COMMUNITY MESSAGE

FROM THE DESK OF INTERIM DEAN YANG CHAI

Dear Trojan Dental Community:

We recently received some very exciting news for the Dr. Roseann Mulligan Special Patients Clinic. The clinic has received a \$3.4 million Specialty Dental Clinic Grant from the California Health Facilities Financing Authority. The grant was established to help improve oral healthcare access in California for special needs populations through the development and expansion of specialty dental clinics. With the funds,

we will be renovating the eight existing operatories within the Special Patients Clinic, adding another three that are outfitted to allow treatment for bariatric patients as well as those who use personal mobility devices. It will also allow for the addition of a larger restroom for bariatric patients, an electronic health record review room and a patient check-in desk. The clinic renovations are planned to be completed by October 2027. It's an enormous honor to be selected for this grant, allowing us to truly establish ourselves as a lasting dental home for those with special needs here in Southern California. [Read more about it here](#). I'd like to congratulate **Roseann Mulligan, Piedad Suarez and their team** for their efforts in securing this grant.

Last week, the **USC Mobile Dental Clinic** completed a clinic for veterans as part of our ongoing partnership with Village for Vets, a nonprofit organization that helps fill critical gaps in services for homeless and at-risk veterans. During the week-long engagement, Ostrow students and faculty provided comprehensive treatment — including exams, radiographs, prophylaxis, composite restorations, root canals and simple/surgical extractions — to more than 100 of our nation's bravest. Many U.S. veterans rely on services like those provided by the USC Mobile Clinic to maintain great oral healthcare, and I'm so proud of our team for stepping in to fill these gaps in service. Thank you to the USC Mobile Dental Clinic staff (**Epifania Juarez, Anthony Santiago, Juan Landeros, Vladimir Lima Garcia and Edwin Salgado**), under the leadership of **Sanaz "Sunny" Fereshteh** for your continued hard work and dedication to this underserved community.

Ostrow's annual Research Day is quickly approaching, taking place Wednesday, April 9, at the USC Galen Center. It's an exciting day, where I think nearly everyone — me included — walks away having learned something new — either from our fellow oral healthcare colleagues or our peers at the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and the USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy. It's also a great opportunity to forge new interdisciplinary collaborations. The [registration link is now live](#). Please RSVP by **no later than Friday, March 21, 2025**.

Faculty: The Office of the Provost has recently launched a Faculty Unionization section on their website, which provides information about the university's stance on

faculty unionization; recent messages to all faculty from the Provost's Office, FAQs that have been previously shared and continue to be built upon, and other resources related to RTPC faculty rights. You can navigate to the webpages by [going here](#) or by selecting the "USC Faculty" menu item on the [Provost website homepage](#) and selecting "Faculty Unionization" from the dropdown menu.

Students: You might have seen that **Kim Eeles** sent out an email last week — Subject: Student Well-Being Survey — announcing the launch of the annual Student Well-Being Index Survey and asking for your participation. The survey aims to fill in the missing gaps in the student experience by collecting key well-being data. While it is a university-wide survey, the data can be disaggregated to give us, your Ostrow leadership, a better idea of where to focus our resources to best support you as you continue your oral healthcare studies. The survey is optional, but I urge you to take the time to fill it out. You can find instructions in your emails — from [wellbeingcollective@usc.edu](mailto:wellbeingcollective@usc.edu) or you can do a keyword search for "SWIS Survey."

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

Stay safe, and fight on!

Yang Chai, DDS, PhD  
Interim Dean

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