

---

## Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

[10/10/2025]



# DEAN'S MESSAGE

FROM THE DESK OF DEAN YANG CHAI

Dear Trojan Dental Community,

Last week, we held our annual Friends of Dentistry Celebration event. This year's festivities, taking place in the USC Tower, was held in honor of a very special milestone for Ostrow's premier support group — their 50th anniversary! Since 1975, the **Friends of Dentistry** have been incredibly generous, valued and dependable supporters of USC Dentistry. From establishing annual scholarships to creating

endowed chairs to supporting infrastructural upgrades, technological enhancements and program updates, there are very few areas of the school the Friends of Dentistry have not had an impact on. In addition to welcoming representatives from all of our support groups, including members from the Friends of Dentistry board (pictured with me below), we were honored that both USC Interim President **Beong-Soo Kim** and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs **Steven Shapiro** joined us to celebrate. It is such an honor to be in the Dean's role while we're celebrating the longtime support of the Friends of Dentistry. Thank you to all who journeyed downtown on a Saturday evening. I'd also like to acknowledge the **Office of Development** for their work organizing and holding this event. I'd like to thank the **new and upgraded Friends of Dentistry members** for your continued support of Ostrow, Friends of Dentistry Chair **Brian Hong** for serving as the evening's emcee and the **Student Ambassadors** who volunteered their time to make sure our guests were taken care of throughout the evening. Finally, I'd like to congratulate Friends of Dentistry on this historic milestone!

*(continued below)*



## FRIENDS FOR 50 YEARS

The Friends of Dentistry Board of Directors helped celebrate the Friends of Dentistry's 50th anniversary at a gala taking place at the USC Tower in Downtown Los Angeles. (L-R: **Gary Solnit, Santos Cortez Jr., Karen Liang, Derick Tagawa, Yang Chai, Brian Hong, Marina Jimenez, Saro Setian** and **Mindo Lee**. Not Pictured: **Chethan Chetty, Reuben L. Johnson, Ruth Kawakami** and **Ali Modarres**.)

---

*(continued from above)*

Speaking of congratulations being in order: We were recently notified that **Kian Kar** has been awarded the Periodontology Educator of the Year Award by the Western Society of Periodontology. “Dr. Kar has distinguished himself as a dedicated teacher and role model for resident and students, ensuring that the next generation of periodontists receives the highest level of training and inspiration. His passion for education strengthens both our specialty and our society,” read the award notification material. The Western Society of Periodontology is a membership organization of periodontists, restorative dentists and dental hygienists unified to tackle issues facing 21st century dentistry and to create a collaborative learning environment to expand knowledge among its membership. This is an incredibly well-deserved award, and we are thrilled to see him recognized in this way. Fight on, Dr. Kar!

The **USC Mobile Dental Clinic** recently held a patient care event for our veterans in Westwood, Calif. Throughout the week-long mobile clinic event, our faculty, students and staff provided comprehensive oral healthcare — dental exams, radiographs, prophies, SRPs, composite restorations, root canal therapies and extractions — to more than 100 veterans. For those who might not know, this population is incredibly underserved and faces an urgent need for oral healthcare. The event marks just the latest we’ve held with Village for Vets, a nonprofit dedicated to filling critical gaps in

latest we've held with Village for Vets, a nonprofit dedicated to filling critical gaps in key services for homeless and at-risk veterans. Our five-year partnership with the nonprofit has resulted in the improved oral healthcare of nearly 800 veterans, many of whom have made the Mobile Dental Clinic their “dental home.” We are very grateful to our partnership with Village for Vets for their help accomplishing this essential work. I’d also like to acknowledge the faculty, students and staff (all under the leadership of USC Mobile Dental Clinic Director **Sunny Fereshteh**) who devote themselves wholly to providing treatment to such a worthy group. Thank you all for the continued great work in our community!

---



## DEAN’S INSTALLATION

Earlier this week, we held the Dean’s Installation event, where we were joined by more than 300 of our community members at Town & Gown to hold the official commemoration of my becoming the next Dean of the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC. It was so incredibly heartwarming for me to be surrounded by so

Density of USC. It was so incredibly heartwarming for me to be surrounded by so many friendly faces — some I hadn't seen in awhile — during this monumental moment. Thank you to all who took the time out of their day to attend. I know it can be tough to get away in the middle of the afternoon, so I feel very fortunate you all made it. I'd especially like to thank USC Interim President **Beong-Soo Kim**, Senior Vice President for Health Affairs **Steven Shapiro** and USC Provost **Andrew Guzman** for your continued guidance, support and advice. I'd also like to thank all the other academic deans as well as former Dean **Avishai Sadan** and former Interim Dean **Sigmund Abelson**, all of whom were there to show their support, and the **Cultural Relations and University Events (CRUE) Team** — under the leadership of **Adam Rosen** — for their efforts with the logistics of this event. In case you missed it, you can [read all about it here](#).

**Pictured Above:** L-R: USC Interim President Beong-Soo Kim, Dean Yang Chai, Senior Vice President for Health Affairs Steven Shapiro and USC Provost Andrew Guzman

---

Our **Office of Admissions** has been hard at work, interviewing prospective DDS candidates to fill our **DDS Class of 2030**. After just two weeks, they've already interviewed more than 160 applicants. Later this month, they will interview and test our prospective ASPID students to fill our **ASPID Class of 2028**. As if filling those classes weren't enough to keep the Office of Admissions busy, they've also been working to process applications for scholarships. This year, we received 345 applications, which are currently being reviewed by faculty members. I'd like to thank the **Office of Admissions** (especially **Christine Wade** and **Corey Berry**) for their work on these incredibly important tasks. I'd also like to acknowledge **Kim Eeles** and **Mei Tse**, both of whom helped with the scholarship application process.

On Friday, September 26, we were joined by very special guests here at Ostrow. ADA President **Brett Kessler** and ADA 13th District Trustee (and Ostrow alumna) **Karen Irani** stopped by to deliver a presentation to our faculty, staff and students and took a tour of our facilities here on campus. Kessler also spoke with our

students about the importance of the ADA and advocacy to ensure dentists are well-represented when new legislation is proposed. I'd like to thank faculty member **Emad Bassali** and student **Arman Zograbyan** for extending the invitation to our ADA dignitaries and the organized dentistry student representatives who attended the event. I'd also like to thank **Carla Kelliny**, who was the expert guide who leading the tour of our facilities.

With that, I wish you a relaxing weekend.

Stay safe, and fight on!

Yang Chai, DDS, PhD

Dean

G. Donald and Marian James Montgomery Professor of Dentistry

University Professor of Dentistry, Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine, and Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery



*Copyright © 2020 Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, All rights reserved.*

**Our mailing address is:**

925 W. 34th Street DEN 202

Los Angeles, CA 90089

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)