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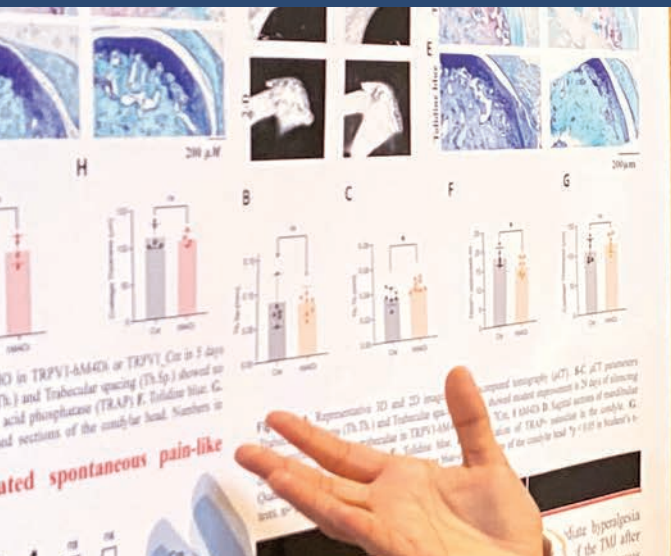
Meet the Dean’s Scholarship
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**AGENT OF
CHANGE**

Edward Neal Sr. broke
dental hygiene barriers.

Mdental

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY | SPRING 2024



**MAKING NEW DISCOVERIES
POLISHING CLINICAL SKILLS**



Oral Health: An Evidence and Data-Driven Approach to Achieve Better Health, Equity, and Fiscal Responsibility

Natalia I. Chalmers DDS, MHSc, PhD
Chief Dental Officer, Office of the Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



here to search

OfNote

In celebration of Women's History Month, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion hosted a discussion led by Natalia I. Chalmers, DDS, MHSc, PhD '08, the first chief dental officer for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Titled "Oral Health: An Evidence and Data-Driven Approach to Achieve Better Health, Equity, and Fiscal Responsibility," the presentation was held March 18 at UMSOD. Chalmers, who is the first person to serve in the role of chief dental officer for Medicare and Medicaid, spoke for nearly an hour about policy changes affecting oral health coverage via Medicare and Medicaid and the importance of access to oral health care before answering questions.

"No matter how you look at access to oral health care — whether by education, race, income, or age — it is crystal clear that untreated [dental] decay is influenced by social determinants," she said.

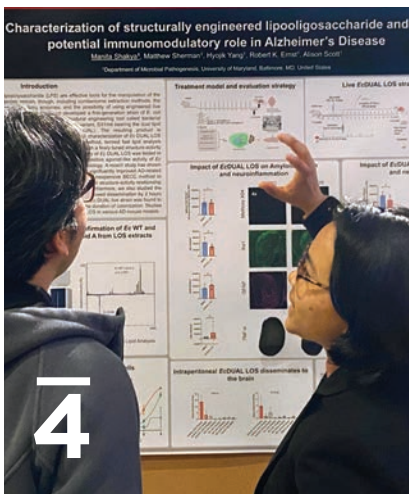
Noting that nationwide the average cost of a visit to the emergency room for a dental problem is \$900, Chalmers added: "When you don't have access to oral health care, where do you end up? The emergency room. Think how much dental care we could give for that." **M**

— HOLLY SELBY

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As I think about the collective successes and innovations of our University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) community, I am reminded of all the ways we demonstrate our shared commitment to advancing oral health and improving the human condition.

As you will read in this issue of *Mdental*, that commitment is shown through a culture of collaboration; the dedication of our faculty, staff, and alumni; and the rich and comprehensive training offered to our students. At the inaugural UMSOD Research Day, for example, more than 100 students and faculty members gathered to share ideas and discuss research conducted by our

master's degree candidates, predoctoral PhD students, and postdoctoral trainees. As one faculty member noted: The gathering was chock-full of new ideas and ways of collaborating.

Additionally, every year, through our Diamond Scholars Program, UMSOD offers high-achieving fourth-year dental students the opportunity to accelerate their clinical experiences by working with faculty supervision alongside first-and second-year residents.

Although our efforts to enrich our students' educational experiences usually begin close to home, they also stretch across the globe. For two consecutive years, a group of dental students has spent spring break providing oral health care to residents of underserved communities in the Dominican Republic. Another trip is scheduled for this summer.

Meanwhile, a partnership formed among Operation Smile, UMSOD, and the University of Rwanda School of Dentistry will expand oral health care in Rwanda. Plans are underway for representatives from UMSOD and Operation Smile to travel there this fall.

Innovation and discovery also are vital to our continued success in advancing oral health care. I am pleased to share that UMSOD has established a Department of Biomaterials and Regenerative Dental Medicine. Chaired by Professor Huakun Xu, PhD, MS, FADM, its scientists will investigate new approaches to enhance the regeneration and reconstruction of damaged oral, dental, and craniofacial tissues.

I am also pleased to announce that Robert K. Ernst, PhD, the Dr. Paul and Mrs. Jean Corcoran Endowed Professor and Distinguished University Professor, is the co-founder and chair of the Scientific Advisory Board of a startup, TollereBio, that is commercializing a patented bacterial enzymatic combinatorial chemistry platform designed to enhance prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines.

At our 2024 UMSOD Honors Convocation on May 17, we celebrated our dental and dental hygiene graduates who are well-prepared to provide superlative patient care, become future leaders of our profession, and serve the public good.

During the ceremony, Dennis Brave, DDS '69, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science by the University of Maryland, Baltimore for his pioneering work introducing new instruments, technologies, and systems in the field of endodontic practice to the dental profession. Dr. Brave's dedication to advancing endodontic care is further exemplified by his creation of Real World Endo, a premier patient-centered educational resource for oral health care professionals.

I hope you will enjoy reading about these original thinkers, valuable programs, and wonderful achievements in this issue of the magazine.

Best regards,

Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD
Dean and Professor

Mdental

ON THE COVER

TOP: Ishraq Alshanjiti, DDS, MSD, DABOM, PhD '24, presents her science poster at UMSOD's inaugural Research Day. BOTTOM CENTER: Brandon Shim, DDS '24, participated in the 2023-24 Diamond Scholars Program, which offers selected fourth-year students opportunities to accelerate their clinical experiences.

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OnTheCusp

Partnership to Address Dental Needs in Rwanda

BY LAURA LEE



LEFT TO RIGHT: Charles Ntageruka, second chancellor, Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda; Kayihura Muganga Didas, acting vice chancellor, University of Rwanda; UMSOD Dean Mark Reynolds; UMB President Bruce Jarrell; William Magee, CEO emeritus, Operation Smile; Kathy Magee, CEO, Operation Smile



Kayihura Muganga Didas, acting vice chancellor, University of Rwanda, and UMSOD Dean Mark Reynolds sign the MOU.

A new partnership among Operation Smile, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD), and the University of Rwanda School of Dentistry aims to provide much-needed oral health care in Rwanda over the next three years.

The organizations signed a three-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) in October 2023 that outlines the establishment of a dental education and patient care program in Rwanda focusing on people born with cleft lip and palate.

Operation Smile, a nonprofit founded by UMSOD alumnus William Magee, DDS '69, MD, is a leading global nonprofit that works to bridge the gap in access to essential surgeries and health care, starting with cleft surgery and comprehensive care. A cleft condition can create severe health issues for a child including

malnutrition and starvation if it's not treated. Rwanda currently has 5,000 cleft palate patients awaiting treatment.

The University of Rwanda School of Dentistry is the only dental school in the East African nation of nearly 14 million. It graduated its first class in 2018 when it added 10 new dentists to the country's 40 oral health professionals.

According to UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, the program will include exchanges enabling UMSOD and Rwandan faculty and students to learn from one another.

"This impactful partnership aligns with our vision to shape faculty and student development through global patient care, research, and public service," Reynolds said.

Since the MOU signing, work has begun on its fulfillment, and an inaugural health care mission trip

has been scheduled for November.

On it, a group of five UMSOD faculty members will join health care professionals from Operation Smile in providing oral health care in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

Additionally, a second working group is creating online educational modules targeting dental therapists, who represent the largest group of dental professionals in Rwanda, said Qoot Alkhubaizi, BSc, BChD, MFDRCS (Ireland), MS, ABGD, clinical associate professor and program director of Advanced Education in General Dentistry in UMSOD's Department of Comprehensive Dentistry.

The modules, which will be distributed through Operation Smile Academy, an all-access virtual learning platform aimed at expanding access to medical education in underserved countries, will focus on oral health promotion and prevention.

The partnership will expose UMSOD residents and faculty to craniofacial dentistry while providing care to Rwandan pediatric and adult patients, said Alkhubaizi, who is the lead faculty member on the project. "It's an opportunity for our residents and faculty to become future volunteers and educators to address the need in Rwanda."

For the University of Rwanda, the collaboration provides access to dental expertise and resources from UMSOD.

"The partnership with the University of Maryland is extremely valuable because the dentistry school here at Maryland is the best," said Kayihura Muganga Didas, acting vice chancellor at the University of Rwanda, who attended the MOU signing. "We want to raise the bar in education." **Md**

— HOLLY SELBY CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ARTICLE



Knowledge Exchange

UMSOD's Inaugural Research Day Inspires Ideas, Cultivates Collaboration

BY HOLLY SELBY

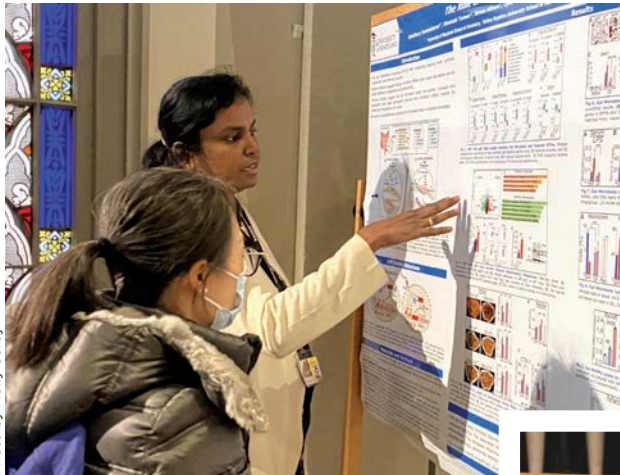


Photo by Holly Selby

Jeba Gnanasekaran describes her research titled "The Role of Gut Microbiota in Skeletal Homeostasis."



LEFT TO RIGHT: Areej Alfaifi, Jeba Mercy Gnanasekaran, Laura Ventura, Vicente Telles, Erica Zimmerman, Eman Mirdamadi, Ishraq Alshantqi, Tristan Wang

Blake Warner, Stadtman Investigator and chief of the Salivary Disorders Unit and the Sjögren's Disease Clinic, NIDCR, presented the keynote address.



More than 125 faculty members, residents, and students came to share knowledge, swap research findings, and view science posters at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) inaugural Research Day. The all-day event, held on March 6, highlighted the innovative research being conducted by UMSOD's master's degree candidates, predoctoral PhD students, and postdoctoral trainees.

Held in Westminster Hall on the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) campus, the day included a science poster competition and nine oral presentations offered by UMSOD faculty members about their research, as well as a luncheon. It also featured a keynote address, "Uncovering the Pathophysiology and Therapeutic Targets of Sjögren's Disease," presented by Blake Warner, DDS, PhD, MPH, Stadtman Investigator and chief of the Salivary Disorders Unit and the Sjögren's Disease Clinic, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research.

"Research Day plays a crucial role in promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange. It brings together researchers from all UMSOD departments, fostering a cross-pollination of ideas and perspectives that can lead to innovative solutions to complex challenges," said Man-Kyo Chung, DMD, PhD, professor and assistant dean of research and graduate studies, who spearheaded the event.

The gathering also showcases the school as a hub of innovation, Chung said. "It serves as a source of inspiration and motivation for trainees, showcasing the impact of dental, oral, and craniofacial research on advancing knowledge and addressing real-world problems in dentistry," he said.

Throughout the day, participants and attendees moved from science poster to science poster, listening to researchers-in-training present their findings. Judges, who were drawn from the UMSOD faculty, also moved slowly from presentation to presentation.

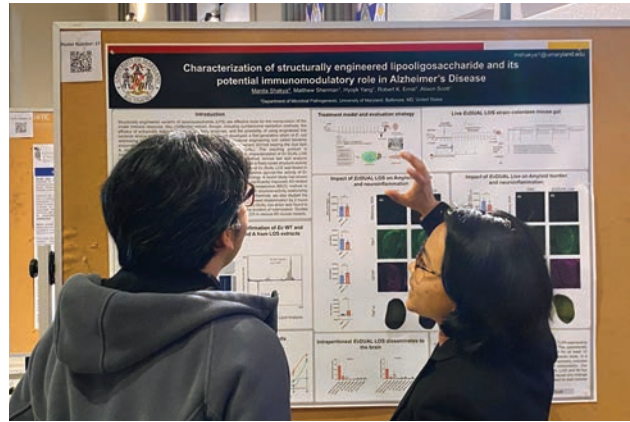
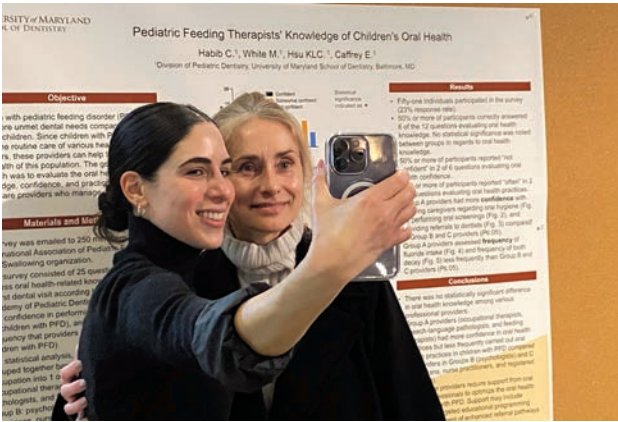


Photo by Holly Selby

TOP LEFT: Darien Weatherspoon, assistant professor, Department of Dental Public Health, discussed his analysis of claims data aimed at assessing access to oral health care among the Medicare population.

TOP RIGHT: Alison Scott, assistant professor, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis, was among the nine faculty members who presented their research March 6 at Research Day.

BOTTOM LEFT: Chloe Habib, DMD, second-year resident, Division of Pediatric Dentistry, takes a selfie with Martina Majstorović, DMD, MSc, PhD, director, Predoctoral Program; and clinical associate professor, Division of Pediatric Dentistry.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Manita Shakya, PhD, postdoctoral fellow, presents research findings to Hoyjik Yang, PhD, research assistant professor; both in the Department of Microbial Pathogenesis.

In the end, the first-place winners in the poster competition were Ishraq Alshanjiti, DDS, MSD, DABOM, PhD '24, Predoctoral/DDS category; Jeba Mercy Gnanasekaran, PhD, Postdoctoral category; Eman Mirdamadi, MS, Predoctoral category; and Vicente Telles, DMD, Master's Candidate category.

Noting that poster presentations are a longstanding tradition in the research community that allow investigators to showcase original work and share their findings, UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, said, "Events like Research Day can act as incubators for ideas and collaborations, so I'm pleased at both the high attendance and the level of research being conducted and shared here today."

Indeed, attendee Glenn Canares, DDS, MSD, clinical assistant professor and Graduate Program director, Division of Pediatric Dentistry, said it was exciting to learn about the wide range of research being conducted by UMSOD colleagues. "I'm glad I was able to attend the inaugural Research Day," he said. "I saw some opportunities in terms of collaborations, so I'm looking forward to investigating those." **Md**

Winners at Research Day

OUTSTANDING POSTER PRESENTATION

Predoctoral/DDS Category

1st Place: Ishraq Alshanjiti

2nd Place: Areej Alfaifi

OUTSTANDING POSTER PRESENTATION

Postdoctoral Category

1st Place: Jeba Mercy Gnanasekaran

2nd Place: Tristan Wang

OUTSTANDING POSTER PRESENTATION

Predoctoral Category

1st Place: Eman Mirdamadi

2nd Place: Laura Ventura

OUTSTANDING POSTER PRESENTATION

Master's Candidate Category

1st Place: Vicente Telles

2nd Place: Erica Zimmerman



UMSOD's ASDA Chapter Recognized for Outreach and Community Engagement Efforts



Photos by Bethany Probst

Hnin Hlaing, president of UMSOD's ASDA chapter (front row, center), and the members of the ASDA general board and executive committee

The University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) chapter of the American Student Dental Association (ASDA) won three awards at the ASDA District 3 annual meeting in Washington, D.C., in January.

The awards are:

- **Outstanding Pre-Dental Initiative Award**, which recognizes the ASDA chapter with the most successful

outreach initiative to pre-dental students through in-person or virtual information sessions, pre-dental days, or mentoring programs.

- **Outstanding Community Service Event Award**, which recognizes the chapter that has hosted the most successful community service event.
- **Best Social Media Award**, which recognizes the most successful and creative campaigns for upcoming events and chapter accomplishments.

Last summer and fall, among many other programs or events, the UMSOD chapter engaged and informed pre-dental students about dental professions and UMSOD. It also provided pre-dental students with information about applying to dental school, the Dental Admission Test, and ASDA through interactive Instagram stories. The chapter also held a virtual panel discussion about the application process at UMSOD that was attended by about 30 University of Maryland, Baltimore County Pre-Dental Society students.

During Halloween, the group



Members of the ASDA hosted a Mental Health and Wellbeing in Dentistry discussion in March for UMSOD students.

shared healthy snacking practices and proper oral hygiene facts while building connections with more than 200 children from the neighborhood at a "Trick or Treat with UMSOD" outdoor booth. And, in collaboration with UMSOD's Student National Dental Association, the ASDA chapter created and delivered 150 "Kits for Kids" that included toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, and fun stickers.

In addition to UMSOD, the ASDA's District 3 encompasses Temple University, Howard University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Pittsburgh. **MD**

— HOLLY SELBY

A Day of Sharing Oral Health Information at Lexington Market

University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) dental hygiene students and faculty members shared information about the school's dental clinics, helped interested community members fill out patient intake forms, and passed out 175 dental kits (complete with toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss) on Feb. 22 at Baltimore's Lexington Market.

Their efforts are part of the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) EMBRACE initiative, a multifaceted approach designed to increase the vibrancy of the campus and its surrounding neighborhoods. In announcing the initiative, UMB President Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, challenged members of the University

community to go into the surrounding neighborhoods to share resources and information with the goal of creating and maintaining a safe, thriving community for all who work, study, or live in the area.

The dental hygiene students were joined at the afternoon event by Lisa Bress, RDH, MS, clinical associate professor and chief, Division of Dental Hygiene, and Mark Macek, DDS, DrPH, FICD, professor and assistant dean for curriculum innovation and scholarship, Department of Dental Public Health. UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, also stopped by to thank the students and faculty and chat with members of the community.



Photo by Bethany Probst

Class of 2024 dental hygiene student Claire Kristine Valenzuela and dental hygiene program division chief and clinical associate professor Lisa Bress hand out UMSOD informational flyers to shoppers at Lexington Market.

"There were many professionals, community members, and patrons who weren't aware that the dental school takes Medicaid insurance," Bress said. "They were curious about the process for registering as a patient and seeing what is and what isn't covered by different insurance plans." **MD**

— BETHANY PROBST

SNDA Earns UMB's Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Diversity Recognition Award

BY LOU CORTINA



LEFT TO RIGHT: Members of UMSOD's Student National Dental Association chapter Folashade Awofeso, Daryan Fisher, Chimezie Osondu, Heywan Gessesse, Taylor Bordes, and Lincoln McNish pose with faculty advisor Andrea Morgan after receiving the Diversity Recognition Award for outstanding student group.

The Student National Dental Association (SNDA) chapter at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) is the recipient of the 2024 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Diversity Recognition Award for outstanding student group from the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), marking the second time in four years it has been honored with the award.

It has an impressive list of achievements, earning recognition for its efforts to promote oral health care in underserved communities and advocate for the dental profession as a career path for minorities.

For 10 years in a row, it received first or second place in the national SNDA's Chapter of the Year competition (large chapter category). It also won the National Dental Association's Legacy of Excellence Award, which recognizes a group's overall and continuing achievements, and has twice received the Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures Award.

"I am beyond ecstatic to learn that all the work and service that our organization does is being recognized by UMB," said Chimezie Osondu, DDS '24, who was the 2022-23 SNDA chapter president. "I appreciate the fact that the University recognizes the impact that our work in the community truly has."

Taylor Bordes, a fourth-year student, who was the 2023-24 SNDA chapter president, said, "I am honored to be a part of such a commendable accomplishment. It is reassuring to know that our chapter is moving in the right direction. I hope the award will provide momentum for our future within the school and surrounding community."

UMSOD's chapter is dedicated to fulfilling the national SNDA's mission to create opportunities for its members to develop strong alliances and sense of community while aiding in the advancement of minority students in the field of dentistry. In fall 2023, 56 percent of the school's enrolled students identified as Asian, Black, Hispanic, or multiple races.

Its outreach efforts include providing virtual monthly mentorship to students at Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy in Baltimore, hosting minority undergraduates to inform them about the dental school experience in the Impressions Day program, participating in donation drives for food banks and other organizations that help the underserved in Baltimore, and tutoring city students in grades 6 to 12.

"Our chapter's long history within the School of Dentistry has made a tremendous impact on the diversification of our school," said fourth-year student Daryan Fisher, who nominated SNDA for the Diversity Recognition Award. "SNDA has created a safe space within the dental school for students to mentor each other, create community, and give back to the greater Baltimore community."

Andrea Morgan, DDS, MS, clinical assistant professor and director of student advocacy and cultural affairs at UMSOD, has been the group's faculty advisor since 2011. "My favorite quote by Dr. King is 'Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?'" Morgan said. "I am so proud of each and every one of our members that goes above their responsibilities as a full-time dental student to help others in SNDA and in the community that surrounds the UMB campus." **MD**



Celebrating the Dental and Dental Hygiene Class of 2024

BY HOLLY SELBY



TOP LEFT: Led by Patricia E. Meehan, DDS '93, BSN, associate dean for academic affairs and associate professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, the graduates recited the Convocation Oath.

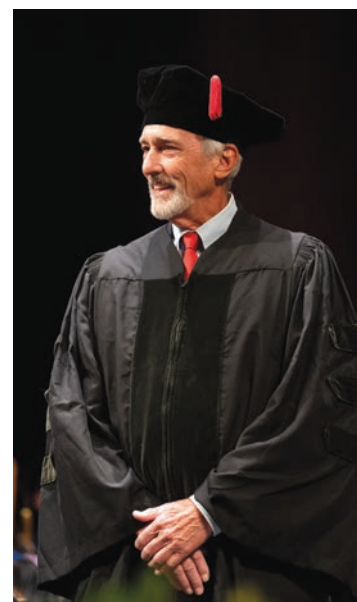
BOTTOM LEFT: Mark A. Reynolds, UMSOD dean, presented the Frank J. Sinnreich Jr. Excellence in Teaching Award to Chris Choi, clinical assistant professor and director, Predoctoral Prosthodontics.

BOTTOM RIGHT: UMSOD alumnus Dennis Brave was presented with an honorary Doctor of Science degree in recognition of his transformative contributions to the field of endodontics.



“As memorable as today — the day you receive your dental and dental hygiene degrees — may be, it really is only the beginning of your long, successful, productive careers in oral health. We cannot wait to see where your passion and professionalism will take you. Just remember, the sky is the limit!”

— JOANNE BLOCK RIEF, DDS '86,
PRESIDENT OF THE ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Carrying purple and gold balloons, enormous bunches of flowers, and, in some cases, babies, members of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) Class of 2024 marked the completion of their training and transition from students to professionals on May 17.

The day's festivities began with UMSOD's Honors Convocation, held at Baltimore's Hippodrome Theatre, and were part of several days of celebratory events including an outdoor, tented celebration held May 15 by the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) for all University graduates and their family members.

UMB President Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, offered welcoming remarks at the convocation, congratulating the UMSOD graduates and noting that they now possessed "the skills and wisdom to help mankind."

"I look forward to hearing great things about you," he said before conferring the 12 dental hygiene degrees and 128 dental degrees.

During the ceremony, Jarrell also presented an honorary Doctor of Science degree to Dennis Brave, DDS '69, in recognition of his contributions to the endodontic practice.

Describing Brave as having made transformative changes in the field, UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, said the honoree's "inventive spirit has advanced the clinical specialty, translating his ideas into tangible instruments and technologies that not only enhance the work of dental professionals but also significantly improve patient outcomes."

Reynolds also announced that Chris Choi, DMD, MS, clinical assistant professor and director, Predoctoral Prosthodontics, was the 2024 recipient of the Frank J. Sinnreich Jr. Excellence in Teaching Award, which is given annually to a faculty member selected by the graduating class.

Several other guests also made remarks at the Honors Convocation including Melvin F. Kushner, DDS '66, chair of UMSOD's Board of Visitors, and Joanne Block Rief, DDS '86, president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

"As memorable as today — the day you receive your dental and dental hygiene degrees — may be, it really is only the beginning of your long, successful, productive careers in oral health," Block Rief said. "We cannot wait to see where your passion and professionalism will take you. Just remember, the sky is the limit!"

Bright smiles lit up the graduates' faces as they gathered with family members and friends on the School of Dentistry front lawn for photographs and a celebratory brunch immediately after the Honors Convocation.

The festive affair was followed by UMSOD's Military Commissioning Ceremony, where Allison Marie Orlosky, DDS '24, U.S. Navy, and Zachary Thaddeus Palas, DDS '24, U.S. Army, took their oath of office and began their military service. (Two other UMSOD graduates — Dae Min Jeon, DDS '24, U.S. Army, and Tae Young Lim, DDS '24, U.S. Army — were unable to attend.) **MD**



Photo by Holy Selby



TOP: After the Honors Convocation, Jason Luo, Sajani Patel, and Renee Fajardin, all members of the DDS Class of '24, celebrate at the Senior Send Off.

MIDDLE: Alisha Karley, DDS '24, holding her baby, was among the 128 dental students and 12 dental hygiene students who marched May 17 during the Honors Convocation at the Hippodrome Theatre.

BOTTOM: Atemnkeng Forwang, DDS '24, receives his hood.



Allison Marie Orlosky, U.S. Navy, and Zachary Thaddeus Palas, U.S. Army, took their oath of office at UMSOD's Military Commissioning Ceremony.

Museum Receives \$1.28 Million NIH Grant to Develop Online Oral Health Lessons for Young Learners

BY HOLLY SELBY



Courtesy of Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry

The Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry (NMD) received a \$1.28 million Science Education Partnership Award from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of General Medical Sciences.

The award supports educational activities that encourage students (pre-kindergarten to grade 12) from diverse backgrounds, including those from groups underrepresented in the biomedical and behavioral sciences, to pursue further studies in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Called "A Mouthful of History," the NMD project will

provide teachers throughout the country with online lessons aimed at bolstering oral health literacy as well as familiarity with oral health careers.

"It aims to be the spark that makes young learners interested in oral health and aspire to join the dental profession," said Patrick Cutter, MBA, MA, assistant director of NMD; research assistant professor, Department of Dental Public Health (DPH), University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD); and co-principal investigator (PI) on the grant.

The project, which is in the content development stage, also will expand the reach of the museum.

"This is the first award that the NMD has received from the NIH. The museum will take its educational programming nationwide to educate pre-K to 12 learners about oral health promotion and opportunities for them to become part of our profession," said Richard Manski, DDS, MBA, PhD, professor and chair, DPH, UMSOD; executive director, NMD; and co-PI on the grant.

"We are the national museum of the dental profession as designated by Congress, and we have a responsibility to not only welcome visitors within our walls, but to also make an impact outside of our walls, in our community, and across the United States and globally, as well, which this grant helps us achieve."

Frequently, formal oral health education in schools, if taught at all, stops at first or second grade. By integrating oral health and dental career topics into online lessons designed to satisfy existing educational standards, "A Mouthful of History" is being designed to make oral health lessons widely accessible.

Modules that can be incorporated into science, art, social studies, and language arts standards are being developed, Cutter said. "The learning modules [eventually] will be translated into many languages. Oral health is important to everyone, so we need to make it accessible to everyone." **MD**

Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry Draws Upon Its Colorful History



The current School of Dentistry building, located at 650 W. Baltimore St., opened in 2006.

Offering glimpses into just how vivid the past can be, the Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry (NMD) has created a coloring book filled with images of all the buildings in which dental school lectures have been taught. The effort is part of the New York Academy of Medicine's #ColorOurCollection initiative in which museums create coloring books drawn from their collections to engage and inform their audiences.

Noting that NMD produces a variety of educational resources that are available on its website, Patrick

Cutter, assistant director of NMD, says, "This project offers museums a chance to delve into their collections and highlight pieces from their collections in an unusual, fun way. Plus, I'm told that coloring can be amusing and relaxing for adults as well as children."

The coloring book includes a depiction of Davidge Hall identified as "the site where Horace Hayden gave the first documented dental lectures in the world at a university (1814-1839)." **MD**

— HOLLY SELBY

UMB Foundation Honors Two UMSOD Philanthropists

BY LOU CORTINA

Barry L. Cohan is joined by (from left) UMB President Bruce E. Jarrell and UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds after receiving the Catalyst Award for Excellence.



Henry Y. Lee is joined by (from left) UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, UMB Foundation Board of Trustees Chair Harry C. Knipp, and UMB President Bruce E. Jarrell after receiving the Distinguished Service Award.

The University of Maryland Baltimore Foundation (UMBF) recognized its Distinguished Service Award and UMB Catalyst for Excellence Award recipients during its “Celebrating Excellence: Honoring Service, Philanthropy, and Volunteerism” event in May at the M&T Bank Exchange.

UMB President Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, presided over the gathering, telling the 170 attendees that the funds provided through philanthropy help sustain the University and advance its mission to improve the human condition and serve the public good.

“Your support of UMB is a long-term commitment — as alumni, as faculty, as friends. All of you are people who believe in the University and our mission. And I thank you for that.”

UMBF Board of Trustees chair Harry C. Knipp, MD, FACR, presented Henry Y. Lee, DDS '79, an alumnus of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD), with the Distinguished Service Award, which annually recognizes the outstanding achievements of a volunteer who has substantially contributed to enhancing and sustaining UMB.

Lee has been an active donor and volunteer with UMSOD for more than three decades and in 2017 launched the Dr. Henry Lee Scholarship, which provides financial support for UMSOD students who intend to pursue a career in general dentistry. Lee also sits on the school's Board of Visitors and serves on the UMSOD Dean's Faculty, a group of volunteer practitioners who guide and mentor students through their clinical education and provide quality care to patients in the school's clinics.

“I'm deeply humbled to receive this award. It represents not just my own efforts, but the unwavering support and guidance of mentors and friends who saw the potential in a young boy who did not speak English upon entry to school and never imagined going to college,” Lee said. “From them, I learned the invaluable rewards of mentoring and guiding the next generation. This award is a testament to their belief in me, and I am forever grateful.”

In addition, Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, UMSOD dean, recognized Barry L. Cohan, DDS '74, PEDS '76, who is one among the 2024 recipients of the UMB Catalyst for

Excellence Award, which recognizes those who exemplify powerful advocacy for success, achievement, and philanthropy for their respective schools while serving as visionaries for future progress.

“Dr. Cohan's journey is one of unwavering commitment to dentistry and community betterment,” Reynolds said.

Cohan, whose name is recognized in the Dr. Barry and Mrs. Adele Cohan Pediatric Dental Clinic, has dedicated more than 40 years to dental practice and community service. He has served as president of the UMSOD Alumni Association Board of Directors and is a current member of the UMSOD Board of Visitors.

“It was truly an honor to be recognized for my efforts to help the School of Dentistry and the University of Maryland,” Cohan said. “Giving back to our profession and school is very important to me. We all have a responsibility to support the next generation of clinicians so that our profession will continue to grow and maintain a level of excellence.” **Md**

— BETHANY PROBST CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ARTICLE



Spring Break in the Dominican Republic

Trip Offers Lasting Lessons for Dental Students

BY BETHANY PROBST

Eight University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) dental students traveled to the Dominican Republic during their spring break in March with the goal of delivering oral health care to underserved children.

As part of a collaboration between UMSOD and the Rotary Club of Baltimore, the students and their faculty supervisors spent the week of March 11-15 in the Dominican Republic, providing dental services to 521 children. The Rotary Club is a nonprofit dedicated to improving lives locally and globally; additional partners in the effort included local Rotarians and other local health care professionals.

During the trip, UMSOD dental students performed 121 extractions, 352 cleanings, and 48 fillings under faculty supervision, in addition to demonstrating proper oral health techniques to the children and their families.

The trip also provided valuable lessons for the dental students.

Sleiman Kallab, DDS '24, who described the week as a "life-changing experience," expressed admiration for the bravery shown by the children and their families. "The parents were so helpful, supportive, and grateful for our time. It made doing our job so easy because we did not have to convince them that what we are doing is safe. They already trusted us," he said.

The UMSOD students worked alongside members of the Rotary Club to set up temporary dental clinics at schools in the Samaná province in northeastern Dominican Republic. Oral health care was provided by the UMSOD team.



Photo by Jennifer Kim

"Treating underserved populations in the state of Maryland through the dental school has amalgamated both my passion for dentistry and giving back to the community."

— KAREN ABBOUD, DDS '24

Class of 2025 dental student Torrance Kang provides a dental screening to a young patient at a school in the Dominican Republic municipality of Sánchez.

This was the second year that UMSOD students traveled to the Dominican Republic. Eight UMSOD dental students volunteered during the 2023 spring break and provided oral health services to 450 underserved children at schools in the same communities.

Both trips were sponsored by Barry W. Rosenthal, DDS '78, who in 2019 established the Barry W. Rosenthal '78 DDS Humanitarian Experiences Fund to provide international volunteer opportunities to students. (The inaugural trip was scheduled for 2020 but was postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic.)

Ryan Linn, DMD, and Nicole Quezada, DMD, who are both UMSOD Dean's Faculty members,

accompanied the students and served as supervisors on the most recent trip to the Dominican Republic.

Karen Abboud, DDS '24, who was born in Syria, noted that having grown up in a developing country informed her understanding of underserved communities. The trip solidified her passion to provide oral care to those in need, she said.

"Treating underserved populations in the state of Maryland through the dental school has amalgamated both my passion for dentistry and giving back to the community," Abboud said. "I was able to have the opportunity to fulfill that passion and use my dental knowledge to provide oral care to those in need in the Dominican Republic." **MD**

Innovation +Discovery



Maryland-Based Biotechnology Startup Formed to Commercialize Vaccine Adjuvant Technology Developed by UMSOD Professor

BY LAURA LEE AND HOLLY SELBY

A new Maryland-based biotechnology startup was awarded an exclusive, worldwide, all-fields license from the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) for a novel vaccine adjuvant technology developed by Robert K. Ernst, PhD, the Dr. Paul and Mrs. Jean Corcoran Endowed Professor and chair of the Department of Microbial Pathogenesis, University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD), and Distinguished University Professor.

Called TollereBio, the company, which launched in February, is commercializing a patented bacterial enzymatic combinatorial chemistry (BECC) platform designed to develop accessible, cost-effective vaccine adjuvants for prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines.

Adjuvants are added vaccine ingredients that enhance the body's immune response. The BECC platform generates innovative adjuvants that can be used to fine-tune desired immune responses, ultimately improving vaccine efficacy. Compared to existing adjuvants, BECC-based adjuvants show increased antibody production, improve T-cell activation, and extend the durability of vaccine protection.

"We want to help augment the

response to some of these adjuvants that have been around for more than 100 years," said Ernst, co-founder and chair of TollereBio's Scientific Advisory Board. "The goal is to generate a high-efficacy, cost-effective adjuvant that, when formulated in component vaccines, can be used to combat the global health burden of a wide range of human pathogens."

Ernst will lead teams of researchers from UMSOD and the University of Maryland School of Medicine, as well as collaborators from the University of Missouri and Washington University in St. Louis. Over the next five years, researchers will evaluate BECC adjuvants with influenza, staphylococcus, and pseudomonas antigens for preclinical testing in adult and elderly populations. Studies will evaluate efficacy, safety, and manufacturability. The researchers will use empirical testing and data-driven decisions to select the most promising vaccine formulations for further development.

"It's wonderful to see our faculty translate their research from the lab into commercial endeavors where it has the potential to positively impact human health," said Phil Robilotto, DO, MBA, associate vice president

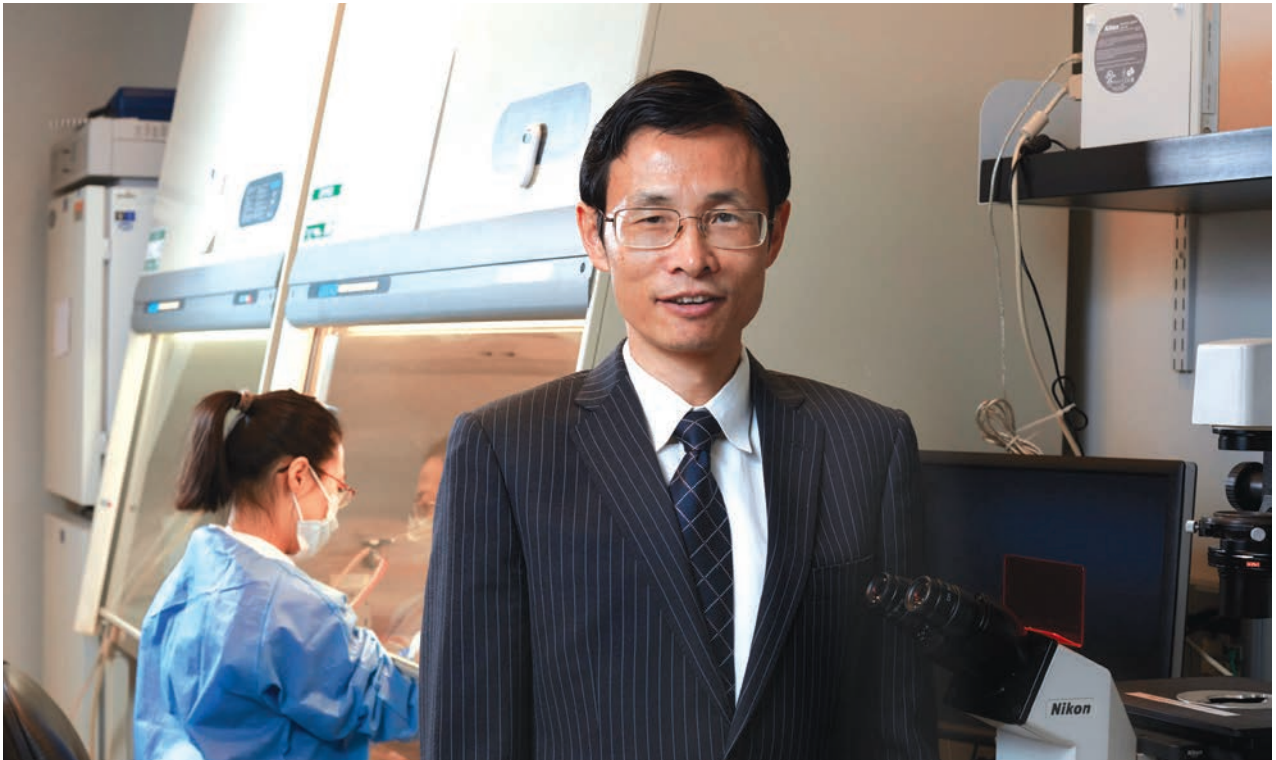
for technology transfer at UMB and executive director of UM Ventures, Baltimore. "We're excited to see how TollereBio advances this technology."

Ernst has received more than \$16 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to support his research on novel adjuvants. Most recently, he was awarded a five-year, \$9.4 million contract from NIAID to continue his work on improving vaccines. Ernst was awarded \$6.4 million through the same NIAID program in 2018.

Additionally, in February, Ernst was elected as a 2024 fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, the prestigious leadership group within the American Society for Microbiology. Fellows are elected annually through a peer-reviewed process based on their records of scientific achievement and original work that has advanced microbiology.

"Academy Fellows are eminent leaders in the field of microbiology and are relied upon for authoritative advice and insight on critical issues in microbiology," wrote Vanessa Speradio, PhD, chair of the Academy Governors, in a congratulatory letter. **MJ**





Leading Man

UMSOD Professor Xu Heads New Department of Biomaterials and Regenerative Dental Medicine

BY HOLLY SELBY

Professor Huakun Xu, PhD, MS, FADM, was named chair of the Department of Biomaterials and Regenerative Dental Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) in May after serving as interim chair since the department was established six months earlier.

Xu is a highly accomplished scholar and scientist whose career includes more than 400 peer-reviewed articles, over 29,000 citations, and over a dozen patents. In recognition of his body of work, he received the 2018 Distinguished Scientist Award from the International Association for Dental Research/American Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research.

Xu, who led UMSOD's Division of Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering from 2010 to 2023, discussed with *Mdental* the new department and his vision for it.

What is the new department's mission?

The new department's mission is to drive discoveries and innovations that enable the reconstruction of damaged oral, dental, and craniofacial tissues, ultimately restoring normal structure, function, and aesthetics. I'm grateful to Mark A. Reynolds, UMSOD's dean, for his leadership and foresight in establishing this new department.

Our research focuses on regenerative dental medicine via stem cells, scaffolds, nanotechnology, and bioactive agents, as well as developing bioactive, therapeutic dental restorative and preventive materials for tooth restorations. The department also directs five courses for DDS students, PhD students, and residents.

“UMSOD’s biomaterials lab is developing nanotechnology where the dental biomaterials can release sustained fluoride while possessing good load-bearing capabilities for dental use, which can be recharged for long-term release and enhanced restoration longevity.”

— PROFESSOR HUAKUN XU, PHD

What are the critical connections among biomaterials, tissue engineering, and oral health?

I will quote Dean Reynolds, who said it well when announcing the new department last November: “Tissue engineering and regenerative medicine are critical to the future of dentistry and will play transformative roles in improving the health and quality of life for individuals affected by developmental disorders, trauma, infection, and cancer.”

What role do biomaterials play in oral health?

Biomaterials can play the role of a delivery vehicle to deliver stem cells and bioactive agents to promote dental tissue regeneration. Furthermore, they can serve as multifunctional scaffolds to enhance cell behavior and guide cell differentiation. In addition, biomaterials can serve as load-bearing replacements of missing dental tissues to maintain aesthetics geometry, restore dental function, and promote oral health.

Can you describe some of the department’s projects?

When Michael Weir [research assistant professor and lab director, Department of Biomaterials and Regenerative Dental Medicine] and I joined UMSOD’s Department of Endodontics, Prosthodontics and Operative Dentistry in 2007, we brought a funded R01 grant on bone regeneration to the school. So, in essence, the tissue regeneration program at UMSOD was launched in 2007. Since then, we have received several more research grants, including R01 grants, R21 grants, and a Maryland Stem Cell grant, to develop and strengthen tissue regeneration research.

More recently, Abraham Schneider, chair, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences, and I received two R21 grants focusing on craniofacial and dentin tissue regeneration. We also obtained National Institutes of Health funding for an R56 grant on bone regeneration. In addition, my collaborator and I obtained a five-year R01 grant on multifunctional dental biomaterials.

Some of your research involves fluoride-based materials. Why are they an important avenue of investigation?

Biomaterials with sustained fluoride release can promote the formation of fluorapatite in teeth. UMSOD’s biomaterials lab is developing nanotechnology where the dental biomaterials can release sustained fluoride while possessing good load-bearing capabilities for dental use, which can be recharged for long-term release and enhanced restoration longevity.

What advances in oral health care are likely to emerge a decade from now?

We hope to see new tissue engineering and regenerative therapies emerge for dental and craniofacial regeneration that brings greater efficacy, faster healing and recovery, and lower cost.

Looking forward, what do you foresee for the department?

We are currently conducting in vitro studies and animal studies. If these show potential, and we obtain more funding, we will move on to testing in larger animals and, after that, seek FDA approval for clinical trials and, ultimately, human interventions.

With the help and collaborations from other departments and colleagues, we foresee the new department growing with more faculty members, establishing further collaborations, obtaining more research grants, and educating and mentoring the new generation.

What role can your clinical colleagues play?

Our clinical colleagues provide clinical-relevance and patient-need perspectives and point to important potential applications. We have worked with many of our colleagues already, and it has been very beneficial. **MD**

POLISHING THEIR SKILLS

The Diamond
Scholars Program
Offers Students
Opportunities to
Hone Clinical
Know-How

LEFT: Qoot Alkhubaizi, clinical associate professor and program director, AEGD, Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, has directed the Diamond Scholars Program since 2017.

RIGHT: Alkhubaizi oversees as Diamond Scholar Brandon Shim treats a patient.

BY HOLLY SELBY





LEFT: The Diamond Scholars Program allows high-achieving fourth-year students to practice their clinical skills while working alongside first- and second-year AEGD residents.

BELOW: Diamond Scholar Sleiman Kallab treats a patient who needed several extractions.



On any given day during their fourth year of dental school, Sleiman Kallab and Brandon Shim might spend seven or eight hours placing anterior aesthetic crowns, extracting multiple teeth, conducting a root canal, and completing an alveoloplasty.

Kallab and Shim — who completed their Doctor of Dental Surgery degrees in May — spent the previous nine months as participants in the Diamond Scholars Program, an ambitious clinical training program at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD). As Diamond Scholars, they provided patient care with faculty supervision alongside first- and second-year Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) residents. In doing so, they gained opportunities to perform procedures with greater frequency and complexity than other fourth-year students.

Launched in 2011 by Douglas Barnes, DDS, MS, professor, Division of General Dentistry in the Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, the program was designed to challenge high-achieving students. “I wanted to push the boundaries and allow advanced students the opportunity to accelerate as they grow professionally,” said Barnes, chief dental officer for UMSOD’s Faculty Practice, who directed the program for 20 years and continues to teach in the AEGD clinic. “Most undergraduate colleges have an honors-type program, and that is what gave me the idea.”

“It was the most incredible, fulfilling experience I’ve ever had. The program was intense, but practicing dentistry in such an intimate environment with a lot of help made it worthwhile.”

— SLEIMAN KALLAB, DIAMOND SCHOLAR

The program provides interested students the opportunity to work on “cases that are more complex than those a typical fourth-year student might encounter including advanced restorative techniques, rotary endodontics, and surgical experience,” said Qoot Alkhubaizi, BSc, BChD, MFDRCS (Ireland), MS, ABGD, clinical associate professor and program director, AEGD, Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, who has directed the Diamond Scholars Program since 2017.

In recent years, two to four students have been accepted into the program annually. In addition to observing academic accomplishment, “we look at who would make an exceptional clinician and who can work successfully under pressure,” Alkhubaizi said.

Other factors considered include interest in general dentistry, willingness to learn and work on a team, ability to think critically, maturity, and organizational skills.

Noting that the program is not meant to be a substitute for a residency, Alkhubaizi said, “I really have tried to advocate for students to have an opportunity for accelerated experiences. We want to produce exceptional health care practitioners who are well-prepared to practice anywhere, including in underserved areas where very well-rounded general dentists are greatly needed.”

DEMANDING AND REWARDING

As Diamond Scholars, Kallab and Shim entered the program in July 2023 — alongside first-year residents — and completed it in April, in time to graduate with their fourth-year dental classmates.

“We hold orientation for both residents and Diamond Scholars at the same time each year to integrate the students and residents and to ensure vertical learning and cohesive teamwork,” Alkhubaizi explained.

The scholars are expected to attend clinical sessions five days a week that last four hours in the morning and three in the afternoon. They meet regularly with their assigned General Practice director and are evaluated twice during the year. They also complete the didactic portion of the AEGD residency and maintain a digital portfolio so that, after graduation, they have easily accessible documentation of their clinical work for future employers.

From the get-go, participating in the program was simultaneously demanding and rewarding, both scholars said.

“We definitely jumped in on the deep end when we began last July,” Kallab said. “The workload increased, but it has been such a learning experience. You are around people every day who uplift you and push you to be your best self.”



When he launched the Diamond Scholars Program in 2011, Douglas Barnes, Division of General Dentistry, wanted to “push the boundaries” by challenging advanced dental students.

In addition to honing his clinical skills, Diamond Scholar Brandon Shim improved his time and patient management techniques.



When adjusting to the demands of the program, Shim said he quickly learned to make improvements in both time and patient management.

Noting that in previous years during his dental training, he had been able to carve out more time for community and professional activities, he added that in his fourth year, “I freed up my time from other responsibilities I had been involved in before. I also started thinking about how long certain procedures take for me to do comfortably.”

The increased opportunities to practice his skills, although accompanied by a greater workload, helped him develop his ability to work more efficiently and with greater confidence. “Sure, I’ve gotten better throughout the year, too, but the program allowed for an exponential growth in clinical skills,” he said.

DRAWN TO DENTISTRY

Shim, who at age 13 moved from Seoul, South Korea, to Rockville, Md., with his family, majored in bioengineering at Cornell University. His interest in dentistry was piqued when he participated in a service trip to Honduras organized through the Cornell University Medical/Dental Brigades, part of an international network of students and medical professionals who work with local communities to build sustainable health systems.

“I really got to know what a global health impact we could have. I was really inspired by a dentist on the trip who was compassionate and willing to share knowledge. I began thinking about dentistry,” Shim said.

Drawn to dentistry from an early age, Kallab recalls always having had good experiences when visiting the dentist. “I saw what a difference great dental care makes but also learned what a difference lack of good dental care can mean,” he said.

After graduating from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and entering dental school, applying to the Diamond Scholars Program “just made a lot of sense,” he said.

“I knew I wanted to continue comprehensive care and could see that being a Diamond Scholar was the way to do that. Ultimately, my five-year goal is to start my own practice in this area, and I would love to give back by teaching.”

A particularly memorable case for Kallab included using the school’s new, state-of-the-art TRIOS 3Shape scanner to digitally design and plan an aesthetic case for a patient. “We used our brand-new 3D printer to print out the case and show the patient in real time what her teeth would look like. The patient cried in the chair,” he said.

“What made the case unique was the use of so many new dental products,” he explained. “The actual procedure is quite standard work, but the technology made the case very applicable to the real world.”

WELL-PREPARED TO PRACTICE

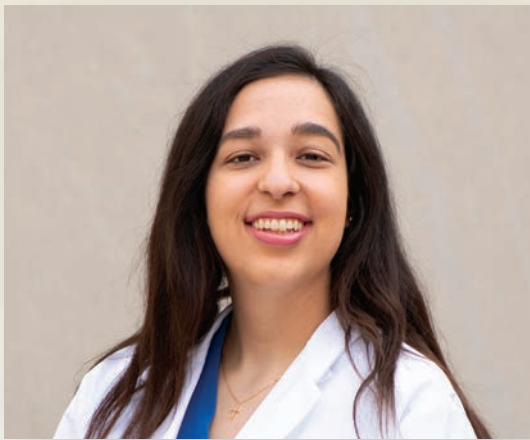
Both Shim and Sleiman were among eight UMSOD dental students and several faculty members who traveled to the Dominican Republic on a mission trip last March; both found the experience transformative. For Shim, it seemed as if he had come full circle: “This time, instead of just assisting like I did in Honduras, on this trip, I was the dentist, the provider. It was a moment of fulfillment and professional growth for me.”

After graduation, Shim plans to work in a private office in Montgomery County, Md. “The Diamond Scholars Program is such a wonderful program for anyone who wants to be a general dentist,” he said. “The setting, the atmosphere is much closer to a private clinic environment, and you get so much more experience. I loved the faculty and their passion for teaching and for bestowing knowledge.”

Despite the hard work, Kallab, who will be working at a private practice in Perry Hall, Md., said the experience was well worth it. “It was the most incredible, fulfilling experience I’ve ever had. The program was intense, but practicing dentistry in such an intimate environment with a lot of help made it worthwhile.” **Md**

INTRODUCING THE

2024



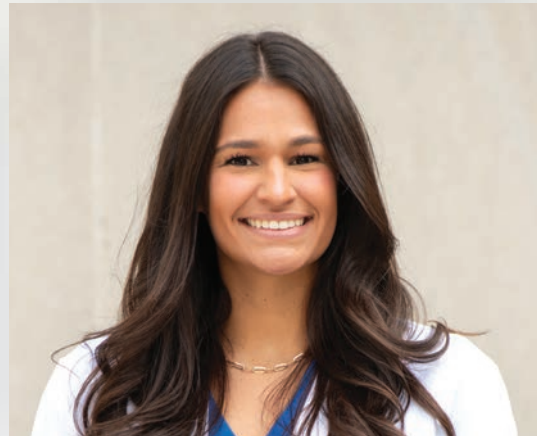
Allison Keyes



Marilyn Okine



Justin Tabatabai



Allison Orlosky

RECIPIENTS
of the Dean's Scholarship
for Leadership & Excellence

BY HOLLY SELBY

The University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) established the Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence in 2021 to celebrate and support outstanding student leaders who aspire to have a positive impact on their communities. Each year since then, two remarkable dental students have received the honor.

This year, four students have been selected as recipients of the prestigious \$25,000 scholarship.

“Supporting our outstanding students so that they can maintain their focus on academic excellence and professional development is a priority for the school,” said Mark A. Reynolds, DDS ’86, PhD, UMSOD dean and professor. “Each year, I am impressed by the range of achievements, contributions, and aspirations of the students considered for this honor. This year, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to expand our support and celebrate four highly deserving 2024 recipients.”

Here is a look at the recipients of the Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence:

ALLISON KEYES

When Allison Keyes, DDS ’24, describes her experiences at UMSOD, she begins with her patients.

One young man grew from being frightened of dentists to feeling comfortable enough to hug Keyes when his treatment was complete. A second, who had had a tongue piercing for years, volunteered that she was removing it after learning how it could affect her oral health. A third, after receiving a partial denture, announced that he finally felt confident enough to embark upon job interviews.

“I’ve learned that listening and having the patient’s best interests at heart are key guides to clinical care,” Keyes said. “Altogether my experiences at dental school have reinforced my commitment to working to improve patient care and help others.”

Growing up in Olney, Md., Keyes, who holds bachelor’s degrees in communication and biological sciences from the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), was influenced by her orthodontist’s passion for his job. “When he interacted with patients, it was easy to see how he valued them and made them feel like they were his only patient,” she said.

Another early experience as an undergraduate volunteer at a Mission of Mercy (MOM) event cemented a commitment to working for greater access to oral health care. (In 2023, Keyes also volunteered as a student clinician at the MOM held at the Universities at Shady Grove in Montgomery County.)

At UMSOD, Keyes, who was vice president of the DDS Class of 2024, immersed herself in building community, research,

“THIS YEAR, I AM VERY PLEASED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND OUR SUPPORT AND CELEBRATE FOUR HIGHLY DESERVING 2024 RECIPIENTS.”

— MARK A. REYNOLDS, UMSOD DEAN AND PROFESSOR

and advocacy. As a former participant in the Summer Research Training Program, she worked under the guidance of Mary Anne Melo, DDS, MSc, PhD, FADM, FACD, clinical professor; director, Division of Cardiology and Operative Dentistry; and chair, Department of Comprehensive Dentistry. Evaluating the physical properties of a double network hydrogel. She also was co-president of the Student Research Group, which works to create a community for student researchers.

Keyes volunteered through UMSOD’s Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion last summer as a facilitator for the entering first-year class. She served for two years on the American Student Dental Association Maryland chapter’s Legislative Liaison Committee, lobbying for bills such as health insurance coverage for dental procedures for individuals with congenital anomalies. She also served on the UMSOD Student Affairs Committee and the Admission Committee.

Keyes hopes to one day operate a private practice, teach in a university setting, and continue working on behalf of underrepresented populations. She is deeply appreciative of being selected for a Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence. “I was so surprised and grateful. It is such an honor,” she said.

Since graduating, Keyes has entered UMSOD’s Advanced Education in General Dentistry postdoctoral program. “I really have enjoyed and appreciated all the experiences I’ve had and the people I’ve met here,” she said. “Our class began dental school in the pandemic, which was not ideal. Despite the uncertainty, I have learned that dental school truly is a team effort, and, as students, we are learning to use our hands to improve the lives of others and to work together to improve our community.”

MARILYN OKINE

Witnessing the effect that access to oral health care can have on an entire family catalyzed Marilyn Okine to apply to UMSOD.

Before arriving at dental school, Okine, who is a rising fourth-year student, was a nutritionist at multiple Federally Qualified Health Care (FQHC) centers in Southern Maryland. The experiences offered her a firsthand opportunity to observe “the impact of disparities in health and how complex it is to address these issues,” she said. “When a dental clinic was added to the services provided at the FQHC, I saw the tangible changes it made.”

The daughter of Ghanaian immigrants, Okine was born and raised in Gainesville, Fla. She attended the University of



This year, for the first time, there were four recipients of the Dean's Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence.

Florida, where she majored in nutritional sciences, initially intending to pursue a doctorate and a career in research. As an undergraduate, Okine spent a summer conducting research in Ghana. After graduating, she took a position that allowed her to conduct research at the National Institutes of Health for two years before joining the FQHC.

While at UMSOD, Okine has served as the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) University Student Government Association representative for the Class of 2025. In this role, she attends Universitywide meetings and advocates on behalf of dental students.

Currently, Okine serves as vice president of community relations for the American Association of Public Health Dentistry's Community Outreach and Engagement organization, which aims to engage dental students in dental public health issues. She also served from 2022-23 as community service chair for the UMSOD chapter of the Student National Dental Association, which fosters a sense of community and aids in the advancement of underrepresented minority students within the field of dentistry. In these roles, she is responsible for helping to build community by organizing public service activities in the Baltimore area ranging from volunteering at food banks to environmental cleanup events. She also has volunteered as a tour guide for prospective students and alumni and served as a student representative for the admissions committee.

Upon reflecting on the past year, during which she began her clinical training, she said, "The preclinical courses were great preparation for the daily challenges and experiences in patient care. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with such great clinical faculty. Every day when I am in clinic, I always leave with more knowledge and have seen tremendous growth in myself this past year."

For Okine, being selected for the Dean's Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence will help ease the financial challenges posed by dental school. "I worked hard to gain acceptance into dental school and continue to have the same level of commitment and dedication during my time at UMSOD," she said. "I am grateful to be one the recipients of this distinguished scholarship."

ALLISON ORLOSKY

When Allison Orlosky first learned of the University of Maryland Three-Year Arts/Dentistry Program, she recognized it as the perfect fit. Then a sophomore at UMCP, she saw an opportunity to fast-track her entry into UMSOD, earning a Bachelor of Science in Combined Program Dentistry by the end of her first year of dental school. This innovative path allowed her to pursue her passions in bioengineering and oral health without the delay of completing a traditional degree first.

"This unique program, which had not been pursued in a decade, offered me the chance to leap into dental school, my ultimate goal, without the prerequisite of a conventional degree, such as the one in bioengineering I was pursuing at UMCP," she explained.

Orlosky has embarked on the next phase of her journey, joining an Advanced Education in General Dentistry program in San Diego and serving in the U.S. Navy.

Orlosky's enthusiasm for dental innovation stems from her belief in the intersection of dentistry and bioengineering. She views dentistry as a field where new techniques can be harnessed to benefit others, a sentiment reinforced by her experiences in dental school.

Her interest in oral health was sparked during her youth, witnessing her brother's orthodontic treatment. She was captivated by the complexity of his case and the meticulous care provided by his orthodontist, which fueled her passion for engineering and medicine. While a high school student in Clarksville, Md., Orlosky began working as an intern as well as shadowing at this Howard County orthodontist's office, which she continued throughout her undergraduate studies.

During her academic journey, Orlosky worked as a graduate research assistant and assumed various leadership roles, including serving as an ambassador for the Reed-Yorke Health Professions Advising Office at UMCP and holding positions in student organizations at UMSOD such as president of the Tau Sigma Chi Military Dentistry Society, president of the Gorgas Odontological Honorary Society, and vice president of the Orthodontic Interest Group. Her involvement extended beyond campus, volunteering at events like Special Smiles for Special Olympics athletes and MOM.

Orlosky is grateful for the opportunities afforded to her through the scholarship. She is eager to serve in the Navy, providing dental care to those in need, leveraging her background in bioengineering to drive innovation in dental technologies, and making dental care more accessible to diverse communities.

JUSTIN TABATABAI

With a mother who graduated in 1993 from UMSOD and a father who graduated in 1992 from the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Justin Tabatabai, DDS '24, is well-acquainted with the health professions.

But when he was choosing between medicine and dentistry as a career, a conversation with a UMSOD graduate during a UMCP lacrosse game helped tip the scales.

"I met him at a home lacrosse game, and he said, 'Why don't you spend a week in my office?'" said Tabatabai, who at the time planned to pursue medicine. "Of course, I had both my parents as mentors. But having someone not related to me take a genuine interest in my future and share his life with me was inspiring, too."

The opportunities provided by dentistry to forge meaningful relationships with patients also appealed to Tabatabai.

"Recently, I said goodbye to one of my first patients," he said. "I first saw her maybe 18 months ago. She had several teeth that were unrestorable, so she needed extractions that we then had to let heal. Finally, I delivered dentures to her, and she said, 'I am so grateful I was assigned to you. I will miss you.' And we took a selfie."

Tabatabai, who earned a bachelor's degree in neuroscience at UMCP, served in leadership roles while an undergraduate including as a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, a national leadership honor society; president of the Maryland Men's Club Lacrosse; recruitment chair of the Phi Delta Epsilon professional fraternity; and vice president of race logistics for the Miles for Smiles UMD charity 5K run.

At UMSOD, Tabatabai served four years as president of the DDS Class of 2024 and was a member of the 2020-21 UMB President's Student Leadership Institute, a program that exposes students in different fields to contemporary leadership and professional development issues. He also participated in the American Dental Education Association's (ADEA) American



Mark A. Reynolds, UMSOD dean, stands with the 2024 recipients of the Dean's Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence, Allison Orlosky, Allison Keyes, Marilyn Okine, and Justin Tabatabai.

Dental Career Fellowship Program (ADCFP). As part of the program, he analyzed patient care surveys collected in UMSOD's predoctoral clinics. The school then selected him to present his findings at the 2023 ADEA ADCFP Conference. Tabatabai went on to gather clinical research about the success and survival rate of crowns across traditional and digital modalities, earning him a spot to present at the 2024 ADEA ADCFP Conference.

As president of a class that began its dental education during a global pandemic, he learned firsthand the importance of working as a team. "We onboarded during 2020, and everyone worked as a team to come out on the other side," he said. "It was very emotional and humbling to connect with classmates, faculty, and administrative leaders to problem-solve and optimize our experiences."

He praised Karen Faraone, DDS, MA, the now-retired associate dean of student affairs, for her support. "I remember working so much with Dr. Faraone. She kept us safe and organized, and we managed to make it to graduation! Her leadership stays with me."

Tabatabai has entered a one-year general practice residency program at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Looking ahead, he said, "My plan is to stay in Maryland in private practice. I think ultimately my life journey will bring me back to academia. I have had such a wonderful experience at UMSOD with so many faculty and administration members." **MD**

To read more about the scholars, visit dental.umaryland.edu/DSLE2024.



THE DEAN'S SCHOLARSHIP FOR LEADERSHIP & EXCELLENCE

is supported primarily by UMSOD's Socks for Scholarships fundraising effort. If you'd like to support the scholarship, please visit dental.umaryland.edu/give/sock23.

Lasting Impressions

Laurels

In celebration of faculty accomplishments



Jose A. Bosio, BDS, MS, the Alumni and Friends Professor in Orthodontics and division chief and program director, Division of

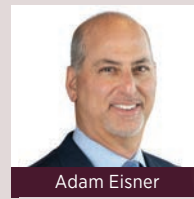
Orthodontics, Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry, presented a lecture about dental transposition at the Angle Midwest Annual Meeting on Feb. 3.

Infectious Diseases to study antibiotic resistance in *Staphylococcus aureus*.



Flavio Copello, DDS, MS, PhD, clinical assistant professor, Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry,

was among the co-authors of “Three-Dimensional Evaluation of the Carriere Motion 3D Appliance in Treatment of Class II Malocclusion,” which was published as the cover story in the December issue of the *American Journal of Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopedics*.

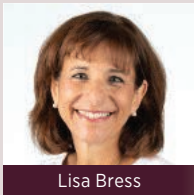


Adam Eisner



Jeffery B. Price

Adam Eisner, DDS, clinical instructor, Advanced Education in General Dentistry, Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, and **Jeffery B. Price, DDS, MS**, clinical professor and director of oral radiology, and co-director of the Division of Artificial Intelligence Research, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Services, were inducted into the American College of Dentists. Eisner also was appointed to the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners by Gov. Wes Moore in November.



Lisa Bress

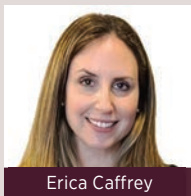


Thomas Oates

Lisa Bress, RDH, MS, division chief and clinical associate professor, Dental Hygiene Program, and **Thomas Oates, DMD, PhD**, professor and chair, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, received \$200,000 from the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health in December to support the third year of a statewide diverse prenatal and postpartum advisory board.



Vineet Dhar



Erica Caffrey

Vineet Dhar, BDS, MDS, PhD, clinical professor and chair, Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry, and **Erica Caffrey, DDS**, clinical assistant professor, clinical director, and assistant director, Advanced Specialty Education Program, Division of Pediatric Dentistry, received a \$250,000 multiyear care grant from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Foundation. Dhar also was among the co-authors of “Nonpharmacological Behavior Guidance for the Pediatric Dental Patient,” which was published in the *Pediatric Dentistry Journal* in September.



Robert K. Ernst, PhD, the Dr. Paul and Mrs. Jean Corcoran Endowed Professor and chair, Department of Microbial

Pathogenesis, and colleagues received a \$9,448,080 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to develop the adjuvant potential of BECC470, a rationally designed and engineered TLR4-based ligand, and evaluate it for preclinical testing with three immunogenic vaccine antigens from *Influenza A*, *S. aureus*, and *P. aeruginosa*.



Som Chatterjee, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis, is the principal

investigator of a \$2,764,704 R01 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and



Eleanor Fleming, PhD, DDS, MPH, assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion, was among the co-authors of “The

Relations Between Systems of Oppression and Oral Care Access in the United States,” which won the International Association for Dental Research Judith Albino Award for Outstanding Research in Health Equity.



Isadora Garcia, DDS, MSc, PhD, clinical assistant professor, Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, received

the 2024 Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Dental Society Research Award, which recognizes individuals who have demonstrated remarkable achievements in dental research.

Cailin Gollubier, RDH, clinical instructor, Dental Hygiene Program, wrote “Senior Students’ Attitudes Towards Mental Health Screenings in Dental Settings,” which she presented at the 2024 International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research/ American Association for Dental, Oral,

and Craniofacial Research/Canadian Association for Dental Research General Session and Exhibition, held in New Orleans in March.



Gary Hack, DDS, clinical associate professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, was

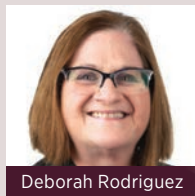
among the co-authors of “The Growth and Development of the Myodural Bridge and Its Associated Structures in the Human Fetus,” which was published in November in *Nature*.



Mark Macek



Christina Platia

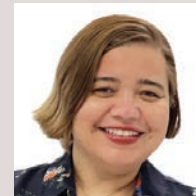


Deborah Rodriguez

Mark Macek, DDS, DrPH, assistant dean for curriculum innovation and scholarship and professor,

Department of Dental Public Health; **Christina Platia, DDS,** clinical assistant professor and director of general practice,

Department of Comprehensive Dentistry; and **Deborah Rodriguez, DDS,** clinical assistant professor, Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, were inducted into the International College of Dentists.



Mary Anne Melo, DDS, MSc, PhD, professor, director of operative dentistry, and chair of the Department of Comprehensive

Dentistry, wrote “Magnetic-Based Photosensitizer to Improve the Efficiency of Antimicrobial Photodynamic Therapy Against Mature Dental Caries-Related Biofilms,” which was published in *MedComm – Biomaterials and Applications* in December.

Melo also was among the co-authors of “Multifunctional Dental Adhesives Formulated with Silane-Coated Magnetic Fe₃O₄@m-SiO₂ Core– Shell Particles to Counteract Adhesive Interfacial Breakdown,” which was published in *American Chemical Society Applied Materials Interfaces* in January.



Kate E. Noonan, PhD, MEd, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Dental Public Health, was named assistant dean for student affairs at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) in January.

Noonan, who served as interim assistant dean for the previous year, is an integral part of the UMSOD community,

providing expertise to support the well-being, professional identity development, and success of UMSOD students.

In her new post, Noonan will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the direction of the student experience and fostering an inclusive, enriching, and supportive learning environment.

Since arriving at UMSOD in 2017, Noonan also has served as senior director of special projects for the dean.

“Throughout her tenure, she has shown exceptional leadership in strategically supporting student learning and development, while advancing our institutional core values,” UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS ’86, PhD, wrote in announcing Noonan’s appointment. “Her collaborative leadership has advanced

our global engagement efforts, fostered the development of our student leaders, furthered community engagement initiatives with our West Baltimore partners, and forged partnerships throughout the school and University.”

Noonan earned a PhD in educational psychology from the University of Houston and a Master of Science degree in higher education administration from the University of Pennsylvania. Before coming to UMSOD, she served in student affairs positions at Rice University and California Polytechnic State University. Her work at previous institutions involved the founding of a student well-being office, the initiation of a campuswide dialogue about community values, and teaching. **Md**
— HOLLY SELBY



Abraham Schneider



Tao Ma

Abraham Schneider, DDS, PhD, associate professor and director, Dental Biomedical Sciences PhD program; **Tao Ma, PhD**, research assistant professor; and



Silvia Montaner

Silvia Montaner, PhD, MPH, professor, all from the Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences, co-authored “Glucose Upregulates Amphiregulin in Oral Dysplastic Keratinocytes: A Potential Role in Diabetes-Associated Oral Carcinogenesis,” which was published in the

Journal of Oral Pathology and Medicine in October. Schneider also was elected to represent the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) on the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research AADOCR Publications Committee for the 2024-2027 period.



Ahmed S. Sultan

Ahmed S. Sultan, BDS, PhD, assistant professor and director, Division of Artificial Intelligence Research, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences (ODS); program director, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology Residency; and co-director, Oral Medicine Programs, UMSOD and

the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center, and **Shahd A. Alajaji, BDS**, chief resident, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, and PhD candidate, Oral and Experimental Pathology, Division of Artificial Intelligence Research, ODS, were among the co-authors of “Generative Adversarial Networks in Digital Histopathology: Current Applications, Limitations, Ethical Considerations, and Future Directions,” which was published in *Modern Pathology*.



Darien Weatherspoon



Richard Manski

Darien Weatherspoon, DDS '10, MPH, assistant professor, and **Richard Manski, DDS, MBA, PhD**, professor and chair, both in the Department of Dental

Public Health, were among the co-authors of “Claims Analysis of Medicare Fee-for-Service Oral Health Care Encounters, from 2019 through 2021,” which was published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association* in November.



Hyojik Yang, PhD, research assistant professor, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis, was among the co-authors of “Structure Determination of Lipid A with Multiple Glycosylation Sites by Tandem MS of Lithium-Adducted Negative Ions,” which was published in the *Journal of the American*

Society for Mass Spectrometry in May.



Renty B. Franklin, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD), retired on Jan. 31. Franklin is an internationally

recognized educator and scientist whose remarkable academic service and leadership extended over 40 years at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB).

During his illustrious career, Franklin was the principal or co-principal investigator of numerous National Institutes of Health-funded research grants focusing primarily on prostate physiology and metabolic alterations associated with prostate cancer. His significant contributions have expanded the understanding and identification of promising pathways toward the targeted treatment of prostate cancer. He published more than 175 papers in high-impact journals such as *Journal of Urology*, *Journal of Cellular Biochemistry*, and *Molecular Cancer*.

Franklin, who came to UMB in 1980 as an associate professor of physiology, joined UMSOD in 1986. As an educator, he stood as a key figure for every first-year dental student for more than 15 years as director and co-director of the course providing foundational knowledge of cell and molecular biology. He also served as the leader of small group discussions in the Clinical Research Conference, helping impart essential research and analytical skills, and oversaw 12 postgraduate and PhD trainees.

Noted for his dedication to fostering intellectual growth and critical thinking, Franklin made a lasting difference in those who were mentored or who worked and collaborated in his classrooms and research laboratories.

“Dr. Franklin has shaped the careers of numerous outstanding clinicians and scientists in the best tradition of academic excellence,” UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, wrote in announcing Franklin's retirement. “We are eminently grateful to Dr. Franklin for his unwavering commitment to the UMSOD community and for his invaluable contributions to education, science, and service. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Franklin on his upcoming retirement and in wishing him a fulfilling and well-deserved next chapter.” **Md**

— HOLLY SELBY

UMSOD Continuing Education Courses



The University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) is committed to lifelong dental education and offers myriad courses throughout the year that are open to all oral health professionals. Below is a partial listing of the upcoming classes in 2024.

The classes listed below will be offered at UMSOD

650 W. Baltimore St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

➤ Nitrous Oxide Administration and Monitoring for the Dental Hygienist

Presented by Deborah L. Cartee, RDH, MS
Saturday, Aug. 10, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

➤ Introduction to Dental Cone Beam Computed Tomography

Presented by Jeffery B. Price, DDS, MS, MAGD, FICD, and Azin Parsa, DDS, MSc, PhD
Friday, Sept. 13, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

➤ Advanced Uses of Dental Cone Beam Computed Tomography

Presented by Jeffery B. Price, DDS, MS, MAGD, FICD, and Azin Parsa, DDS, MSc, PhD
Friday, Nov. 8, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 9, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

➤ Proper Pharmacologic Prescribing and Disposal for Dental Practitioners

Presented by Marvin Leventer, DDS
Friday, Dec. 6, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

New Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Continuing Education Requirement

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 enacted a new, one-time, eight-hour training requirement for all DEA-registered practitioners on the treatment and management of patients with opioid or other substance use disorders.

New courses on the topic of Substance Use Disorder Management are now available through UMSOD Online Training. Participants may access UMSOD's user-friendly online platform and complete the course at their own pace.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OR FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CALL 410-706-2282 OR VISIT WWW.DENTAL.UMARYLAND.EDU/CE.

In Appreciation

of the 2023-24 Dean's Faculty

THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE PROFESSIONALS WHO GENEROUSLY VOLUNTEER AS MEMBERS OF THE DEAN'S FACULTY. EACH YEAR, THESE PROFESSIONALS DONATE THEIR TIME, ENERGY, AND EXPERTISE TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF ORAL HEALTH LEADERS.

Sunia Abdula-Lessing, DDS
 Ronald I. Ackerman, DDS
 Oluwayemisi Titilayo Akinrefon, DDS
 Sara Aldahmash, BDS, MS
 Guy Alexander, DDS
 Bana Al Haydar, DDS
 Dara Alshami, BDS
 Roghieh Atapour, DDS
 Shamim Azad, RDH
 Thomas Barron, DDS
 Steven Becker, DDS
 Reza Beheshti, DDS
 Ali Behnia, DMD
 Harry Benavent, DDS
 Louis Berman, DDS
 Ignacio Blasi, DDS
 Gonzalo Blasi-Beriain, DDS
 Sheldon Bloom, DDS
 Laurie Brenchley, RDH
 Warren Brill, DMD
 Sol Brotman, DDS
 Ashley Brown, DDS
 Saul Burk, DDS
 Paul Bylis, DDS
 Kevin Byrd, DDS

Deborah Cartee, RDH
 Jerome Casper, DMD
 Natalia Chalmers, DDS
 Richard Chang, DMD
 Charles Chen, DDS
 Barry Cohan, DDS
 Harvey Cohen, DDS
 Gary Colangelo, DDS
 James Coll, DMD
 Paul Corcoran, DDS
 Nathaniel Dancykier, DDS
 Wendy Daulat, DDS
 Nneka Davis, DMD
 Ronald Davis, DDS
 Gael Delany, DDS
 Seyed Omid Dianat, DDS
 Richard Diaz, DDS
 Vincent DiFabio, DDS
 Charles Doring, DDS
 Douglas Drewyer, DDS
 Shannon Dunphy, RDH
 Allan M. Dworkin, DDS
 Bruce Dye, DDS
 Karim Elrafei, DDS
 Ali Elyassi, DDS
 Fazel Fakhari, DDS
 Karen Faraone, DDS, MA

Sylvan Feldman, DDS
 Fred Fink, DDS
 Stephen Gandel, DDS
 Farnaz Ghane, DDS
 Ioana Ghita, DDS
 Edward Gillis, DDS
 David Gordon, DDS
 Louis Gorman, DDS
 Elizabeth Greig-Moore, DDS
 Gordon Groisser, DDS, MSD
 Lawrence Hand, DDS
 David Harmon, DDS
 Michael Hartman, DMD, MD
 Joseph Heher, DDS
 Gal Hershko, DDS
 Edna Hirsch, DDS
 Daniel Hoch, DDS
 Robert "Mark" Horner, DDS
 Andrew Horng, DDS
 Michael Hsu, DDS
 Peterson Huang, DMD
 Julius Hyatt, DDS
 Ivanna Ivaniv, DMD
 Jae Jang, DMD

Jeffrey Jarvis, DDS
 Chao Ji, BDS
 Beverly Jimenez, DDS
 Mary Kang, DDS
 Kamila Kantovitz, DDS
 Eric Katkow, DDS
 Susan Katz, RDH
 Wahn Khang, DMD
 Dushanka Kleinman, DDS
 Michael Kleinman, DDS
 Morgan Kneib-Baker, DMD, RDH
 Shari Kohn, DDS
 Haken Koymen, DDS
 Joseph Kravitz, DDS
 Neal Kravitz, DMD
 Melvin Kushner, DDS
 Bryan Lara, DDS
 Alan Wonhee Lee, DDS, MS
 Cameron Lee, DMD
 Henry Lee, DDS
 Lili Leon, DDS
 Martin Levin, DMD
 Xiang Li, DDS
 Christopher Liang, DDS
 Chang Lin, DDS
 Morris Lustman, DDS



Photos by Holly Selby

Members of the 2023-24 Dean's Faculty, including Richard Diaz, Bradley Trattner, and Edna Hirsch, share their time and expertise with students in UMSOD's clinics.

William Maas, DDS
 Erin Mahoney, DDS
 Saurabh Mannan, DMD, MPH, MS
 Marion Manski, RDH, MS
 Philip Markin, DDS, MS
 Christiana Markova, DMD
 David Mazza, DDS
 Patricia McGuire, RDH, BS
 Eugene McNinch, DDS
 John Meredith, DDS
 Marina Meshreky, DMD
 Elaine Miginsky, DDS
 Julian Moiseiwitsch, BDS, PhD
 Charles Morris, DDS
 Niki Moutsopoulos, DDS
 Kevin Murphy, DDS
 Sathyanathan Nadarajah, DMD
 Basem Nashed, DMD
 Angela Noguera, DDS
 Robert Noppinger, DDS
 Ali Nosrat, DDS
 Youssef Obeid, DDS
 Augustine Paik, DDS
 Kristopher Paik, DDS
 Gilbert Palmieri, DDS

Dong Park, DDS, MS, PhD
 Si-Woon Park, DDS
 Mary Passaniti, DDS
 Harold Pincus, DDS
 Jeffrey Posnick, DDS
 John Powers, DMD
 Frederick Preis, DDS
 Steven Pruce, DDS
 Nicole Quezada, DMD
 Michael Raderman, DDS
 Roham Rafat, DDS
 Steven Rattner, DDS
 Michael Rethman, DDS
 Thomas Ritter, DDS
 Elias Rivera, DDS
 Shuyan Rofe, DDS
 Paul Rosen, DMD
 Tarun Saini, DDS
 Viney Saini, DDS
 John Sawchuk, DDS, FAGD
 Richard Schlossberg, DDS
 Craig S. Schneider, DDS
 MaryAnn Schneiderman, RDH
 David Seminowicz, PhD
 Francis Serio, DMD

Juheon Seung, DDS
 Mohammad Shahegh, DDS
 Nahid Shahry, DDS
 Shohreh Sharif, DDS
 Stuart Sheer, DDS
 Preston Shelton, DDS
 Paul Shires, DDS
 Deven Shroff, DMD
 Indra Sidhu, DDS
 Victor Siegel, DDS
 Carl Simon, PhD
 T.P. Sivakumar, BDS
 Terry Slevin, DDS
 Harry Snyderman, DDS
 Ahad Soleymanzadeh, DDS
 Leonard Spector, DDS
 Dennis Stiles, DDS
 Howard Strassler, DMD
 Di Sun, DDS
 Jon Suzuki, DDS, PhD, MBA
 Gary Swiec, DDS
 Sheldon Sydney, DDS
 Garima Talwar, DDS
 Haley Tate, DDS
 Renju Thackenkary, DDS

Robert Tigani, DDS
 Stephen Tigani, DDS
 James Tong, DDS
 Mahmoud Torabinejad, DMD
 Bradley Trattner, DDS
 Amanda Turner, RDH
 Margaret Valega, DDS
 Kim-Thi Van-Dinh, DDS
 Devender Verma, DDS
 Prashant Verma, DDS
 Maya Vernon, DDS
 Jordan Virden, DDS
 Mark Wagner, DDS
 William Wahle, DDS
 Maria Rosa Watson, DDS, MS, DrPH
 George Whitaker, DDS
 Robin Williman, DDS
 Jenin Yahya, DDS
 Chihwen "Alec" Yen, DMD
 Farnaz Younessian, DDS
 Raha Yousefi, DDS
 Shan-Huey "Erin" Yu, DDS
 Lobna Zada, DDS
 Mehdi Zamani, DDS
 Alaina Zborai, RDH

Alumni

From the Alumni Association



Dear Fellow Alumni,
My first year as president of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) Alumni Association Board of Directors has flown by. I have had the pleasure of being a part of many festive celebrations

and important ceremonies. It has been wonderful reconnecting with old friends and meeting new students and colleagues. Here are a few highlights:

During Orientation Week last August, I welcomed the incoming dental students, reassuring them that their dental school experience would be transformative and making them laugh with an anecdote from my first year: On one hand, then-Dean Errol Reese, DDS, advised us not to study on Saturday nights. On the other, one of my anatomy professors, the late Sue Ning Barry, PhD, told us it was no use worrying. We were already one week behind!

At the White Coat Ceremony in September, I reminded the third-year dental and second-year dental hygiene students that during the next two years, they would be challenged to master their clinical skills as well as their ability to empathize with patients from a range of backgrounds and cultures. Learning to relate to patients and understand their fears, I noted, can be just as difficult as getting great contacts on an MOD composite or root planning a 7-mm pocket.

In October, about 50 UMSOD alumni gathered at the Chesapeake Dental Conference Alumni Cocktail Reception. Louis G. DePaola, DDS, MS, associate dean of

clinical affairs, was on hand to offer updates, including the development of an ambulatory dental surgery center. This much-needed addition to the school will allow UMSOD clinicians to treat emergencies that could potentially be life-threatening. I also was interested to learn that of the 130 members of the Class of 2027, 61 percent are women and 28 percent identify as being from underrepresented populations.

In May, I was honored to speak at the Class of 2024 graduation ceremony. My congratulations to all our graduates; my hope is that they will enjoy successful, happy, and fulfilling careers.

The All-Alumni Reunion kicked off last month with the Dr. Harry W.F. Dressel Jr. Memorial Lecture. George Shepley, DDS, past president of the American Dental Association, discussed the current dental landscape and future of the profession. We are blessed to have Dr. Shepley living in Baltimore as a wonderful resource for us all.

The Distinguished Alumni Award recipients also were feted at the reunion. My congratulations to our honorees: Guy Alexander, DDS '82, Distinguished Public Service; Thomas Robert Tempel Jr., DDS '91, MSS, Distinguished Achievement; Kathryn Pawlak, DDS '19, Rising Dental Health Leader; and Marion Manski, RDH '88, MS '04, Linda DeVore Dental Hygiene. We are proud to call them colleagues.

I hope that you all have had the chance to attend one or more UMSOD programs in the past year. It is never too late to get involved in the Alumni Association! I hope you have a wonderful summer and get a chance to relax, vacation, and read a great book.

Joanne Block Rief, DDS '86

President | Alumni Association Board of Directors

In Memoriam

We are saddened by the loss of the following alumni, faculty, and friends.

William H. Barrett Jr., DDS '77
George A. Bealefeld, DDS '73
Stuart D. Blumenthal, DDS '82
Eugene D. Byrd Jr., DDS '76

Frederick J. Dexter, DDS '79
Marshall R. Goldman, DDS '62
Sheldon Holen, DDS '55
T. Gregory Hutton Jr., DDS '67
Frank W. Krause, DDS '59
Neil W. Lamb, DDS '64
Thomas F. Menton, DDS '90
Barbara Seifert Meyers, DDS '54

Clarence J. Myatt, DDS '61
Joaquin M. Perez-Feibles, DDS '79
Anthony M. Policastro, DDS '59
Albert R. Rayne, DDS '65
Charles M. Rosenberg, DDS '64
James Lawrence Schatz, DDS '64
Marvin H. Tawes Jr., DDS '58
Thomas J. Toman, DDS '63

*The school learned of the passing of these alumni, faculty, and friends between Sept. 6, 2023, and March 22, 2024.

Congratulating the 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award Honorees

Each year, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) presents four categories of awards to honor outstanding alumni. This year, the four recipients were celebrated at an award ceremony May 31 as part of UMSOD's All-Alumni Reunion Weekend.

THE RECIPIENTS ARE:

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT ALUMNI AWARD



This award honors a graduate for significant professional accomplishments in science, dentistry, or education. The 2024 recipient is **Thomas Robert Tempel Jr., DDS '91, MSS**, Major General, U.S. Army (Retired) in recognition

of his leadership, service to country and profession, mentorship, and dedication to patient care.

DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE ALUMNI AWARD



This award recognizes a graduate for meritorious professional leadership and service to UMSOD and the community. The 2024 recipient is **Guy Alexander, DDS '82**, in recognition of his dedication to promoting

excellence in oral-health service and exemplary leadership through organized dentistry.

RISING DENTAL HEALTH LEADER ALUMNI AWARD



This award honors a graduate from the past 10 years whose accomplishments enhance the perception of the dental profession and who has demonstrated remarkable service to the community. The 2024 recipient is **Kathryn**

Pawlak, DDS '19, in recognition of her early-career efforts to influence children's dental health and contribute to the advancement of the pediatric dentistry field.

LINDA DEVORE DENTAL HYGIENE AWARD



This award recognizes a dental hygiene graduate of UMSOD who represents the integrity, intellectual curiosity, community-mindedness, and leadership epitomized by the late DeVore. The 2024 recipient is **Marion Manski, RDH '88, MS**

'04, in recognition of her trailblazing efforts to advance and support the next generation of dental hygiene professionals throughout her 40-plus-year career.

To read profiles of the four winners, visit www.dental.umaryland.edu/distinguished-alumni. **MD**



Warm Reception

UMSOD's Scholarship Luncheon Offers Students and Donors a Chance to Meet and Mingle

BY HOLLY SELBY



1



2

1. Scholarship donors and recipients swapped stories and memories about UMSOD at the Scholarship Luncheon, which was held in April at UMB's Westminster Hall

2. Jade Weatherington, DDS Class of 2026, and Leslie E. Grant, DDS '86, Board of Visitors

3. Melvin F. Kushner, DDS '66, chairman of the Board of Visitors, Rose Anne Dela Cerna, DDS Class of 2027, and Sharan Kushner

4. Henry Y. Lee, DDS '79, Board of Visitors, and Phuong Bui, DDS '24



3



4



5

5. Michael D. Wright, DDS '99, PROS '02, MS '02, and Travis Fernald, DMD, second-year prosthodontics postgraduate

Warm smiles, fond memories, and expressions of gratitude were plentiful April 16 at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) Scholarship Luncheon.

The event, held in person for the first time in four years, offered an opportunity for nearly 100 scholarship recipients, donors, and faculty and staff members to celebrate philanthropy and the remarkable educational opportunities it can provide.

"Scholarships play a pivotal role in the lives of students pursuing dental education, serving as a powerful vote of confidence. They demonstrate to students that their abilities are recognized and that someone is deeply invested in their success," UMSOD Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, said in his opening remarks.

Noting that many of the donors in attendance were scholarship recipients themselves, Reynolds added, "Their firsthand experience underscores the transformative nature of scholarships and fuels their commitment to maintaining this meaningful tradition of generosity."

The event, which was held at Westminster Hall on the University of Maryland, Baltimore campus, also included a welcome from Josh Hiscock, PhD, executive director, Annual Giving and Alumni Relations, and

a video highlighting scholarship donors and recipients.

Michael Wright, DDS '99, PROS '02, said that as a former recipient, he had experienced firsthand the impact of scholarships. "Dental school is hard enough as it is without worrying about the burdens of financial obligations. I established the Wright Family Scholarship to help ease some of these burdens," he said.

For Henry Y. Lee, DDS '79, UMSOD Board of Visitors, creating a scholarship was a way of acknowledging the support of those who came before him. "I was the first in my family to attend college, graduate school, and dental school. It was a journey I would not have been able to complete without the mentorship and the financial assistance provided me by my advisors and other generous donors," he said. Establishing a scholarship, he added, "is my way of honoring those who have helped me."

Each of the students expressed appreciation for their scholarships. "I'm honored to have been selected for this award," said first-year dental student Brianna Garcia. "My first semester of dental school has been quite a whirlwind, but I'm happy to say that I feel very at home here at the University of Maryland. This program continues to bolster my confidence in dentistry and really ignites my excitement to treat and educate patients soon." **MD**

AgentOfChange

Breaking Racial and Gender Norms



The Mirror, 1973

Edward Neal Sr. was the first Black person and first man to graduate from UMSOD's Dental Hygiene Program.

Edward Neal Sr., Class of 1973, is recognized as the first Black person and the first man to attend the Dental Hygiene Program at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry. In celebration of Black History Month, he was interviewed in February by his granddaughter, Deanna Neal, host of WEEA Radio's morning program "Two Way Talk."

At the time, the Dental Hygiene Program was directed by Patricia Stearns and boasted a faculty of seven women; its Class of 1973 included 10 women and Neal. "The curriculum was extremely tough and still is today, but I had made my mind up that I wasn't going to fail," Edward Neal said. "So, I buckled down."

Now 85 years old and retired, Neal shared his memories during the radio interview about growing up in segregated

"The curriculum was extremely tough and still is today, but I had made my mind up that I wasn't going to fail — so, I buckled down."

— EDWARD NEAL SR.

Baltimore and how it shaped his childhood and limited his professional opportunities.

One of eight children, Neal grew up on Lexington Street in West Baltimore. Segregation was "extremely evident — almost an accepted daily practice," he said. Black people could order food at a diner but not sit at the counter to eat it. Parks were designated for whites only or for Blacks only. Good jobs for Black men were hard to find, Neal said.

"Many of the Black men worked as construction laborers. The pay was extremely low at that time," he said.

As a young man, Neal attended Morgan State College (now Morgan State University) but struggled academically and dropped out. "I didn't want to hang around in the streets, so I decided to join the military and went into the Navy," he said.

While in the U.S. Navy, he met his wife and began working as a dental technician. After being discharged, he tried various jobs but eventually enrolled in the UMSOD Dental Hygiene Program — despite being the only man in the program.

"It changed my life completely because I had an established salary with it," he said in the radio interview. "But I was the only male doing what was primarily a female profession. But as luck would have it, I was successful. I worked in it for over 30 years." **MD**

— HOLLY SELBY

To listen to the interview, visit weaa.org/show/two-way-talk and scroll to the Feb. 5, 2024, program.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



SEPT. 20, 2024

**UMSOD Alumni & Friends
Reception at Chesapeake
Dental Conference**
Hanover, MD



OCT. 18, 2024

**UMSOD Alumni & Friends
Reception at SmileCon**
New Orleans, LA



JAN. 31, 2025

**UMSOD Alumni & Friends
Reception at Yankee
Dental Congress**
Boston, MA

For more information and to register for upcoming events,
please visit www.dental.umaryland.edu/alumnireceptions