

# University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine Messenger

## Commencement To Be Held May 21

The School of Dental Medicine will celebrate the graduation of its 123<sup>rd</sup> class with the commencement of the Class of 2001. The ceremony will be held Monday, May 21, at 1:30 p.m. in the University's historic Irvine Auditorium at 34<sup>th</sup> and Spruce Streets.

This year's graduating class will include 125 D.M.D. degree recipients as well as eight recipients of their M.S. in Oral Biology.

Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., has been invited to make the keynote address. Dr. Niessen serves as Vice President for Clinical Education for Dentsply International and is also a Clinical Professor in the Department of Public Health Science at Baylor College of Dentistry-Texas A&M University System in Dallas. A noted lecturer and writer, she is the author of a textbook on geriatric dentistry entitled *Geriatric Dentistry: Aging and Oral Health* and the host of "Dental Health Check," a syndicated weekly television news report on dental health, the only one of its kind in the country.

Dean Raymond Fonseca, Dr. Judith Buchanan, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and Edward Terzian, Class of 2001 President, will also make remarks as part of the graduation program.

In addition to the presentation of diplomas and certificates, more than 40 academic achievement awards will be presented, including the first Community Dentistry and Pediatric Dental Health Award and the American Academy of Head, Neck & Facial Pain Award. Faculty excellence will also be honored with the Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award.

Special recognition will also be given to the members of Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU), the national dental honor society, and the Matthew

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## SDM Pilots Wireless Internet Access

Wireless Internet access is up and running in the School's endodontic clinic – the result of a pilot program exploring how to incorporate this new technology into SDM's academic and clinic environment.

"Students and faculty members with network access can now sit in the endodontics seminar room and access the Internet," says Dan Shapiro, SDM's Director of Information Services, who has been working with the University's Office of Information Systems and Computing on this pilot program. "Our ultimate goal is to investigate whether wireless technology can become an appropriate way to deliver computing to the operator."

All of the postdoctoral endodontic students as well as some of the department's faculty are participating in the program. The system components include an access card (a device that must be installed in each individual's computer) and wireless transmitters that send out the signals that provide connection to the Internet. There are three transmitters in the Endodontics Department – one in the seminar room, one in the clinic, and one in the department's office.

"It took some experimenting to determine where we needed transmitters," recalls Dr. Garrett Guess, an endodontics resident who has worked closely with Mr. Shapiro in setting up the system. "We ran into some problems because the walls of the building are so thick, but with three stations, it is working out very well, and the speed is the same as if you were on a wired system."

Access is secured by the Office of Information Services (the access card for each computer that connects to the wireless network must be registered with the office). New Macintosh laptops have wireless access devices that accommodate the

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Cryer Society. Matthew Cryer Society membership is the highest scholastic honor at SDM, given to the top ten students in each class as determined by the general order of merit at the close of their second year. Those students who earned National Board Achievement Honors will also be recognized during the ceremony, along with those recipients of dual degrees. Five students earned an M.S. in Education with a concentration in higher education administration and one student received an M.S. in Anthropology from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in addition to their D.M.D. degrees.

A reception for students and their guests will be held immediately following the commencement program in the University Museum Lower Egyptian Gallery at 33<sup>rd</sup> and Spruce Streets. ■

## DADE Graduation

The School's Division of Advanced Dental Education will be awarding certificates to the postgraduates who have completed their specialty programs. Ceremonies will be held independently for each program, as follows:

*Endodontics*, June 20, at the Inn at Penn, Philadelphia, PA. *Graduates*: Denny Fang, Kevin Edwards, Jamie Kang, Kevin Martin, Cezary Mitrut, A. Steven Singh, Brian Suh, and WooCheol Lee.

*Orthodontics*, June 6, at the Morris Arboretum, Philadelphia, PA. *Graduates*: Thomas Bietsch, S. Dovid Friedman, Adena Goldman, Seong Han, David Hufham, Vincent Mongiovi, and Carol Weinstein.

*Periodontics*, March 23, at the Merion Tribute House, Merion, PA. *Graduates*: Jassim Al-Maseeh, Tomoyasu Fuji, Marela Garcia, Masaya Hobo, Kelly Lee, Emilie Larrazabal, and Lucy Villa.

*Periodontics/Prosthodontics*, March 23, at the Merion Tribute House, Merion, PA. *Graduates*: Thomas Jackson, Do-Shik Kim, and InHan Lee.

*Oral Medicine*, June 9, at the home of Department Chair Dr. Martin Greenberg, Bryn Mawr, PA. *Graduates*: Andres Pinto and Karl Hoffman.

*Advanced Education in General Dentistry*, June 30, Nan Restaurant, Philadelphia, PA. *Graduates*: Greg Burdo, Reem Fadl, Racha Fouad, Anna Belous, Amy Shearer, Douglas Sherley, Todd Welsh, and Yi Zuo.

*Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, June 16, Houston Hall, University of PA. *Graduates*: Shi C. Cheng, Arthur Johnson, III, and Therese DiFlorio-Brennan. ■

## New Resident Fellow Named For Dental House

A familiar face at the Dental House has taken on a new role there. Greg Russell ('03), a resident of the Dental House since its opening, was recently appointed to the position of Resident Fellow of the facility. He succeeds Tom Bietsch, who is completing his postdoctoral training in orthodontics and returning to California to practice.

"I am very excited that Greg will be assuming this role in the new academic year," says Susan Schwartz, Director of Student Affairs. "We had wonderful candidates apply for the position, but Greg's commitment to the Dental House stood out. While living there the past two years, he has worked very hard to make it a supportive community environment."

Mr. Russell views his major goal as helping to support students as they make the transition to dental school and hopes to build stronger connections between residents through such activities as monthly social events and special academic programs.

"Coming to dental school can be overwhelming, but the Dental House offers an ideal setting for making that transition," observes Mr. Russell. "Not only because first-year students are surrounded by

fellow students going through the same thing, but also because they have upper classmen to draw upon for help and support."

Mr. Russell will have a set time each week when he will be in the social room to answer questions or simply talk about issues of concern or interest with the House residents. Among his plans for academic support are mock practicals as well as tutoring sessions in the House laboratory for General Restorative Dentistry I and II. In addition, he hopes to encourage residents to relax and socialize together with a monthly movie or house dinner.

Mr. Russell's wife, a physical therapist, also lives in the Dental House. "My wife and I will both be here as first-year students arrive for orientation in August, and we hope to have a cookout during that week so everyone can get to know each other," he notes. "I also want residents to know they are always welcome to knock on our door anytime with a question."

The Dental House features amenities that have made it a supportive learning and residential environment, including a fully equipped preclinical lab; a social room with television, VCR, and slide projector; a grill and picnic tables in the courtyard area; and PennNet connections in each unit. ■

## Rising Seniors Preparing for Postdoc Program Application Process

While this academic year is winding to a close, third-year students recently got advice on helping them plan and organize for the next.

“Between clinical responsibilities, externships, and applying for postdoctoral programs, seniors have a great deal on their plates that requires a lot of juggling,” says Susan Schwartz, Director of Student Affairs. “With such a large percentage of our students pursuing postdoctoral study, our goal with this seminar was to help them become better informed about the postdoctoral application process at an early stage. It is important that they understand the full extent of the process so they can take a proactive role in it.”

Held April 23, this was the first of two meetings on applying to postdoctoral programs. A panel of seniors – Andrew Schwartz, Fariborz Nazeri, and Richard Hong – each with different situations related to their postdoctoral placements, shared their experiences in the seminar. The director of the University’s Resource Learning Center also offered additional strategies on efficient management of the required steps and tasks.

“Preparation is key in applying to programs,” says Andrew Schwartz. “Knowing the deadlines and getting information submitted early is a huge advantage. Organization goes hand in hand with preparation.” He suggests creating a one-page summary that lists all the program applications and key information needed for each so it is easy to track the status of everything.

“Prior to applying, it is important to obtain as much information as possible about the different programs that interest you. The best way to find out about a specific program is to speak with the current residents and to get their point of view,” adds Richard Hong.

Fariborz Nazeri discussed the vital role an externship can play in a postdoctoral placement. “An externship can either help or destroy you, depending on what you put into it,” he says. Professionalism is equally important, he notes.

To aid students in the planning process, handouts explaining the key steps involved in the postdoctoral application process were distributed at the seminar, along with a timeline for those steps that runs from May through October/November. This application process timeline and the other seminar handouts are available in the Office of Student Services.

“It is important for rising seniors to understand that the specialty programs are very competitive and the application process is very involved,” notes Ms. Schwartz. “And with an average of 85 to 90% of graduates pursuing postdoctoral training, our goal is to support them as much as we can in the process.” ■

## Dentrix Enterprise Training Set for School Clinics

As a next step toward a future of paperless charting and digital radiographs, training on the Dentrix Enterprise system will soon get underway for key SDM clinic personnel. Dentrix is one of the most widely used practice management software programs within the dental profession, and SDM was the first site for a major roll out of the Enterprise version, developed to manage multiple offices or clinics. The Enterprise system was deployed throughout the School’s Dental Care Network in mid-November, and now will be introduced into its clinics.

“This system will enable the School to manage our clinics and patient treatment more effectively,” explains Dan Shapiro, Director of Information Services, “and because the Enterprise version is housed within an Oracle database, the leading database on the market for managing large businesses, it will enable us to link with new technologies as they develop.”

The upcoming training will be for those frontline clinic staff members who interact with patients, and plans call for going live with the system for patient registration, billing, and insurance functions by the first week in July.

“This will provide the foundation to allow us to move forward with the use of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology, including paperless charting and digital radiographs,” adds Mr. Shapiro. ■

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## Wireless Internet Access *(continued from page 1)*

access card built in, but all Windows laptops and desktop machines must have them added.

Dr. Guess stresses that in addition to supporting electronic patient charting and digital radiographs, bringing computers into the operator will also enhance patient education resources. “With computers in the operator, we will not only be able to use them as a record keeping tool for patient information, but also as a patient education tool,” he says. “For example, we’ll be able to show patients pictures of their teeth and better explain their conditions and treatments. It has a lot of promise.” ■

## SDM Welcomes New PASS Class

The School of Dental Medicine recently welcomed a new class of foreign-trained dentists to its Program for Advanced Standing Students (PASS). This year's class includes 32 students from 19 different countries, including for the first time a student from Albania.

PASS students attend a summer session that includes lectures and preclinical work before joining the Class of 2003 at the start of the new academic year. Students complete regular third- and fourth-year classes and clinic instruction, making them eligible to take licensure examinations in the United States.

This is the sixteenth PASS class that SDM has admitted, and interest in the program was at a record high. "We had a much larger applicant pool this year, making entry more competitive," notes Dr. Naty Lopez, Assistant Dean of International Programs, who co-directs PASS with Dr. Peter Berthold, Associate Dean for International Relations. There were 514 applicants to the program this year, whereas in years past the number had average between 350 and 370. SDM is one of 23 dental schools in the United States that offer advanced standing programs for graduates of foreign dental schools.

Once again, the entering class includes professionals with a diverse range of experience, many having spent time working and living in the United States prior to applying to PASS. Several students worked as dental assistants, two were involved in research, and one taught in a public school in Chicago.

"With an increasingly diverse population in the United States, the need for dentists to deliver care to various ethnic groups becomes greater," observes Dr. Lopez. "The lack of health professionals of similar ethnic origins has been identified as a contributing factor to the problem of access to health care. By preparing dentists who speak the language and understand the culture and values of these groups, PASS contributes to the reduction of non-financial barriers that impede access to health care." ■

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