

Dental Alumni News

2025



BUILDING THE FUTURE OF ORAL HEALTH CARE

Three transformative facilities redefine preclinical education at the School of Dentistry

PAGE 16



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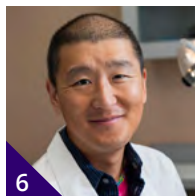
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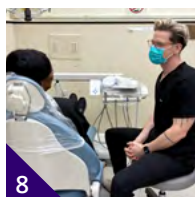


NEWS

6 Excellence in research and education



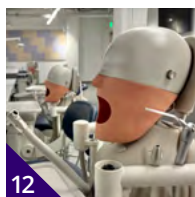
6 Dr. Sue Coldwell steps down as associate dean



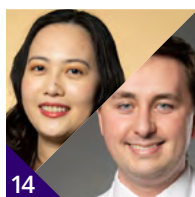
7 SNDA delivers on community

8 Student's research expands oral health care access

10 Learning through service:
School expands dental care access in new initiative



12 From Shoreline to Montlake:
Expanding dental hygiene training at UW



14 Dental students secure place in Husky 100

15 Celine Atkinson is this year's Magnuson Scholar for Dentistry

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

5 The Dean's Corner

5 Alumni President's Message

24 Moments

30 Reunions

31 Class Notes

32 Faculty Updates

33 Business Partners

34 Profile in Partnership:
Omni Practice Group

35 Partners in Excellence

36 Honor Roll of Annual Donors

38 In Memoriam

Back cover: Alumni calendar



FEATURE

16 Building the Future of Oral Health Care

Three transformative facilities redefine preclinical education at the School of Dentistry.

Cover photos: (Top) A view of the RIDE Oral Health Training Center's simulation lab. (Bottom Left) Students working in the new D-165 Sim Lab. (Bottom Right) Dental hygiene students practicing technique in the B-170 Access to Education Center.

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LETTERS FROM THE DEAN AND THE ALUMNI PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Since the launch of the Campaign for Clinics, we've made remarkable strides in transforming the learning environment for our students. This fall we reached a major milestone with the completion of infrastructure renovations in the D1 Simulation Lab, arguably the most significant facility upgrade the School has undertaken in decades.

This space, alongside the newly completed B-170 Simulation Lab for the Shoreline Dental Hygiene Program and the RIDE Oral Health Training Center in Spokane, represent bold investments in our students' dental education. These facilities are designed to elevate the student experience, optimize teaching spaces for the faculty, enhance clinical training and ultimately improve the quality of care we provide for our patients.

We can't wait to show you these spaces. See pages 16-23 for photos and more information.



A handwritten signature in black ink.

André V. Ritter, D.D.S., M.S., MBA, Ph.D.
Professor and Dean

Dear Dental Colleagues,

I am delighted to start the second year of my term as the Dental Alumni Association (DAA) President. I am not your typical DAA president since I am not a dentist. However, I've graduated from the School three times: first as a dental hygiene student in 1982; then with a M.S. in Oral Biology; and finally a Ph.D. in Oral Biology. I've worked at the School for 38 years now and am currently a Professor of Clinical Practice in the Department of Periodontics. I love engaging with students and am very proud of our alumni. I consider it a tremendous honor to serve as the first non-dentist DAA president.

We have so many graduates, who like me, completed their B.S., M.S., M.S.D. or Ph.D. training and are proud UWSOD alumni. Along with our amazing DDS graduates, I hope to encourage other UWSOD alums to join the DAA this year.

When you join the DAA, you make a difference! Your dues are the basis of the DAA's annual budget – with over half going directly to student support and a roster of events allowing for that all-important alumni and student engagement. None of this is possible without your membership.

During a time when membership in alumni associations is decreasing nationally, the single most important thing you can do to sustain the DAA is to ensure your dues are up to date. If you haven't yet, please renew or join today.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Diane Daubert '82 UW Dental Alumni
Association President



DAA MEMBERSHIP

Excellence in research and education

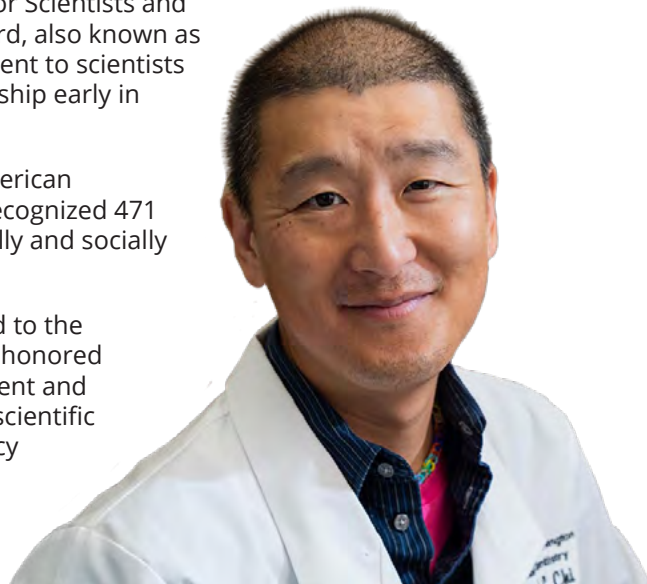
By Jethro Swain

Dr. Donald Chi, the School's Associate Dean for Research and Lloyd and Kay Chapman Endowed Chair for Oral Health, was recognized in a variety of ways in 2025 for his excellence in research and education.

In January, Dr. Chi received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers from former President Joe Biden. This prestigious award, also known as PECASE, is the highest honor given by the United States government to scientists and engineers who demonstrate exceptional potential for leadership early in their research careers.

In March, he was one of five UW researchers to be named an American Association of the Advancement of Sciences Fellow. The award recognized 471 newly elected fellows from around the world for their "scientifically and socially distinguished achievements" in science and engineering.

And in July, Dr. Chi was one of 36 scientists and educators elected to the Washington State Academy of Sciences. The new members were honored for their "outstanding record of scientific and technical achievement and willingness to assist the academy in providing the best available scientific information and technical understanding to inform complex policy decisions in Washington."



Dr. Sue Coldwell steps down as associate dean

By Jethro Swain



Dr. Sue Coldwell stepped down as Associate Dean for Student Services and Admissions on Oct. 1, after serving in the role for 17 years. She will remain engaged in teaching, research and service as a Professor in the Department of Oral Health Sciences.

In partnership with her team in the Office of Student Services and Admissions, Dr. Coldwell guided the recruitment, selection and admissions processes for the predoctoral program. She and her team then facilitated the entry of the new class of dental students.

"I am proud of the work our team has done each year to ensure student success, starting with a comprehensive, holistic admissions review process and culminating in a personal and heartfelt investiture of doctoral hoods ceremony," said Dr. Coldwell. "Our School has outstanding students, faculty and leaders. I look forward to continuing our work 'advancing oral health for all' as a member of the faculty."

Dr. Coldwell graduated with a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Duke University in 1989. Upon completing her master's degree and Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1994, she joined the School as a Senior Fellow in Dental Public Health Sciences and has been here ever since.

"I am grateful for Dr. Coldwell's leadership in the Office of Student Services and Admissions over the past 17 years," said Dean André Ritter. "Dr. Coldwell led the office through significant moments, including three CODA site visits and a global pandemic that required agility and ingenuity in student support and the admissions process. She has been an example of effective leadership, providing thoughtful and measured perspectives in the face of challenges and opportunities."

The School is undertaking a national search to hire a Vice Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, who will have oversight over academic affairs and student services and admissions. The goal is to fill the position by July 1, 2026.

SNDA delivers on community

By Jethro Swain

The School's Student National Dental Association (SNDA) chapter has been hard at work since its inception just over two years ago.

Part of the greater SNDA organization, the UW SNDA promotes, supports and aids the academic and social environment of minority dental students. They do so through community-building events and by drawing a cohort of classmates who share many of the same lived experiences.

"We provide our members with a sense of community by welcoming everyone to our meetings, including our potlucks, and getting to know every individual as a whole," said president Kejdra Williams ('26). "We also try to participate in quarterly social outings and help each other with studying habits and guidance."

This spring SNDA members supported the UW's Minority Association of Pre-Med Students (MAPS) Pre-Health Conference on campus. During two event workshops, they taught high school, community college and undergraduate students how to take impressions and use composites. They also talked to students about career opportunities within dentistry and the realities of dental school.

Although they're smaller than the majority of SNDA chapters across the country, the group still participates in the annual SNDA National Convention. Thanks to sponsorship from Delta Dental of Washington, which covers a portion of the expenses, all members can make the trip.



SNDA members pose in their White Coats after the ceremony. From left: Ure Nnanabu, Zahra Ali, LaVera Shields, Rhianna Jackson, Ena Shepard and Kejdra Williams.



LaVera Shields (left) and Ena Shepard during the holiday food drive.

The national convention features networking and community-building activities, interspersed with poster competitions, career fairs and even a "Dental Shark Tank" competition for entrepreneurs.

"We love the exposure [the convention] gives us to meet other dental students and dentists who look like us," said treasurer Chiamaka Odoh ('27). "I loved meeting new people, along with attending interesting panels and participating in outreach during the conferences."

The chapter is also committed to giving back through service. During its first two winters, members volunteered at the University District Food Bank holiday food drive and the Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church Toy Drive.

Because they're using their collective power for good, the sense of community and inclusivity among the group continues to grow. Looking ahead, they seek to attract more members.

"We hope to continue to promote diversity, equity and belonging in the School," said Odoh. "We want more students of diverse backgrounds interested in dentistry to attend our school. We want to encourage them to join (SNDA), to feel that sense of community, while learning from one another on how to succeed inside and outside of dental school."

Student's research expands oral health care access

By Jethro Swain

Priyanka Prajapati, a student in the International Dentist DDS (UWIDDs) program, is using interprofessional collaboration to help improve access to oral health care for underserved populations around the globe.

Our School's Timothy A. DeRouen Center for Global Oral Health conducted two of her life-changing projects.

She designed an award-winning research study and implemented the World Health Organization's (WHO) modules for oral health in primary healthcare settings to train nondental healthcare workers in Kisumu, Kenya. Her second project taught those healthcare workers how to perform oral exams and identify diseases, including HIV-related lesions.

Passionate for Preventive Care

The genesis of this work goes back to her dental training in India, where Prajapati encountered a staggering range of oral health diseases. Some patients couldn't open their mouths and others bore the signs of advanced oral cancer. She quickly noted that patients only came in with severe problems because access to dentistry was scarce.



Priyanka Prajapati

"When I first began training to be a dentist, dental care was associated with patients getting out of pain," said Prajapati. "Treatment was much more reactive, not preventive. As I connected with these patients, I learned about their obstacles to accessing dental care, many of which were due to socioeconomic barriers."

Prajapati and her colleagues visited local communities, teaching them about proper oral care, performing check-ups and explaining about dental clinics in the region.

"I was overjoyed when people began to show up at the clinic and were eager to learn about oral health and receive some much-needed care," she said. "Observing the influence of these small actions was uplifting and inspired me to discover strategic ways to improve access to care."

Ultimately, she decided additional education would help her achieve that goal.

Prajapati completed McGill University's Master's in Dental Sciences program in Montreal, specializing in clinical and population health. She learned "everything from epidemiology (and) implementing public health programs to understanding what a community needs and how to tailor programs to meet them," she said.

Working with Canadian health authorities taught her how to use data to increase efficiency in hospitals, emergency rooms and dental clinics.

After a few years, she was ready to balance her passion for clinics and public health projects. In 2022, she reached out to Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario, Director of the DeRouen Center, after learning about her leadership and expertise.



At this year's AADOCR annual meeting (clockwise from top left), Wendy Kramer, Dean Ritter, Dr. Claire Mills and Priyanka Prajapati.

Prioritizing Community Oral Health

"Dr. Seminario's commitment to improving oral health in underserved communities, both locally and internationally, resonated with my passion for clinical population health and equity and I was eager to contribute," said Prajapati.

In her initial work with Dr. Seminario, Prajapati supported research projects by analyzing data, conducting literature reviews and assisting with manuscript preparation for projects in Washington, Kenya and Peru.

"Priyanka showed strong professional presence with maturity, responsibility and a true passion for global oral health right away," said Dr. Seminario. "She was excited to dive into research methods, international health policy and manuscript writing and her background in large database management made her a perfect addition to our team."



Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario

This work inspired Prajapati to apply to the UWIDDS program in 2023 and she became a member of the Class of 2026. Her cohort will complete 10 quarters of classes before receiving their degrees.

One of her first course choices was Advanced Global Oral Health: From Theory to Action, taught by Dr. Seminario. Prajapati was among the handful of students who could take their research project from the classroom into the field. Using research conducted by previous students, she familiarized herself with the barriers to oral health training in Kenya and discovered that area providers were eager to learn about it.

Since the DeRouen Center was already connected with oral health professionals in the region, Prajapati had an excellent opportunity to implement her research.

"We tried to look for validated resources of information where we could train nondental healthcare providers to identify oral diseases, collect more information and make them more aware about oral health," said Prajapati. "The number of dentists in Kenya, specifically in Kisumu, is very low, which adds to the number of systemic barriers for patients who are already facing life challenges that make going to the dentist low on their priorities."

With help from Dr. Immaculate Opondo, a pediatric dentist at Maseno University in Kenya and a close colleague of the DeRouen Center, Prajapati tested the oral health knowledge of the providers for a control. Then she gave them a crash course in oral health care using a WHO presentation. The providers were retested and showed they improved their knowledge.

The providers expressed substantial interest in doing hands-on training, so Prajapati created another project, which was conducted in November. Dr. Opondo taught the providers how to identify oral diseases and manifestations that occur with HIV through practices like lifting the lips and tongue.

"The hope is that...the more engagement we see, the more it can be implemented in similar settings where access to dental care is limited," said Prajapati.

Interprofessional Collaboration

As a global oral health activist, Prajapati's work isn't limited to one country. Through the Equity and Access to Oral Health Care course (taught by Dr. Amy Kim, Director of the Office of Educational Partnerships), Prajapati and classmates have been teaching groups of UW Medicine and Montana State University nursing and allied health students how to become more aware of oral health when treating patients and refer them to dentists.

Prajapati's goal is to build a foundation of basic oral health training among primary healthcare providers who work in remote and rural areas in the WWAMI region (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho).

"Knowing people see primary care providers more frequently than a dentist, particularly in remote areas, a provider who can also check for oral health diseases, counsel on nutrition or offer a fluoride varnish can make a big difference," she said.



Prajapati gives oral health training at Montana State University.

Project Accolades

Prajapati's projects have garnered much attention. She received the American Public Health Association's prestigious Anthony Westwater Jong Population Oral Health Pre-Professional Award for her work in Washington and Montana.



And earlier this year she traveled to New York to present "Integrating Oral Health Among HIV Health Clinics in West Kenya" at the annual meeting of the American Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR).

Her upcoming project was developed through the School's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) program. She will present these findings at the 2026 Research Day this winter.

Prajapati views awards and presentations as motivators.

"If I'm going to continue doing what I'm passionate about — and that is to make a difference in people's lives in terms of their oral health and overall health and mostly in communities where there's limited access — when I get recognized like this, I feel like it means I was doing something good for someone," she said.

Prajapati with her project poster at AADOCR 2025.

Learning through service: School expands dental care access in new initiative

By Jethro Swain

The School received a grant of nearly \$175,000 from the King County Adult Dental Program (KCADP) to help provide uninsured and underinsured community members with dental treatment, beginning this summer.

The KCADP provides services for residents living in King County who are not eligible for Apple Health (Medicaid). The King County government office estimates that 52,000 residents meet the KCADP eligibility requirements.

Part of the School's mission is to advance oral and craniofacial health for everyone, with a commitment to serving community needs. By working with the KCADP and securing funding, the School plans to see at least 175 patients, with each client making a minimum of three visits to our clinics.

"Bringing in these patients fits perfectly into our mission of serving the underserved through the Office of Educational Partnerships (OEP)," said Dr. Amy Kim, its director and the principal investigator on the grant. "The UWSOD has a long history of service and Dr. [Andy] Marashi and I are working closely together to meet the needs of KCADP clients."



Dr. Andy Marashi (left) and Dr. Amy Kim.

Dr. Kim and Dr. Marashi, of the Department of Restorative Dentistry, are overseeing the implementation of KCADP patients in the predoctoral clinic through the Access to Care rotation. This rotation was integrated into the regular teaching clinic that prioritizes these patients and reserves a certain number of appointment slots.

Fourth-year student Tanushree Temker has already helped treat two KCADP patients through the rotation.

"This program is a huge win-win for patients as well as [students]," said Temker. "We are constantly looking for different patients to fulfill our requirements, so helping these vulnerable patients is a great way to do that."

Temker was assigned to help an immigrant student who needed their wisdom teeth removed. She swiftly put together a referral for the complex extraction and facilitated timely scheduling of the procedure for the patient.

"Catering to patients' needs immediately fills them with so much gratitude," she said. "That's my greatest takeaway as a professional and what makes my day, watching them walk away so grateful."

An immigrant herself, Temker understands the barriers her patient overcame just in getting to the School. She recognizes that people from low-income backgrounds often forego preventive dental care and only seek treatment once a problem arises.

"Preventive care is so important and I don't think people are aware that there is access to programs like this one, where they can get easy access to [care] and be taken care of," said Temker. "This program has been amazing, even just the start of it. I'm looking forward to treating many patients."

The funds provided by the grant will be used to establish care, conduct comprehensive exams of new patients and perform X-rays and prophylaxis cleanings. If extensive treatment is needed, additional requests will be made and approved on a case-by-case basis by the King County team.

Third-year students are also called upon to assist KCADP patients.



Rafael Urrutia Camargo

"Dr. Kim asked if I would be willing to see this patient who visibly needed urgent care," said student Rafael Urrutia Camargo. "He was facing so many barriers that stopped him from getting the care that he needed, so we wanted to help him as soon as possible."

Language was the first barrier, since the patient only speaks Spanish. He was given the option of working with a medical translator, yet chose to communicate directly with Camargo.

(Right): A dentistry student talks with a KCADP patient during treatment.

"Having a provider with a familiar background, who recognizes the barriers [their patients] have faced, is important because it builds trust and the patient will feel more relaxed and comfortable," said Camargo.

Camargo completed the patient's primary exam. At first the patient was shy and timid, but after putting together a treatment plan with Camargo, his spirit lightened.

"He said multiple times how he really hoped his treatment could get done because he was so embarrassed just to walk out in public," said Camargo.

As a Regional Initiatives in Dental Education (RIDE) student, Camargo is training to treat patients from underserved communities upon graduation, so helping KCADP patients is a perfect fit.

To date, over 30 KCADP patients have established care at the School. Some patients will continue to receive comprehensive care, including extractions, restorations and complete or partial dentures.

This partnership helps fulfill the goals of the School's strategic plan, "Advancing Oral Health for All": specifically, to "expand and maintain efforts and initiatives to improve health outcomes of patients and communities experiencing great need."

"Oral health is an essential part of overall well-being and everyone deserves access to high-quality dental care," said Dr. Kim. "We at the University of Washington recognize that it is our duty and privilege to serve those who need it most."





A view of the new Access to Education simulation lab.

From Shoreline to Montlake:

Expanding dental hygiene training at UW

By Jethro Swain

The Shoreline Community College Dental Hygiene Program (SCCDHP) established its home on the UWSOD campus in 2020. Thanks to donors, alumni and corporate partners, that home grew a little bigger this year.

In April, the Access to Education Center (B-170) — a state-of-the-art simulation laboratory used for preclinical activities — was completed. This center provides the burgeoning Shoreline program with essential workstations and technology to continue training top-tier dental hygienists for Washington's oral healthcare workforce.

The SCCDHP's move from Shoreline, Wash., could not have come at a better time. During the pandemic the need for oral healthcare workers in Washington was so dire that it was recognized by the Washington State Department of Health and Washington State Dental Association.

Simultaneously, infrastructure projects on the Shoreline campus threatened the dental hygiene clinic. In recognition of the benefits to both schools and the workforce, the partnership was born.

To accommodate the move, the first SCCDHP class to begin their training at the School was downsized to 10 students from the usual 24. The Class of 2026 has 20 students. The goal is to accommodate 30 dental hygiene students per class.

"The faculty, staff and students are very grateful to be included in the vibrant learning environment at UW for both clinical and preclinical activities," said Dr. Nikki Honey, a Shoreline Dental Hygiene Professor.

The SCCDHP offers a Bachelor of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene (BASDH) degree, the first of its kind in Shoreline's 60-year history. Successful completion of the degree requires an intense two-year curriculum including didactic, preclinical and clinical courses.

During training, dental hygiene students demonstrate competencies in periodontology, local anesthesia and restorative dentistry. The partnership allows them to work and learn side-by-side with DDS students in clinic, so that both parties can benefit from one another's expertise.

The eventual goal is to organize the curriculum so a singular dental hygiene student is assigned to a few dental students for the duration of their training. That way, students can build relationships that could continue into their professional lives.

All these considerations make renovations to the B-170 dental simulation clinic even more important. More DDS students have access to the latest technology, improving their training and knowledge of cutting-edge oral health skills, and their dental hygiene counterparts gain the same benefits.

"We love being at UW because we get to build professional relationships with the dental students," said Kennan Houser, Shoreline Dental Hygiene's 2025 class president. "Last year our program was invited to go with the dental students who attended an annual service trip to Jamaica. Six of us went and stayed with the dental students. Now when we see them in the halls, we recognize each other and say 'hi.'"

Houser, who's from Bonney Lake, Wash., received her bachelor's degree in business from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix. After working as an orthodontic assistant for three years, she wanted an expanded role in oral healthcare.

"As a dental hygienist, we act more as a provider and since I really value the relationship with patients, I wanted to continue with school and build a patient base," she said.

Houser's classmate Taryn Aschim-Dawson also worked as a dental assistant before joining the Shoreline program.

"Dental assistants are the backbone of the office and sometimes patients see dental assistants more than the dentist," said Aschim-Dawson. "But with the scope of dental assisting, they can only do so much. Compare that to a hygienist who can actually perform cleanings and build rapport with a patient. That's what made me want to pursue dental hygiene."

Aschim-Dawson lives in Mount Vernon, Wash., which made for a long 60-mile commute each day to and from UW for training. The value of the degree and the diverse career opportunities after graduation made all the miles on the road worth it, she said.

"There are so many routes we can take after graduation. We can keep pursuing education and become teachers, become representatives for a dental supply company or work in a dental office," she said.

Salina Thai, from Tacoma, Wash., appreciates the security a dental hygiene role provides in an era increasingly defined by advances in technology and artificial intelligence.

"AI is a big deal right now and dental hygiene isn't one of those jobs that AI can take over because it requires hands-on care," said Thai. "I love the field, the hands-on work and the connection you make with patients."



SCCDHP Professors Lori Simicich (left) and Dr. Nikki Honey.



New simulation stations in the Access to Education Center.

After graduation, dental hygiene students must pass seven board examinations before applying for the Registered Dental Hygienist license. Their broad scope of practice allows dental hygienists and dentists to collaborate efficiently for optimum patient care.

Thai, Aschim-Dawson and Houser have earned their dental hygiene licenses. After two years of rigorous training, their hard work and dedication are about to pay off.

Houser plans to work as a temporary hygienist in a variety of offices to explore different environments and find the best professional fit.

"I'm excited to discover a practice I can call my professional home, where I can build lasting relationships with patients and make a positive, long-term impact as a registered dental hygienist," she said.

Aschim-Dawson will work closer to home, but hopes that in five to 10 years she'll have an opportunity to explore the country and be a hygienist somewhere new.

Thai will begin her career as a temporary hygienist to continue developing her skills.

"I want to go through a variety of experiences and learn how to be the best healthcare provider I can be," she said. "Learning from different offices will give me an idea of what works and what doesn't before settling down and finding my career home."

Having access to the School's resources – facilities, students, faculty and patients – definitely helps prepare SCCDHP students for a successful career in oral health.

"Our partnership with the UW is what sets us apart from others in the state," said Lori Simicich, Shoreline Dental Hygiene Professor. "When dental students can see first-hand dental hygiene students' level of competency and education in certain areas, they know how to utilize dental hygienists in a way that maximizes their scope of practice."



Mhary De Francia ('25) and Nathan Dahm ('26)

Dental students secure place in Husky 100

By Jethro Swain

Students Mhary De Francia ('25) and Nathan Dahm ('26) were named to the 2025 cohort of the UW's Husky 100, which recognizes undergraduate and graduate students from the UW Bothell, Seattle and Tacoma campuses who are making the most of their time at UW.

These students are acknowledged for applying their learning to make a difference on campus and in their communities, for their leadership potential and for their commitment to building an inclusive community.

De Francia lived in Alaminos City, Philippines, until age 14, when she and her family moved to Pearl City, Hawaii. She earned a B.S. in Biology from Hawaii Pacific University, with a concentration in Human Health.

"Growing up in a rural province in the Philippines, I observed the disparity of dental care firsthand," said De Francia. "We had one dental clinic in our subdivision and despite the already busy schedule of the clinic, most people only went to the clinic for emergency purposes. This made me realize the immense need for dentists in our country."

In Pearl City, De Francia noted there was still inequity in access to care, particularly for the marginalized populations on the island. She also watched her father navigate oral health issues, including needing dentures at a young age. All these factors pushed De Francia to apply to dental school and brought her to Seattle.

De Francia sees the Husky 100 selection as motivation to continue working toward her short- and long-term goals, including an Oral Medicine residency at Harvard University and mission trips to the Philippines and remote islands of Hawaii.

"To be selected as a member of the Husky 100 is a great honor and privilege," she said. "Moving to another state by myself and being able to thrive while

doing something I am passionate about and being recognized for it (is) the cherry on top. It feels like validation of my resiliency, hard work and tremendous growth over the last four years here at the UW."

Dahm is a Washington native who grew up in Seattle and Issaquah, Wash. He earned a B.S. in Biology-Physiology, with a minor in Microbiology, from the UW.

"I chose to pursue dentistry because not only can I engage in direct patient care, including surgery, but I can put effort into improving and advancing our specialty within healthcare and the community at large," he said.

As a fourth-year student, Dahm is narrowing in on what he wants to do after dental school.

"Ideally, I'd love to pursue an advanced education in dentistry to learn more about how to manage complex cases and their restoration of function," he said.

Dahm is also interested in eventually returning to the School as a faculty member to build upon the system the Schools of Dentistry and Medicine use to teach collaborative initiatives.

Dahm recognizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in the oral health field and strongly believes that education across specialties is key to improving healthcare as a whole and strengthening the benefits for patients.

"It's through this collaborative attitude that I strive to affect positive change within the field of healthcare, beyond just being an excellent clinician," he said. "Being selected as a member of the Husky 100 is a culmination of my accomplishments and represents what I stand for as a Husky, provider and member of the Seattle community."

Celine Atkinson is this year's Magnuson Scholar for Dentistry

By Jethro Swain

Celine Atkinson, a second-year student in the Oral Health Sciences Ph.D. program, was named the School's 2025-26 Magnuson Scholar.

The Magnuson Scholar Program recognizes one student from each of the university's six health sciences schools. For the fourth year in a row, an additional recipient has been awarded the prestigious scholarship.

"Being selected as a Magnuson Scholar by the School of Dentistry is an incredible honor that affirms my dedication to advancing oral health," said Atkinson. "It represents the confidence my mentors and the School have placed in my potential to contribute meaningfully to the field, and it motivates me to live up to the values and legacy of Sen. Warren G. Magnuson."

"This recognition is not only a personal milestone, but also a reflection of the supportive academic community that has shaped my journey thus far. I feel both humbled and inspired to continue striving for excellence in service, scholarship and leadership."

Atkinson graduated from the University of South Florida in 2018 with a B.S. in Microbiology and in 2023 with an M.S. in Biology before coming to Seattle. She is a research assistant in the lab of Dr. Jeffrey McLean, a Professor in the Department of Periodontics.

Focusing on the human oral microbiome, Atkinson's research aims to understand the microbial communities that influence diseases like periodontitis and explore potential strategies for preventing and treating oral diseases. Her research has broader implications for systemic health, particularly related to heart disease and diabetes.

Dr. McLean calls Atkinson an outstanding young scientist "with a remarkable work ethic, leadership and a strong commitment to both her research and teaching." He also highlights her ability to balance scientific rigor with humility and respect, noting her capacity to foster meaningful scientific discussions.

As a Black Asian American woman in science, Atkinson is passionate about fostering diversity and inclusion. She is dedicated to supporting underrepresented groups in research and inspiring the next generation



Celine Atkinson

of scientists. Her commitment to scientific advancement and mentorship, combined with her advocacy for diversity, positions her as a future leader in the scientific community.

"The Magnuson Scholarship will provide crucial support that allows me to fully engage in my research training without the added burden of financial stress," said Atkinson. "It will also enable me to participate in more professional development opportunities, such as conferences, workshops and collaborations that will enhance my growth as a well-rounded oral health researcher. Ultimately, this scholarship brings me one step closer to my vision of contributing to equitable, science-driven improvements in public health."

All Magnuson Scholars help carry on the legacy of the late Sen. Magnuson and his remarkable commitment to improving the nation's health through biomedical research, education and responsive, sustainable healthcare discoveries. At least one scholar must be engaged in research related to diabetes, its antecedents or treatment.

Information provided by the Introduction of the 2025-26 Magnuson Scholars.



BUILDING THE FUTURE OF ORAL HEALTH CARE

Three transformative facilities redefine preclinical
education at the School of Dentistry

By Jethro Swain



DDS students working in the new D165 Sim Lab.

This year the School unveiled three new world-class training spaces that mark a transformative leap in oral health education. Designed to elevate the learning experience for dental, dental hygiene and Regional Initiatives in Dental Education (RIDE) students, these facilities give students modern layouts that foster more efficient, immersive training and incorporate advanced digital technologies for teaching and learning.

The D-165 Simulation Lab, B-170 Access to Education Center and the RIDE program's Oral Health Training Center in Spokane are more than just new facilities. They represent a strategic investment in the future of clinical practice. By expanding capacity and embracing innovation, the School is not only preparing students to meet the evolving demands of dentistry, but also addressing the state's urgent need for a larger, highly skilled oral health workforce.

These spaces position the School at the forefront of preclinical dental education and reinforce its commitment to its mission: Advancing Oral Health for All. They became a reality thanks to the generosity of donors, vital funding from the state legislature and federal grants and significant investments from the School and the UW.

D-165 Simulation Laboratory: Reimagined for the Future of Dentistry

For more than 80 years, the D-165 Simulation Laboratory has been the site of preclinical training, shaping the skills and confidence of thousands of future dentists.

Refreshed only a handful of times over its long history, the lab had not seen a major renovation since 1996, long before digital dentistry, 3D printing and the immersive technologies that define modern dental practice.



The old D-165 design featured pentagonal workstations, which gave the lab a honeycomb-like layout.

A Bold Vision

In early 2021, under the leadership of former Dean Gary Chiodo, the School launched an ambitious plan to transform this essential teaching space. When Dean André Ritter arrived in 2022, he continued to champion the project alongside Dr. Ricardo Schwedhelm, Associate Dean for Infrastructure and Development, who led its execution.



The D-165 lab stripped down during construction.

“Our Sim Lab is a true clinical simulation environment, and the clinical delivery of oral health care has significantly evolved since the ‘90s,” said Dean Ritter. “The main driver for this project was the need to provide our students, faculty and staff with the best possible simulation environment for teaching and learning dentistry in the 21st century.”

The original vision was bold: Expand from 72 to 120 student workstations to accommodate dental and dental hygiene students in one space. But beneath the lab lay a complex web of utilities —electrical, plumbing, compressed air and vacuum lines — that made large-scale expansion nearly impossible. After extensive collaboration among architects, engineers and vendors, and the construction of B-170 to house dental hygiene

students, the team developed a smart alternative: Reimagine the space around the existing infrastructure.

Using this approach the space was gutted and rebuilt from the ground up over the summer of 2025. It successfully delivered 84 fully equipped workstations just as fall quarter began.

A Space Reimagined

“In addition to much improved lighting, circulation, airflow, flooring and cabinetry, the new space incorporates digital dentistry tools and equipment, so students can simulate the digital workflows they will apply when they begin treating patients in our clinics and beyond,” said Dean Ritter.



“Carrying forward the pride and craftsmanship of the School’s 1996 renovation, when the original pentagon workstations were built and equipped with simulators, the Dental Maintenance team took on the challenge of restoration. Instead of purchasing new simulators, they meticulously refurbished the existing units, steam-cleaning every surface, replacing hoses and polishing all 72 heads to a near-new finish. Their work reflects both respect for the School’s history and a commitment to sustainable stewardship, perfectly complementing the School’s 2025 upgrade with modernized utilities, improved ergonomics and renewed instructional capabilities that extend the lifespan of the School’s original investment.”

– Rich Lee, Manager of Program Operations in Dental Maintenance



A view of the new layout of the D-165 Sim Lab.

The Student Learning Experience

"The increased number of workstations and improved layout have made it much easier to accommodate both D1 and D2 students simultaneously," said second-year student Mark Yang. "The additional space reduces crowding, which helps everyone focus more effectively."

Second-year student Christopher Penner is equally impressed: "The new simulation clinic has greatly enhanced my experience in the lab by providing a more comfortable, spacious and efficient environment to practice in. Each station has been thoroughly equipped with all of the essentials, from a desktop to optimal lighting sources, ensuring that any time spent in the lab is as productive as possible."

One of the most impactful upgrades to the new Sim Lab is the addition of individual monitors at each workstation, allowing students to follow faculty demonstrations and instructional videos directly from their seats.

"The new digital stations have been especially helpful," said Yang. "Being able to view instructional content at each workstation allows for more independent learning and better visualization of techniques."

Penn's favorite part of the new Sim Lab is the open, collaborative design. "It allows for easy communication and interaction with those around me," he said. "This layout has facilitated a strong sense of collaboration, making it easier to share ideas and problem-solve together."

Digital Dentistry

The final phase of the renovation will introduce the latest in digital dentistry technology. The east wet lab will be transformed into a cutting-edge digital suite, complete with six workbenches, digital design software, 3D printers and milling equipment.



Students praise the new Sim Lab's layout and the addition of individual monitors at each workstation, allowing them to view instructional content up close.



Student working at a station in the D165 Sim Lab.



A view of the RIDE Oral Health Training Center's simulation lab.

"One of the most exciting aspects of the remodel is the introduction of digital dentistry," said Dr. Schwedhelm. "This new space will empower students to gain hands-on experience with the technologies shaping modern dental practice."

"The D-165 renovation stands as more than just a construction project. It's an investment in the next generation of dental professionals and a reflection of the School's unwavering commitment to innovation, excellence and education," he said.

RIDE Oral Health Training Center

Applying \$2.5 million in funding from the Washington State Legislature and additional federal grants, the RIDE program is expanding dental education and access to care in Washington's rural and underserved communities.

The RIDE facility's new wet lab.



"The new facility...has transformed how we learn."

– Garret Lloyd,
Second-year student

The program now occupies a state-of-the-art, 13,000-square-foot Oral Health Training Center within the UW-Gonzaga University Health Partnership building in Spokane.

With a dental simulation lab, digital dentistry lab, wet lab, dispensary, classrooms, study spaces and administrative offices, this new facility consolidates all of RIDE's preclinical activities under one roof. Construction began in January 2025 and was completed in September, just in time to welcome students for the fall quarter.

"It's amazing. I love [the new facility]," said Raman Preet Singh, a second-year RIDE student. "All this is much bigger. We have so much more space, which I think will lead to more effective learning. Last year was amazing. This year will be better."

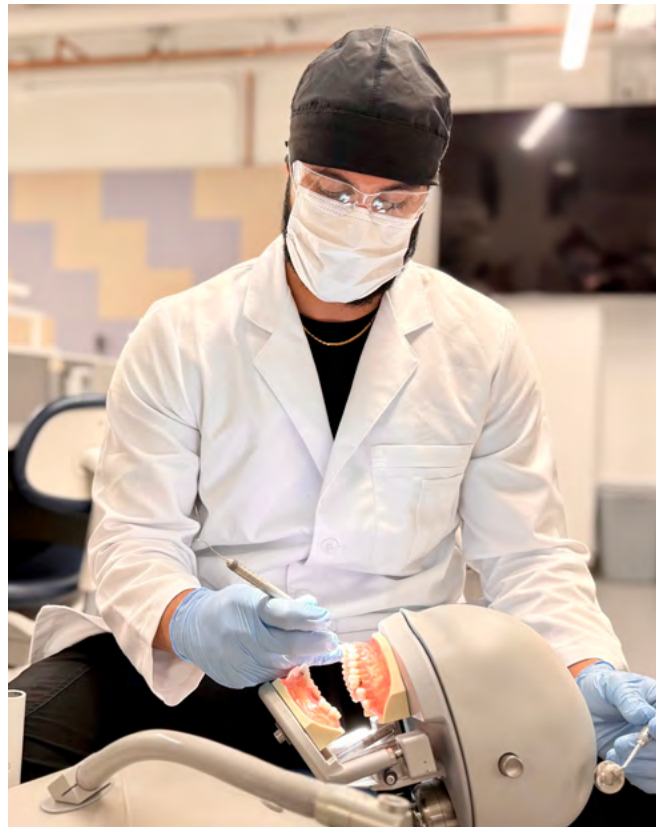
"The new facility...has transformed how we learn," said Garret Lloyd, also a second-year student. "From brand-new simulator mannequins that mimic a patient sitting in a modern dental chair to interactive AV systems that connect us with Seattle, the new facility is highly equipped to enable us to reach our potential."

With this expansion RIDE doubled its enrollment capacity to 64 students. And by accommodating two full classes, students can complete their first and second years of dental school in Spokane.

"The new RIDE facilities have greatly enhanced my learning experience by providing resources and an environment that promotes collaborative, effective learning," said Lloyd. "Having D1s and D2s share the same space has created more opportunities for meaningful peer-to-peer collaboration. This is the first time in the history of the RIDE program that first- and second-year students get to interact in person. This has opened the door for mentorship, teamwork and a greater sense of community within the RIDE program."

"The new building has made it easier to connect with both my professors and my peers," said Naw Paw Knyaw, a second-year student. "The open layout and shared work areas create more natural opportunities to stop, ask questions and have meaningful conversations. I find myself interacting with faculty more often, getting quick feedback and learning from their experience in a way that feels effortless."

Expanding the RIDE program in Spokane "marks a significant milestone for regional oral health," said Dr. Frank Roberts, Associate Dean and RIDE Program Director. "Our enduring partnerships with Eastern Washington University and the UW-GU Health Partnership are vital to creating this innovative learning environment and we are eager to see the incredible impact our students will have on the community."



A dental hygiene student practices on a simulation unit in the new B-170 lab.

(Below): The new B-170 Access to Education Center Sim Lab provides additional capacity for the growing Shoreline Dental Hygiene Program.





DDS students working in the D-165 Sim Lab.

That impact is urgently needed. Thirty-eight of Washington's 39 counties are federally designated as a complete or partial Dental Health Professional Shortage Area. RIDE's expansion directly addresses this crisis by preparing more students to work in rural and underserved communities. As it stands, 80% of graduates return to practice in these areas after graduation — a testament to the program's success.

"I've always thought about [practicing in places] where there are more people who need more help instead of in the city centers," said second-year student Jeremy Percival. "It's been motivating to learn in such a supportive and modern environment that truly reflects the future of dentistry in Washington's rural and underserved communities."

"These investments in the RIDE program give me a deep sense of pride and motivation," said Lloyd. "It shows that the University of Washington truly believes in RIDE's mission and in us as the next generation of dentists training to serve in rural and underserved communities."

B-170: Access to Education Center

In April, the Access to Education Center (B-170) — a state-of-the-art simulation lab built to expand cohort capacity and elevate preclinical training — opened as the new preclinical home of the Shoreline Community College Dental Hygiene Program (SCCDHP) at the School of Dentistry.

"This space is so much more than a simulation lab."

— Lori Simicich,
Shoreline Dental Hygiene Professor

The B-170 Sim Lab is central to the program's long-term vision for growth and provides a dedicated space for hands-on learning. When SCCDHP transitioned to the UW in 2020, expanding student capacity was a key goal. The program began with just 10 students in its inaugural UW cohort and has since grown to 20 students in the 2026 class. With the new simulation lab, SCCDHP is poised to accommodate up to 30 students per cohort in the near future.

"This space is so much more than a simulation lab," said Shoreline Dental Hygiene Professor Lori Simicich. "The advanced video and audio in the classroom/lab offer students the ability to view an instructor demonstration at the podium using multiple cameras and screens to ensure all students have the best seat in the class. The modern equipment can also record demonstrations for later review."

"Our Sim Lab's 20 individual workstations offer an ideal atmosphere for focused practice," said Dr. Nikki Honey, Shoreline Dental Hygiene Professor. "The spacious layout also encourages small group collaboration and peer learning."

Having the Access to Education Center so close to the School's teaching spaces also allows for seamless collaboration between Shoreline students and predoctoral students.

Operated by Shoreline Community College in partnership with the School, SCCDHP offers students access to world-class facilities and collaborative learning opportunities.

Dental Hygiene Education at the UW

The opening of B-170 builds on a long-standing tradition of dental hygiene education at the UW. It began in 1950 under the leadership of Dr. Esther Wilkins, a pioneering figure widely regarded as the godmother of modern dental hygiene. Her landmark textbook, *Clinical Practice of the Dental Hygienist*, first published in 1959, remains a foundational resource and is now in its 13th edition.

Dr. Wilkins established a four-year dental hygiene program and a degree completion track at the School. She was succeeded in 1961 by Dr. Martha Fales, who led the program until 1986 and was known for her advocacy on public health issues. Although the undergraduate program was discontinued in 1983, the School continues to offer master's and doctoral degrees in dental hygiene.

Given this legacy, integrating Shoreline's undergraduate dental hygiene program into the School was a natural evolution.

"This new space isn't just great for students, it's welcome news for our state," said Dr. Honey. "Demand for hygienists outpaces the supply nationwide, and we are proud to be a part of the solution. Now we can train even more skilled professionals to enter the workforce and improve access to this vital health care."

Working side-by-side in the B-170 Sim Lab.



MOMENTS



Statewide Dental Outreach Events

Multiple students and faculty participated in outreach clinics throughout Washington this year, providing free dental care and screenings. Clinics were coordinated with community partners in Aberdeen, Burlington and north Seattle.



Annual Alumni Association Football Event

Sept. 6, 2025

The Dental Alumni Association held its annual pregame event for the UW-UC Davis football game, which the Huskies won 70-10. Alumni, faculty, staff and student leadership were in attendance, including many recent alumni. The crowd enjoyed a delicious meal, a jazz band performance and a Husky raffle.





Ernest M. Jones Memorial Lecture

March 28, 2025

This year's lecture welcomed Dr. Armand Bedrossian as guest speaker. He provided an outstanding series of presentations on modern implantology to over 150 attendees, followed by a luncheon and a Q&A session. Special thanks for making the event possible go to Dr. Bedrossian, as well as all the sponsors, including the Dental Alumni Association, Continuing Dental Education and Dean Jones Memorial Endowment.

The 6th Biennial IAAD Meeting

July 11-12, 2025

The School hosted the 6th Biennial Meeting of the International Academy of Adhesive Dentistry (IAAD), bringing together clinicians, researchers, educators and students from 12 countries to discuss the latest advancements in science and clinical practice.



MOMENTS



Dean's Club Dinner

May 3, 2025

The Dental Alumni Association hosted the 39th Dean's Club Dinner at the Marriott Seattle Waterfront Hotel. The sold-out event drew 190 alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends. Dr. Barbara Sheller (top left) received the Distinguished Alumnus Award and Dr. Wendy Mouradian (right) accepted the Dean's Club Honorary Lifetime Member Award. Fourth-year students Zain Natha and Olga Smelik received the Jack Nicholls and Johnny Johnson Student Leadership Awards, respectively.



Hooding Ceremony

June 7, 2025

The Class of 2025 received their DDS degrees at the Hooding Ceremony in Meany Hall. Class president Dr. Zain Natha, Dean André Ritter and Dr. Kerry Streiff gave remarks before the investiture began.



The 25th Annual Golf Tournament

Sept. 12, 2025

The annual Dental Alumni golf tournament was held at Washington National Golf Course in Auburn. The Pierce County Dental Society was our co-sponsor. We had 64 participants and 14 corporate sponsors. The team of Sam Hinz, Ray Kao, Jason West and Jordan West (top left) took top honors. The team of Scott Cahoon ('76), Christopher Cahoon, Aaron Cahoon and Scott Taylor came in second (top right).



Dr. Ivy Lin (center) with ADEA student leaders after winning her award. Left to right: Dr. Min Lin ('25), Dr. Teddy Dong ('25), Mark Yang ('28) and Dr. Owen Tam ('25)

ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition

March 8-11, 2025

The UW American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Chapter was recognized with a Gold-level Chapter Award in March. This award is given to chapters that display extraordinary efforts and performance, exemplifying the values and mission of the ADEA and the ADEA Council of Students, Residents and Fellows (COSRF). Also at the session, Dr. Ivy Lin, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, received the Junior Faculty Award for her passion and dedication to dental education. Dr. Min Lin ('25) was recognized as the ADEA COSRF Sections Liaison.



Faculty, staff and students at the UWSOD table during the ADEA conference.



White Coat Ceremony

Sept. 27, 2025

After two years of tests, lectures, studying and hours practicing in the sim lab, the rising third-year students received their clinical coats, marking a milestone in their journeys to becoming dentists.

Photos courtesy of Tara Brown Photography.





LIFE IS LIKE A BRIGHT SMILE!

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REUNIONS

CLASS OF 1975

The Class of 1975 had an impressive 16 members attend the School's 2025 Hooding Ceremony in recognition of their 50th year since graduation. An additional six classmates gathered for an afternoon of reminiscing at Inglewood Golf Club following the festivities. It was a wonderful time sharing about life since our dental school days and renewing old friendships.



CLASS OF 1995

The Class of 1995 celebrated their 30-year reunion at the Portage Bay area of South Campus Center. Thirty classmates and guests attended. The reunion was organized by Dr. Dana Larson ('95) and Dr. Jackie Bunce ('95) and began with a tour of the School led by two Class of 2025 students, Angela Yang and Noor Momi. It was a fun evening of good food, slide shows and socializing.



CLASS OF 2005

The Class of 2005 reunited in Seabrook, Wash., for a joyful and heartfelt 20-year reunion weekend. Classmates and their families reconnected over a welcome BBQ, class presentations, outdoor activities, beach time and a formal dinner. The weekend was filled with laughter, reflection and renewed friendships, as alumni celebrated two decades since their time at UW.



CLASS OF 2015

The Class of 2015 celebrated their 10-year reunion in August with a group of 60 (classmates, spouses and kids) along Lake Union in Seattle. It was wonderful to connect and relive our dental school experience. We asked faculty to submit words of wisdom or recollections. We are lucky to have had such positive mentors that yielded a strong class with a strong bond.



CLASS NOTES



Pictured from left: Tom Davidson, Gaither Everett, Kas Stroh, Renate Mock, Sarma Davidson, Jim Mock, Art Kennedy and Seve Stroh

Members of the Class of 1963 gathered at the Tsillan Cellars tasting room in Woodinville, Wash., this September, our third annual gathering. The venue was generously provided by classmate Bob Jankelson, founder of Tsillan Cellars winery, who was able to join by conference call. Classmates reminisced about experiences we had together so many years ago.

Dr. John Johnson ('75): It was great seeing and catching up with those who could make it to our 50th-year reunion. On a personal note, I sold my practice 17 years ago. Both my wife, Barbara, and I still water ski, snow ski, run trails, train and work out on a regular basis. We continue to go on missionary trips around the world and support many Christian organizations. In addition, we see a multitude of miracles wherever we go, whether home or abroad. We have seen so many, in fact, we were inspired to create a website, miracles4real.org, where you can check out some of them, such as finding my wedding ring within an hour of losing it in the Pacific Ocean near Puerto Vallarta!

Class of 1978: Drs. Dona Seely, Jean (Allen) Martin, Carol Friedel and Susan (Hollinsworth) Adams attended the Dean's Club dinner early last May, where they were recognized for their contribution to the Campaign For Clinics. To date, eight women have donated to have an operatory and a digital workstation named for "Women of the Class of 1978." Any other women from the class are invited and encouraged to add their name to the list by sending a donation to the UWSOD.



Dr. Darcie Morris ('82) is serving as Chair of the Washington section (which includes Alaska) of the American College of Dentists. She took over from Dr. Susan (Hollinsworth) Adams ('78), who served as chair for eight years.



Dr. Lisa Egbert ('93) is the 2025-2026 Washington State Dental Association President.

Dr. Gene Tynes ('94) published a book this year titled *The Antifragile Man: A Tactical Guide to Strength That Defies Age*. Gene currently resides in Montana and has been using his spare time to teach healthy nutrition and mindset habits, which ultimately culminated in his self-help book. For more on Gene's health and wellness program, visit genetough.com.

Dr. Whitney Bator ('12, GPR '13) was appointed Secretary/Treasurer of the Idaho State Dental Association.

Dr. Emily Chu ('12, Ph.D. '15) was named the recipient of the 2025 American Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research William Butler Fellowship.



Dr. Brittany Dean ('12) is President-elect of the Washington State Dental Association.

Dr. Lauren Hage ('19, Ortho '22) is serving as Secretary of the Washington section of the American College of Dentists. She has established a case review study club for dentists who are interested.

Dr. Kerry Strieff ('19) has taken over as Student Professionalism and Ethics Association advisor from **Dr. Pollene Speed-McIntyre ('80)**, who served as the advisor from the inception of the UWSOD chapter. Both are fellows in the American College of Dentists.

FACULTY UPDATES

Dean André Ritter is serving as Vice President of the Supreme Chapter of Omicron Kappa Upsilon.

Dr. Jamie Booth, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, began her new role as the Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology (OMFR) Residency Program Director in the Department of Oral Medicine in January.



Dr. Angela Chianglin ('01), Restorative Dentistry, was the 2025 faculty member inductee for the Sigma Sigma chapter of Omicron Kappa Upsilon.

Dr. Jasjit Dillion and **Dr. Thomas Dodson**, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, delivered presentations at the 107th American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Meeting in Washington, D.C., in October.

Dr. Lizzy Hsu (Ph.D. '24), Periodontics, was appointed Vice Chair of the department.



Dr. Ivy Lin, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, earned the 2025 Husky Sustainability Award for her work advancing environmental sustainability within the School.



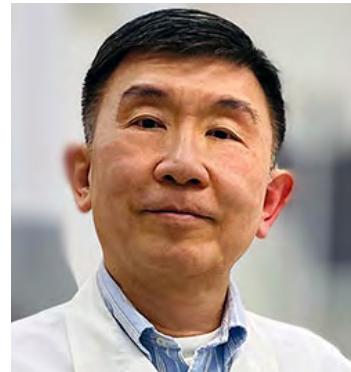
Dr. Er-Jia Mao, Periodontics, was awarded the 2025 American Academy of Periodontology Award for Outstanding Teaching and Mentoring.



Dr. Hiba Qari, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, is the new oral pathologist managing the biopsy service and didactic oral pathology courses.



Dr. Ralf F. Schuler, Periodontics, is the new Graduate Periodontics Program Director.



Dr. Johnny Wang,
Teaching Professor, Periodontics

Congratulations to the following faculty members who received promotions effective July 1, 2025:

Dr. Richard Bienenfeld ('76), Affiliate Associate Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Jamie Booth, Clinical Assistant Professor, Oral Medicine

Dr. Angela Chianglin ('01), Clinical Assistant Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Stephen Cho ('00), Affiliate Assistant Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Diane Daubert (Hygiene'82, PhD '17), Teaching Professor, Periodontics

Dr. Timothy Hess ('94), Affiliate Associate Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Lizzy Hsu (PhD '24), Associate Professor, Periodontics

Dr. James E. Johnson, Affiliate Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Luciana Safioti (M.S. '16), Clinical Professor, Periodontics

Dr. Sangeetha Nedunchezian, Clinical Assistant Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Dawn Onesty, Affiliate Associate Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. John Rossi, Affiliate Associate Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Karen Sakuma ('79), Affiliate Assistant Professor, Pediatric Dentistry and Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario, Professor, Pediatric Dentistry

Dr. Mary K. Smith, Clinical Assistant Professor, Restorative Dentistry

Dr. Johnny Wang, Teaching Professor, Periodontics

Dr. John Yae, Clinical Assistant Professor, Restorative Dentistry

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OMNI PRACTICE GROUP

Established in 2004, Omni Practice Group specializes in guiding dentists and healthcare professionals through the complex process of buying and selling practices. With a nationwide team of expert consultants operating in 17 states, the company brings deep experience and personalized support to every practice transition.

"What I like about [the field] is that you have to use your right and left brain," said Rod Johnston, founder and principal broker of Omni Practice Group. "You have to use your left brain to do financial analysis and figure out what each practice is worth and then you have to use your right brain to put creative marketing materials together and do sales.

"When it comes to running a practice, dentists are taught how to treat patients in school, but often not how to run and manage the business," Johnston said.

"You don't get any training on HR in school or on how to negotiate a lease or how to fix the toilet if it's leaking in the bathroom. Those types of questions never come up," said Johnston, who has an MBA from Seattle University and is a Certified Management Accountant and an Accredited Business Appraiser by the Institute of Business Appraisers.

To help medical professionals with these and other unique business challenges, Omni offers free seminars and webinars on practice management and tips and strategies for making the best business decisions.

Johnston also has advice for recent dental graduates who want to buy a practice one day. He recommends taking a few years to ensure their hand skills are up to speed, their production numbers are good and they're working to learn the business side of things.

To connect with Omni's practice management resources, "I suggest they sign up for our monthly newsletter," said Johnston. Omni's newsletters include listings, checklists and steps for buying and selling practices, as well as upcoming webinars and seminars.

While advertising listings and providing educational resources are normal for agencies like Omni, what makes them stand apart is their hands-on approach, said Johnston. No singular night was more indicative of Rod's and Omni's values than New Year's Eve 2017.

Johnston had recently worked with a client who needed him to list, finance and sell her practice in under two months. Although this process usually takes well over six months, she needed it done before she embarked on a multi-year mission trip.

After finalizing the deal in time, Johnston stopped by her office to deliver the signed lease and a closing gift around 7 p.m. on Dec. 31. She was alone with over 750 letters to send to patients, informing them of the sale of the practice and introducing them to their new dentist.

She had a flight to China the next morning, so Johnston helped her address and stuff every envelope — an act of kindness that is second nature to him and a part of the culture at Omni.

Johnston strives to instill a "Nordstrom-like" mindset within the company, with a mission to go above and beyond while helping clients transition to a new career stage.

Omni is deeply committed to community involvement. Each year, Johnston and his team organize a Thanksgiving food drive that provides meals to approximately 300 families in need. Their dedication to service extends beyond philanthropy. They've proudly partnered with the School of Dentistry for over nine years, fostering a strong and enduring relationship.

"We're giving back as much as we can," said Johnston. "We want to support the University of Washington, as well as all the other dentists out there, and help out in whatever way we can."

While the process of buying and managing a healthcare practice, or selling one on the verge of retirement, can be daunting, Johnston and his team assure practice owners there's no reason to be afraid.

"The failure rate for a dental practice is approximately 0.3%," said Johnston. "You grow equity in your practice as soon as you buy it, which will allow you to retire sooner than an associate who has no equity in the practice.

"You control your own destiny [when you own your own practice]. Not many practice owners have laid themselves off."



Rod Johnston

For more information about Omni Practice Group, visit omni-pg.com.

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IN MEMORIAM

Remembering esteemed colleagues

who enriched and shaped our community.

Dr. Joseph Chasteen (1942–2025)

Dr. Joseph Chasteen, a beloved former faculty member and leader at the School, passed away on April 7 at age 82. His career in dentistry and education spanned decades, leaving a lasting legacy at every institution he served.

After earning his D.D.S. from the University of Michigan in 1967, Dr. Chasteen served as a captain in the U.S. Air Force. While based in Turkey, he also directed continuing education. He later returned to Michigan to teach and practice before joining the University of Colorado as Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs.

In 1989, Dr. Chasteen was recruited to become the School's first Associate Dean for Clinic Operations. Over 17 years he modernized clinical systems, introduced digital records,

established the Patient Relations office and authored the original Clinic Policy Manual. His innovations continue to shape student and patient experiences today.

Known for his warmth, humor and mentorship, Dr. Chasteen fostered a culture of professionalism and respect. Colleagues recall his friendly greetings, thoughtful leadership and unwavering belief in his team. His impact extended far beyond policy. He made people feel seen, valued and inspired. He is remembered as a visionary administrator, mentor, colleague and friend.

Dr. Chasteen is survived by his wife, Donna, a beloved staff member in Graduate Endodontics.



Dr. Jack Nicholls (1932–2025)

Dr. Jack Nicholls, a long-time faculty member, passed away on July 2 at age 93.

Born in New Zealand, Dr. Nicholls earned degrees in Civil and Structural engineering before completing his Ph.D. in Structural Mechanics at Purdue University. He joined the UW in 1965 and transitioned to the School of Dentistry in 1973, where he served for 31 years.

A gifted educator and mentor, Dr. Nicholls guided countless graduate students in Prosthodontics, Orthodontics and Endodontics. He authored over 100 peer-reviewed publications —nearly half in the Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry — with more than 6,000 citations. He received multiple teaching awards and was known for his open-door policy, warm smile and unwavering support for students.

Outside of academia, Dr. Nicholls was a devoted family man who cherished time at Camano Island, family vacations in Kauai, Hawaii, and Sunday night pizza dinners. He brought the same joy and dedication to teaching his grandchildren as he did to mentoring graduate students.

Dr. Nicholls is remembered for his scholarly contributions, kindness, humility and deep care for others. His legacy lives on in the lives he touched and the systems he helped build.

He is survived by his wife, Irene; children Kathy, Tania, Tamara and Mike; and several grandchildren.

Dr. David Turpin (1938–2025)

Dr. David Turpin, esteemed orthodontist and educator, passed away peacefully on May 29 at age 87. For 48 years he served as a part-time affiliate professor in the Department of Orthodontics, shaping the careers of over 300 orthodontists.

A graduate of the University of Iowa College of Dentistry, Dr. Turpin began his career in the U.S. Navy before pursuing orthodontic training at the School. He opened a private practice in Auburn, Wash., which he ran for 37 years while remaining deeply committed to education and professional service.

From 2010 to 2019, he held the Moore-Riedel Endowed Professorship, culminating in the internationally recognized David Turpin Symposium on Evidence-Based Orthodontics. He was a regular presence at departmental

events, including Thesis Day and the Dean's Club Dinner.

Dr. Turpin's editorial leadership spanned decades, and his titles included editor of the PCSO Bulletin and The Angle Orthodontist and editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics (AJODO). His work made him one of the most recognized orthodontics figures in the world.

A Diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics, Dr. Turpin published 34 scientific articles, delivered 155 lectures and authored over 135 editorials. His graduate research earned him the Milo Hellman Award, one of the field's highest honors.

Dr. Turpin is survived by his wife, Judy; and children Barbara, Paul and Matthew.



CONTINUING DENTAL EDUCATION

Friday, March 27, 2026
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Our Speaker:

Rebecca Bockow, DDS, M.S.,
Board Certified Orthodontist
and Periodontist

2026 Ernest M. Jones Memorial Lecture:

The Healthy Face: Understanding Growth Patterns and Creating Harmony Between the Lips, Tongue, Joints, Periodontium, Airway and Teeth

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Saturday, Jan. 31

D1 Simulation Lab Open House

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

UW SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY, D-WING

Saturday, May 2

Dean's Club Dinner

6:00 - 9:30 p.m.

THE ARCH AT 800 PIKE, DOWNTOWN SEATTLE

Friday, March 27

Ernest M. Jones Memorial Lecture

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

UW KANE HALL

Friday, May 8

2026 Law Lewis Lecture in Pediatric Dentistry

8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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