

Dental Public Health ALUMNI

News

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY
& DENTAL CLINICS

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(Random) Reflections on Involvement in the Dental Public Health Grad Program

I came to the University of Iowa College of Dentistry from Albany, New York, where I worked for the NY State Department of Health. One of the major attractions for me to leave government service and move to an academic career was the presence of a graduate program in dental public health located within a college of dentistry. The opportunity to work with students who had chosen dental public health as their field of study was, and continues to be, very appealing.

When I first started at Iowa, there were usually only one to three entering students in a class. However, the students we did have were eager to learn and to challenge their professors. Refreshing my knowledge to prepare for classes provided a useful vehicle for me to prepare for the American Board of Dental Public Health certifying examination.

I was appointed Graduate Program Director in 1989. It was my first academic administrative position, and it gave me the opportunity to learn about University of Iowa rules, admissions, student affairs, accreditation and administrative responsibility. After I became department head, Dr. Steven Levy took over as Program Director and led the effort to attract substantially more students. Under his, and now Dr. John Warren's direction, the program attracts substantial numbers of very well qualified and accomplished students every year.



Jed Hand

(Continued on page 5)

A NOTE FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR ~

It's already April, and we're still awaiting the onset of winter in Iowa. In other words, things are pretty good here as I look out of my non-existent office window. Yes, 2011 was a good year for the Dental Public Health program at the University of Iowa. First of all, the president of the American Board of Dental Public Health (ABDPH) for 2011-12 has been none other than our own Dr. Steve Levy. Better yet, three of our program's alumni – Drs. Kecia Leary, Donald Chi and Scott Rankin – successfully completed the ABDPH exam and are now board-certified in the specialty. Congratulations to Kecia, Donald and Scott!! We are also extremely proud that **all three** of the new ABDPH diplomates for this year are graduates of *our* program.



John Warren

The year 2011 was also a good one for the physical surroundings of the program. Thanks to generous donation made by a UI alumnus and friend of the department, the common room was remodeled from floor to ceiling. As one can see in the accompanying story in this issue of the Alumni News, the "new" common room is spectacular. (I especially enjoy the new Keurig coffee maker!). In addition to the changes in the common room, the College of Dentistry dedicated a new addition to its clinical wing on October 14. The new addition, located at the southwest corner of the building (near the faculty/staff parking lot), houses a new, state of the art Geriatrics and Special Needs clinic, along with the endodontic clinic, faculty practice clinic and the Center for Clinical Studies. The addition also houses numerous new seminar rooms and clinic administration, where one of our alumni (Mike Kanellis, MS '95) holds forth.

As an accompanying article describes, the program's accreditation was renewed during 2011, so that now we can begin to focus on the next accreditation in 2018! We are also excited that three students completed either the MS or PhD program and that we welcomed four new students, all to the MS program. I am especially pleased to report that the program continues to attract interested students from throughout the world, as for the past several years we have had several applicants for each available slot in the program. We are also optimistic about future applicants, particularly from College of Dentistry graduates pursuing training under the pre-doctoral training grant received in 2010 (see update on page 3 of this issue).

The year also featured several annual events, including a great Regional Dental Public Health Conference held in October which featured discussion on dental workforce issues in the Midwest. As usual, several department faculty participated in the National Oral Health Conference in Pittsburgh, as well as the IADR and ADEA meetings in San Diego.

As is usually the case, not all news was good news during 2011. The Bureau of Health Professions within the Health Resources and Services Administration, which has funded the graduate program's training grant since 2000, announced that they will not accept applications to renew funding for grantees (including our program) whose funding runs out this year. As of this writing, there appears to be a possibility for some limited extension of funding, but after the fall of this year it's unlikely that the program will have meaningful federal support. While this is unfortunate, we expect that the program will continue to thrive, and are hopeful that federal funding can be restored in the future.

Update from the Chair

Hello everyone! I've been Department Executive Officer (DEO) for over four years now and things are as busy as ever! Here are just a few of the major happenings in the department over the past year or so:

- Accreditation for both the pre-doctoral dental program and our MS program in Dental Public Health occurred in September 2011 and we passed with flying colors!
- Our "Special Care Clinic" moved into the third floor of the building's new addition in Fall 2011 and is now called the "Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation Geriatric and Special Needs Clinic". This facility has all new equipment and is a great improvement over our previous clinic. Many patients have commented about how much they like it. If you haven't seen it, stop by sometime and we'll show you around!
- Our faculty dentists and hygienists now deliver care in the "Faculty General Practice", located on the fourth floor of the new addition. Lots of natural light and new equipment help make this a better place for us to provide patient care.
- A pilot "Geriatric Dentistry Fellowship" is being developed and Dr. Lindsey Cosper (DDS '11) started in the program in July 2011. Mostly she sees patients who are deemed too difficult for pre-doctoral students to treat, and she also participates in some didactic activities.
- We continue to identify and create additional extramural rotation sites for our D4 students. New Iowa sites include private practices in Clinton and Corning, and there also are new sites with the Indian Health Service in Cass Lake (MN) and Sisseton (SD). We also are facilitating opportunities in India and Guatemala.
- Our "Common Room" was renovated through a generous contribution from Drs. Alice and Herschel Horowitz (see pictures below). The old yellow cabinets and sterile countertops have been replaced and the room is now cozy, inviting, and up to date.
- The Dows Institute (4th floor North), where some of our department's faculty and students have met, worked or collaborated over the years, also has undergone a renovation. The workspace has been transformed and now has a more open, flexible layout. Check it out when you come back to the College, it looks completely different!
- Our overall missions continue to be addressed through ongoing grant activity and scholarship in fluoride, dental workforce, and access to care issues; training of pre-doctoral students in Preventive Dentistry and Geriatric and Special Needs Dentistry; private patient care in the new facility; and numerous professional service activities.



Dan Caplan

There's a lot more happening than just these things, and as always I am pleased to be associated with such fine and helpful faculty, staff, students, alumni, and donors, all of whom contribute to the department and College of Dentistry in their own ways. Thank you all for your continued support, and please stay in touch.

Remodel of our "Common Room" (N332) – Now the Dental Public Health Library



Transformation of this room into our Dental Public Health Library was provided through a generous contribution from Alice & Herschel Horowitz

Accreditation

The graduate program in Dental Public Health successfully completed its re-accreditation by the ADA's Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) during 2011. The climax of this process was a site visit which occurred on September 13-14, and was conducted by Dr. Ana Karina Mascarenhas from Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine. Prior to the site visit, hundreds of pages of documentation were compiled about the program and submitted to CODA for review. During the site visit, Dr. Mascarenhas met with the program director, program faculty and students, as well as with College of Dentistry administration. While compiling the documents required a great deal of time and coordination, these efforts paid off as the accreditation process went smoothly and the documentation was well-received by the site visitor and by the CODA staff. In fact, in December, 2011, CODA requested permission to use the documentation prepared for our accreditation as an example for the U.S. Department of Education, which oversees accreditation of all institutions of higher learning. Many thanks go out to program faculty, staff (particularly Pat and Tina) and students, as well as College of Dentistry staff and administration.

Ongoing Dental Public Health Training Grant

We are currently in our third year of our 3-year Dental Public Health Training Grant (DPH) specialty training grant from the federal Bureau of Health Professions within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). This bureau has funded previous grants from 2000-2004 and 2006-2009 as well as the current grant; however, HRSA has announced that they will not accept applications to renew funding for grantees (including our program) whose funding runs out this year. Thus, when the current grant ends later this year, we will no longer have any new federal support for the MS program. We are hopeful that federal funding can be restored in the near future, and expect a call for new applications in 2013 or 2014.

HRSA Predoctoral Dental Public Health Grant

The University of Iowa College of Dentistry is currently in the second year of a 5-year training grant from Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to develop and implement a new training program in general dentistry and the specialty of Dental Public Health. This grant was funded mid-fall 2010, and its main goal is to enhance DPH opportunities and learning for dental students. Here are some of the highlighted activities, this grant is helping to support:

- We have a new DPH student club that is a chartered AAPHD student chapter and club recognized by the UI College of Dentistry and the University of Iowa – Steve Levy is the club's advisor. About 30 students are club members.
- We are working to develop a "DPH Distinction Track" at the College of Dentistry for those active in DPH for 4 years with the club and outreach activities and who take 11 credits of public health courses beyond the DDS curriculum. This proposed track is in the process of being finalized and reviewed by the Department, College of Dentistry curriculum committee, and College of Dentistry Administration.
- 11 students are taking a PH course this semester. We pay tuition and provide a small stipend.
- We have had external speakers come and meet separately with the DPH club students: Ana Karina Mascarenhas, Jim Lalumandier, Bob Weyant, and Isabel Garcia have come in the past 10 months, and several more are planned.
- Several members participated in our 2011 Dental Public Health Regional Conference, and we will offer them the opportunity to participate in the 2012 conference.
- Several students also plan to attend the National Oral Health Conference in Milwaukee, WI.
- We are working closely with the Associate Dean for the Graduate College to arrange for a few highly motivated individuals to have about 9-11 credits from the distinction track work toward the MS in DPH; and we are working out details for a coordinated "dual degree" DDS/MS sequence.
- We have attempted to identify applicants to dental school who might have interest in DPH and we already have one very interested student for 2012 admission.
- The DPH Club is working to link with other student clubs to begin to emphasize outreach activities such as elderly oral cancer screenings and school-based sealants.

The Principal Investigator is Dr. Steven M. Levy, Wright-Bush-Shreves Endowed Professor in the Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry (College of Dentistry) and Professor in the Department of Epidemiology (College of Public Health). Co-investigators are Dr. Raymond A. Kuthy (Professor, Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry), Dr. John J. Warren (Professor, Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry), Dr. Michelle R. McQuistan (Assistant Professor, Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry), and Cathy A. Solow (Associate Dean for Student Affairs).

Graduate Student Dental Public Health Field Experiences – 2012

Astha Singhal - *Media campaign to improve dentists' participation with the I-Smile™ program*

Site Directors: Shaela Meister, Dr. Bob Russell (Iowa Department of Public Health)

Low participation of dentists with the I-Smile program continues to be a major barrier in improving access to dental care for low income populations. The project included an assessment of reasons behind dentists' participation or refusal to participate with the I-Smile program, which was accomplished through surveys of the I-Smile Coordinators, as well as telephone interviews with dentists. Based on the results of these surveys and interviews, and based on the literature on media campaigns for health professionals, a media campaign plan was developed. The media campaign targeted dentists with an aim to improve their participation with the I-Smile program.

Stella Chukwu - *The Making of the Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC)*

Site Directors: Penny Anderson, Alice Horowitz, and Dushanka Kleinman

The goal of this project is to document the purpose, structure, and functions of MDAC and describe the characteristics and interests of initial members/participants. Currently, MDAC is working endlessly to improve the oral health of Marylanders by increasing efforts in prevention, education, advocacy, and access to oral health care. MDAC is an independent network of stakeholders charged at monitoring the continued progress of the Dental Action Coalition (DAC) by working on developing a five year state oral plan for Maryland. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the DentaQuest Foundation supported the establishment of MDAC since April 15, 2010.

M. Julie Kim - *As assessment of the potential interest/need for a program of basic knowledge and training for on-the-job trained (OJT) dental assistants in the U.S.*

Site Directors: Arlene Furlong, Dr. James Willey (American Dental Association, Council on Dental Practice)

The American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA) submitted a proposal to the ADA Council on Dental Practice to develop a program of basic knowledge and training for OJT dental assistants. Upon receiving this proposal, the ADA was examining the issue to determine if there is need/interest in creating a joint ADA/ADAA task force to study the feasibility of developing such a program. This project included 1) a comprehensive background research on dental assistants workforce and trends in the U.S. with a focus on OJT dental assistants and 2) the findings of the survey to dentists and dental assistants regarding interest/need for a program of basic knowledge and training. Recommendations to the Council Committee were presented as part of the project.

Golnaz Kavand - *Minnesota school-based sealant programs*

Site Directors: Merry Jo Thoele (Minnesota Department of Health, Oral Health Director), Patti Ulrich (Prevention Coordinator)

The purpose of this project is to survey the Minnesota school-based sealant providers to determine the extent of current school-based sealant programs and their financial and demographic characteristics. This survey will provide background information on existing programs which will be used to identify how new programs may be created or current ones may be expanded. Furthermore, the findings will be used as the baseline for evaluation of future programs.

Regional Dental Public Health Conference – September 23-24, 2012

The dates have been set for this year's conference – September 23-24, 2012. It will be held at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center in Coralville, IA. We very much look forward to hosting another successful conference this fall.

New Graduate Program Webpage

Please visit our new webpage at:
<http://www.dentistry.uiowa.edu/preventive/gradprogram/requirements.shtml>



The National Oral Health Conference

The National Oral Health Conference will be held April 29-May 2, 2012 in Milwaukee, WI, with the American Board of Dental Public Health (ABDPH) exam administered April 26-28, 2012. We plan to have many of our faculty and most of our current students attend, and also hope to see many alumni there!

Thanks and Best Wishes!

Thank you for your contributions to improving the public's oral and general health and your support of our program and department. We wish you all the best personally and professionally. Keep in touch so we can share your activities and accomplishments with our faculty and with other alumni. You can contact Dr. Warren at john-warren@uiowa.edu or Tina Craig at tina-craig@uiowa.edu.

“(Random) Reflections on Involvement in the Dental Public Health Grad Program”

(Continued from page 1)

I have always been proud of the program’s student-centered focus. The program faculty members are open to flexible class scheduling to accommodate student schedules to allow students to complete the program.

The program maintains a strong research focus that complements the research of the faculty. Students’ need for research mentoring stimulates faculty research programs.

My own research productivity benefited greatly over the years from the collaborative efforts of the graduate students with whom I had the privilege to work. Interactions with them always pushed me to learn new methods and techniques and to become familiar with new material. I have met and worked with wonderful students in the program forming enduring friendships with several. Watching the accomplishments of these talented people as they develop in their careers is truly gratifying.

My position for the last 14 years as Executive Associate Dean of the College has limited my involvement with the graduate program, although I have always maintained some contact with faculty and students. I firmly believe that the program is a huge asset to the Department, College and the University.

AlumNEWS

Jodi (McGrady) Spilotro ('98) graduated from UCLA in 2011 with a certificate in Pediatric Dentistry. She is working in a private practice in San Diego and is on staff at Rady Children’s Hospital, San Diego.

Kari Steinbock ('01) currently resides in Oregon and is a practicing PA-C in interventional pain management.

Yogita Butani Thakur ('02) is working part-time as dental director for a community clinic in East Palo Alto, CA. She is also the northern California team leader for the Head Start Oral Health Initiative. Yogita reports her three sons (ages 9, 6, and 2) enjoy playing ice hockey.

Zhaomin Huang ('04) moved with her family to Dublin, CA last year, where she has purchased a dental practice. She enjoys living in the beautiful San Francisco Bay area, and her practice is steadily growing. Please visit the office website at: www.liveandsmiledental.com.

Michelle McQuistan ('04) was elected for membership into Omicron Kappa Upsilon, the National Dental Honor Society. She will receive a certificate of member, along with the other new members, at a recognition dinner on June 7.

Linda Saleh ('06) shared that she recently gave birth to her 4th child – a girl named Masa (meaning “diamond” in Arabic).

Major Paul Colthirst ('08) was presented and inducted in the Order of Military Medical Merit (O2M3) by Major General Ted M. Wong on Saturday, March 3, 2012 (see photo). This is a very high honor for someone of Paul’s military rank, and it has not happened for almost 18 years! Paul also has two manuscripts pending publication at this time.

Colonel JJ Shelley ('10) is moving this summer to take **Major Scott Rankin’s** position as the Public Health guru for DENCOM. Scott ('09) is moving to Germany to take command of the Bamberg Dental Clinic.



First Year DPH Graduate Students

Vinti Ahuja received a BDS degree from Kurukshetra University in India. She also received an MS in Health Policy and Management from Carnegie-Mellon.

Tajasi Avasare received a BDS degree from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences in Nashik, India.

Tariq Ghazal received a BDS degree from Baghdad University in Iraq.

Julie Reynolds received a DDS degree from the University of Iowa.



From left: Susan McKernan, Golnaz Kavand, Tejasi Avasare, Tariq Ghazal, Vinti Ahuja, Julie Reynolds, Astha Singhal, Stella Chukwu, and Graduate Program Director John Warren

2011 GRADUATES

(and titles of research theses)

Deise Oliveira (MS) – *Minimally Invasive Dentistry Approach in Dental Public Health*

Deise accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry at the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine.

Adrienne Jennings (MS) – *Variables Associated with the Hours Worked by Iowa Dentists*

Adrienne is a managing clinical director at a dental office in Ankeny, IA. She is working hard to educate patients about oral health and “give them back their smiles”.

Yousef Al-Yousef (PhD) – *Medical Professionals’ Oral Health Knowledge, Attitudes and Related Practices Performed for High Caries-Risk Children*

Yousef was recently appointed as Assistant Professor in the Departments of Pediatric Dentistry and Dental Public Health at the University of Dammam, Saudia Arabia. In addition to his teaching and clinical responsibilities, he is also working with others on several oral health education programs targeting both non-dental professionals and the public.

Congratulations!

Kecia Leary ('07), Donald Chi ('09), and Scott Rankin ('09) successfully completed the ABDPH examination and are now diplomates of the American Board of Dental Public Health. In addition, Astha Singhal (PhD candidate) and Pradeep Bhagavatula ('09) successfully completed the written portion of the ABDPH exam.

HONORS & AWARDS

Faculty

Michelle McQuistan – Elected for membership into Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU)

Steve Levy – ASTDD Fluoridation Merit Award (4/11)

Graduate Students

Julie Reynolds – UI Obermann Graduate Institute on Engagement and the Academy AAPHD Herschel Horowitz Scholarship

Current Graduate Students

PhD candidates (in Oral Sciences with DPH Emphasis)

Elham Kateeb (BDS, Jordan)
Susan McKernan (DMD, Florida)
Astha Singhal (BDS, India)

Pediatric Dentistry/Dental Public Health Students

Aaron Blackwelder (DDS, Baylor)

MS Program candidates

Vinti Ahuja (BDS, India)
Tejasi Avasare (BDS, India)
Atul Bidarkar (BDS, India)
Stella Chukwu (DDS, Howard University)
Joshua Cohen (DDS, USC)
Golnaz Kavand (BDS, Iran)
Julie Kim (DDS, South Korea)
Julie Reynolds (DDS, University of Iowa)