
Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[5/9/2025]



COMMUNITY MESSAGE

FROM THE DESK OF INTERIM DEAN YANG CHAI

Dear Trojan Dental Family,

Last week, we welcomed the **ASPID Class of 2027** to the Trojan Dental Family. The cohort spent their first week taking part in a series of orientation events, hosted by students, faculty and staff, meant to get them up to speed about life at Ostrow. I would like to thank all those community members who took time out of their schedules to introduce the class to everything from financial aid

services to general lab safety to resources available to them. The week ended with scrub fitting and the distribution of tools and equipment — a rite of passage for any dental student. The class has an average age of 35 and is 79 percent female and 21 percent male. These students hail from 18 different countries. Please join me in a big “Fight On!” to the incoming class.



WELCOME, ASPID CLASS OF 2027!

The **USC Mobile Dental Clinic** fleet had a busy couple of weeks, first finishing off a stop in Pasadena as part of a clinic representing our long-standing

partnership with Young and Healthy. At the multi-day event, Ostrow students and faculty provided treatment to more than 60 children and teenagers, many of whom had never before been treated by a dentist. Treatments included prophies, scaling, comprehensive exams, X-rays, oral surgery procedures, pulpotomies and restorations. Thank you to all — students, faculty and staff, alike — who participated in this mobile clinic event. And, congratulations to the **USC Mobile Clinic student core** on a job well done this year. We wish you the best in all your future endeavors.

The mobile clinic also made a stop at the end of April for the *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books, a weekend of fun activities, panel discussions, book signings and exhibitor booths for Southern California's bibliophiles. At the country's largest literary event, students, faculty and staff distributed oral health education kits to community members and performed a number of oral cancer and dental screenings. Thank you to the students, faculty and staff who took part in this the weekend event.

And finally, the **USC Neighborhood Mobile Dental Van Prevention Program (NMDVPP)** was among several programs honored recently for the Good Neighbors Campaign's 30th anniversary. As part of this celebration, the City of Los Angeles acknowledged Ostrow and the NMDVPP with two official certificates honoring our work in the community, fostering meaningful change, strengthening community ties and advocating for a brighter future. I'd like to congratulate the NMDVPP — led by **Elizabeth Brummel** and **Carlos Sanchez** — for their impactful work in the region! And thank you to **Piedad Suarez**, who represented us at the event.

This time of year, of course, can be frenetic with fourth-year DDS and second-year ASPID students working to complete all of the necessary requirements for graduation. It used to be an even more grueling experience, coordinating the sign-off on competencies. But, thanks to a project spearheaded by **Ben Creighton** of the **Office of Technology Services** with active participation from faculty members, we built a centralized, digital sign-out system meant to make

the process easier, faster and much more user-friendly. This system, accessible anywhere with web service, is a comprehensive step-by-step process that not only takes any guesswork or wait time out of the process but also showcases in an objective way student readiness for the general practice of dentistry. I'd like to thank all who participated in this initial system and worked over the years to further refine it.

Speaking of our soon-to-be graduates, we recently celebrated the accomplishments of the **ASPID/DDS Classes of 2025** with an evening at the Everson Royce Bar in Downtown Los Angeles. I had a wonderful time with these students, acknowledging the incredible amount of work they have put in to becoming competent, confident dental professionals. I'd like to thank all who attended as well as the **Office of Student Life**, who helped to organize the event.

Of course, that was just the beginning! We are very excited to celebrate the **Class of 2025** during a number of Commencement festivities scheduled for next week. For ease, here's a quick rundown of some of the events scheduled:

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2025

Senior Awards Ceremony | 2 p.m.

Omni Los Angeles Hotel
Watercourt Plaza
251 S. Olive Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Students, guests, faculty and staff are all invited to attend this complimentary event.

Senior Cocktail Reception | 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Omni Los Angeles Hotel
Bunker Hill Ballroom

DUNKER HALL BALLROOM

251 S. Olive Street

Los Angeles, CA 90012

The RSVP deadline has come and gone, but there will be an opportunity for walk-ups for an additional fee that day.

USC Main Commencement Ceremony | 7 p.m.

Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum

3911 S. Figueroa Street

Los Angeles, CA 90037

Tickets: Event requires tickets for each graduate and guests. [Get more info about tickets.](#)

General information: commencement.usc.edu

Note: If you're unable to make it, you can livestream it at commencement.usc.edu.

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2025

Ostrow Satellite Ceremony | 4:30 p.m.

USC Village Great Lawn

3100 McClintock Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 9007

Tickets: Event requires tickets for each graduate and guests. [Get more info about tickets.](#)

General information: commencement.usc.edu

Note: If you're unable to make it, you can livestream it at commencement.usc.edu.

I look forward to seeing many of you at these celebratory events.

With that, I wish you all a relaxing weekend.

Stay safe, and fight on!

Stay safe, 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
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