ASDA Fever. These are two words that can’t be fully comprehended without actually exposing yourself to the events in the world of the American Student Dental Association (ASDA). “ASDA Fever” takes many forms—the buzzing excitement that lingers after an inspirational talk by one of ASDA’s many dental leaders, the new friendships formed among dental students from all over the nation, the opportunities for improvement, and the excitement that you are now equipped with ways to effect these changes. It was through these ASDA events—including National Leadership Conference, District 11, National Lobby Day, and Annual Session—that many dental students at UCLA, and all over the U.S., have discovered a personal meaning for “ASDA fever.”

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UCLA CORE BUILD-UP DAY 2014
REMEMBERING WHERE WE CAME FROM

By Neikka Fareideh (‘17)

“What is your favorite kind of pancake?” was the first question Dr. Bibb, Associate Dean of Student Affairs at the UCLA School of Dentistry, asked me during my dental school admissions interview 18 long months ago. Suit pressed, resume committed to memory, and knowledge of dentistry handy, I naively thought I had come to my interview day prepared. I hadn’t, however, accounted for this syrup-coated curveball. Dr. Bibb was in fact referring to the personal statement I wrote to accompany my dental school application; the personal statement that I wrote about pancakes.

18 short months later I found myself in the company of 54 prospective dental students as Dr. Bibb vividly chronicled our buttermilk themed first encounter in her address to the attendees of UCLA ASDA Pre-Dental Committee’s 2nd

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

As the 2013 – 2014 academic year winds down, UCLA ASDA experienced an active spring season. Beginning with ASDA Annual Session (Feb. 26 – Mar. 1, 2014), UCLA ASDA was well represented by its 34 students who attended the conference held in Anaheim, CA. UCLA School of Dentistry also participated in Annual Session through sponsorship of the Welcome Reception and the contributions of Dr. Tara Aghaloo as poster presentation judge, Dr. Evelyn Chung and Dr. Colby Smith as the AEGD vs GPR breakout session facilitators, and Alex McMahon and I as pre-dental workshop coordinators. Our chapter was well-decorated, winning seven national awards, including: Best Newsletter in Competition, Best Website in Competition, Outstanding Pre-Dental Involvement, 2nd Place in Pre-Dental Recruitment, Excellence in Social Media, Most Creative Scrapbook Presentation, and District 11 Delegate of the Year. Each of the awards is a testament to the hard work of all UCLA ASDA members. Speaking on behalf of the UCLA ASDA Executive Cabinet, we truly appreciate all our members’ dedication, enthusiasm, and involvement. None of our successes would be possible without each of you! In addition to these chapter awards, numerous individuals were recognized for their personal achievements and elected to distinguished leadership positions within ASDA. Michael Hoang was awarded the Student Choice Award for his research poster presentation, Alcohol Induced Epigenetic Dysregulation in DPSCs. On the district level, Matt Stephens (2017) was elected as District 11 Secretary. And finally, in what was certainly the highlight of week, our own Kris Mendoza was elected as the new national ASDA President! Kris’s impeccable work ethic, professionalism, and inspirational leadership style convinced the 500 ASDA members in attendance that he was best candidate to lead ASDA—the same organization that represents over 20,000 dental students and is nationally renowned and respected. I know the entire UCLA SOD family shares the same sentiment when I say that we cannot be more proud of Kris and we know his greatest achievements are yet to come!

During the first weekend of April, 17 UCLA students stormed Capitol Hill to advocate on behalf of the dental profession, specifically on the welfare of dental students during National Dental Student Lobby Day (April 7 – 8). UCLA ASDA members participated in 14 meetings with local congressmen and staff to lobby for bills regarding student loans refinancing and coordination of pro bono, medically recommended dental care. As a whole, ASDA held 175 meetings, showing again the great significance of advocacy within organized dentistry.

On the chapter level, Spring Quarter welcomed two of UCLA ASDA’s annual events, the Golf Tournament and Core Build-Up Day. Both events were larger and more successful than they had been any previous year. I would like to personally thank Steven Petritz and Anthony Fierecci (Golf Committee Chairs) and Greg Asatryan and Eric Chen (Pre-Dental Outreach Committee Chairs) for their hard work in organizing the two amazing events.

On behalf of the entire Executive Cabinet, it has been an honor serving as the elected leadership for UCLA ASDA for the past year. As we transition to the future leaders of this chapter, I know UCLA ASDA will be in excellent hands with a group of passionate and well-qualified individuals that will use our chapter’s current accomplishments as the foundation for greater success to follow. I look forward to hearing about all UCLA ASDA’s successes following ASDA Annual Session 2015 in Boston, MA!

Respectfully,

David Lindsey
UCLA ASDA President
UCLA School of Dentistry, Class of 2015

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

We would like to express our gratitude to you all for entrusting us with the management of the esteemed Diastema Newsletter. It has been an honor for us to hold this position, and we hope that you agree that we’ve upheld our commitment to deliver tasteful, thought-provoking articles that best represent the ideas and ideals of our school, its esteemed faculty, and its talented students.

Our goals for the 2013-2014 editions of the Diastema were rooted in the idea of reach—we hoped to expand the readership of the Diastema not only to our students and faculty, but also to our patients, associated families and dental institutions around the nation. To that end, we took great care to present articles on topics ranging from dental legislation, to faculty and student interviews, to Coach John Wooden, and even to simple DIY recipes for the starving student. With this mixture of high-impact articles, UCLA focus pieces, and fun student features, we aimed to produce a newsletter with which students and faculty could relate, and patients could understand and appreciate. We hope you have felt some kind of connection to this newsletter throughout this year and that, by perusing these editions of the Diastema, you’ve had fun, learned something new, and maybe even been inspired to write about something important to you.

In closing, we would like to express our utmost gratitude to our faculty, readership, and students. Because of your support, the Diastema Newsletter was granted the award for Best Newsletter in Competition in the 2014 ASDA Annual Session in Anaheim, CA. This award is a testament to our supporters, and we, along with the Diastema team, hope we have honored you all with our work over the past year.

It is with nostalgia that we close this last chapter on the 2013-2014 Diastema Newsletter. The lessons learned, memories made, and happiness shared will continue with us throughout our journey in dentistry. Again, thank you for the endless contribution and support; it has been an honor to work for you all.

Regards,
Jeremy Chau & Erik Balingshay
2013-2014 Diastema Editors-in-Chief
As a kid who grew up in the Midwest, there was nothing better than when spring would arrive and stay. The days would be warmer and longer, and I knew it would be time to dust off the golf clubs that had been hibernating for those long winter months. Even now, as a dental student at UCLA, I still get the same springtime excitement because I know that the ASDA Golf Tournament is on the horizon.

The goal for the tournament each year is to have a large showing of UCLA Dental School alumni, faculty, staff, residents, and students—the more participants, the better! One of the greatest aspects of the tournament is that it draws all of these participants away from the dental school setting and gets them to spend the day together, just having some fun. This year was no different, as Industry Hills Pacific Palms Resort hosted a beautiful tournament on Saturday, April 26th, with over 90 UCLA players and sponsors in attendance.

What some may not know is that the UCLA ASDA Golf Tournament is a completely self-funded event. Through the hard work and dedication of the ASDA Golf Committee members, they are able to raise enough money to support the tournament, subsidize the cost for the student and resident participants, supply prizes for both the winning teams and raffle winners, and garner support from some of the dental school’s favorite sponsors. This year’s tournament was especially memorable as the committee was able to double its goal and raise over $20,000 in money, donated prizes, and sponsored product samples. Furthermore, over half of the sponsoring companies were brand new to the golf tournament and are now already on-board for the 2015 ASDA Vendor Fair.

In paraphrasing one member of the dental school’s faculty: if you don’t know how to play golf, you shouldn’t be allowed to graduate from dental school. Fellow students, there you have it. I encourage you to join in the fun next year.

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WHAT IS SPEA, AND WHAT CAN IT DO FOR ME?

By Sami Shahhal ('16)

The Student Professionalism & Ethics Association (SPEA) is an organization that was established to instill the basics of ethics and professionalism at every level of the dental profession. Pioneered by Dr. Alvin Rosemblum, this organization has its roots in the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry and upholds its mission to provide an open forum to discuss ethical dilemmas on both the national & local level.

As stated in its mission statement, SPEA strives to:

- Provide a resource for ethics, education and development
- Foster a non-partisan, open-forum environment for ethics communication
- Promote awareness of ethics standards and related issues within dentistry
- Collaborate with leadership of the dental profession to effectively advocate for its members

Embracing the ideals instilled within SPEA, UCLA School of Dentistry started its own chapter in order to provide awareness regarding ethical dilemmas throughout academia. Working closely with the ASDA Ethics Committee, SPEA has been able to host an abundance of educational lectures tailored to give students accounts of ethical issues within and outside the realm of dentistry.

Recently, Officer Bill Baker gave a unique account regarding “the Code of Silence” within the Police Force. He inspired a dialogue between students which urged the students to question how camaraderie could cloud ethical judgments in the professional setting. The SPEA Cabinet hopes to continue these discussions with the participation of faculty and students.

Open dialogues provide a forum to discuss and resolve ethical issues within the UCLA community. We hope that our peers continue to show support as we further expand upon this organization.
Love is timeless, and so are teeth. For thousands of years, stories of heartaches have been passed down in literature and songs, yet the painful tales of toothaches remain unheard. It is not to say that dentistry is dreary, entailling torture and body modifications combining humans with animal parts. One of the earliest accounts of dentistry extends 9,000 years ago in the Indus Valley Civilization, in what is now modern Pakistan. The technique is similar to creating fire, with a wooden stick tipped with flint, and under a bow mechanism, the heated tip would drill into the tooth. Whether it be for actual medicinal benefits or to release evil spirits from the teeth, there must be reason why such a painful procedure, believed to be performed without any anesthetics, lasted for 1,500 years. The civilization itself, however, lasted longer, when perhaps people finally agreed that the pain was not worth the benefits.

Skills acquired during the Stone Age were forgotten, yet there was little questioning to the cause of toothaches. In ancient times, it was widely believed that teeth are occupied by worms—not actual microbes such as S. mutans that cause caries, but literally worms that would bore themselves into the victim’s pearly whites. Sometimes nerves were mistaken for worms, and removing them would had been painful without a doubt. In fact, the Babylonians used dental extraction as a form of punishment, as mentioned in the Code of Hammurabi in 1800 BC. Nevertheless, the mention of worms was first written in 5000 BC, in what was then the Sumerian civilization, and the popularity of this belief held strong throughout the rest of the world, in Egypt, Greece, India, China, and Japan.

Egyptian pharaohs, despite their godly status, suffered from periodontal disease, as indicated by radiographs of their mummified remains. It is hence unsurprising that, in 2600 BC, one of pharaoh Djoser’s acquaintances, Hesy-Re, was a dentist. He was not just any dentist, but the first dentist to be recorded in name. His tomb is marked with, “The greatest of those who deal with teeth, and of physicians.” This distinction between dentistry and medicine shows a high degree of respect for dentists among the Egyptians. Although magic and religion played an integral part of ancient Egyptian life, medicine and surgery, including dentistry, were quite advanced. The Ebers Papyrus, in 1700-1550 BC, mentions several recipes to treat dental problems that even included mouthwash. Although Hesy-Re is the first recorded dentist, at the same period, in the Eastern world, the ancient Chinese were using acupuncture to relieve toothaches. By 700 AD, they were using silver amalgam, long before the Western world.

While Hesy-Re was treating the pharaoh’s teeth and the Chinese were inserting needles to stimulate nerves, dentistry took on a different form in Mesoamerica. Here, procedures were concerned with cosmetics rather than health—a philosophy that might have occasionally caused harm. The grave of a young man, whom the current locals of the Mexican state of Michoacan nicknamed “Huitzinki,” indicated that he suffered from infections while filling his teeth so that he could receive a denture fashioned from a wolf or jaguar, which was popular in later periods in the Maya civilization. More common amongst men were jeweled inlays, which required that teeth were drilled with an obsidian tip to fit semi-precious stones, such as turquoise and jade. Unlike the case of Huitzinki, whose exposed pulps led to possible blood poisoning, many of these drilled teeth show that dentists at the time had extensive knowledge of tooth anatomy, allowing them to leave the pulp intact and prevent infections.

Cosmetic dentistry took a more restorative form in 700 BC, when the Etruscans, who predated the Romans, used prostheses. Crowns, bridges, and partial dentures were fashioned from gold, and women in particular removed their incisors to fit these prostheses in order to flaunt their wealth. The Romans who came after the Etruscans adopted their serious attitude toward dentistry. Cleanliness was regarded highly in Roman culture, and the same was applied to teeth. It became law in 450 BC that “whoever shall cause the tooth of a free man to be knocked out shall pay a fine of three hundred asses” (Just two asses would buy enough flour to make one pound of bread). It was during the Roman era that Christianity arose, and with it the saint of dentistry, Saint Apollonia, who defended her religion, was burned at Alexandria while declaring that whoever suffers from toothaches should invoke her name.

After the collapse of the Roman empire, dental literature survived with the Byzantines, but there were no advances within the profession. While the rest of Europe fell into the Middle Ages, knowledge of dentistry was passed on to the monks. However, in 1130-1163 AD papal edicts forbade monks from performing dental works, so the tradition passed on to barbers, who cut the monks’ hair and shaved their faces. These barbers also assisted the monks with surgeries, so these barbers became barber-surgeons; it was from them that people sought dental treatments in addition to the common practice of bloodletting. It wasn’t until the Elizabethan era in the 16th century that modern dental problems arose. Since ancient times, the diet lacked refined sugar, and teeth would wear out due to the coarse food. However, the Elizabethan era introduced wide access to refined sugar brought from the New World. Not only did decay become a more significant issue, but it was even a status symbol to have black teeth, which Queen Elizabeth herself exhibited.

The belief of tooth worms still held strong since the time of the Sumerians, yet its validity was finally questioned in 1723 when Pierre Fauchard traced the source of tooth decay to acid derived from sugar. It was then that dentistry took a drastic turn after 7,000 years of fallacy. Nevertheless, without the contributions of several civilizations and individuals from around the world, dentistry might not exist as it does today. While empires rise and fall, dental problems remain a constant phenomenon to the human race, and the painful stories of toothaches are what connect modern human beings with their ancestors in the Stone Age.
How did you first get interested in Public Health Dentistry?
As a young dental graduate, I went out to elementary schools and talked about oral health, and I also went to nursing homes and did examinations. It was during this time that I realized there were a lot of low income people who didn’t have good oral health and didn’t have access to dental treatments. I also noticed that more care was provided on the medical than the dental side. This is how I first became interested in Public Health Dentistry.

What are some of the most important Dental Public Health topics of today?
Medicare and Medicaid don’t offer dental treatments to adults! The current Children’s Health Insurance Program, the national health care program, has really helped children get the oral care that they need. Although we don’t have national health care system for adults yet, this is something that we really need to think about, as there has been an increasing number of people going into emergency rooms for toothaches! This is a sign of an inefficient oral care delivery system!

What are some opportunities in Public Health Dentistry that many students may not know about?
DPH offers many career options and advantages for dental students! For example, you can pay for student loans by working as a dentist for the Indian Health Services, Coast Guard Services, and the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention). And by working in areas dentists are needed! As a young graduate, I received loan forgiveness for practicing dentistry in rural Wisconsin for two years! The National Health Services Corps (http://nhsca.org/) is specifically designed to help dentists get selected and be placed in areas that need dental services. The National Health Services Corps also provide loan forgiveness to dental students who want to specialize in DPH.

What is your advice for dental students?
In the past, dental students went to dental school with the intention of practicing general dentistry. Like medicine, the number of dental students choosing to specialize has increased. Dental Public Health is a specialization that is infrequently considered and yet it has many opportunities that students may not know about. I have colleagues who do quality assurance work for dental insurance companies, and others who run large community clinics. Because it isn’t well known, DPH may first appear esoteric. However DPH is rich with leadership opportunities and can be very enjoyable.

Dr. Atchison is currently mentoring the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) - UCLA Student Chapter. in organizing two DPH selective courses at the UCLA School of Dentistry, with the goal of informing dental students about DPH as a specialty and to demonstrate to students how they may apply DPH principles in their future careers as general health care professionals. “If you don’t know what to specialize in yet,” she says, “these are great selective courses that keep you informed about all the options that are out there.”

Public Health Dentists can be experts in policy and management, research, protocol development, disease prevention, oral health promotion and health surveillance as well as program evaluations among the DPH professionals. Although DPH is a difficult field to summarize, one thing is clear: Dental Public Health training allows dentists to take leadership and solve high impact problems that have a large influence on the world. Dentistry, like medicine, is very clinic-based and has traditionally focused on providing the best treatment on an individual case-by-case basis. The field of Public Health drives dentists to think outside of that box, look at communities as a whole, and address problems more abstractly. Despite the relevance and importance of the field, not many dentists know about the field of Public Health Dentistry, and consequently, few pursue it after graduation. Out of 160,000 dentists in the nation, only 60 have chosen to become public health dentists.
Trying to reorient myself inside the massive Longworth congressional office building, I stood waiting in an elevator bank trying to get myself back to the main level. I heard the noise of an arriving elevator, and along with the man standing next to me, naturally motioned in that direction. I quickly noticed a "congressman only" sign next to the shaft and stood down. However, this man, looking as if he owned the place, held the door open and told me to "...come on in, who's going to know?" With gold-plated crown molding above me, I glanced down at a very official and impossible-to-miss lapel pin bearing the words "House of Representatives," and shook this man’s hand. The lobby floor was just a one floor ride and he jokingly asked why a young man was using an elevator to go up just one floor. He laughed, gave me a pat on the back, and I was on my way.

Standing there, I realized that these representatives, the same ones we see on Yahoo News every day, are actually real people with real personalities. It felt like I had just shared an elevator with Dean Park—in the sense that these individuals are not inapproachable as they seem, and that, with a little friendliness and genuine interest, can be reached and talked to face to face.

Let's rewind here. At a point in the late eighteenth century, when the US and its government were in their infancy, the government was only responsible for a few organizations, such as the postal service and Navy. Now, the government controls the vast majority of things in our lives. And certainly, the stretch of their responsibility is vast—from the regulations on the control panels in our cell phones, to ingredients allowed in our food, how much electricity can cost, and most directly relevant to us: the interest rates on our student loans. Whether we like it or not, the government is involved with our daily lives.

Congress members are elected for 2 year terms, in which more than 6,000 bills are presented to the House and 4,000 are presented to the Senate. This means that over 10,000 bills are proposed every 2 years, and it is exactly these bills that influence the way we live our lives—that represents ten thousand different ways we can be taxed and regulated. With 3,000 of these affecting dentistry either directly or indirectly, we as a community cannot just sit on the sidelines. Luckily for us, there are organizations such as the CDA and ADA who keep watch on these pertinent regulations. The ADA runs the American Dental Political Action Committee, ADPAC, which is not only one of the nations largest PACs, but it is also the body that strives to preserve dentistry as we know it. The Wall Street Journal has even named it one of the nation’s most influential groups.

You don’t need to be a huge PAC in order to make a difference. Differences can be made by individual relationships that are developed over time. By getting to know your local representative, you are doing something that most people in the world would never have the opportunity to do. Though it does take some initial effort, it certainly helps that representatives are more likely to schedule meetings with people who live in their district. So if we saw an increase in legislative committee participation, we could make a much bigger impact and potentially reach all 53 districts in California. All we need is the opportunity to meet; once we are there, our stories as dental students are sure to make an impact. These meetings are more about telling them our personal stories and experiences. Most of us are coming out of school with two to three hundred thousand dollars in student loans, and in most cases, that's going to determine what happens after dental school. For some it may mean not specializing and going straight to work to pay off loans. For others, it may mean taking a job in corporate dentistry where, a lot of the time, production in dollars is more important than patient outcomes and experiences. Yes, getting these meetings requires some effort, but once they hear our stories, they will not forget them. I believe that with some effort, we can influence all of them in some way, so that when Lobby Day comes around next year, they will be happy and willing to meet with us. More importantly, the next time a bill is being voted on, members of congress can remember the dental student they have connected with and perhaps give the dental community a second thought.

At the end of the day, we need to enjoy the opportunity and privilege given to us as American citizens to both vote for and be able to access our representatives. We need to keep in mind that, whether we like it or not, new laws and new proposals are presented or voted on every day, and its up to us as the future of dentistry to choose whether we have an influence in the outcomes.
Annual Pre-dental Core Build-Up Day. Pre-dental students from throughout California traveled by plane, car, and foot, poised for a day promised to prepare them for the dental school application process. Informational lectures, personal statement reviews, and mock interviews provided opportunities for the attendees to network with each other, current dental students, and members of our faculty. Though a distant memory for many of us, the construction of an effective personal statement remained a seemingly unattainable reality for many of the attendees. Workshops facilitated by current dental students provided opportunities for peer review, and lectures provided important contextual recommendations. Interviews once plagued by sweaty palms, blossomed into effective avenues of communication, as current dental students and pre-dents met in both group and individual mock interview settings. In addition, Dr. Mitto and Quinn Yost ('16) held presentations on current hot topics in dentistry. Dr. Bibb shared tips on writing personal statements, and Dr. Wong introduced the prospective students to the School’s concurrent DDS/PhD program. Committee co-chairs Greg Asatryan ('16) & Eric Chen ('16) shared their insights on personal statements and how to choose the right school.

UCLA ASDA Pre-Dental Committee received a Gold Crown Award at the 2014 ASDA Annual Session for having the “Best Pre-dental Involvement” committee and the 2nd place award for “Pre-dental Recruitment Initiative”. Core Build-Up Day was cited as a principle testament to the committee’s exemplary commitment to pre-dental outreach and education.

Rather than sleeping in, first years Rachel Lim, Sara Kwong, and Neikka Fareid spend their Saturday morning offering advice regarding the application process, holding mock interviews, and sharing their dental school experience with eager pre-dental students.

As another successful Core Build-Up Day neared its end, prospective dental students walked away with their interview questions answered, applications edited, and pancake recipes perfected. But the lingering question still remained: what was my favorite kind of pancake? Let’s just say I won’t let that question crépe up on me ever again.

Pre-dental students from all over the state seized the opportunity to spend a day at the UCLA School of Dentistry, in order to gain a better understanding of the dental school experience.
During the 2014 ASDA Annual Session, over 500 dental students from all over the nation congregated at the Disneyland Resort and Hotel in Anaheim, CA, from February 26th to March 1st, 2014. During this week, attendees participated in the annual House of Delegates meeting, where association resolutions were debated and initiatives were determined. Attendees got the chance to participate in the election of the new ASDA President and Vice Presidents, Speaker of the House, and the new board of District Trustees and Secretaries. In addition to ASDA leadership elections, students also participated in the Research Poster Session, the Exhibitor’s Fair, and various breakout sessions that included seminars such as “Preparing for Success: How to Fast-Track Your Career after Dental School”, “Mega Trends in Dentistry”, and others about self-improvement, student debt management, and technology.

ASDA Annual Session also serves as a stage for showcasing the dedication and accomplishments of dental students around the country within ASDA. UCLA ASDA did an incredible job in the 2013-2014 academic year, taking home seven Gold Crown Awards including: “Best Website in Competition” (Sami Shahal, Selina Samo), “Best Pre-Dental Committee” (Eric Chen, Greg Astarita), “Excellence in Social Media” (Max Bouchour), “Best Scrapbook in Competition” (Jeff Yoshihara), “Research Student Choice Award” (Michael Hoang), “Best Newsletter in Competition” (Erik Balintnesay, Jeremy Chau), and “2nd President, District 11 Secretary.” All these achievements were earned by ASDA committees under the presidency of David Lindsey (’15), who was also awarded “District 11 Delegate of the Year.”

While UCLA ASDA swept many of the awards on a local level, UCLA students also made a significant impact on the national level, with Kris Menchaca (’15) elected as ASDA President and Matt Stephens (’17) elected as District 11 Secretary. ASDA Annual Session presents opportunities to be inspired by the work of our peers not only within our school, but also around the nation.

ASDA events take you out of the mechanical routine that dental school can create and transport you back to that unfamiliar “real world” – where all of these skills that we learn in dental school take their place in line of relevance, and personal development, drive, charisma, and confidence take forefront. Alan Nguyen (’17) noted that “...everyone who attends Annual Session comes in expecting to learn about organized dentistry. They do, but they leave feeling a part of something bigger, with a renewed sense of purpose.” It is at events like these where we can see the true beauty of organized dentistry and realize that we are not alone in affecting positive changes for our profession; we are powerful in affecting that change.

Remember to sign up for ASDA Annual Session 2015, held in Boston, Massachusetts!
KRIS MENDOZA
ASDA PRESIDENT

It is such an honor to have the opportunity to represent UCLA, California, and over 20,000 dental students throughout the country. In the next year, we will finish carrying out ASDA’s 2013-2015 strategic plan (insert link), in addition to creating a new strategic plan through the year 2017. We are excited to implement our licensure reform strategy in order to create a fair and psychometrically sound exam that improves upon our current examination process. Our ultimate goal is to create a licensure examination that aligns with ASDA’s L-1 policy. To this end, we must use a collaborative approach with many other dental associations in order to find the best solution for our patients and our profession. In addition to licensure reform, I hope to extend our current member engagement, public outreach, and advocacy initiatives by further developing our current incentive programs. Finally, I hope to streamline the way our members receive information in order to allow each student a customizable experience within ASDA. I am excited for the possibilities this year has to offer, and I look forward to working with you all. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions about ASDA or organized dentistry, and I hope you too decide to get involved in organized dentistry!

MATT STEPHENS
DISTRICT 11 SECRETARY

I am grateful to be able to serve UCLA and the rest of the California dental schools as the District 11 Secretary. The role of District Secretary is to directly support the District Trustee and to oversee the progress of the District Cabinet. This includes facilitating communications between the District Cabinet and the ASDA chapters at all of the California schools and working with the Trustee and the rest of the ASDA District 11 leadership to coordinate events such as Advocacy Academy and the District 11 Meeting.

During my term I intend to work toward establishing more cohesiveness among the ASDA chapters within District 11. It is my goal to encourage collaboration among California dental students by organizing and publicizing district-wide events targeting advocacy, community service, and leadership development.

I have had the privilege to meet and be inspired by some amazing young leaders in organized dentistry, and it is my hope to provide many more such opportunities for my fellow dental students.

DEDICATION TO JI WON LEE

In early May, UCLA and the rest of the dental community was dealt the devastating news that ASDA’s Immediate Past President, Ji Won Lee, passed away. She was a fourth year dental student at the Columbia College of Dental Medicine and was preparing to graduate at the end of the school year. Prior to being elected President of the American Student Dental Association for the 2013-2014 year, Ji Won served as ASDA’s Speaker of the House from 2012-2013.

Ji Won was a terrific leader, mentor, and friend. Her ability to speak with such grace and authority enabled her to command any room. After spending a few minutes with Ji Won, it was easy to see why she was so successful throughout her dental career. Though she left us all too soon, her leadership and friendship will always be remembered; she was destined for greatness.

While Ji Won will be dearly missed, she will continue to live through the many lives that she touched. She inspired countless others to achieve more than they ever thought possible, and her memory continues to be an inspiration to all. While the dental community will greatly miss Ji Won, we are grateful for what she has contributed to our lives and the dental profession.
“The first and simplest emotion which we discover in the human mind, is curiosity” - Edmund Burke.

It is this curiosity nurturing ingenious minds that has led to the development and application of science. From the early inventions and augmentations of medicine to the new era of nanotechnology, the human race has made significant advances in medical technology.

The vision of nanotechnology was introduced in 1959 by Nobel Physicist Richard P. Feynman, who described its beginnings by saying, “...it is a development that I think cannot be avoided.” However, this idea remained mostly neglected until the mid-’80s, after which research in the field of nanotechnology gained its momentum.

The word Nano is derived from the Greek word “nanos,” which means “dwarf.” Nanotechnology is based on the concept of creating functional structures at the atomic and molecular level. The human body is of course made of molecules, and application of molecular nanotechnology will aim to address many medical problems and work towards enhancement of human health. Research and application of nanotechnology are seen in a variety of fields that include health sciences and biotechnology as well as electronic and computer technology.

But what are the future possibilities of nanodentistry? The answers can only be provided by research scientists working hard in the nanoland. Fortunately, there is hope that the integration of nanotechnology in dentistry will address the underlying issues of oral health through tissue engineering and nanomaterials. The following are the possible applications of nanodentistry:

Dental implants using nanotechnology: Have we ever imagined a non-failing implant? Probably not. But evidence shows that the failure rates can drop drastically if we apply nanotechnology to implants. Creation of nano particles on the surface of implants by roughening them will induce osteoblast proliferation in the contacting bone, leading to increased bonding of the implant surface to the surrounding bone (osseointegration) and thereby reducing the chances of future implant failures.

Tissue engineering and nanotechnology: Tissue engineering and stem cell research are integral in treating complex oral and maxillofacial fractures, osseointegration of implants, bone augmentation, etc. Incorporation of nano-scale fibers into the biodegradable and ceramic materials used for bone tissue regeneration improves the mechanical durability of these materials. Due to their biological and physiological similarities to human tissues, bone grafts using nanocrystalline hydroxyapatite can induce cellular proliferation, leading to periodontal tissue regeneration.

Periodontal drug delivery system: A number of studies using practical applications have been done, for example, using Arestin or Adiflox, which delivers tetracycline or doxycycline respectively into the periodontal pockets to treat periodontitis. Research demonstrates that Triclosan impregnated with nanoparticles can achieve a higher success rate in periodontal drug delivery mechanisms.

Nanocomposites and Esthetics: Nanocomposites are already in use and are well-researched. Use of nanofiller particles in composite allows greater incorporation of filler particles. This increases the strength of the material and prevents marginal breakdown. Additionally, the fillers in nanocomposites have higher translucency due to their small wavelength of light. This quality allows for a vast range of color options, thereby widening the scope for esthetic dentistry.

In the future, the appearance of teeth could be enhanced by inserting such materials as sapphire with carbon nanotubes into the outer layers of enamel. Materials like sapphire, diamonds and quartz have high optical translucency which gives the tooth a better esthetic look. Also, the addition of carbon nanotubes improves the durability and strength of the material. This could be a boon to the field of cosmetic dentistry and could be considered as an alternative to whitening procedures.

Dental Nanorobots: Based on medical robots, dental nanorobots will be programmed by nanocomputers. They will be programmed to move around the teeth and clean the organic residues from the supragingival and subgingival regions, preventing accumulation of plaque and calculus. These nanorobots are left behind either by mouthwash or toothpaste and are safely inactivated upon swallowing. Although this concept might sound unrealistic, it’s possible that its application in the future might revolutionize the field of preventive dentistry.

Tooth repair and treatment for hypersensitivity: Nano-robotics and tissue engineering can also be used to manufacture the whole tooth. This could include the hard tissue and cellular components of the tooth, which would make natural tooth replacement in the dental office a possibility. Dental nanorobots can occlude the exposed dentinal tubules within minutes, permanently addressing the issue of dental hypersensitivity.

Diagnosing Oral cancer: This can be achieved with accuracy by utilizing:

1. Nanopores: These allow single strands of DNA to pass through the tiny pores, in turn allowing detailed DNA sequencing.
2. Nanotubes: These are carbon rods half the size of DNA that help in detecting altered genes.
3. Quantum Dots: These are nanomaterials that glow when illuminated by ultraviolet light. Quantum dots bind themselves to proteins unique to cancer cells and bring the tumor cells to light.

Despite the future advantages that nanotechnology can provide, its potential hazards and practical application are still being studied. There are innumerable applications of nanodentistry that might sound unrealistic and far-fetched, but the influence of this technology, which adopts the molecular and homeostatic mechanisms of the human body, will give a new face to the field of dentistry and act as a pioneer for improved oral health care.

Science is capable of converting these visions into reality. The scope of nanotechnology in dentistry is wide, and there will be more practical applications in the near future. Finally, to quote William Atkinson, author of Nanocosm: “Nanotechnology and the big changes coming from the inconceivably small, will affect everything. It is going to be a blizzard!”
"Thrown into the deep
No place for the weak
All burnt out...an absolute lack of sleep
With your faith all tied up, all you have to do is leap!"

Being an international student at UCLA School of Dentistry gives the saying, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger,” a whole new meaning. The twenty of us PPID students came out looking like Mike Tyson without the cool face tattoo (for better or worse) after the summer quarter this year. To say that school is tough would be an understatement. Getting into the international program was tough. Repeatedly sitting for bench exams, flying to various cities for interviews, and not giving up hope was tough. But even in spite of the obstacles we faced getting into the program, last summer quarter seemed impossible to undertake.

Six months ago we face a world of uncertainty, but at the beginning of last quarter, we were finally in! What changed was that, even though we were anxious, we were no longer afraid. We weren’t uncertain about whether we’d be successful or not—we had to be successful. We were in it for the long haul. We definitely, if nothing else, had the will to get through dental school yet again.

What makes impossible tasks doable is the word: “We.” I use this word repeatedly because I couldn’t have done it without my classmates. As a team of twenty, we helped each other. From being there for each other to literally holding each other’s hand to help festoon gingival roll on the complete denture—we did it all last quarter. Everyone here had different experiences. Unlike our first dental school experiences, explaining why I’m in dental school again is my favorite thing to do by the way, everybody has a different skill level here. It was interesting to see how the same procedure could be done in so many ways. Even with all these different perspectives, everybody still looked at the vacuum mixer the first time like it was from a different planet.

Not only did we differ in our dental training, but we also differ also in our life experiences. Many PPID students are married here. Some even have kids. At 25, I can barely manage myself, let alone others. Working in the lab with mothers of 2-, 7-, and 12-year-olds at 11 pm helped me appreciate sacrifice. Keeping each other company through difficult classes helped ease the stress, and I have certainly leaned valuable lessons from my classmates. Facing a battery of exams including restorative, indirect, complete dentures, RPDs, endodontics, pain and anxiety, periodontics, pedodontics, orthodontics, oral diagnosis, and endodontics, we really had to rely on one another for encouragement and relief. And not only did we take these exams—we performed well!

At times, techniques learned back home really helped; at other times, they hurt. Having to unlearn old practices while learning new ones presented an extra challenge. By the time I’d get my brain to register how a certain procedure was done, I would have already made a 180 degree exit angle for a class II amalgam. While that may be an exaggeration, understand that in India, I would have just extracted the tooth. We had the hand skills to do the procedures but had to relearn them in accordance with new parameters.

We all appreciated that when we joined the domestic UCLA students, we felt as though the same camaraderie had doubled instantaneously. Everyone was easy to talk with and so quick to help. Sometimes I wonder if I would have been this kind to twenty new strangers who spoke in strange accents and asked silly things, such as, “Uhn, so blue gown on the third floor lab, right?” Fortunately, the seasoned PPID’s of 2014 had been in the same situation and were willing to help us too! Not only were the current students helpful, but the professors here are also on our side. Every time somebody asks me what’s different about studying in the States, I always reply, “It’s amazing! The professors here don’t hate us!” It sometimes seems too good to be true, but they actually care about our success.

So before I sign off, I just wanted to leave some handy hints for students entering UCLA SoD, both international and domestic:

- Ask for help—you’ll get it.
- If you think something that you’re asking is dumb, don’t worry—somebody’s probably asked something even dumber (probably me).
- Never hesitate to ask what goes where in the clinic.
- The computers run really slowly. Don’t panic.
- Believe that you are good at dentistry and that class II’s are fun (It’s healthy to trick yourself into thinking these things!)
- Never lose hope.
- There are a lot of bars in Westwood.
- Things will go wrong...fight back with super glue.
- And finally, nobody knows how GSD works. Nobody.
The American Student Dental Association is a national student-run organization that protects and advances the rights, interests and welfare of dental students. It introduces students to lifelong involvement in organized dentistry and provides services, information, education, representation and advocacy.

“Being involved in ASDA gave me the opportunity to learn more about organized dentistry. As student dentists, it is important for us to have the support of an organization like ASDA. It is a way to unite student dentists across the country because we all have a common goal: to become competent dentists who provide the best treatment possible to patients.”

- Allison Ozaki (’16)

“ASDA gives students the chance to network with each other, find new elements of dentistry about which they can become passionate, and ultimately effect real change within the profession. It nicely complements the academic rigors of dental school and gives students support in this crucial point in their careers. Every student should take advantage of the opportunities ASDA has to offer!”

- Erik Balinghasay (’16)
“NO ONE IS PERFECT.”

Even though we tell this to ourselves over and over again, many of us still hold ourselves to standards of perfection. Such unrealistic expectations leave us disappointed, bitter, and scarred.

We come from accomplished backgrounds—graduating from top colleges, receiving top scores on national exams, winning accolades, leading successful projects—such that expecting success has become second-nature.

But dental school poses seemingly insurmountable challenges that have the potential to make us question our abilities, our choices to enter dental school, and ultimately ourselves. If there’s one thing all of us share in common, it’s that sinking feeling of despair when we get our first IP (or NP) in lab, when we are told that we have to re-do our pindexing, when the denture we have invested months on turns out to fail, when our crowns have open margins, when we perforate a tooth, or when we give an IAN block that leads to a hematoma. But there’s also another thing that binds us together: our resilience. Disappointments are not failures; they are obstacles that humble us and ultimately help us realize that we are not defined by our performance or by what others think of us. Although we should always strive for excellence, we should not let that striving undermine us. Yes, the aforementioned disappointments will gnaw at our hearts in the moment, but rest assured that even the most highly-esteemed professors have grown stronger because of them. Here are some of our professors’ stories of disappointments:

“Reflecting on disappointment and failure during dental school is an interesting thing for me, I’ve heard it said that ‘hindsight is 20/20’—that’s the reason for why things happen in the past become clear when the outcomes have already occurred—and that’s true for me. I had two major disappointments in dental school that have actually had a substantial positive impact on where I am today (as well as who I am). My first memorable failure in dental school was....wait for it....receiving an NP grade in Pediatric Dentistry. When I was in dental school, hardly anybody pursued Pediatric Dentistry as a specialty and I thought I was going to be a Periodontist. So the whole class, including myself, had a bad attitude about our course and about 20% of our class received NP grades. As I was studying for my makeup exam, I realized how interesting Pediatric Dentistry actually was and made up my mind to correct for my previous mistake. The following were formative lessons for me—never disregard anything, learn to turn failure into a learning opportunity. The second memorable failure in dental school was not being accepted into the School of Public Health. I attended Harvard School of Dental Medicine when it was a five year program. We had three options for our fifth year, for which we paid tuition. We could apply to and begin our residency program in the fifth year, we could spend the entire year conducting research, or we could apply to the School of Public Health. I wasn’t ready to choose my specialty and I didn’t want to pay tuition to conduct research, so I applied for the MPH program. I was the first student in the history of the dental school to be rejected. When I asked for feedback on my application, the admissions officer told me that the committee didn’t know why I was applying. So I ended up spending a year in a developmental biology lab, which became the foundation for my Master of Science degree at UCLA. This provided additional important lessons for me—know why I am doing something and have convictions about it, learn how to communicate my convictions. I’ve had other failures since dental school, but I’ve learned that it’s not the failure that has shaped me, but how I’ve bounced back from it.”

- Clarice S. Law, DMD, MS
It is 5:30 in the morning in Vallejo, California, and those of us who are volunteering for the morning shift at the CDA Cares event set off across the parking lot towards the Solano County Fairgrounds main campus. Other volunteers joined us as we marched toward the illuminated convention center, where a queue of patients has already snaked around the building. Some of these patients had been in line since yesterday; some had traveled from the outer reaches of the state to stand in the damp cold outside of the convention center. Although we knew the day would be long and that we would leave tired, sore, and hungry, the guarantee that many of these patients’ conditions would be significantly improved made it all worthwhile.

CDA Cares events serve a demonstrative purpose as well. They show individuals, who are capable of making change, that barriers to oral health care do exist in California, and that they need to be addressed NOW. Dr. James Stephens, CDA President, states that CDA Cares events have changed the way our legislators think and act. He explains, “CDA Cares has been crucial in focusing a very bright light on the problem of unmet oral health needs in California. The legislature and the administration have seen that light because we invited them to witness, for themselves, the thousands of people willing to line up for hours to have a filling or a tooth extracted.”

After witnessing the overwhelming body of evidence at CDA Cares in Sacramento, Senate President Pro Tem, Darrell Steinberg made efforts to help restore Adult Dental-Cal benefits, which went into effect on May 1st of this year. Stephens points to the CDA Cares events as being partially responsible in helping to reestablish the State Dental Director position in the Department of Public Health, who will help to coordinate oral health initiatives throughout California.

The thirteen UCLA students in attendance (featured in the photograph) experienced the personal satisfaction that comes from providing relief to the underserved population in our State. They also gained perspective regarding the dire need to address the access to care problem that currently exists in California. UCLA alumnus Dr. Russell Webb ’78 gave these students a message during a well-deserved break at the event: “My challenge to those entering our profession is to find a way to start preventing dental issues like those we see at [CDA Cares] clinics—as we will never be able to operate our way out of this dilemma.” Whether it is in helping sterilize the mounds of instruments used during the clinic, translating for non-English speaking patients, or helping to assist a local dentist providing treatment, it is evident that the dental student’s role in these clinics is paramount.

CDA Cares, held on April 25th and 26th at the Solano County Fairgrounds, marked the fifth time that CDA volunteers provided millions of dollars worth of free oral health care to an underserved population. Thirteen first-year students from the UCLA School of Dentistry made the trek to join 1,800 dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, community members, and other dental students to provide free dental care.

For those unfamiliar with CDA Cares, it is a two-day, free clinic organized and partially funded by the CDA Foundation, the charitable arm of the California Dental Association. Since the CDA’s first event in April 2012 in Modesto, California, the clinic has provided pro bono relief up and down the state. Each clinic is held in an area of California where the population demonstrates need and suffers from the access-to-care issues that have made the state infamous.

The numbers from these events are staggering—to date, approximately $7.5 million in dental services have been provided, more than 50,000 procedures performed, and 10,040 patients have benefited from the collective contributions of volunteers in the two years since the event’s inception. The event in Solano County alone had 1,995 patients receive nearly $1.5 million worth of dental care in just two days.

Yes, the numbers are quite impressive, but the stories and the astounding transformations that come from CDA Cares events are even more noteworthy. The CDA Cares in Solano County was no exception. One patient, a single mother who had several young children at home, came to have several teeth removed that had been causing her pain for months; until this event, she had neither the resources nor time to seek treatment. Another patient, a recent stroke victim, needed a cleaning, but could not afford the treatment with his medically related debt. He received the cleaning for which he had waited all morning—along with treatment to several teeth that needed to be extracted. Each patient’s story is heartfelt and unique, but these tales of suffering and misfortune are all too commonplace at CDA Cares events.

The next CDA Cares clinic will be held in Pomona, California, on November 21 and 22. Even if you are unable to volunteer, you can support the cause by helping your class to sponsor a dental chair at the event. Donations collected from dental students are matched by TDIC, the CDA’s insurance subsidiary.

Winston Churchill once said, “We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give”. Please be on the lookout for notifications about registering as a volunteer for CDA Cares Pomona from your class CDA representatives.
**Bite Block**

**Baked Cajun Tilapia**

Eric Scott

Whether it is finals week and you are cooking that quick meal before a long night of studying or you are trying to impress that special someone with a delicious meal, this recipe for two is sure to meet your needs. It is versatile, as it is simple, yet sufficiently elegant for a more formal dinner. The ingredients are affordable, easily obtained at any store, and do not require much effort in the way of preparation. It is also a dish that marries well with a variety of sides, from vegetables and rice, to a Mediterranean-seasoned bed of couscous. Enjoy!

**Recipe serves 2:**
- 2 tilapia fillets
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 1.5 tsp Cajun seasoning
- Fresh dill for garnish
- Salt and Pepper, to taste

**Sauce:**
- 1 Tbsp chopped dill (fresh)
- 3 Tbsp mayonnaise
- ¾ tsp garlic powder (or garlic salt)
- ¼ cup of sour cream

1) Preheat oven at 350°F.
2) Coat baking pan with olive oil.
3) Apply Cajun seasoning, along with salt and pepper to your liking.
4) Bake tilapia for 20 minutes or until flaky upon touch.
5) Garnish tilapia with thinly-sliced lemon to give it a pleasant zest, along with a sprig of dill.
6) To prepare the sauce, begin with mayonnaise in a bowl. Add the garlic powder, sour cream, and chopped dill. Stir.
7) Serve with a side of steamed vegetables or on a bed of couscous.

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**Dental School Problems**

Completed Case MD View

My Reaction: :)  

Completed Case BL View

My Reaction: :(  

By Elaine Lu (*16)
The Diastema

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SUBMISSIONS

If you would like to submit an article and/or photos for The Diastema or have any suggestions, please email the editors at ucladiastema@gmail.com.

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