Dear students, faculty, alumni, staff and friends,

I hope everyone enjoyed the summer. Between commencement in late May, the arrival of a new group of PPID students, a visit from our friends from the dental schools at Meikai and Asahi Universities in Japan, and some major research advances, it was certainly a busy and productive one for our school.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank everyone for their support during this tough economic time for the University of California. Please enjoy this newsletter. It is a testament to your continued hard work and dedication which yield so many news stories. You have my sincere appreciation.

Dean No-Hee Park, DMD, PhD
Dental School Research Announcements

A New Way to Target Cancer, a New Light Shines on a Genetic Disease, and a New Method to Diagnose Oral Cancer

Throughout the UCLA School of Dentistry, scientists are conducting research at the forefront of 21st-century dental medicine.

On July 20, 2009, the UCLA Office of Media Relations announced that UCLA medical researchers had collaborated with the dental school's Sotirios Tetradis as well as with other scientific colleagues to identify a way to turn off a key signaling pathway involved in the physiological processes that can stimulate the development of cancer and other diseases.

In the study, published in the journal *Molecular Endocrinology*, "scientists found that by activating a receptor in cells called the liver X receptor (LXR), they were able to inhibit the hedgehog (Hh) signaling pathway, which is involved in the maintenance of tissue integrity and stem cell generation. When stimulated in an unregulated manner, however, the Hh pathway can also cause cancers of the brain, lung, blood, prostate, skin and other tissues." The researchers' findings may lead to new treatments including targeted pharmaceuticals. The full announcement is available online.

On July 31, 2009, the UCLA Office of Media Relations issued a research advisory to announce that dental school researchers had come to a new understanding of the cause of a rare genetic facial disorder.

The disease, known as oculo-facial-cardio-dental syndrome (OFCD), is characterized by canine teeth with extremely long roots, congenital cataracts, craniofacial defects and congenital heart disease, and is associated with mutations in a protein that shuts down gene expression during fetal development.

The findings of Cun-Yu Wang and his colleagues, published in *Nature Cell Biology*, provide a molecular explanation for the exaggerated dental and craniofacial features seen in patients with OFCD, and unravel the epigenetic mechanisms that control human adult stem-cell function. This may lead to a treatment for OFCD, as well as to new therapies for promoting the growth of teeth and bone.

August 25, 2009 marked the date of the advance online publication, in the September 1 issue of *Clinical Cancer Research*, of new findings that emanated from David Wong's laboratory.

Wong and his colleagues at the dental school, the UCLA School of Public Health and the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA have expanded the available avenues for the diagnosis of oral squamous cell carcinoma (OSCC) to include microRNAs. Like hall monitors in an elementary school, microRNAs are the molecules produced by cells that simultaneously assess the behavior of multiple genes and control their activity.

Dr. David Wong and his colleagues previously demonstrated the usefulness of proteome and transcriptome diagnostics for oral cancer. The scientists' latest results show that while the saliva of healthy individuals contains about 50 microRNAs, two in particular — miR-125a and miR-200a — are present at significantly different levels in the saliva of individuals suffering from OSCC.
New Research Grants Awarded

Nancy Reifel has won two grants. The American Dental Association (ADA) has awarded $1,335,000 for the Community Dental Health Coordinator Training Program, a UCLA School of Dentistry pilot program to provide clinical training and internships in a Native American community. She also has received more than $8,000 from Mono County to fund the Mono County Oral Health Project (for more information about the availability of oral health services in Mono County, see the story "A Dearth of Dentists").

Shen Hu has won three grants. Two are made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). One, from the National Cancer Institute, funds proteome analysis of oral cancer metastasis in the amount of $20,377. The other, a grant from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, will fund a project concerning quantitative salivary proteomics for human oral cancer. Shen Hu's third grant, from the University of California Cancer Research Coordinating Center, provides $46,310 for a systems analysis of oral cancer.

Jeffrey Kim has won an F30 award of more than $66,000 from the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research. He is studying the epigenetic regulation of oral cancer (for more information, please see the "T32 Success" story below).

Hao-Fu Lee has won two grants. The American Association of Orthodontists Foundation has granted a $15,000 Orthodontic Faculty Development Fellowship award, while the American Association of Orthodontists has given $60,000 as part of the Full-Time Faculty Teaching (FFT) Fellowship Program intended to address a recognized crisis in orthodontic education by providing funds to encourage and support the recruitment and retention of orthodontic educators.
A Dearth of Dentists

Los Angeles County: 6,804 Dentists; Inyo County: 8

SOURCE: GWENDOLYN DRISCOLL, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS, THE UCLA CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH

According to a study published by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research in June 2009, California has nearly 32,000 licensed dentists, or approximately 14 percent of the total number of dentists nationwide — the largest percentage of any state.

However, a "dental paradox" exists in that California also has 233 dental health professional shortage areas (DHPSAs), or smaller areas within counties that have a dentist-to-population ratio of one-to-5,000 or less, a population with unusually high needs, or an insufficient capacity for care among existing dentists.

To learn more about the communities where California has all the dentists it needs — and about where the needs are greatest, click here.
High School Dental Scientists

LA-Area Teens: Youngest People in Dental School With Their Own Lab Coats

For the second summer in a row, something amazing happened in the laboratories at the UCLA School of Dentistry — and it was not simply cutting-edge science.

It was meaningful scientific research projects conducted by African-American and Latino teenagers from Los Angeles-area high schools under the supervision of dental school faculty mentors — many of whom are dentists and PhDs with prestigious grants from the National Institutes of Health. It's all part of a grant-funded program that seeks to address a national shortage of minority dentists.

Read the full story in a UCLA Magazine web exclusive, or click here for additional coverage by the L.A. Watts Times.
Congratulations are in order for Jeffrey Kim (’08). Jeff is a dual-degree student who has earned his DDS and is continuing toward the PhD as a trainee in the UCLA Dentist-Scientist and Oral Health Scientist Training Program (T32) in the laboratory of Dr. David Wong.

He also is the first UCLA T32 trainee to do what the program is designed to accomplish: win an independent research award. Jeff recently received news of an Individual National Research Service Award Predoctoral Dental Scientist Fellowship (F30) from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research.

In concert with the advancement of epigenetic science, there has been significant improvement in the field of cancer research, yet the matter of epigenetic regulation in oral cancer remains largely unresolved. This past year, 31,000 individuals were diagnosed with oral cancer in the US alone, of which more than 50% were in the advanced stages at the time of detection. One out of four patients with oral cancer dies due to delayed diagnosis. More detailed molecular mechanisms in the pathogenesis of oral cancer should be elucidated to ensure early detection and to reduce morbidity and mortality.

Dr. Kim’s objective is to understand the role of abrogated epigenetic regulation in oral carcinogenesis. Specifically, he wants to elucidate the molecular mechanism behind CDK2AP1-mediated DNA methylation.

The outcome of this research will potentially be used to develop diagnostic tools to detect oral cancer at the onset of the disease development (our current scientific knowledge is not sufficient to make an early diagnosis for oral cancer patients). Dr. Kim hopes to bridge the gap between the present assessment of oral cancer and the prognosis of the patient by studying the fundamental biology underlying the disease.
Commencement 2009

Dental School Family Celebrates 42nd Graduation Ceremony

Four years of focused hard work (and many more years of earnest preparation) culminate each spring in one very important day. On May 31, 2009, Dean No-Hee Park, the Office of Student Affairs under the leadership of Associate Dean Carol Bibb, and the dental school faculty hosted the school's 42nd Commencement Ceremony at UCLA's iconic Royce Hall.

Commencement served as a wonderful opportunity for Dean Park to give special recognition to the extraordinary support that Robert and Marion Wilson, Margaret Bloomfield, and Thomas and Paula Wilson provided in the form of the extensive renovation of the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center in 2008.

Keith Cowhey, president of the Class of 2009, offered the greeting, and Dr. Richard Valachovic, executive director of the American Dental Education Association, delivered the keynote address.

Professors, staff, family members and friends applauded the achievements of 100 DDS graduates, 18 recipients of the MS degree in oral biology, three recipients of the PhD in oral biology, and 48 individuals who earned postgraduate certificates in general and specialty dentistry. Hearty congratulations are due to all of them!

Click here to view the names of all the new Bruin alumni.
Senior Banquet and OKU Induction Ceremony

More Opportunities to Celebrate Student Achievement

May 22, 2009 marked the date of the Senior Banquet at Covel Commons. Faculty and graduating dental students traded in their scrubs and gowns for formal attire, exchanged awards, then dined together and danced the night away.

The dental school's OKU chapter president, Dr. Diana Messadi, hosted the dental honor society's annual banquet May 27, 2009 at the Faculty Center. The new alumni members from the Class of 2009 include Kevin Andrus, Brian Asbury, Nini Chaichanasakul, Keith Cowhey, Aline Ekizian, Ryan Hodges, Kristen Lowe, Richard Manwaring, Richard Rauth, Stephen Rusó, and Gregory Werner. New faculty members include Dr. Mo Kang and Dr. Robert Merrill. Dr. Larry Wolinsky was presented with the Wolcott Award, and the Kramer Award went to Michael Shoff of the Class of 2010.
Leaders Among Teachers

Two Dental School Faculty Members Win Notable Teaching Recognitions

The UCLA School of Dentistry couldn't train the next generation of dentists without them. Who are they? Fine teachers who have recently been recognized for their meaningful contributions to dental education.

Richard G. Stevenson, clinical professor and chair of restorative dentistry, has won the American Dental Association's 2009 Golden Apple Award — a national, annual honor that recognizes a dental educator who has made a commitment to mentoring students, especially those interested in academic careers. Dr. Stevenson was nominated by dental school students, faculty and staff.

The Academic Senate's Committee on Teaching recently selected 14 Senate and non-Senate faculty members and teaching assistants for its prestigious Distinguished Teaching Awards. Among those honored was our very own Dr. Fariba Younai, clinical professor of oral medicine.
Philanthropy Persists Despite Recession

A Year-End Report

BY THOMAS MITCHELL, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, & LAURA PESCATORE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Teaching and Research

The school announced the creation of three new endowed chairs – the Felix and Mildred Yip Endowed Professorship in Dentistry, the Thomas K. Barber Endowed Chair in Pediatric Dentistry, and the Dr. No-Hee Park Endowed Chair in Dentistry – bringing the total number of dental school chairs to seven. Endowed chairs, which provide a permanent source of financial support for academic and research activities of outstanding faculty members, are among the most prestigious honors on campus and serve as a powerful recruiting and retention tool for UCLA.

Student Support

The Apollonian Society continues to attract broad support from alumni, faculty members and friends. Participation in the campaign rose 17% compared to last fiscal year with a total of 504 supporters who contributed more than $220,000. Gifts to the Apollonian Society are virtually the only means of funding such initiatives as the White Coat Ceremony, the patient care subsidy fund, The Explorer journal of student research and evening workshops. The Class of 1973 contributed the largest total sum to the Apollonian Society, closely followed by the Class of 1978, while the Classes of 1979 and 1984 tied for the highest number of participants.

Scholarships continue to be a critical component of student support and several members of the Board of Counselors made a tremendous impact in this area this year. Dr. Margaret Pan DDS ’68 – the newest alumni member of the Board – and her husband, Ron Quon, established the Quon Family Endowed Scholarship. Meanwhile, the Board itself increased its scholarship endowment from $160,000 to $250,000 which will allow the school to provide a greater award to third-year dental students.

Patient Care and Community Service

Thanks to a generous gift from the Schutz Engel Trust and a $25,000 commitment from an existing patient care endowment established by Robert Wilson, the men and women who reside at Upward Bound House, a transitional housing shelter for homeless families, now have access to dental care at the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center. This new partnership continues a tradition of providing the highest quality care to underserved populations in the West Los Angeles community and begins to address the challenge of funding adult oral health care in the wake of the elimination of adult Denti-Cal coverage.
School of Dentistry in the News

Summer break? Not for many UCLA School of Dentistry faculty members (and one resident) who have been sharing their professional expertise with the public via interviews with several media outlets. Here is a selection of recent dental school media hits:

- August 17, 2009, the *Los Angeles Times* Spotlights Oral Health Savings To Be Found at Dental Schools
- August 8, 2009, Dr. Shane White Questions Likely Ineffective and Cruel Canine Disarming Technique in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*
- July 28, 2009, Dr. Edmond Hewlett Talks About Mercury Control in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*
- July 20, 2009, Dr. Francisco Ramos-Gomez Discusses Xylitol on NPR’s *Morning Edition*
- July 15, 2009, Trying to Stay Young? Take Care of Your Teeth. Dr. Hewlett's Advice to *Real Simple* and *CNN.com* Readers
- July 13, 2009, *Examiner.com* Recommends UCLA’s Dental School Clinics to Save Teeth and Bank Accounts
- June 23, 2009, *Santa Monica Daily Press* Features Advice from Pediatric Dentist Dr. Francisco Ramos-Gomez
- June 21, 2009, *Los Angeles Times* Quotes Westwood Dental Center Director Dr. Jeffrey Goldstein Regarding "Resources for Those Without Health Insurance"
- June 11, 2009, KVEA-TV Recognizes Oral Surgery Resident Dr. Raquel Ulma as Role Model for Latina Women and Girls (use Firefox browser to view video)

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Community News

Alumni

Summer Evening Celebration for Pediatric Dentistry

Alumni, current residents and faculty members of the postgraduate program in pediatric dentistry gathered in West Los Angeles on July 31, 2009 to celebrate the silver anniversary of the Class of 1984 (Drs. Oariona Lowe and Maria Lekka) and the graduating Class of 2009. Conrad Sack, DMD, PD ’86, MS ’87 gave the keynote address, which was followed by research presentations from graduating residents, a cocktail hour and an evening dinner program.

Faculty & Staff: May

The Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Foundation Board of Directors selected a paper authored by Vivek Shetty, Kathryn Atchison and their colleagues to receive the 2009 Daniel M. Laskin Award for the most outstanding article published in the Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery in 2008. Drs. Shetty and Atchison will receive their award at the Foundation's annual meeting in Toronto, Canada in October.

The American Dental Association (ADA) has recognized Francesco Chiappelli as a “Champion of Evidence-Based Dentistry.”

Dr. Chiappelli is the author of a textbook on evidence-based research (Manual of Evidence-Based Research for the Health Sciences, Nova 2008), and is preparing a second book on the subject for publication (Evidence-Based Clinical Decision-Making, Springer 2009). He was recently appointed editor-in-chief of a new e-book series on evidence-based decisions and comparative effectiveness research (Bentham Science 2009); the first publication, on endodontics, will appear in 2010. Furthermore, Dr. Chiappelli was nominated for the ADA Gold Medal for Excellence in Dentistry and to the Council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) - Pacific Division (2009-2012).

Steve Shaevel, director of the Office of Academic Personnel, had the opportunity to meet the man who received his donated kidney.

"We had a great time and talked for four hours," Steve shared. [He and his wife are] "great people and they expressed their deep appreciation and now we are connected for life! He is off dialysis and has a new lease on life... like Gail [Steve's wife, who received a donated kidney as part of the transplant chain in which Steve participated]. As you can see, he looks great. I'm pointing to where my kidney is on his body."

Faculty & Staff: June

Pediatric dentistry residents and faculty gathered on June 3, 2009 to recognize Robert Berson's last day teaching the second-year DDS student pediatric dentistry lecture/lab course. In appreciation for his contribution, Dr. Berson received a personalized cake, cookies and applause from his students.

Ronald Mito, associate dean for clinical sciences, and his wife, Millicent, received an award from the LAX Coastal Area Chamber of Commerce on May 13, 2009. They earned the “Friends of Education” award for their work with public education in the Westchester elementary, middle and high schools. Millicent is a past president of the PTA for Cowan Avenue Elementary School and volunteers on a daily basis helping either in the classroom or the office. She and Dr. Mito co-chair the primary fundraiser for Westchester High School to support its Academic Recognition Night where graduating seniors with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above receive a letterman’s jacket for academics. Dr. Mito served as the President of the Cowan Avenue Booster Club from 1998-2007 and grew the operational budget from $25,000 per year to over $120,000 per year through fundraising. He is currently the president of the Orville Wright Middle School Booster Club.

Charlene Flowers-Taylor, supervisor of the Westwood predoctoral clinic billing office, won a seat on the 2009-2010 Staff Assembly Executive Board. She serves as the vice president of programs for the UCLA community as of July 1, 2009. Charlene’s professional development program mentor, deputy assistant chancellor Dave Miller, nominated her.
New Faculty and Staff

Faculty

New Appointments

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yazdan Alami</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>4/7/09</td>
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<td>Crystal Angelopoulos</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>6/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Chen</td>
<td>Assistant Clinical Professor</td>
<td>3/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Dickins</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
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<td>Robert Jacob</td>
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<td>Barbara Kabes</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
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<td>Holly Park-Nah</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
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<td>Anjali Krishnakumar</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>6/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Rawlings</td>
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<td>Oscar Rivera</td>
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<td>Nancy Reifel</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>7/1/09</td>
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<td>Todd Schoenbaum</td>
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<td>4/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yair Whiteman</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>5/21/09</td>
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Promotions

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<tr>
<td>Tara Aghaloo</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>7/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melanie Gironda</td>
<td>Adjunct Associate Professor</td>
<td>7/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anahid Jewett</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>7/1/09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Lee</td>
<td>Associate Clinical Professor</td>
<td>7/1/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xinli Zhang</td>
<td>Adjunct Associate Professor</td>
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Staff

New Employees

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<tr>
<td>Cindy Samayoa</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>5/6/09</td>
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Staff in New or Expanded Roles

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<tr>
<td>Josyl Castellon</td>
<td>Senior Administrative Analyst Supervisor</td>
<td>6/11/09</td>
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BIDDING A FOND FAREWELL TO A RETIRING STAFF MEMBER
BY ROCHELLE BACHE, MANAGER, FACULTY GROUP DENTAL PRACTICE
For more than sixteen years, Bella Heidari was an important member of the Faculty Group Dental Practice (FGDP) team. Her years of experience, energy, and incredible work ethic helped the practice meet its goal of providing excellent dental care to the UCLA community and private sector. The FGDP doctors and staff looked forward to working with Bella each day. Her nurturing and caring ways helped patients to feel at ease, and they were always thrilled to see her. She was viewed as a leader in the practice; those she trained and passed her knowledge onto received a valuable gift. Although Bella has retired, her smile and “we can do it” attitude is carried on by us — her co-workers and friends. We wish her a happy retirement.
Faculty & Staff: July

Jennifer Graves, a part-time faculty member in the Division of Restorative Dentistry, welcomed a baby boy on July 2, 2009. His name is Connor and his father is Jeffrey Nagel, who just completed the postgraduate training program in orthodontics.

Paulo Camargo and Philip Melnick gave the course, “A Contemporary Approach to Periodontal Treatment,” for the Australian Dental Association's New South Wales branch.