

University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine Messenger

The Graduates: Class of 2000 Commencement May 22

Members of the Class of 2000 have become SDM alumni with the School's 122nd commencement ceremony on Monday, May 22. The day's events honored 118 DMD degree recipients and 3 who earned the MS in Oral Biology. Certificates were also awarded to 27 individuals who completed specialty training within the Division of Advanced Dental Education.

The recently refurbished Irvine Auditorium was the setting for this year's ceremony. This historic Penn landmark, at 34th and Spruce Streets, has traditionally been the site of the School's graduation, but has been unavailable for the past two years during its restoration.

Presenting the day's keynote address was Dr. Stephen A. Cooper. A Philadelphia native and 1971 SDM graduate, Dr. Cooper is Vice President for Clinical and Medical Affairs for the Whitehall-Robins Healthcare Division of American Home Products (Madison, NJ), where he oversees all clinical research activities. Among his other professional posts, he was Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies at Temple Dental School from 1990 to 1995, and from 1985 through 1990, he directed SDM's Division of Advanced Dental Education. Dr. Cooper continues to maintain an active involvement with SDM as a member of its Board of Overseers.

Dean Raymond Fonseca, Class President Joshua Dembsky, and Dr. Judith Buchanan, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, also presented remarks as part of the commencement program.

In addition, outstanding student achievement was highlighted with the presentations of over 40 awards from the various academic departments and with special acknowledgement of the members of the Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU) Honor Dental Society and the School's
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Dental House Renovation Earns Preservation Award

The School's Dental House has won a welcome response from the University City community, having been recognized by the University City Historical Society (UCHS) for its enhancement of the neighborhood.

UCHS recently awarded Thomas L. Lussenhop, Managing Director of Institutional Real Estate at Penn, with its Outstanding Preservation Award for the renovation and revitalization of the Dental House.

"We selected the Dental House because it was a sensitive restoration of a building that had been decaying for a long time," says Tim Wood, Vice President of UCHS. "It also really helped to stabilize a good block." The Dental House building, located on the 4200 block of Osage Avenue, was built *(continued on page 6)*



PASS Welcomes New Class

While the academic year is nearing a close for most SDM students, a new class of PASS students is just beginning. The School's Program for Advanced Standing Students (PASS) recently welcomed 21 foreign-trained dentists from 13 countries, who arrived April 24 to join the Class of 2002.

The two-year PASS program allows dentists from overseas to take licensing exams in the United States. The program begins with a summer session to review knowledge and skills taught in the first two years of the dental curriculum, as well as the School's treatment principles. Students then are integrated into the regular class in the fall, completing all third- and four-year classes and clinic instruction.

Many of the 21 students in this class come to SDM with experience in oral health care in the United States — seven as dental assistants, two as dental technicians, one as a dental hygienist, and one as a research assistant. In addition, one student has earned a master's in public health and periodontics. "There is a trend toward an increasing number of applicants who have worked for one or two years as dental assistants here the U.S.," observes Dr. Lopez. "We are also seeing that most applicants have been in the U.S. for an average of three to four years, and therefore, are more acculturated prior to enrollment."

PASS also continues to attract students of high academic achievement and from all corners of the world—this year's entering class averaged 89 on their National Boards Part I, and for the first time, has a student originally from Mongolia. ■

Dr. Elliot Hersh Honored For Service, Leadership in Field

The Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics Group of the International and American Associations for Dental Research recently honored Dr. Elliot Hersh for his outstanding leadership and service to the Group. This special recognition award was presented during the 78th General Session and Exhibition of the International Association for Dental Research, held April 5 to 8 in Washington, DC.

Dr. Hersh, Associate Professor of Oral Surgery and Pharmacology and Director of the Division of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, has dedicated many years of service to this professional organization in varying leadership roles. He held the position of Secretary Treasurer from 1993 to 1997, was elected Vice President for the 1997-1998 term, and led the Group as President through-

out 1999. In addition, he co-chaired two in-depth symposia sponsored by the Group. One, entitled "Drug Interactions in Dentistry: Separating the Myths from the Facts," was presented in 1998 and published in 1999 as a five-part series in the Journal of the American Dental Association. The second, "Infective Endocarditis and Dentistry: Time to Reconsider," was presented at this year's meeting. Since 1996, he has also been Councilor for the Group and the Philadelphia American Association of Dental Research Section, and he continues to act in these capacities.

"I was totally surprised by the award," notes Dr. Hersh. "Coming from my colleagues from around the world, it is one that I will always cherish." ■

Oral Health Fair, Table Clinic Showcases Student Research

The depth and strength of SDM's student research activities were evident at the Annual Oral Health Fair and Table Clinic. Organized by the School's student research group, The Vernon J. Brightman Research Society, this year's Fair and Table Clinic on April 6 drew approximately 500 attendees and featured 20 student poster presentations.

"This event allows us to display the excellence in student research that takes place at SDM," notes Nima Massoomi, president of The Vernon J. Brightman Research Society. "It was a pleasure to see such enthusiasm in honor of Dr. Brightman, who was instrumental in the development of the student research group at SDM."

The Table Clinic enables participants to gain experience presenting their research and clinical data in a format similar to a scientific meeting. As always, the students from the most recent Summer Research Program made up the majority of presenters—participation in the event is a requirement of that program. However, it is open to any student undertaking research, and this year's event again drew postgraduate and dental hygiene students as well.

A faculty panel judges the table clinics on their subject matter, presentation, and display. According to Mr. Massoomi, the number of judges was increased this year to ensure the judging process was as fair as possible. On behalf of the organizing committee, he extends thanks to Drs. Amer Abu-Hanna, Sherrill Adams, Judith Buchanan, Joan Gluch, Ellis Golub, Jonathan Korostoff, Phoebe Leboy, Max Listgarten, Scott Nakamura, Ronald Piddington, Bruce Shenker, Norton Taichman, and Robert Tisot for their participation as judges.

First prize was awarded to James N. Tsau for his research project entitled "Comparison of D and E Plus Speed Films with CCD and APS Digital Sensors for Evaluation of Diagnostic Efficacy," conducted with preceptor Dr. Muralidhar Mupparapu. As the top prizewinner, he will represent SDM in the ADA/Dentsply Student Clinician Program at the 2000 ADA meeting in Chicago with all expenses to the meeting paid by Dentsply International. In addition, Mr. Tsau received a \$2,000 Hinman Scholarship and will also represent SDM at the 2001 Hinman meeting in Atlanta, GA. The Hinman Committee will pay his expenses to this meeting.

Taking second place was Yi Zuo for "Analysis of the Binding of HSV-2 Glycoprotein D to Cellular Receptors HveA and HveC" under preceptor Dr. Gary Cohen. She will represent the School in the 2000 Hinman Student Research Symposium at the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry in Memphis. Ms. Zuo also received a \$300 cash award.

The third predoctoral student recognized was Sharon Johnson for her research with Dr. Elliot Hersh on "Analgesic Evaluation of Ibuprofen Liquefil and Acetaminophen," receiving a \$100 cash prize.

Dr. Elisabetta A. Cavalcanti received an award in the postgraduate category for her work on "Comparison of Microbial Composition in Subgingival Plaque of Adult Crowded versus Aligned Teeth" with Dr. Robert Vanarsdall. She also received \$100 as the winner in this category. The dental hygiene prizes went to three students from Harcum College—Jill Arra, Mary Ellen Guiles, and Stephanie McGrath—who developed a periodontal questionnaire to identify patients at risk. They each received a \$50 prize. And finally, Barbara MacNeill was recognized for her community service project, which involved establishing a community wellness center in East Parkside. Ms. MacNeill was awarded \$200.

Under the leadership of Dr. Fancis Mante, faculty advisor for the event, and Mr. Massoomi, the Planning Committee was able to attract a record number of corporate sponsors this year, including Benco, Biotrol/Zirc/Bosworth, Brasseler, John O. Butler Company, Caulk, Crosstex, Kavov America, Kerr Corporation, Maillefer, Oral B, Orospectics Research, PNC Bank, Sultan Chemists, Dentsply International, and Dux Sales. All sponsors had an informational booth at the Fair. Other Planning Committee members included students Tatyana Kaganova, Derek Steinbacher, Kerry McEntee, and May Nooreyazdan.

Throughout the year, student research activities at the School are many and varied and all students interested in learning more about them or getting involved in The Vernon J. Brightman Research Society are encouraged to visit its website at <http://jmdserver.dental.upenn.edu/StudentResearch.html> (also accessible through the School's website under the "Student" section) for further information. ■

Students Voice Views On Policy, Profession

Several SDM students recently represented the School and the student voice at large as part of two dental association events.

A. Melissa Lopez served as an American Student Dental Association (ASDA) representative at the Pennsylvania Dental Association's 2000 House of Delegates, held April 6 to 9 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Philadelphia.

The main focus of this annual session is to discuss, debate, and then vote on the resolutions submitted by districts from throughout the state, which Ms. Lopez notes, ranged from concerns about increases in dues to third-party restrictions being placed on dentists.

The student voice within the House of Delegates is represented by one shared vote among the state's three dental schools with one ASDA delegate from each school invited to attend and participate in the annual meeting. However, a resolution passed at this year's meeting will add an alternate delegate from each school for a total of six student representatives.

According to Ms. Lopez, this action is intended is to allow students a more flexible attendance schedule and also get more students involved in the learning process.

"While most of the resolutions presented at this House of Delegates did not directly affect us as students, they all represent issues we will be facing after graduation," she adds.

In addition, Melisande Wolff of the Class of 2002 and Diana Cardona and Patricia Sansaricq, both of the Class of 2003, joined dental students from throughout the country on March 14 on Capitol Hill as part of the 3rd Annual ADEA/ASDA Dental Student Lobby Day.

According to the American Dental Education Association (ADEA), one of the event organizers, more than 80 students representing 26 dental schools participated as lobbyists for the day. Students met with 100 congressional offices, advocating for three issues of importance to dental education and the dental profession—broadening the student loan interest deduction (SLID), securing a tax credit for providers who establish practices in underserved areas, and increasing federal support for loan repayment programs.

"It was very informative and an edifying experience," says Melisande Wolff, who is first delegate of the School's ASDA chapter and organized the chapter's participation in the event. "Dealing with politics is not a forte of most dentists, but having participated and learned the ropes so to speak, I can foresee myself taking action in the future on behalf of dentists in America." ■

SDM Student Receives ADA Research Award

This spring, third-year student Jose Ramirez was recognized at two dental meetings for his research activities. He took first place in the dental student competition held at the Liberty Dental Conference, the Delaware Valley's regional meeting of the American Dental Association, for his project entitled "Salivary Interleukin-4 in Primary Sjogren's Syndrome." Mr. Ramirez completed this project as part of the 1999 Summer Research Program under preceptor Dr. Margaret M. Grisius, Assistant Professor of Oral Medicine. His work was part of an ongoing study being conducted by Dr. Grisius.

He also presented the same project in the AADR Caulk/Dentsply Competition, held during the IADR/AADR/CADR Annual Session, April 5 to 8, in Washington, DC. Mr. Ramirez was selected as one of seven finalists among the 70 students competing in the clinical sciences category. ■



SDM students Patricia Sansaricq, Melisande Wolff, and Diana Cardona visiting Capitol Hill.

Final Preparations Underway

Final reviews and revisions of the School's self-study document are underway as its deadline for submission draws near. The report will be sent to the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CDA) and members of SDM's designated site-visit committee on June 30.

When the CDA conducts its predoctoral accreditation, it will be examining the degree to which the School meets the Commission's published accreditation standards in the areas of institutional effectiveness, educational program, faculty and staff, educational support services, patient care services, and research. The self-study addresses each of these six standards and is the primary component by which the CDA carries out its accreditation.

A final draft of the self-study has undergone an institution-wide review, with a copy being sent to each department chair and accreditation subcommittee member and two copies available in the School library for interested students, staff, or faculty. During the last week of May, the Accreditation Steering Committee will examine the feedback gathered through this review and make the final changes to the self-study. Copies of the final version will be distributed to department chairs and the accreditation subcommittee members following its submission to the CDA June 30. Five copies will also be placed in the School library. In addition, the final self-study document will be posted on the School's intranet by early July.

"It is important for members of each department to have a complete knowledge and understanding of those sections in the final self-study that relate to

their areas," says Associate Dean James Galbally. "That is a vital final step this summer in preparation for the site visit in September."

The CDA site visit will take place September 12 through 14. Members of the 12-person site-visit committee will each focus on different areas. Dr. Frank Catalanotto of the University of Florida will chair the team. Other members include Dr. Virginia Merchant of the University of Detroit Mercy, reviewing basic sciences; Dr. Denise Kassenbaum of the University of Colorado on curriculum; Mr. Steven Donofrio of NYU on finance; Dr. Harold Laswell of the University of Kentucky on clinical sciences; Dr. Gonzalo Pardo of SUNY at Stonybrook on licensure; and Dr. Frank Sussi of Tufts University as a silent observer. For those Division of Advanced Dental Education programs undergoing accreditation, there will be Dr. Charles Cunningham of the University of Florida on endodontics, Dr. David Turpin of the University of Washington on orthodontics, Dr. Connie Drisko of the University of Louisville on periodontics, and Dr. Cyril Meyerowitz of the University of Rochester on the AEGD program. While the main focus of the CDA accreditation process is on the School's predoctoral program, the aforementioned specialty programs will also be reviewed, and independent self-study documents have been prepared and will be submitted for each of them. ■

Dental House *(continued from page 1)*

in 1926 by architects Stetler & Deysher in the Tudor revival style. Mr. Wood notes that the 1920s saw the construction of many apartment buildings in West Philadelphia.

Prior to the University acquiring the property, the building had three owners over the previous 10 years and had fallen into disrepair.

“This project accomplished a win/win for the community and Penn,” says Mr. Lussenhop, “providing needed graduate student housing for Penn dental students, as well as stabilizing an important building on a critical street.”

The UCHS presents its preservation awards annually, recognizing outstanding achievement in the historical restoration of significant University City properties, such as the Dental House, as well as private homes in the community. ■

Commencement *(continued from page 1)*

Matthew Cryer Society. Membership in the Matthew Cryer Society is the highest scholastic honor conferred at the School, given to the top ten students in each class as determined by the general order of merit at the completion of their second year. Those students who achieved honors on the National Boards were also recognized during the program.

And finally, presented for the first time this year was the Herman Segal Award, to be given annually to the senior dental student with the greatest interest, proficiency, and knowledge in emergency dental care. Dr. Herman Segal, who headed the School's Emergency Clinic for more than 25 years, presented the award with Dean Fonseca.

Following the commencement program, a reception was held for graduates and their guests at the Penn Tower Hotel, 33rd Street and Civic Center Blvd. ■

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