The Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center celebrates 50 years of providing dental care to the community.
THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ the fourth issue of the UCLA Dentistry bi-annual magazine. Being a transplant from the Midwest and east coast, I can see why Angelenos are partial to their southern California weather. As you can see from the cover, this issue pays homage to our clinic by the sea, the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center, as this summer marks the Center’s 50th year of serving the community. Over the years, it has grown from a small, 4-chair operation to a 27-chair, state-of-the-art facility that administers nearly 15,000 visits per year to underserved patient populations, concentrated in Venice Beach and West Los Angeles, that need it the most.

We also recognize a very special faculty member and administrator, Dr. Carol Bibb, our associate dean for student affairs. After dedicating 40 years of her career to dental education and our students, Dr. Bibb has decided to step down from her role and pass the torch to a new leader. I want to thank her for her loyalty and hard work in ensuring that generations of dentists go on to lead successful, fulfilling careers; and some have even come back and become colleagues.

The dental school welcomed new leadership and new ideas to the Section of Restorative Dentistry this past year. Drs. Reuben Kim and Marc Hayashi became the chair and vice chair, respectively, of the Section and have already implemented positive changes. We also established our 12th endowed chair at the School with a $1 million gift from Naomi and Jim Ellison. The gift allowed us to create an endowed chair in restorative dentistry, which bears the couple’s name.

You will meet four of our exceptional dental students, who have each received some of the many scholarships that have been established to help our students to defray educational expenses. You will also meet two of our long-time staff members, both with decades of service, who have dedicated their entire careers not only to UCLA, but solely to the dental school.

Finally, I’d like to recognize the hard work of all our faculty, staff, and students this past year. It’s our collective dedication to excellence in education, research, patient care, and public service that sets us apart. A special thank you also to our alumni and friends; your support helps us achieve our vision and goals.

If you have an idea for a story or just want to send us your thoughts about what was featured in this magazine, please email us at info@dentistry.ucla.edu. Your opinions and thoughts are important to us.

Sincerely,

Paul H. Krebsbach, DDS, PhD
Dean and Professor

In order to continue our progress, we need to celebrate the people and places who helped us become who we are today.
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ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

DEAN
Paul H. Krebsbach, DDS, PhD

EDITOR
Brianna Aldrich
Director of Communications

COPY EDITORS
Jane Fransella
Mallory Gompert

DESIGNERS
Brianna Aldrich
Brian Lozano

COVER ARTWORK
Fabio Consoli

PHOTOGRAPHY
Chris Flynn, unless otherwise noted.
“UCLA’s Venice Dental Clinic treated people with the dignity and respect they deserved. Oral health is not separate from systemic health, and you need both to function as a person. Everyone is entitled to a life free of pain from dental disease.”

- Dr. James Freed, Professor Emeritus of Public Health & Preventative Dentistry & Founding Dental Director

1967
A health survey shows that Venice Beach residents need dental care more than any other service. Advocates approach the UCLA School of Dentistry with a proposal to open a community clinic.

1968
Approvals from Chancellor Charles Young and dental school dean, Dr. Raider Sognaes, move the clinic project forward. A grant for $38,000 is secured for start-up costs.

1969
UCLA Venice Dental Clinic officially opens its doors at 300 Lincoln Blvd. Dental director, Dr. James Freed, hires Venice residents to recruit new patients who are in dire need of care. Within days, the 4-chair, 1,200 sq. ft. clinic has a month-long waiting list.
“When I first saw the original clinic space, I knew that I needed to pull together resources to move the operation into a new space that met the high standards of the UCLA name. More importantly, the dental school needed to expand in order to continue to provide dental care to the local, underserved populations of Venice Beach and West Los Angeles and expose dental students to valuable clinical experiences.”

- Mr. Bob Wilson ’53, UCLA Dentistry Board of Counselors member, & Chairman, Duckett-Wilson Development Company

1970s & ’80s

Word spreads about the UCLA Venice Dental Clinic, which continues to be a safety net for the community.

Demand for specialty services grows and the clinic has a yearlong waiting list to see a pediatric dentist.

1986

Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center is established

A building across the street from the clinic comes up for sale. UCLA Dentistry board of counselors members, Bob Wilson, Gerald Jennings, and Bill Bloomfield, join their families to purchase the building, spurring the establishment of the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center.

The new building quadruples the size of the clinic’s old space and dramatically increases the ability to serve the community.
“Working in the UCLA Venice Clinic as a student was a valuable experience that was more like working in a professional practice than a dental school clinic. I am proud that this location has grown over the past 50 years into the full-service Venice Dental Center we know today.”

- Dr. Ronald Mito, DDS ’76 & Professor Emeritus of the UCLA School of Dentistry

“BISCO, Inc. is proud to be a part of the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center’s commitment to providing ongoing patient care services to vulnerable patient populations since the 1990s.”

- Dr. Byong Suh, President of BISCO, Inc.

1990s
The Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center becomes a fixture in the community and, in addition to general dentistry, now offers oral surgery, pediatrics, orthodontics, endodontics and more.

1997
1,600 Additional Square Footage Added
Gifts from the Wilson and Bloomfield families help refurbish an additional 1,600 sq. ft. of clinic space.
The renovation adds six new operatories and more service facilities, expanding the ability to treat more patients with complex needs.

1999
BISCO, Inc., establishes the BISCO Endowed Fund for Patient Care at the Center.
The Center reaches a patient volume of more than 15,000 visits annually, with the majority of patients using Denti-Cal or having no insurance at all.

By the 2000s, tooth decay in children had become a significant public health concern and affected nearly two-thirds of children by the third grade. The Wilson and Bloomfield families help fund the construction of a pediatric dentistry wing.

“Adding the new pediatric dentistry wing in 2007 was another important achievement in the story of the UCLA Venice Dental Center and its capacity to provide comprehensive dental care to the thousands of children in the area.

The state-of-the-art clinic provided a new, advanced ‘classroom’ for faculty to train the next generation of pediatric dentists to be knowledgeable about the disparities in the delivery of dental care, issues around access to dental care, and to learn how to advocate for possible solutions.”

- Dr. John Yamamoto, Vice President of Professional Services for Delta Dental of California & Clinic Director from 2005 to 2008

2000s

Ground-breaking Ceremony for New Pediatric Clinic

February 21, 2007
“What started out as a small clinic by the beach is now an integral part of the dental school’s story. I know I speak for hundreds of alums, faculty, staff, and current students when I say that in helping ensure people of all means have access to excellent oral health care there is no better reflection of the UCLA School of Dentistry’s values than the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center.”

- Dr. Paul Krebsbach, Dean, UCLA School of Dentistry

April 12, 2008

Pediatric Clinic Opens with Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

The pediatric dentistry wing opens, complete with a waiting room with toys and books, seven operatories sized for children and a reception desk.

The new space also becomes home to a new community-based pediatric dentistry residency program.

2009

The Center establishes a partnership with Upward Bound House (UBH) under the leadership of Mr. Tom Wilson. UBH’s mission is to eliminate homelessness among families with children in Los Angeles by providing housing, supportive services, and advocacy.

The Center provides dental care to families living in UBH housing—restoring their smiles and self-confidence. The Wilson Family and The Schutz-Engel Trust supplement the Center’s efforts by supporting subsidy funds directed towards UBH patients.
“I have had the privilege to be a part of the leadership team at the UCLA Venice Dental Center that helps train dental students to treat our patients with dignity and respect; and also instill in them the ethical principles of the dental field. I’m confident that UCLA graduates will continue serving the community and those who have limited access to oral health care.”

- Dr. Lillian Cheng, Clinic Director, Wilson-Jennings Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center

Since its inception, the mission of the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center to provide comprehensive dental care to underserved communities has not changed. The Center has grown from a 4-chair operation to a 27-chair, state-of-the-art facility. A new radiology facility, imaging equipment, and a sterilization room are added to improve patient care.

50 Years of Providing Quality Care to the Community

September 28, 2019

UCLA & Community Leaders Come Together to Commemorate the Anniversary

A special event will take place to commemorate the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center’s 50-year presence in the community and the value that its brought to its patients.

The School recognizes the following honorees: Mr. Bob Wilson, Delta Dental of California, and Dr. James Freed.
Past students who Dr. Bibb has mentored during her tenure. Back row, left to right; Dr. Clark Taylor II, DDS ’19; Dr. Nini Tran, DDS ’09, assistant professor of pediatric dentistry; Dr. Mo Kang, DDS ’01, chair and professor of endodontics; Dr. Wayne Gonzalez, DDS ’19. Front row, left to right; Victoria Chen, Class of 2020; Dr. Carol Bibb, DDS ’78, associate dean for student affairs; Dr. Mohammed Husain, DDS ’11, assistant clinical professor of oral radiology.

Thank you to the UCLA Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden for the use of your beautiful garden.

Passion for Dental Education Transcends a 40-Year Career
DENTISTRY WAS NOT ON CAROL BIBB’S MIND as a future career path until a faculty member serving on the UCLA School of Dentistry’s admissions committee asked if she had ever considered applying to dental school. She had just completed her PhD degree in cell and developmental biology from UC Irvine and had started conducting research in a lab located in the dental school. UCLA was familiar territory for her, as she had completed both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biology at the Westwood campus and had originally planned on pursuing a career in research. With inspiration from her husband, John, who had just completed his medical training, Carol applied to and was accepted into the UCLA DDS Class of 1978.

At that time, women represented less than five percent of dental students in the U.S., and UCLA was working to change that trend by actively recruiting female applicants. Today, the student body has an approximately equal number of men and women. “It’s been encouraging over the years to see our incoming classes and the dental profession shift from one that was male-dominated to one of equal gender make-up. Today, it’s not even a point of discussion. It’s the norm,” said Dr. Bibb, clinical professor of oral medicine and orofacial pain.

After completing her DDS degree, Dr. Bibb went into general practice and enjoyed caring for her patients’ oral health for 14 years. During that time, she was invited by a faculty member at her alma mater to teach one day a week in the first-year dental morphology course. Her initial assignment was as a bench instructor in the preclinical laboratory, and when that became a success, she was encouraged to give a lecture to the entire class. “I thought I was too shy to give a lecture so I was very nervous, and I obsessively prepared for that first experience,” she recalls. That 1-hour lecture started a chain reaction that eventually led to her current role as the associate dean for student affairs, a position she has held for nearly 14 years. “My career in dental education has been exciting, challenging, and fulfilling, and I can honestly say that I have never been bored.”

Throughout her tenure, Dr. Bibb has taught in a range of formats, from lectures and small group case-based seminars, to preclinical laboratory instruction and chair-side clinical supervision. She has taught pre-doctoral students and residents and has served as a research mentor for dental students and master’s degree candidates.

“The common denominator in all of these interactions is that I consider my students as future professional colleagues. I strive to provide a positive educational experience based on best practices in pedagogy and respect for student time and professional goals,” Dr. Bibb reflects. Her favorite way to summarize this philosophy is to paraphrase celebrated UCLA basketball coach, John Wooden: “Students need mentors and role models, not critics.”

In 2000, Dr. Bibb was offered the position of director of the Westwood general clinic by longtime colleague, Dr. Ronald Mito. She accepted the position and held it for five years. The role had significant administrative responsibilities, but it also presented an opportunity for her to use her expertise as an educator by integrating and applying the foundational, behavioral, and clinical sciences in the patient management curriculum. “It’s always been my goal to help our student dentists become competent, caring, and successful clinicians,” she said.

When the former assistant dean for student affairs retired at the end of 2004, the dental school needed someone who was capable of running an important office at the School as well as being a mentor to the hundreds of students earning their doctorate of dental surgery degree. In January 2005, Dr. No-Hee Park, then-dean of the School, asked Dr. Bibb to step in to this crucial role as he knew she was the right person for the job. “My greatest joy comes from being able to support and assist dental students to maximize their potential and achieve their unique professional goals,” she said.

In addition to teaching for the past 40 years, Dr. Bibb fulfills her passion for dental education through personal, academic, and career mentoring. She serves as the faculty advisor for professional development activities, such as a teaching apprenticeship that provides workshops and practical experience to student dentists interested in pursuing academic dentistry. She enjoys sharing her expertise and experience with her student teachers. Many of those same individuals, who she mentored and nurtured over the years, are now faculty colleagues here at UCLA and in dental schools around the country.

“You have supported me from the very first time I stepped foot on the UCLA campus. I will always be grateful for how you made me feel like UCLA was my home.”

- Dr. Wayne Gonzalez, DDS ’19
“It’s been priceless to see and hear of our graduates’ accomplishments in their own careers,” she said. “It’s hard to put into words how much it means to me to hear from alumni about the impact I have had on their professional endeavors.”

When asked what her favorite memory is, Dr. Bibb fondly reflects on the annual commencement ceremony that she and her team are responsible for coordinating. “The sense of pride I feel when I enter Royce Hall to watch another class be formally recognized for their hard work in front of their families is something I am honored to be a part of. It’s a reminder that the future of the dental profession is in very capable hands and that, in a small way, I had a part in it.”

At the end of June, Dr. Bibb stepped down as associate dean for student affairs. She is confident that her successor, Dr. Barry Margolis, will maintain the high level of support and advocacy that the students deserve. She looks forward to continuing to serve the UCLA School of Dentistry on a part-time basis, where she will focus her energy on the exciting curriculum innovations that are currently underway.

Dr. Carol Bibb, pictured at center, is happiest when she is surrounded by dental students. Here, she is pictured with a group of student teachers participating in the Basic Dental Principles teaching apprenticeship for future dental educators.

“Dr. Carol Bibb embodies the word—educator. Her expertise during class lectures and her mentorship throughout my four years at UCLA are just some of the influences she had on me as a student and a big part of why I want to become an educator myself.”

- Dr. Joshua Vert, DDS ’18
Dr. Carol Bibb Bibb with Dr. Barry Margolis at the 2019 Donor luncheon. Dr. Margolis took over for Dr. Bibb as the associate dean for student services. Photo taken by UCLA Photography.

Dr. Bibb enjoys welcoming incoming students at the White Coat Ceremony, where she is pictured with Dr. Anna Kreymer, DDS ’12, in the above left image; and wishing them a bright future at commencement, where she is pictured with Dr. Michael Shoff, DDS ’10, at his commencement ceremony in the above right image. Photos taken by UCLA Photography.

“Carol has been my colleague, collaborator, and dear friend for many years. Her unwavering commitment to fostering our students’ success has been an inspiration to me and to dozens of faculty members. Her wisdom and expertise as a dental educator are lasting gifts to the UCLA School of Dentistry and I am forever grateful for her friendship.”

- Dr. Edmond Hewlett, DDS ’80, Associate Dean for Outreach and Diversity
Restorative dentistry gains two new leaders who strive for excellence in training, research, and patient care within a collaborative environment

WITH MORE THAN 160 FACULTY MEMBERS, from full-time to volunteer instructors in the clinic, restorative dentistry is UCLA Dentistry’s largest section. A collective term for diagnosing, treating, and managing diseased teeth and surrounding structures, restorative dentistry builds the foundation for our pre-doctoral students’ understanding of the art and science of dentistry.

Dr. Reuben Kim, a UCLA Dentistry alumnus with the Class of 2003 and chair of the Section of Restorative Dentistry, takes his role very seriously. “There are a lot of exciting changes going on in the study of restorative dentistry. I’m determined for UCLA Restorative Dentistry to become the gold standard across all dental schools.”

The Section also operates two residency programs in advanced education in general dentistry (AEGD), with 13 residents admitted annually. One program operates out of the Westwood clinic and the other program out of the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center. Also under the Section’s purview is the BISCO Clinic for Esthetic Dentistry, a highly regarded specialty clinic that offers patients cosmetic and esthetic services, directed by Dr. Yair Whiteman, assistant clinical professor.

To say his plate is full is an understatement, but Dr. Kim isn’t new to hard work and perseverance. He was hired as an assistant professor of restorative dentistry in 2006 while he was still working towards his PhD degree in oral biology, which he completed in 2008. He was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2014 and then appointed as chair of restorative dentistry in 2018.

At the beginning of 2019, Dr. Marc Hayashi, assistant clinical professor of restorative dentistry, who joined UCLA full-time in 2016, was appointed as vice chair of the Section. Dr. Hayashi received his DMD degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine and completed his advanced training at USC and Sepulveda VA.

Together, they have devised a plan to enhance the Section in four key areas: digital transformation, research, community dentistry, and communication with faculty and staff.

“My goal is to increase the digitization of our curriculum and offer modern approaches to clinical training and faculty calibration.”

- Dr. Marc Hayashi

“Ultimately, we’re striving to create a dental home for our patients, where the focus from our faculty and student dentists is on a case completion model with attention on prevention,” said Dr. Hayashi. “With this, we can offer an affordable treatment option for our patients that will arrest their decay, and, if necessary, buy them time before deciding on a more permanent treatment option.”

Leading a Digital Transformation

Drs. Kim and Hayashi’s top goal is to further implement the use of digital technology within the Section’s patient care and clinical training initiatives.

“My goal is to increase the digitization of our curriculum and offer modern approaches to clinical training and faculty calibration,” said Dr. Hayashi. “By providing more frequent online modules and audience response systems, we can create a more engaging and dynamic education

“- Dr. Reuben Kim
for our students and instructors, resulting in a more cohesive and informed body that ultimately improves the patient experience and level of care provided.”

Recent acquisitions of digital scanning and impression tools are preparing pre-doctoral students to leave UCLA with the skills needed to practice dentistry using the most advanced technology on the market. The immediate goal is to increase the use of digital milling systems, such as CAD/CAM machines, in clinical instruction in order to facilitate all pre-doctoral students gaining experience using the equipment.

The Section is also tracking to be the first in the School to incorporate axiUm, the School’s electronic health records management software, in preclinical teaching so that first year dental students are familiar with the software before they begin seeing patients during the summer of their second year.

Promotion and Investment in Research

While in dental school, being introduced to oral health research was a seminal moment in Dr. Kim’s career. “Dentistry is built upon evidence-based research and science, and I wanted to be a part of it. I decided to pursue a PhD degree after my second year in dental school. For me, research opened my eyes to a whole new way of thinking and approach to my training. I really want to encourage dental students to incorporate some type of research in their time here, and as early as their first year,” said Dr. Kim. “Research is a time-consuming activity and the true value comes from identifying a mentor and learning and producing tangible results that can apply back to patient care.”

Over the last 15 years, the UCLA School of Dentistry has become a research powerhouse, with the help of significant investments made in physical laboratory space and other resources. In the 2017-18 fiscal year, the dental school was awarded more than $10.3 million from seven agencies under the National Institutes of Health (NIH) umbrella. As a recipient of multiple NIH grants, including a R01 training grant, Dr. Kim plans to continue this precedent of research excellence in the Section. He is in the process of building a dedicated research laboratory to house the latest research equipment, where restorative dentistry faculty of all levels can conduct research. He hopes that more resources will help promote clinical, basic, and translational research, especially in dental materials.
Bringing Restorative Dentistry to the Community

With the recent introduction of the Community-Based Clinical Education (CBCE) program in the fourth-year curriculum, dental students will now be exposed to valuable, real-life clinical experiences during six-week rotations at federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) or clinics that treat underserved populations. UCLA dental students become a valuable part of a clinical team, which provides services to patients who generally struggle with access to oral health care. Across the 12 CBCE sites where students rotate, the majority of the treatment being provided is restorative work, making the Section a vital partner in the success of the School’s pre-doctoral training curriculum.

Throughout the past year of getting the CBCE program off the ground, constant calibration and communication between restorative dentistry faculty here in Westwood and CBCE clinical educators in the community has been crucial in ensuring teaching material and best practices are aligned with UCLA quality standards of care. This newly formed collaboration functions to close the gap between the School and the community.

“Restorative dentistry is the pillar of dentistry. Without knowing how to prep and restore teeth properly, there is no post-graduate education,” Dr. Kim said. “There’s no better preparation for our graduates than getting that hands-on experience in restorative work, not only at the dental school’s clinics but also at the CBCE sites.”

Culture of Inclusiveness

Drs. Kim and Hayashi believe that none of their plans and aspirations can transpire without the vested interest and motivation of their faculty, staff, and trainees. One way that they plan to create a more inclusive culture is to establish multiple pipelines of communication so that administrative decisions are transparent to all.

“We want to make sure that everyone feels a part of our shared progress. To do so, we are implementing ongoing communications, such as face-to-face interactions and emails to the entire section and our stakeholders about our progress. We also have quarterly faculty and staff meetings, including weekend sessions to regroup amongst ourselves,” Dr. Kim said.

Despite the size of the Section, the leaders hope that everyone in restorative dentistry feels that they can make suggestions for improvements and solutions. This management approach is in line with one of the dental school’s core values of professionalism and humanistic culture. Moving into their newly renovated offices, where many of the part-time faculty have dedicated workspace and a meeting room, is helping to work towards this goal.

“I want everyone to ‘feel at home’ in restorative dentistry, which is our motto for this year. This shouldn’t be a place you only come to work and train. I want it to be a place where people can enjoy expressing their ideas and sharing their talents,” Dr. Kim said. “To me, UCLA is a place where we work and study and build significant relationships with our colleagues, who are also friends and family. This is the reason why I come to school every day full of excitement and expectations.”

“| I’m determined for UCLA Restorative Dentistry to become the gold standard across all dental schools.” | Dr. Reuben Kim |
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<td>Full-time, part-time, and volunteer faculty members in Restorative Dentistry</td>
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JOIN THE UCLA DENTISTRY BEQUEST CHALLENGE!

The UCLA School of Dentistry is an internationally recognized leader in dental education, research, community service, and patient care. Your gift can be directed to support scholarships for the next generation of dental students, to attract and retain leading faculty, or support cutting-edge research.

Establish a legacy gift through your estate:

• Earmark your gift for the UCLA School of Dentistry.

• Give a specific amount, a particular asset, or choose to give a part of what is left of your estate (residue) after first providing for your loved ones.

For more in-depth information or for assistance in drafting bequest language, please contact:

Mallory Gompert, Senior Executive Director of Development, UCLA School of Dentistry
Phone: 310-206-6079
Email: mgompert@support.ucla.edu

Robin Sauldsberry, Director of Gift Planning
Phone: 310-267-4070
Email: robinw@support.ucla.edu

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Thank You for Your Support!
“ANY TIME YOU REAP THE BENEFITS OF SOMETHING THAT HAS AFFORDED you a successful career, it’s your responsibility to ensure those same opportunities are available to others,” said Dr. Naomi Ellison, UCLA DDS Class of 1981. “I always intended to give back to the school and feel fortunate that I am able to in several capacities.”

At the end of 2018, Naomi and her husband, Jim Ellison, established the Naomi and Jim Ellison Endowed Chair with a $1 million gift. The chair will be used to recruit and retain star faculty to practice and teach restorative dentistry. The donation establishes the twelfth endowed chair at the dental school and the third in the past five years.

Dr. Naomi Ellison received her dental degree at UCLA in 1981, but she made her first gift to the dental school when she was still a student, to support a subsidy fund for patients from underserved populations. Her desire to give back to her alma mater continued as she built a successful private practice, during which time she also held several leadership positions within the dental field, including with the California Dental Association.

Dr. Ellison has also elevated the dental school through decades of counsel and philanthropic leadership, including through her service as chair of the UCLA School of Dentistry’s board of counselors for the past 25 years. During her over two decades of service, she has helped raise more than $55 million to support UCLA Dentistry’s mission for excellence in dental education, research, service, and patient care.

“There has not been a day when I didn’t love being a dentist,” she said. “UCLA prepared me to be the best clinician I could be. General dentists are the gatekeepers of dental care, and I wanted to ensure that general restorative dentistry remains strong at UCLA. This endowed chair allows Jim and me to support an exceptional faculty member who will teach future leaders.”

Dr. Ellison is also a leader in campus-wide philanthropic activities, including being a current member of the cabinet for the Centennial Campaign for UCLA and immediate past president of UCLA Women and Philanthropy.

Jim Ellison is the former chairman and CEO of Ellison Technologies, a global manufacturing solutions company. He built the company from a single location to 24 locations across the country. Since stepping down as chairman and CEO, he has focused his time on philanthropic interests. In addition to giving back to UCLA Dentistry, he is the director and past chairman of the board of the Los Angeles Metropolitan YMCA and was a board member of the Simms/Mann–UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology.

“I hope that this gift inspires other alumni of the dental school to look at their successful careers and consider giving back to their alma mater,” he said. “I see what UCLA has done for Naomi, and if it weren’t for this world-class university, she wouldn’t have had such a fulfilling career.”

The couple chose to endow a faculty chair in restorative dentistry in part because they knew it would benefit the dental school for many years to come.

“Donors and alumni like the Ellisons are instrumental in the upward trajectory of this dental school,” said Dr. Paul Krebsbach, the School’s dean. “Their gift will make a lasting impact on our section of restorative dentistry, and I can’t thank them enough for their support and dedication to UCLA.”

Ensuring the future growth of...

RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY

"ANY TIME YOU REAP THE BENEFITS OF SOMETHING THAT HAS AFFORDED you a successful career, it’s your responsibility to ensure those same opportunities are available to others,” said Dr. Naomi Ellison, UCLA DDS Class of 1981. “I always intended to give back to the school and feel fortunate that I am able to in several capacities.”

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“UCLA prepared me to be the best clinician I could be. General dentists are the gatekeepers of dental care, and I wanted to ensure that general restorative dentistry remains strong at UCLA.”

-Dr. Naomi Ellison, DDS ’81, pictured at right, with husband, Jim Ellison
AFTER A NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING in the demanding New York film industry, Michelle Piasecki decided she needed a career change. She still enjoyed the collaborative nature of working with a team to keep the cameras running, but wanted to spend her time making more of a direct impact on people’s well-being. It was a trip to the dentist for an extraction and an implant that made her think that health care, more specifically dentistry, might be the profession she desired.

In 2013, Michelle left the film industry to prepare herself to become a viable dental school applicant. After completing the necessary requirements and applying to dental school, she found herself moving to Los Angeles to join her future colleagues at the UCLA School of Dentistry. Since then, she has immersed herself in dental school life and has served as a resourceful leader among her colleagues as well as a mentor to incoming dental students.

Michelle also became involved in digital dentistry and was instrumental in creating a new selective course on the subject. “There are a lot of amazing advances happening in dentistry right now and I would like to remain ahead of the curve when it comes to this transition,” she said. “We are able to interact with the new equipment that will eventually be instrumental in practicing dentistry.”

All of her hard work and passion for leadership has paid off. Last year she received the Ralph and Shirley Shapiro Scholarship and this year she received the David and Miki Lee Scholarship; both awards seek to recognize a student who has exhibited academic excellence and leadership qualities.

“The financial assistance that scholarships give really makes a difference. It is no secret that the UCLA School of Dentistry has a rigorous environment and succeeding here requires a lot of effort,” Michelle said. “Feeling support from donors and alumni feels like an acknowledgment of all of that hard work.”

Michelle plans to pursue an AEGD or GPR certificate after she graduates next June, and following that program she’d like to pursue a career in maxillofacial prosthodontics. “Maxillofacial prosthodontics is the discipline that allows you to have the biggest positive impact on a patient’s quality of life,” said Michelle. “The ability to treat a population that doesn’t feel comfortable going outside, and who may not be able to eat or drink comfortably without a prosthesis, really inspires me.”
WALTER FUENTES HAS ALWAYS BEEN PASSIONATE about pursuing a profession where he could give back through public service. He discovered dentistry on a humanitarian trip to Ghana during his freshman year of college. He was inspired by a dentist who was making a difference in impoverished communities by providing basic cleanings and treatment. After that experience, he was set on attending dental school and worked diligently to become a competitive applicant, including shadowing a dentist while completing his undergraduate degree.

Walter chose to attend the UCLA School of Dentistry because of its strong reputation and teaching philosophy, but more important to him was the diversity of the campus and city. From the beginning of his training, his desire to practice in underserved communities was recognized and encouraged. In 2015, following his acceptance to UCLA, he applied to and received the coveted National Health Services Corp Scholarship (NHSC). The loan repayment program is only offered to 20 dental students across the country. And in 2016, he was awarded the Naomi Ellison Scholarship, which is given to a deserving first year student with potential to practice dentistry in an underserved community.

Throughout his training, Walter gravitated towards treating children. He had the opportunity to shadow pediatric dentists through the School’s Infant Oral Care program, where he worked directly with parents, caregivers, and children in low-income communities to teach them about basic oral hygiene. During the 2019 scholarship cycle, he received the Wyatt Rory Hume Scholarship, which awards a dental student who shows significant involvement in community service.

“Dentistry is an expensive profession to pursue; the scholarships I’ve received over the years mean that I can focus on practicing in an underserved area when I’m done with my training, instead of repaying student loans,” said Walter. “The most recent award helped cover a significant portion of the costs associated with the application process to residency programs.”

After having completed dental school this past June, Walter will head to Seattle to pursue a pediatric dentistry residency program at the University of Washington School of Dentistry, and following that, he will begin his NHSC commitment by practicing in an underserved area for four years. In the future, he plans to become involved with public health policy-making, and he credits pediatric dentistry and public health faculty members, Drs. Clarice Law, Francisco Ramos-Gomez, and Jim Crall, for their influence and guidance in this area.

“I just want to tell those individuals who helped establish scholarships that you have indirectly helped a population that needs more resources and health care providers,” said Walter. “It’s my pursuit in life to improve the oral health of underserved, yet deserving, communities.”
LAYLA FIJANY FELT SHE WAS DESTINED FOR DENTISTRY.
As a little girl, she spent her free time making jewelry, and it was the hand-eye coordination that she especially enjoyed. While in college, she added the sciences as another personal interest and chose to major in human biology. When faced with what she wanted to do as a profession, dentistry revealed itself as the perfect fit, as it combined hand-eye skills, was patient-centric, and afforded her the opportunity to make a positive impact on others’ lives.

Now, having completed her third year of dental school, and being well into the clinical care portion of the curriculum, Layla feels even more fulfilled with her choice. “When a patient reveals to me that they have insecurities with their smile, I feel empowered to work with them to achieve their goals,” she said. “At UCLA I feel that I have the skills to help them smile again, and it is a very humbling, yet gratifying feeling.”

Like many of her colleagues, Layla chose UCLA because of its phenomenal reputation, but it was the research focus that drew her to enroll. Research had been and continues to be an important part of her professional pursuits ever since her bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in biology. “I wanted to attend a school where I could continue to do research. UCLA has been a great environment not only for learning clinical dentistry, but as a university that is at the forefront of dental innovation and research,” Layla said.

The Southern California native has also made a point to involve herself with several dental and graduate student clubs and organizations, including holding leadership positions within those groups. Her passion for dentistry and the School has been recognized with the Ralph and Shirley Shapiro Scholarship, which is awarded to students who exhibit academic excellence and have made leadership contributions.

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“There’s something so profound about watching someone transition from feeling ashamed and embarrassed of their teeth to someone who can’t stop smiling because they’re so proud and excited about their appearance,” said Layla. “That alone is why I want to be a dentist.”
When Joseph Mullen was faced with the decision to pick a college major, he was set on picking one in a different field than the one his father had chosen, which was oral surgery. After completing his first year of college as a marketing major, he went on a mission trip to the Czech Republic where he provided service to a number of individuals and families and found that he enjoyed human interaction much more than interacting with computer screens. It was this mission that changed his mind and path from marketing and advertising to health care. Based on his own experience growing up, he knew that dentistry could provide a more flexible lifestyle, one where he could be more involved in his children’s lives.

“Dentistry is the perfect marriage of interaction with people, has elements of art, and accommodates a work-life balance that I want,” Joseph said.

As a husband and father of two young boys, Joseph has the added stress of planning for his family’s financial future, so he’s made a point of trying to minimize the amount of debt he will have after graduating. He’s achieved this in part by choosing the UCLA School of Dentistry, which is known for the tremendous value as well as the quality of education students receive. In his second year, he was awarded the Mason C. Oong, DDS and May H. Oong Endowed Scholarship and one of the School’s newest endowed scholarships, the Dr. No-Hee Park Award for Excellence Endowment in the art and science of dentistry category. The latter endowed scholarship was set-up in honor of dean emeritus, Dr. Park, after his 18 years of service as dean, through a campus-wide fundraising effort led by Dr. Thomas Rauth, DDS ’73.

“Scholarships make a huge difference financially and the timing in receiving this generous scholarship is optimal. This year I will start applying to residency programs and this award will help offset the costs associated with the application process,” said Joseph.

Joseph plans to pursue orthodontics after he graduates next June, as he enjoys working with children, and especially teenagers and young adults. Another determining factor for choosing this specialty was that he had become involved with research related to orthodontics early on in his dental training. This research dovetailed into his being chosen to represent the dental school at a prestigious student competition hosted by the American Association for Dental Research.

“The generosity I’ve received in the form of faculty mentorship and financial support has set off a chain reaction for me to give back in the future.”
“IT’S MY CO-WORKERS WHO MAKE IT EASY to come to work every day. We’re a team. We put our heads down and get things done,” said Francesa Moore. Fran will celebrate her 30-year work anniversary in January 2020. When asked about retirement, she laughed and said, “I’m not quite ready yet.”

Fran grew up in the Boston, Mass. area and as a teenager began working part-time at a private dental practice for extra spending cash, and continued working at that practice on and off throughout high school. Then, after a few years in college as a business major, she changed course and enrolled in Northeastern University’s dental assistant program.

With a certificate in hand, Fran moved to sunny Los Angeles for a fresh start and was immediately hired at a private dental practice. In those early years of her career, she taught dental assisting on the side. At a meeting for the Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontics, Fran was recruited by staff from the UCLA School of Dentistry to work at the UCLA orthodontics clinic.

“The founding chair of the orthodontics section, Dr. Spiro Chaconas, hired me, and one of my first experiences was to take impressions for mouth guards we supplied to the UCLA Athletics Department,” she said. “It was that moment when I started to feel that Bruin Pride, it’s something that can’t be ignored, whether you’re an alumnus, faculty, or staff.”

For the first eight years of her career at UCLA, Fran worked in the clinic as a chair side assistant. She then transitioned to the clinic’s front desk and was later promoted to the Section’s administrator, where she has spent the last three years. When asked what she likes about working here most, she says that, “every day is different and there’s always opportunity to learn a new set of skills at each stage.”

It’s the relationships she’s established over the years that mean the most to Fran. In addition to all the staff members and faculty who have come in and out of her life, many of the orthodontics residents who have graduated from the program have become personal friends. This coming June will mark the graduation of the thirtieth class that Fran has worked with and impacted.

“My favorite part about working with the residents is watching them come in a little afraid of the unknown, but then leaving with confidence. You see the lights turn on.”

Fran has also touched the lives of generations of patients. “Parents bring in their children because of the experience that they had as an adolescent or teenager. That makes me smile,” she said.

For anyone who’s ever had the good fortune to meet Fran, it’s her sense of customer service that stands out the most. “My mission is to make people feel welcome when they come to UCLA Orthodontics. I say that you won’t get better service anywhere else than in my section.”
REBECCA LOPEZ-PIRAINO WAS ONLY 19-YEARS-OLD when she accepted a dental assistant position with a UCLA dental satellite clinic in downtown Los Angeles. She had just received her registered dental assistant license from Los Angeles City College, and she liked the fact that the clinic catered to underserved children in the area. She was hired by the then-chair of pediatric dentistry, Dr. Don Duperon, who has become a father-figure to her over the years. “Dr. Duperon has been such a valuable mentor and guiding figure in my career. He’s brilliant—a true walking encyclopedia.”

Becky celebrated her 36-year work anniversary this past January, which is quite an accomplishment considering she rides a bus four hours a day to get to-and-from work. This anniversary doesn’t include the three years of contract work that she did before becoming a permanent employee.

The dedicated UCLA Dentistry veteran instantly loved working with children and it didn’t take long for Becky to realize that she had found her path. She was instrumental in recruiting students from local elementary schools to come to the clinic to get the services they needed. At one point, the UCLA satellite clinic was seeing up to a dozen children per day. After eight years of operation, in 1991, funding ran out to keep the clinic running, so she was faced with having to find another opportunity.

Luckily, the Section of Pediatric Dentistry at the dental school needed a clinic business manager, so Becky applied. She slowly transitioned from chair-side assisting to more of the managerial, administrative aspects of running a busy clinic. In 2010, she began assisting the clinic, as a general anesthesia coordinator, with the large volume of medically compromised patients that come to UCLA. The additional responsibility, which she says has been the most rewarding part of her job, includes appointment scheduling, coordination of transportation, insurance authorization, and managing medical records.

“Our special needs patients are those children who no one else will treat. There’s a deep sense of satisfaction knowing that we’re helping a portion of the population that has nowhere else to turn,” Becky said. “It’s very rewarding to see that our patients receive the care they need. We’re doing our job as a public university.”

Becky sees UCLA pediatric dentistry as a family and considers the staff and faculty to be close friends. She also enjoys seeing alumni of the residency program at the Section’s annual alumni day. “It takes someone who can listen, is patient, and has a big heart to work with children,” she said. “When I see our alumni experiencing so much success and serving their communities, there’s a sense of pride I feel in having helped guide them to achieve their goals.”

Becky Lopez-Piraino started with UCLA at age 19 and has never looked back.

36 Years of Working with Children
**Faculty Retirements**

Thank you for your commitment to elevating the reputation of the UCLA School of Dentistry through your clinical & scholarly contributions.

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**Dr. Ian Coulter**  
Professor, Division of Public Health & Community Dentistry

27 Years of Service

After a successful career in academia, **Dr. Ian Coulter**, professor of public health and community dentistry, retired at the end of January. His UCLA tenure-track appointment began in 1996, and he spent the last 23 years as a valued teacher and mentor to students, residents, fellow faculty members and researchers, and to colleagues in several health professions in the U.S. and internationally. He provided extensive and diverse service to the dental school, UCLA campus, and the UC system. Most notably, he contributed to the dental school’s inter-professional education and inter-professional practice curriculum. He authored over 140 published papers, over 90 of which are indexed in PubMed, and 26 books or book chapters.

Prior to his UCLA appointment, Dr. Coulter served as the president of the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College from 1982 to 1991. In 1992, he served as the director of the UCLA/Drew University Minority Oral Health Research Center. Since 1992, he also held research positions with the RAND Corporation working on various research projects within the field of health policy. In 2007, he was appointed as the RAND/Samueli Chair for Integrative Medicine.

One of Dr. Coulter’s most notable appointments was as a member of the National Institutes of Health Expert Panel for the Consensus Development Conference on the Diagnosis and Management of Caries. He is widely recognized as a respected mentor who guided several master’s and Ph.D. students to successful completion of their graduate studies.

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**Dr. Carl Maida**  
Adjunct Professor, Division of Public Health & Community Dentistry

20 Years of Service

**Dr. Carl Maida**, adjunct professor of public health, retired at the end of June. Dr. Maida began his tenure with UCLA as an assistant research anthropologist at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, a position he held for 11 years. He was hired by the dental school in 1999 as an associate adjunct professor of public health and community dentistry. He received his PhD in anthropology from UCLA in 1981. He is strongly tied to community endeavors through his research and public service and has demonstrated an ability to conduct collaborative research with numerous investigators.

Dr. Maida spent his career conducting studies of ethnic cultural disparities in health care and of health-related quality of life and self-care. His research focused on the prevention and treatment of chronic and epidemic disease, and on the impact of community-scale trauma on children, adolescents, and their families. In 2007, he was elected as a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences. He also acted as a program manager for one of the dental school’s successful pipeline programs, which exposed gifted and disadvantaged high school students to oral health and scientific research and, potentially, a promising career in the health sciences field. He will continue to be a co-investigator on the HRSA T-32 grant and PROMIS study, and to teach third-year, pre-doctoral dental students in the Systems-Based Healthcare course.

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**FACULTY RETIREMENTS**
Dr. Robert Merrill
Health Sciences Clinical Professor, Division of Oral Biology & Medicine

28 Years of Service

Pain management and dental sleep medicine expert, Dr. Robert Merrill, clinical professor of oral medicine and orofacial pain, retired at the end of June. His tenure with UCLA began in 1991 as a lecturer, and in 1997 he was asked to come to UCLA as a full-time instructor, to treat patients at the Orofacial Pain Faculty Practice, and assume the role of director of the Graduate Orofacial Pain Clinic. He was instrumental in developing UCLA’s orofacial pain residency program, making the program the first in the world to teach dental sleep medicine as part of the dental school’s advanced training certificates. He also helped launch a continuing education mini-residency in sleep medicine.

Prior to his UCLA appointment, Dr. Merrill worked in general dentistry private practice starting in 1974 after he received his DDS degree from the Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC in 1973. Then in 1990, he completed a fellowship in pain management at the UCLA Pain Management Center and started to treat patients in this specialty in 1991. He developed and administered the FACIALPAIN list serv, the primary instrument for facial pain specialists to communicate with each other, which has over 500 members around the world. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Orofacial Pain and the American Headache Society. In 2008, he became a founding board member of the Headache Cooperative of the Pacific; and in 2009, he received a lifetime achievement award from the American Academy of Orofacial Pain.

Dr. Vladimir Spolsky
Professor, Division of Public Health & Community Dentistry

49 Years of Service

Dr. Vladimir Spolsky, professor of public health and community dentistry, retired at the end of June. He began his tenure at UCLA in 1970 and has taught a range of courses, including preventative dentistry, dental psychology, and dental epidemiology—a topic which he studied and researched his entire career. Prior to his UCLA faculty appointment, Dr. Spolsky was in the epidemiology branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where he was involved in population surveys and conducting clinical trials. Shortly after coming to UCLA, he assumed the responsibility for developing didactic and clinical curricula on prevention. He continued his research on developing and testing preventive agents for dental diseases and in the measurement of dental disease and oral health. Dr. Spolsky received his DMD degree from the University of Pittsburgh. He completed postdoctoral fellow work and received a Master’s of Public Health degree from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. In 2008, Dr. Spolsky attained diplomate status in the specialty of Dental Public Health. He had a major impact on UCLA School of Dentistry’s teaching program by instituting a program of community-based health fairs where dental students provide preventive services to families throughout Los Angeles. His efforts have not only impacted thousands of people, but have also provided UCLA dental students with an understanding of the disparities that exist within our community.

Photos taken by Brian Lozano.
Centennial Campaign Honor Roll

The UCLA School of Dentistry wishes to recognize and thank the following individuals, corporations, and foundations whose extraordinary generosity and exemplary vision enables us to pursue our mission of excellence in education, research, patient care, and public service. Each gift is an investment in the future of the oral health profession.

Centennial Campaign Donors

Remarkable firsts and forward leaps have marked UCLA’s first 100 years. The Centennial Campaign for UCLA celebrates these accomplishments and prepares the university for a new century of breakthroughs. Through their generosity, the donors below have made lasting contributions to the School of Dentistry by giving to student scholarships, endowed chairs, faculty research, patient care initiatives, community dentistry, and greatest needs funds.

Key

This honor roll lists all philanthropic commitments made to the School between July 1, 2012, and May 30, 2019. We generously thank those who have given before and after these dates. Donors’ academic degrees (at the Master’s level and above) are noted as recorded in the UCLA External Affairs database. Donors’ UCLA School of Dentistry degrees (DDS, MS in oral biology, PhD in oral biology, and certificates) are recognized by the inclusion of the class year in which they were conferred.

The Office of Development makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of this report. If you note an error or omission, please accept our sincere apologies and notify us by writing to the UCLA School of Dentistry Development Office, 10833 Le Conte Avenue, CHS 53-038, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1668; calling (310) 206-6063, or sending an email to development@dentistry.ucla.edu.

Certificate Abbreviations:

- (A) Dental Anesthesiology
- (AEGD) Adv. Edu. in General Dentistry
- (AP) Advanced Prosthodontics
- (E) Endodontics
- (GP) General Practice
- (M) Maxillofacial Prosthetics
- (O) Orthodontics
- (OS) Oral Surgery
- (P) Periodontics
- (PD) Pediatric Dentistry
- (PO) Peds-Orthodontics Combined

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Dr. James Mulick Craniofacial Memorial Fund

The UCLA School of Dentistry established the Dr. James Mulick Craniofacial Memorial Fund. This Memorial Campaign was chaired by Dr. Thomas Bales, and the successful completion establishes an endowed fund that honors the memory of Dr. Mulick and his more than 40 years of dedicated service at UCLA. Over the course of three decades and with selfless dedication, Dr. Mulick treated thousands of children with craniofacial concerns and trained hundreds of health care professionals, including many UCLA orthodontics faculty members and residents.

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Three members from the Class of 1969 reflect on their time at the UCLA School of Dentistry from 50 years ago. Join them as they go down memory lane...

“As a young school, Dean Soggnaes did a brilliant job in hiring premier dental experts that quickly transformed UCLA Dentistry into a top institution. I couldn’t have made a better choice by attending UCLA and being taught by world-renowned faculty. One of my greatest memories was having Dr. Frank Jim Kratochvil, a legend in the field of prosthodontics, select me to be his protégé. The mentorship he provided helped shape my dental career. The first dean and initial faculty helped build the foundation for UCLA Dentistry’s success.”

- William Harrison, DDS ’69, pictured at left in group photo

“One of my fondest memories was when I was accepted for early admission to the UCLA School of Dentistry. This memory was only eclipsed when I graduated, four years later. One of my favorite experiences and also of my classmates was attending classes given by then-endodontics professors, Drs. Krasny and Higgenbotham. It was educational, but also like being at a comedy act.”

- Nadine Levinson, DDS ’69, pictured at right in group photo

“Being a part of the UCLA dental school experience was truly a highlight of my life. Seeing the formation of a great institution was very motivating and exciting as a student. I have the fondest of memories of the four years I spent with an exceptional group of classmates. I couldn’t be prouder or more grateful to be part of the UCLA School of Dentistry Family!”

- William Patterson, DDS ’69, pictured in center in group photo

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<th>Course Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cone Beam CT: Interpretation and Applications</td>
<td>07/13/19</td>
<td>$1,100</td>
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<td>Pocket Reduction and Crown Lengthening Workshop</td>
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<td>Adv. in Surgical Implant Dentistry: The Digital Evolution</td>
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<td>Guided Bone Regeneration (GBR)</td>
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<td>$3,600</td>
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<td>Your Patient’s Medical History</td>
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