From the Dean’s Desk
March 2013

A Message from the Dean

During my career as dean of New Jersey Dental School, I have often felt great pride in being associated with this school. The feeling I got while listening to the accreditation team’s tremendously positive report, however, defies description. And, I could not have been happier with the professional, warm and helpful demeanor that everyone showed the evaluators. My congratulations to all, and my sincerest thanks to everyone who worked so hard to achieve this outstanding result. As we move ahead we will continue to strive for excellence in everything we do. Thank you all again.

Cecil

NJDS Receives Stellar Reaccreditation Report

There was never a doubt, but now it’s official: NJDS has once again attained the highest level of excellence as a dental educational institution.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) re-accredited the school for another seven years, after spending four days reviewing every aspect of the academic programs, including the CODE program, general practice residency, and our postgraduate programs in endodontics, orthodontics, periodontics and prosthodontics. At a post-accreditation reception, Dean Feldman said that the school has never had such an overwhelmingly positive report, with no recommendations for improvement. "Along with their accolades, the team noted many of the strengths they found in both the pre-doctoral and postgraduate programs," she said. “I could not be prouder of this institution or this outcome.”

Two of the students who helped during the CODA site visit receive thank you gifts at the post-accreditation reception. They are Lisa Veselovsky and Andrew Jursik, III.

And the Winner is...

The results of the annual student esthetics competition are in, and this year’s winner is Emma Pollack,’13. The competition, now in its fifth year, is hosted by Reena M. Varghese, DMD, MSEd, MSc, assistant professor, Restorative Dentistry and course director for Esthetic Dentistry. All fourth-year students are invited to submit before and after photos of patients they treated in the "esthetic zone." Drs. Joel Martin, Marc Rosenblum and Andrew Brafman, all of Restorative Dentistry, anonymously selected the winner. Student-Dr. Pollack’s name will be added to the plaque of award winners in the Oral Health Pavilion lobby.

"Even after five years, the students continue to be enthusiastic about the competition," says Dr. Varghese. “The competition provides an opportunity for our students to showcase their work. I hope watching them will inspire the third-year students to start preparing for next year’s event.” Photos of Student-Dr. Pollack’s work and that of the other students who competed are on the bulletin board next to room D-839.

Emma Pollack points to her winning entry on the D-Level bulletin board.
Helping in the Wake of Sandy

The University community came together on the Newark Campus on February 28 for “UMDNJ’s Got Talent,” a fundraiser for victims of Superstorm Sandy.

More than 300 people from the University and the community gathered in NJMS’s Grand Foyer to watch performances by faculty, staff and students. The event raised more than $1,000. Singers, poets, musicians, and even a hula-hoop dancer took to the stage for an evening of unforgettable entertainment.

Arguably, one of the more memorable acts was The Deans and Freda Zackin, who performed their own rendition of the Village People’s famous oldie, “Y.M.C.A.” The general consensus was that while the “Dean Team” may not have been the most talented act, its members could not be beat for their good natures and enthusiasm.

...at NJMS

There may not have been any hat tricks, but the puck was flying at the first UMDNJ Winter Classic Charity Hockey game. Held at the Prudential Center in Newark, the game featured the New Jersey Medical School (NJMS) Medwings vs. the New Jersey Dental School (NJDS) Bitewings, with proceeds going to the Restore Our Shore fund.

The evening started with a ceremonial puck drop by the deans of each school, followed by nonstop action that was fast and furious. There were great passes, outstanding saves by both goalies and a perfect deflection, which led to a Bitewings 6-5 win over the Medwings.

Adding to the excitement was a “chuck-a-puck” contest. Spectators threw previously purchased pucks onto the ice at intermission, aiming for the center of the rink. Winners received a signed hockey stick and photos of Devil’s star Ilya Kovalchuk.

One of the game’s organizers was NJDS student Judson Dacher-Shapiro, who plays recreational hockey with three NJMS students. “We got talking one day and decided to do a charity game,” he says. “The NHL lockout was the perfect opportunity to reserve the ice.” Student-Dr. Dacher-Shapiro, the captain of the Bitewings, says several team members asked Pamela Alberto, DMD, to play, however, she opted to be the celebrity coach instead. She was the perfect choice, since she was on the women’s ice hockey team at Penn.

“The faculty, students and their families all had a great time,” says Student-Dr. Dacher-Shapiro. “And it was fun for us to play in front of so many people. But we were most excited about raising $7,400, which far surpassed our goal of $5,000. We’re hoping we can make this an annual event.”
Students from NJDS teamed up with Delta Dental of New Jersey, the School of Health Related Professions and the Hudson County Dental Society to present the 14th annual Oral Health Awareness Day at Liberty Science Center in Jersey City. Hundreds of families visited the museum, where they learned proper oral hygiene and the basics of good nutrition, all while playing carnival-style games and visiting interactive exhibits. For adults there were exhibits on the prevention of diseases related to smoking and information on smoking cessation. More than 100 volunteers—52 of them from NJDS—helped make the day a success.

“Our students helped people understand how certain habits and diseases cause harmful effects,” says Deb Goldsmith, RDH, MS, director of the event. “Our hope is that this event results in better oral health for everyone.”

NJDS students continue their quest for the causes, treatments and, perhaps, even the cures for oral and systemic diseases. At this year’s annual Balbo Dental Research Expo, a total of 54 pre-doctoral, postgraduate and summer research students presented posters that covered a wide range of topics. Judging the competition were Drs. Sowmya Ananthan, Rufus Caine, Gill Diamond, Daniel Kadouri, Padma Mukherjee, Samuel Quek, Narayanan Ramasubbu, Marc Rosenblum, Asha Samant, Helen Schreiner, Gayathri Subramanian and Vincent Tsiagbe.

In addition to the poster competition, students could attend seminars and faculty could attend a CE session. Dental manufacturers exhibited their products throughout the day, as well.

Summer Research winners are Amy Tran (1st), Grigory Efros and Jonathan Snow (2nd), and Kathryn Pallonetti and Michael Feurstein (3rd). Clinical postgraduate winners are Mohamed Elazhri (1st), Abhinay Wadkar (2nd), and Rashmi Ganesh (3rd). Research postgraduate winners are Bollamma Puchimada (1st), Prashanth Konathan Haribabu (2nd) and Deyaaeddin Alnaas (3rd).

The event is named for its founder, the late Dr. Michael Balbo, a faculty member and student advocate, who worked with student mental health services on the Foresight Leadership program.

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Fun and Learning at Liberty Science Center

(1-r) Drs. Rosenblum, Ramasubbu and Kadouri listen as a student explains his poster during the Research Expo.

An NJDS student explains to a youngster how to look for the cavities in the dental mannequin, using a dental mirror.

NJDS students are invited to participate in this community service activity. Join the fight against this killer by walking in the Annual Oral Cancer Walk New York on April 21, rain or shine. The walk begins at Kissena Park Velodrome (Booth Memorial Ave. and Parson Blvd., Queens, NY) and ends at Citi Field, Willets Point.

For more information call Dr. Mahnaz Fatahzadeh at 2-1956, or e-mail her at fatahza@umdnj.edu.
Donors Make the Difference

The renovation of the Brunsden-Villa Pediatric Clinic and the Delta Dental Special Care Clinic are well underway, with completion scheduled for the end of August.

Everyone is looking forward to learning and treating patients in brand new, state-of-the-art clinics that match the quality of our faculty, students and staff. Locating the Pediatric Clinic and Special Care Treatment Clinic next to each other and improving the existing space will increase access for patients, reduce wait times, and create an environment that reflects sensitivity and concern for patients and caregivers. The redesigned space will include wider hallways, doorways and operatories, with customized dental units for the special-needs patient population in wheelchairs or on stretchers.

In this economic climate of reduced state funding, people who care about the future of our school are more important than ever. NJDS is grateful for the generosity of our donors, who have made this renovation possible. Recently, some new donors helped raise the remaining funds needed to complete the project. Mrs. Heni Koenigsberg recently honored her late brother, Samuel, with a generous gift to create the Dr. Samuel R. Koenigsberg Educational Conference Room in the new pediatric clinic. The Conference Room will be equipped with the latest instructional technologies to be used for a range of learning activities. Dr. Koenigsberg was director of the school’s pediatric dental clinic until his passing in 2001. Among the alumni who have recently donated are Ryan Scally, DMD, ’10, Ped., ’12, and his wife, Stephanie, who directed their gift to a project that is meaningful to both of them: naming an operatory in memory of Ryan’s mother.

Naming opportunities are available from $5,000 and up, and gifts of $500 or more will be recognized on an attractive donor wall. Gifts of any amount are appreciated and will help us raise the last amount needed to complete the project. For information on how to give, contact NJDS Development Director Jenny-Ann Kershner at 973-672-4963 or jkershner@njhf.org.

Awards and Honors

Cecile Feldman, DMD, MBA, dean, NJDS, received an ADEA Presidential Citation at the 2013 ADEA Session in Seattle. Citations are awarded to members who have shown “extraordinary dedication to dental education.”

Hoda Youssef, DMD, associate professor, Restorative Dentistry, became a Diplomate of the American Board of Prosthodontists.

Presentations

Shahid Aziz, DMD, MD, professor, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, presented a lecture “Oral Submucous Fibrosis—Coming to America” at the Sy Symanski Memorial Middlesex County Dental Society lecture in February.

Barry Zweig, DDS, associate professor, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, presented a lecture “Challenges and Solutions to Lateral Approach Sinus Augmentation” at the Dentalxp Global Symposium in Las Vegas in February.

Publications

