

# Dental Public Health ALUMNI *News*

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY  
& DENTAL CLINICS

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## A NOTE FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

As I type this message, it's early March, and unlike last year, we are expecting yet another snowstorm. For those of you who have relocated, doesn't this make you miss your time in Iowa?? The Dental Public Health program has had a few storms this past year, but nothing we weren't able to shovel ourselves out of. Like Iowa's weather, this past year has been a mix of storms and sunny weather...

### First, the stormy weather report...

As you may know, we lost one of our adjunct faculty and most distinguished alumni in April, 2012, when Dr. Rhys Jones passed away. Rhys was a 1981 graduate of the program, and among his many accomplishments, he was past-president of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, former dental director for the State of Wisconsin, and was certified by the American Board of Dental Public Health. He was perhaps best known to students as the long-time director of the St. Luke's Dental Health Center in Cedar Rapids where he provided dental care for countless underserved children, and served as a role model and mentor for many students. He was an exemplary member of the dental public health community, and will be greatly missed.

Later in the year – September – we lost another great friend of the program and department, Dr. Jim Wefel. Dr. Wefel was a professor and director of the Dows Institute for Dental Research. Jim originally came to the UI in 1972, and was associated with the College of Dentistry for 40 years. He received numerous grants and awards throughout his career, including several major NIH awards to study caries, and the E.W. Borrow Memorial Distinguished Scientist Award from International Association for Dental Research. He also served on over 80 MS and PhD committees, including several from students in our program. Dr. Wefel was not only a mentor to students, but to numerous faculty colleagues including me – his door was always open and he was extremely generous in offering advice, being a sounding board for new ideas, or just listening to problems or concerns. Like Rhys Jones, Jim was a great role model who will be missed by everyone at the College of Dentistry.

I would be remiss if I didn't also mention the passing of Mrs. Nitzy Field in February, 2013. Nitzy was the wife of Dr. Howard Field, former program director and emeritus faculty member in the department. Although maybe not as familiar to students, Nitzy was always quick to offer a friendly word and a smile to me and others in the department. On behalf of the graduate program, I want to express my sympathy to Dr. Field and his family.

Finally, I will mention that my writing this column was interrupted by the death of my mother, Marjorie Warren, on March 8, at the age of 94. Like many, I could write volumes about my mom, but she was a very modest and private woman, and she would find it

embarrassing if I were to "make a fuss" about her. Suffice it to say that Mom was a loving, caring and supporting wife and mother who worked hard and always enjoyed a good card game.

### And now on to the sunny weather report...

One of the great things about education is that there are always students to be congratulated upon graduation, and new students to be welcomed to the program. Please see later mention in this newsletter for updates on our new and continuing students.

In other good news, thanks to a generous donation from UI alumnus Dr. Alice Horowitz, the Alice M. Horowitz Graduate Fellowship in Dental Public Health has been established. This fellowship, which is funded by Dr. Horowitz, the College of Dentistry and the Graduate College will provide support of \$30,000-40,000 annually for tuition, travel and stipend for a graduate student who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident and plans to practice dental public health in the U.S. We hope to name the first Horowitz fellow during 2013. Many thanks to Dr. Horowitz for her tremendous support of our program!

Another sunny event was our annual Regional Dental Public Health conference which was held last September 23-24. The topic of the conference was water fluoridation, and we had a large number of invited speakers which made for a very stimulating and wide-ranging conference – one of our best ever. Also, for the first time, we included programming for pre-doctoral students, and hope to continue this aspect in subsequent conferences including this year's conference to be held October 13-14, 2013.

The last bit of "good" news (and note the quotation marks), is that yours truly has been elected to be a director of the American Board of Dental Public Health beginning in April 2013. This is good news in the same way as landing on the Community Chest space on the Monopoly board, and reading the card that says: "You've just been elected chairman of the board – pay each player \$50".

(Continued on page 2)

John Warren



## A NOTE FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR (Continued from page 1)

### And finally, a thunderstorm and a rainbow.....

Just over a year ago began one of the more unique episodes in the history of the program, and indeed, one of the more interesting things that has involved the University of Iowa in a while. One of our graduate students, Tariq Ghazal, traveled to Mexico in mid-March 2012 along with some of his peers, Dr. Levy, and a number of other UI students, staff and faculty, as part of a service-learning project. Tariq is from Iraq and is sponsored by the Iraqi government, and had been planning on making this trip for some time; however, when he arrived in Mexico and went to the U.S. embassy to secure a visa to return to the U.S., he was told that it would require 6 to 8 weeks for his visa to be processed. A series of contacts were made to try to resolve this situation which went from the Dean's office to the UI president's office to the governor's office to Senator Grassley's office, but to no avail – Tariq was going to be stuck in Mexico for weeks. His Iraqi sponsors were not pleased, at one point saying in an e-mail to me, that "the student will be punished", and at another point strongly suggesting that Tariq return to Iraq.

Fortunately, Tariq was able to stay with a host family in Mexico, was able to use Skype and e-mail to continue with his classes, and was finally able to return to Iowa near the end of April. I am happy to report that Tariq is nearly finished with the program, is on track to graduate in August, and hopes to pursue PhD training in the near future.

## Update from the Chair

Once again it's the Spring semester and time for an update from the Department Chair:



Dan Caplan

- Our pilot graduate program in Geriatric and Special Needs Dentistry was formally approved as a Certificate Program by the University last summer, so students who matriculate through the program now will receive an officially-recognized "Certificate in Geriatric and Special Needs Dentistry" from the University of Iowa. Congratulations to Program Director Dr. Howard Cowen and our upcoming Certificate recipients on this wonderful milestone!
- "Project SEALED" had its first clinical visit to Allamakee County in December 2012. This project, funded by the UI Office of the Provost, aims to deliver preventive dental care and career education in dentistry to a population of underserved children in Iowa's most northeastern county. In December we coordinated a team of 14 volunteer dental students, faculty, and staff to provide screening exams, fluoride varnish applications, cleanings, and dental sealants to over 140 Head Start or Grade K-2 children in Waukon and Postville, the two biggest towns in Allamakee County. Currently we're planning a similar 2-day visit for May 2013, and we're tentatively planning to incorporate overnight trips to Allamakee County as a required component of our D3 dental students' pediatric dentistry curriculum starting in 2013-14. Stay tuned!
- This spring has seen a parade of potential faculty candidates interview for faculty positions in our department. Between February and April we brought in seven candidates for three faculty positions. We're looking forward to getting some great new faculty integrated into the department and the College, so be on the lookout for announcements in the next annual DPH newsletter!

As always, there's a lot more happening than just these things, especially since we work in such a vital and active department, College, and University. I'm honored to work with the faculty, staff, students, alumni, and donors in our department, all of whom make contributions in their own ways. Thank you all for your continued support!



## Ongoing HRSA Predoctoral Dental Public Health Grant

The University of Iowa College of Dentistry is currently finishing the third 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 new training in Dental Public Health. Faculty included are: Steve Levy (Director), Raymond Kuthy, John Warren, Michelle McQuistan, Cathy Solow, and Rick Axelson. We are pleased to report much success with this endeavor. Here are some of the highlighted activities this grant is helping to support:

- The DPH student club that is a chartered AAPHD student chapter and club recognized by the UI College of Dentistry and the University of Iowa is in its second year of existence – Steve Levy is the club's advisor. About 80 students are club members, with typical attendance of about 30 at meetings.
- We have further developed the "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. Currently, 23 students are taking a general public health or DPH course. We pay tuition and provide a small stipend.
- We have had external speakers come and meet separately with the DPH club students: Bob Russell and Alice Horowitz came in the fall, and Catherine Hayes will be here in April.
- Several members participated in our 2012 Dental Public Health Regional Conference, and we will offer them the opportunity to participate in the 2013 conference.
- Two students are attending the National Oral Health Conference in Huntsville, AL.
- The DPH Club is working to emphasize outreach activities such as elderly oral cancer screenings and school-based fluoride varnish sealants. For this purpose, many of our DPH Club students participated in outreach at one of five different sites over the course of the school year so far.

We are very fortunate to have this HRSA funding to help offer our DDS students the opportunity to learn about the specialty of Dental Public Health and to participate in these important courses and activities.

## \*\*Regional Dental Public Health Conference – October 13-14, 2013\*\*

The dates have been set for this year's conference – October 13-14, 2013, with the theme being "The Affordable Care Act and Oral Health: Implications for Dental Public Health". The conference 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.



Be sure to visit our new website:  
<http://www.dentistry.uiowa.edu/preventive-grad-program-requirements/>

### Congratulations!

**Paul Colthirst ('08)**

successfully completed the ABDPH examination and is now diplomate of the American Board of Dental Public Health.

**Golnaz Kavand ('12)**

successfully completed the written portion of the ABDPH exam.

## AlumNEWS . . . . .

**Preston A. (PAL) Littleton, Jr. ('73)**, who was a member of the first MS in DPH graduating class, found and sent some historical information on the program. (See page 5 for details). . . . .

**Ronald Hunt ('82)**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Midwestern University-Arizona College of Dental Medicine, has assumed the position of Chair of the Dental Quality Alliance (DQA) for 2013, after serving the past year as Chair-elect. As a national alliance of major stakeholders in oral health care delivery, the DQA uses a collaborative approach to develop, test, and promote oral health care measures to improve dental care delivery and oral health. Its members represent dental practitioners, dental educators, dental payers, healthcare partners, governmental agencies, and the public.

Dr. Hunt has represented the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) on the DQA since its inception in 2008. The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services had asked the American Dental Association to develop an alliance to lead performance measurement efforts for quality improvement in dental care programs. Dr. Hunt also chaired the DQA's Education and Communication Advisory Committee. He served as ADEA President from 2009-2010.

**Jessica Meeske ('99)**, continues to practice dentistry in Hastings, Nebraska, and she also spends a lot of time working on Dental Medicaid Advocacy issues. She heads up a task force that is working on an expanded duty model of dental assisting and dental hygiene in Nebraska. Jessica's son, Robert, spent his senior year of high school in Brazil on a Rotary exchange. Daughter, Sophia, is a high school freshman.

**Kari Steinbock ('01)**, currently resides in Portland, Oregon and is a practicing neurosurgery PA-C. Her four kids keep her busy as well – Caitlin is in high school, Jacob in 7th grade, Izzy is a third grader, and Mollie is in first grade.

**Rahul Nair ('08)**, reports that all is well in Singapore. **Kecia Leary ('07)** and **Deise Oliveira ('11)** also let us know they are doing well in Missouri and Colorado, respectively. **Zhaomin Huang ('04)** continues to practice in Dublin, CA ([www.liveandsmiledental.com](http://www.liveandsmiledental.com)).

## Graduate Student Dental Public Health Field Experiences – 2013

**Vinti Ahuja** - *Developing a needs assessment database for all Iowa counties*

**Site Directors:** Raymond Kuthy (University of Iowa), Bob Russell (Iowa Department of Public Health)

The purpose of this project was to build a database for all counties in Iowa containing information such as: demographic information, social and educational environment, economic indicators, general health infrastructure and indicators, and oral health infrastructure and indicators. This database will act as a one place resource for obtaining data related to the aforementioned characteristics for all the counties in Iowa. It will be a beneficial resource to focus needs assessment programs and planning in any of the 99 Iowa counties. Though the information related to all the individual variables included in the database are available from different sources but a concise one-place data source was missing.

**Julie Reynolds** - *Assessing the dental knowledge, behaviors, oral health status, and access to dental care of the WIC population in DuPage county, Illinois*

**Site Director:** Mila Tsigalis (DuPage County Health Department, Illinois)

As a county dental administrator, it is important to have an understanding of the level of oral health knowledge and access to care within the county's most vulnerable populations. In DuPage County, a need was identified to assess the WIC population for oral health knowledge, behaviors, and access to care during pregnancy. Therefore, a survey was developed containing questions on these topics as well as demographic items, and was administered at all five WIC centers in DuPage County over the course of May-July 2012. Data were analyzed and a final report was sent to Ms. Tsigalis to inform future educational and access-related program development for the county's WIC clients.

## 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](mailto:john-warren@uiowa.edu) or Tina Craig at [tina-craig@uiowa.edu](mailto:tina-craig@uiowa.edu).



The picture to the right was sent to us by Dr. Preston A. (PAL) Littleton ('73). It is from the July 6, 1972 Muscatine Journal, and was one of many clippings sent to us by Dr. Littleton which help to outline the historical perspective for the MS degree program in Dental Public Health at the University of Iowa. Pal Littleton was a member of the inaugural class of MS in DPH students, which also included Jack Brooks ('72). Phil Phair was the program director.

At the time, the mobile dental lab shown above was parked in Muscatine, where a summer dental treatment program for migrant and low income workers was being conducted. Dr. Littleton and other pediatric dentists and dental students commuted daily in the summer to the Muscatine site to provide dental treatment. This mobile dental lab was the forerunner for both the D4 extramural program and the Geriatric Mobile Unit as we know them today (see picture). Many of you will recall that during the D4 year in dental school, about two-thirds of the students in the class gain experience providing dental care to residents of area nursing homes on the mobile unit. Dr. Howard Cowen ('95) is Director of the Geriatric and Special Needs Program and oversees the mobile unit.

Another important aspect of Dr. Littleton's time as a DPH graduate student was, along with Program Director, Dr. Phil Phair, "...researching and then developing the application to the ADA Commission on Dental Accreditation to get the Community Dentistry program initially accredited", which was successful. Subsequent graduates of the program have certainly reaped the benefits of Dr. Littleton's work in this area. You will recall from the April 2011 newsletter, that our program has been accredited through 2018.

Dr. Littleton shares, "I had never stepped foot in Iowa before enrolling in the graduate program – and I came to Iowa solely on the basis of my knowledge of the faculty... It was the best and most exciting educational experience of my life!" Thank you, Pal, for sharing your insights and giving us a glimpse into the history of the MS Degree Program in Dental Public Health.



Muscatine Journal, July 6, 1972

#### Discussing mobile lab

Dr. George Ritson, left and Dr. Nhak Hee Kim, Muscatine, talk with Dr. Preston A. Littleton (center) of the University of Iowa dental school faculty outside the mobile laboratory from the university which is parked at Franklin school for eight weeks. Dr. Kim is president of the Muscatine County Dental Society and teaches one day each week at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry. The mobile unit will provide dental care for migrant families and other economically-disadvantaged persons in the Muscatine area.

**"I had never stepped foot in Iowa before enrolling in the graduate program... It was the best and most exciting educational experience of my life!"**





## 2012 GRADUATES

(and titles of research theses)

### Atul Bidarkar (MS) –

*In Vitro Prevention of Secondary Demineralization by ICON (Infiltration Concept)*

As part of an Optional Training Program, Atul is Research Associate (Evaluator) with the Iowa Consortium of Substance Abuse and Evaluation, working on a grant entitled “Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment” for 50% time. He also is Research Assistant on a grant with College of Dentistry faculty for 50% time.

### Golnaz Kavand (MS) –

*Assessment of Adolescents’ and Their Parents’ Dental Esthetic Perceptions: A Longitudinal Study*  
Golnaz is pursuing the PhD in Oral Sciences at the University of Iowa.

### Elham Kateeb (PhD) –

*Factors Related To The Use of Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART) In Pre and Post-Pediatric Dentistry Programs and In Pediatric Dentistry Practices in The U.S.*

Elham is 60% Assistant Professor at Ohio State University working in teaching and research and also works with the Public Policy Center at the University of Iowa in research.

### Susan McKernan (PhD) –

*Dental Service Areas: Methodologies and Applications for Evaluation of Access to Care*  
Susan is Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry with a secondary appointment at the Public Policy Center.

Current and former DPH Graduate Students gather at the 2011 Dental Public Health Conference. (L-R: Atul Bidarkar ('12), Pradeep Bhagavatula ('09), Tejas Avasare, Julie Reynolds, Tariq Ghazal, Astha Singhal, Kalyani Yaduwanshi, Reem Oweis, Elham Kateeb (PhD '12), Susan McKernan (MS '09, PhD '12)



## Current Graduate Students

### PhD candidates (in Oral Sciences with DPH Emphasis)

Astha Singhal (BDS, India)  
Golnaz Kavand (BDS, Iran)

### MS Program candidates

Vinti Ahuja (BDS, India)  
Tejas Avasare (BDS, India)  
Stella Chukwu (DDS, Howard University)  
Joshua Cohen (DDS, USC)  
Tariq Ghazal (BDS, Iraq)  
Reem Oweis (BDS, Jordan)  
Julie Reynolds (DDS, University of Iowa)  
Kalyani Yaduwanshi (BDS, India)

## First Year DPH Graduate Students

**Reem Oweis** received a BDS degree from Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) in Irbid, Jordan. She also received an MS in Pediatric Dentistry from JUST.

**Kalyani Yaduwanshi** received a BDS degree from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences in Nashik, India.

## HONORS & AWARDS

### Faculty

**Raymond Kuthy** served an Expert Workgroup for CDC’s Division of Oral Health for Oral Health Infrastructure and Capacity Indicator Project; Completed service on the Board of Directors, Association for State and Territorial Dental Directors.

**John Warren ('91)** has been appointed to the American Board of Dental Public Health. This is a multi-year appointment that will ultimately lead him to be President of ABDPH.

### Graduate Students

**Tariq Ghazal** – First Place Postdoctoral Specialty Award- Preventive and Community Dentistry from the Iowa Section of the American Association for Dental Research. The title of his presentation was “Prevalence and Incidence of Early Childhood Caries Among African-American Children”.

**Tejas Avasare** received a Stanley Graduate Award for International Research for her research to take place in Tamilnadu, India, July-August, 2013; and 2013 UI Obermann Graduate Institute Fellow.

**Julie Reynolds** received a Stanley Graduate Award for International Research for her research to take place in Xicotepec, Mexico, May-July, 2013.

Both of these awards were made possible through the generous support of the Stanley-UI Foundation Support Organization.



Dr. Daniel Caplan, Dr. Tariq Ghazal, Dr. Clark Stanford