

Advancing Oral Health.  
Improving Lives.™

**NOTABLES AMONG US**

Introducing the 2022 recipients of UMSOD's Distinguished Alumni Awards.

**EXPANDING COVERAGE**

Task force studies barriers to dental care for moms-to-be.

**INVALUABLE SERVICE**

UMSOD thanks those who give their time and expertise as Dean's Faculty members.

# Mdental

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY | SUMMER 2022



## RESOUNDING RESILIENCE

Families and friends celebrate the persistence and accomplishments of the Class of 2022.



CLASS OF 2022



# OfNote

On May 20, when Umar Mian, DDS '22, was unable to attend the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) Honors Convocation due to emergency surgery, his absence was noticed. After the ceremony, Omar El-Sayed, DDS '22, mentioned to Cynthia Idzik-Starr, DDS, clinical associate professor and director of urgent care, how much his classmate Mian (front row, far right in photo above) was missed. Her response: If he can't come to us, let's take the ceremony to him.

"One thing led to another," El-Sayed says.

On June 7, a surprise ceremony was held at the University of Maryland Medical Center, orchestrated by Idzik-Starr, El-Sayed, Umar Mian's sister Harima Mian, DDS '20, and others. The event

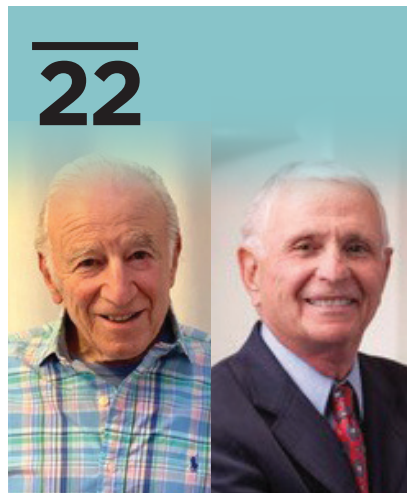
drew about 30 friends, family members, and faculty, some of whom wore all or part of their academic regalia.

Karen Faraone, DDS, MA, associate dean of student affairs, offered welcoming remarks; Patricia Meehan, DDS, BSN, associate dean of academic affairs, led the professional oath; and Idzik-Starr placed the hood on Umar Mian.

"There are no words that I can say to describe my feelings and appreciation of what you all have done for me," Umar Mian wrote later in an email. He is feeling better, he added, and is completing a general practice residency at Baltimore Veterans Affairs Medical Center. **M**

— HOLLY SELBY

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Neither distance nor frostbite deterred UMSOD alumnus John Sargent and his wife Joan, a dental hygienist, from delivering oral health care to Native Alaskan communities.

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Baltimore native Leonard "Boogie" Weinglass endowed a periodontal scholarship to honor the insightful patient care he received from friend and clinician Sylvan Feldman.

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Finally! It was wonderful to see the Class of 2022 process into Chesapeake Employers Insurance Arena at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County on May 19, 2022, as part of their commencement. Anthony Fauci, MD, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical advisor to President Joe Biden, presented the keynote speech. It was a pleasure to see the graduates — in person, not on a computer screen — cheered on by their friends and families.

The ceremony marked the University of Maryland, Baltimore's first in-person university-wide commencement since 2019. Everyone's presence was a victory over the challenges of the pandemic.

On the next day, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) Honors Convocation was just as exhilarating. There seemed to be a heightened appreciation of the strength and resilience shown by the Class of 2022 and the entire UMSOD community, whose members have collaborated, innovated, and supported each other through these exceptional times.

In her remarks at the convocation, Jazmin Jones, DDS '22, president of the Class of 2022, reminded her fellow graduates that they had surmounted remarkable hurdles since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, through perseverance, flexibility, and mutual support.

Having done so, she said, "We can be limitless."

Within this issue of *Mdental*, you will read about initiatives and accomplishments that suggest her words may be applied throughout the UMSOD community. One article describes research being done by Marcela Romero-Reyes, DDS, PhD, and Simon Akerman, PhD, investigating a new way to treat and prevent migraines (p. 13).

In another, UMSOD welcomes Eleanor Fleming, DDS, PhD, MPH, our first assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion. Previously an associate professor in the Department of Dental Public Health and director of the Center for Educational Development and Support at Meharry Medical College, Fleming describes how George Floyd's death and the COVID-19 pandemic moved her to change her professional path.

And, as in every year, I hope you also will enjoy reading about the achievements of our Distinguished Alumni Award winners, who were honored June 3, 2022, at the All-Alumni Reunion (p. 30).

Best regards,

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

# Mdental

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## ON THE COVER

The Class of 2022 graduates amid fanfare and in-person events.

Photos by Matthew D'Agostino / UMB

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# OnTheCusp



## Primary Focus

UMSOD Participates in First Phase of Partnership Aiming to Engage with Patients in West Baltimore and Improve Their Health Outcomes

BY PATRICIA FANNING

Kate Noonan, senior director, special projects for the dean, and Darien Weatherspoon, clinical assistant professor, Department of Dental Public Health, are leading UMSOD's efforts in the UM West Baltimore Primary Care Strategy partnership.

Go to the highest vantage point in the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) building and look west. You'll be gazing upon the neighborhoods of West Baltimore. Soon UMSOD faculty and students will gain a better understanding of the health needs of the community as a whole.

Those insights will inform the UM West Baltimore Primary Care Strategy, a partnership formed in fall 2021 by the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), the University of Maryland Medical Center, and University of Maryland Faculty Physicians, Inc.

The initiative aims to improve the health outcomes and experiences of West Baltimore patients. As part of its first phase, Dean Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, named two representatives from UMSOD — Kate Noonan, PhD, MEd, senior director, special projects for the dean, and Darien J. Weatherspoon, DDS '10,

MPH, clinical assistant professor, Department of Dental Public Health — to work with the school's partners to enhance health care in the community.

Noonan and Weatherspoon began by taking inventory of UMSOD's engagement there. They found that during pre-pandemic 2019, UMSOD treated about 4,000 West Baltimore patients, many of whom received uncompensated care. In recent years, students and faculty have acted through more than 30 clubs and organizations — and numerous other research- and grant-based community engagement programs — to provide oral health services, education, and promotion.

"There is great opportunity for us to be more systematic and collaborative in our approach to community-based partnerships," Noonan says, adding that the strategy also presents opportunities for the school "to continue to pursue its

purpose: Advancing Oral Health. Improving Lives."

Called the UM Partnership, the group, which will work with the West Baltimore community, includes each of UMB's schools. Partners aspire to create a robust, cohesive, and connected primary care strategy and to better coordinate primary and specialty care.

"One of the driving forces of this project is to break down silos," says Weatherspoon, referring to traditions that isolate professional disciplines. Partnering might lead to earlier preventive care and help people find a dental home, a medical home, or both.

Another way to improve health is to change factors, known as social determinants of health, that influence it positively or negatively. Transportation is an example. "Addressing underlying health disparities and inequities in West Baltimore is an overall goal," Weatherspoon says. **MD**

# Grit and Greatness

## Celebrating the Class of 2022



1. Keynote speaker Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, with Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, UMB president, at the commencement ceremony.  
2. Mark A. Reynolds, UMSOD dean, hoods Jazmin Jones, DDS '22, class president, at the Honors Convocation.  
3. Andrea Valencia, DDS '22, and Zack Miller, DDS '22

Photos by Matthew D'Agostino / UMB



BY HOLLY SELBY

Noting that the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) Class of 2022 had “demonstrated remarkable resilience, perseverance, and adaptability,” Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, dean and professor, welcomed the graduates, their friends, family, and mentors to the UMSOD Honors Convocation, held at Baltimore’s Hippodrome Theatre on May 20.

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**“The fact that you have successfully navigated each hurdle the pandemic has put in your way is a testimony to your resilience, resolve, and strength of character.”**

— ANTHONY FAUCI, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ALLERGY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Larry Cohen, DDS '80; Rear Admiral Jeffrey Jablon; members of the Class of 2022 Kendra Rae Bloom, DDS; Jazmin Jones, DDS; Lisa Marie Hart, DDS; Paige Kelsey Jablon, DDS; Won J. Lee, DDS; and Mark A. Reynolds UMSOD dean and professor, at the Military Commissioning held May 20.



The ceremony “affirms the commitment, dedication, and hard work each of you has made to the oral health professions,” he said. “This is your day, and we congratulate you on your extraordinary accomplishments.”

Persistence was a theme throughout the two days of graduation events that began with the University of Maryland, Baltimore’s commencement ceremony held at Chesapeake Employers Insurance Arena at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County on May 19.

“I am in awe of you,” Anthony Fauci, MD, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical advisor to President Joe Biden, told the graduates.

“The fact that you have successfully navigated each hurdle the pandemic has put in your way is a testimony to your resilience, resolve, and strength of character.”

At UMSOD’s Honors Convocation, several speakers also noted that the 13 dental hygiene and 134 dental graduates had shown remarkable grit.

The last few years offer proof, said Jazmin Jones, DDS '22, class president, “that we can overcome any challenge that is in front of us. We can accomplish any goal that we set out. We can be limitless.” **MD**

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**“We can overcome any challenge that is in front of us. We can accomplish any goal that we set out. We can be limitless.”**

— JAZMIN JONES, DDS '22, CLASS PRESIDENT



**TOP RIGHT:** Melissa Harmel, BS, Dental Hygiene Class of 2022, marches in the Honors Convocation procession.

**RIGHT:** Members of the Class of 2022 recite their professional oath.

## Taking an In-Depth Look at Marylanders' Access to Dental Care



Mark A. Reynolds is co-chair of the Task Force on Oral Health in Maryland, which is assessing barriers to oral health services.

The University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) is bringing its expertise to help the state of Maryland take an in-depth look at current access to dental services for all Marylanders.

Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, UMSOD dean and professor,

is co-chair of the Task Force on Oral Health in Maryland, which is charged with analyzing Marylanders' access to dental services with a focus on socioeconomic status, ethnicity, age, and disability. His fellow co-chair is Debony R. Hughes, DDS, designee of the Maryland Deputy Secretary, Public Health Services, Maryland Department of Health.

"Access to oral health care is a critical component of overall health, and I am pleased to work with my colleagues on an issue so important to every person in the state," Reynolds said. "The topics we're examining will break down barriers to oral health care."

Established by the Maryland State Senate, the 16-member task force is responsible for investigating barriers to dental care; identifying underserved areas; analyzing the specific impact of each barrier on Marylanders; and assessing methods of addressing the barriers. Its members include Charles A. Doring, DDS '87, MAGD, appointed by the Maryland State Dental Association; Arpana S. Verma, DDS, appointed by the State Board of Dental Examiners; and Jennifer

Anne Suminski, RDH, MS, appointed by the Maryland Dental Hygienists' Association; and others.

The group has a Dec. 1, 2022, deadline to submit its recommendations about how to increase oral health care throughout the state. Additional issues it will consider include the impact on access to dental care of implicit bias and socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity; low oral health literacy; location of dental offices (with a focus on inconvenient office hours or lack of transportation); language and cultural barriers; lack of Medicaid or dental insurance; and financial support for dentists who agree to provide care in underserved areas.

The task force also will assess and make recommendations based upon the experience of Minnesota, which in 2009 became the first state to license dental therapists. Under consideration will be the number of dental therapists licensed, cost of dental therapy education, and the impact dental therapists had on access to oral health care for low-income patients. **MD**

— HOLLY SELBY

## UMSOD Student Co-Authors Study Investigating Building a Diverse Workforce



Courtesy of Jeremie Oliver

A study published in *The American Journal of Surgery* found similar growth rates in the percentage of women faculty members and

residents in surgical specialty fields, but a surprising lag in the number of residents who belong to racial or ethnic minorities compared to the growing number of minority faculty members.

"While we are making some progress in recruiting a diversity of faculty members, we didn't see the proportion of residents [who identify as racial or

ethnic minorities] in the same specialties reflecting the same growth," said Jeremie D. Oliver, MS, University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) second-year dental student, fellow in the graduate partnership program at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and a study co-author.

Oliver and his co-authors, who include principal investigator Jennifer F. Waljee, MD, MPH, MS, associate professor, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of Michigan School of Medicine, drew upon the Association of American Medical Colleges Faculty Roster and the Graduate Medical Education Track databases. During the years 2001-17, they evaluated the number of women and individuals from racial/ethnic minority

groups on the faculty and trainee level in the surgical subspecialties of neurosurgery; urology; otolaryngology; and general, orthopedic, and plastic surgery.

"Although previous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce on patient care and education, the study suggests that current surgical training programs fall short and require intentional structural change to attain these goals," wrote the co-authors.

To read more about the study, visit: [www.dental.umaryland.edu/OliverArticle](http://www.dental.umaryland.edu/OliverArticle). **MD**

— HOLLY SELBY



# Making Access to Dental Care a Reality for Maryland Mothers

BY HOLLY SELBY



Co-principal investigators Lisa Bress, clinical associate professor, UMSOD's Division of Dental Hygiene, and Thomas W. Oates, professor and chair of UMSOD's Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics

For many Marylanders who are pregnant or have recently given birth, a law passed last year has opened new pathways to better health. Effective in April 2022, the law expands dental coverage for pregnant individuals on Medicaid to a full year after delivery.

Now, faculty at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) have taken a significant step toward advancing this state policy by convening the first meeting of an advisory group of community members and oral health experts who are working to break through access-to-care barriers that exist for thousands of mothers and their children.

"Our goal is to develop a practical blueprint to address oral health disparities among low-income mothers. And what is crucial is that we're engaging people with lived experience and discussing the impact of race, ethnicity, and equity on oral health care," said principal investigator Lisa Bress, RDH, MS, clinical associate professor in UMSOD's Division of Dental Hygiene. "That's never been a part of the equation before, and it's a powerful part of the story."

The UMB Prenatal Postpartum Advisory Board (PPAB), which held its first meeting in April, includes four mothers who are on Medicaid and represent people who benefit from the program, prenatal health providers, and experts from UMSOD and the University of Maryland schools of medicine and social work.

The PPAB project is sponsored by the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health and Colgate Oral Pharmaceuticals, Inc., which have provided \$157,000 in grants. Bress and co-principal investigator Thomas W. Oates, DMD, PhD, professor and chair of UMSOD's Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, lead the project.

The inclusion of pregnant and postpartum mothers who have struggled to navigate the oral health care system brings firsthand experience of oral health inequities. "I have a toothache right now, my baby is 3 months old, and I didn't know I had dental coverage while I was pregnant. Can you help me?" said one of the mothers, reflecting a common need.

Dentists and hygienists on the panel offer their perspectives on care and their knowledge of financial and regulatory challenges. Additionally, Holly Hayes, president of ISI Consulting, a facilitation and health equity coaching firm, was on hand with her staff to help transform the diverse group into a results-oriented team.

"I can honestly say that this was one of the best meetings I've ever attended, and I have attended a lot of meetings," said Katy Battani, BSDH '02, MSDH '08, a member of UMSOD's Alumni Association Board of Directors and a project manager for the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center at Georgetown University. "It accomplished the goal of connection between and among the diverse mix of board members. Relationships were built, and I know they will continue to be deepened."

In pregnant women, poor oral health has been associated with premature births and low birth weight. People who lack insurance coverage for dental care may instead seek treatment in hospital emergency departments when dental problems cause pain. But most emergency medicine departments do not have oral health clinicians regularly available.

In Maryland, oral health coverage for postpartum women on Medicaid became available April 1, 2022. The state legislature also passed a law that requires Maryland Medicaid to cover adult dental services, including restorative and periodontal services.

"Our aim is to develop strategic ways of targeting and educating underserved mothers and health care providers inside and outside dentistry in ways that lead to improved oral health through Maryland's expanded Medicaid dental coverage window for pregnant and postpartum women," Bress said. **MD**

# A Pair of Aces

## Maxwell, O’Keefe Are 2022 Recipients of Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence

BY HOLLY SELBY



Photos by Holly Selby and Janet Wiley

- 1. Scholarship recipients Kelly O’Keefe and Justin Maxwell with Mark A. Reynolds, UMSOD dean
- 2. Melvin Kushner, chair of UMSOD’s Board of Visitors, who attended the surprise meetings, congratulates Justin Maxwell.
- 3. Kelly O’Keefe, 2022 scholarship recipient, poses with an oversized check.

Two University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) students were invited to attend a follow-up — and possibly final — round of interviews for the Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence.

At least, that’s what they were told.

Fourth-year dental student Justin Maxwell and third-year dental student Kelly A. O’Keefe instead found themselves in a meeting during which they were surprised by Mark A. Reynolds, DDS ’86, PhD, UMSOD dean and professor, who congratulated each of them not as finalists but as winners of the \$25,000 scholarships.

“Dental education is recognized as being among the most expensive health professions to complete,” Reynolds said. “With this scholarship, we hope to support students so that they can achieve academic excellence while continuing to immerse themselves in opportunities to enrich their professional development.”

As part of the surprise presentation March 29, the students were invited to meet separately for what they thought would be their last application interview. Maxwell attended in person; O’Keefe attended virtually. Each was met by a panel that included Melvin F. Kushner, DDS ’66, chair of the UMSOD Board of Visitors; Charles A. Doring, DDS ’87, MAGD, chair of the Catalyst Campaign for UMSOD and a Dean’s Faculty member; Janet Wiley, assistant dean of development and alumni relations; and other members of the UMSOD Scholarship Committee.

A few moments into each meeting, the dean, carrying an oversized check, made a surprise entrance and announced the good news.

To Maxwell and O’Keefe in turn, Reynolds said: “You are highly deserving because of your academic excellence, dedication, and leadership. We fully appreciate the tremendous effort and commitment that it takes to excel as a dental student. We are exceedingly proud of you, and we look forward to all that you will accomplish.”

Designed to recognize students who succeed in the classroom and the clinic, demonstrate promise as leaders, and aspire to continue in public service, the Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence is made possible primarily by UMSOD’s Socks for Scholarships fundraising campaign. As part of the initiative, donors who make a minimum gift or pledge of \$100 receive a pair of UMSOD-themed socks as a thank-you.

Since its creation during fiscal year 2020, Socks for Scholarships has raised over \$160,000 from more than 450 donors. In fiscal year 2022, 225 alumni and friends donated nearly \$40,000.

Noting that one of the school’s fundraising priorities is to increase scholarship support, Wiley said, “I am thrilled that we’re able to offer these students meaningful scholarship support. Kelly and Justin are very impressive students and leaders. I wholeheartedly congratulate them.”

### From the Diamond to Dentistry

For Maxwell, who graduated in May, dentistry represents a second career. After graduating from the University of Maryland, College Park with a bachelor’s degree in animal science, the father of three played minor and major league baseball from 2006-16 for the Washington Nationals, Houston Astros, Kansas City Royals, and San Francisco Giants organizations. As a dental student, he also worked as a sports broadcaster for the Mid-Atlantic Sports Network and Fox 5 DC.

Throughout his professional baseball career, Maxwell volunteered during many summers at youth baseball clinics and as a basketball coach for youth teams. At UMSOD, he is a member of the Student National Dental Association, American Student Dental Association, Alpha Omega International Dental Society, Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, and Gorgas Odontological Honorary Society, among others. After graduation, Maxwell plans to enter private practice in Frederick County, Md.

Expressing his gratitude for the scholarship, Maxwell noted that his accomplishments at UMSOD have been greatly aided by the support of his fellow students. “I honestly feel that for me, [my success] has a lot to do with all the feedback I got from classmates and recent graduates.”

Referring to the fact that each class traditionally wears scrubs in a particular hue, he said, “That is one of the things I love about Maryland: That it doesn’t matter what color scrubs you wear — everyone is willing to help you.”

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**“With this scholarship, we hope to support students so that they can achieve academic excellence while continuing to immerse themselves in opportunities to enrich their professional development.”**

— MARK A. REYNOLDS, UMSOD DEAN AND PROFESSOR

### Future Faculty Member?

When told she had received the Dean’s Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence, O’Keefe expressed her surprise and added, “I’m honored and so grateful to receive this scholarship. My classmates set the bar really high in terms of excellence and leadership, and I’m lucky to be surrounded by people who encourage and motivate me every day. Thank you so much.”

After graduating in 2023, O’Keefe plans to complete an Advanced Education in General Dentistry program while serving in the U.S. Air Force. She is a graduate of Wake Forest University, which she attended on a dance scholarship and where she majored in biology and minored in chemistry and dance. Before beginning college, she considered dancing professionally and, in fact, turned down a scholarship to the Rockette Summer Intensive, a demanding, invitation-only training program held at Radio City Music Hall that paves the way for a possible future as a Rockette.

At UMSOD, O’Keefe is vice president of the Class of 2023 and president of the Tau Sigma Chi Military Dentistry Society. A University of Maryland, Baltimore President’s Student Leadership Institute scholar and a UMSOD admissions committee student host and interviewer, she also is a member of the Gorgas Odontological Honorary Society, Gamma Pi Delta Honor Society, Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Association of Women Dentists.

Although undecided about whether to spend her career in the U.S. Air Force or eventually pursue private practice, O’Keefe said her experiences at UMSOD have piqued her interest in academia.

“Having the support of the faculty members has really shown me how much I would like to give back in the same way,” O’Keefe said. “I would love to be a faculty member here so I can help students the way that the faculty members have helped me.” **MD**

# Celebrating UMSOD's Inaugural Endowed Professorship

BY HOLLY SELBY

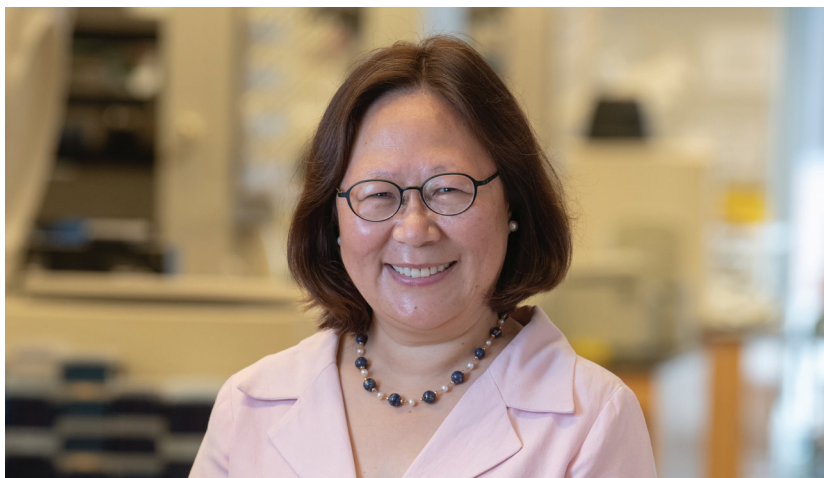


Photo by Matthew D'Agostino / UMB

Tao Lowe, PhD, the inaugural recipient of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) Frederick G. Smith, MS, DDS, and Venice K. Paterakis, DDS, Endowed Professorship in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, was honored Feb. 2 in a virtual investiture ceremony. The event, which had been postponed for months because of the COVID-19 pandemic, also served as an official recognition of the establishment of UMSOD's first endowed professorship.

Created by philanthropists and UMSOD alumni Frederick G. Smith, MS, DDS '78, and Venice K. Paterakis, DDS '81, the professorship marks a path toward greater research collaborations, larger and more rapid advancements in diagnoses and treatments, and transfers of novel discoveries into practical applications.

The professorship is designed to support the work of an outstanding research scientist in the field of tissue engineering and the advancement

of novel therapies for head, neck, and oral cancers, while also supporting pioneering translational research and collaborations throughout the university.

Calling the investiture an important opportunity to recognize and celebrate Lowe and her achievements, Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, UMSOD dean and professor, said, "It is truly a great pleasure and source of pride for me to present one of our school's highest honors to you, Dr. Lowe."

He continued: "We also wish to recognize Drs. Smith and Paterakis, who through their vision, leadership, and generosity have established the first endowed professorship at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry!"


Lowe is a professor in UMSOD's Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery with a joint appointment in the Fischell Department of Bioengineering at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is developing, among other things, delivery platforms that can

As an endowed professor, Tao Lowe says, "I am sincerely committed to contributing to and leading interdisciplinary research aimed at providing innovative solutions, translational discoveries, and technologies that will enhance patient care and economic development in Maryland and beyond."

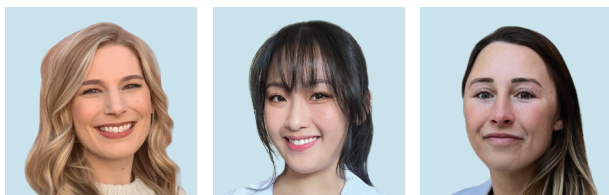
cross biological barriers and offer the controlled release of drugs with the potential to aid patients with diseases such as oral cancer and diabetic retinopathy. She additionally focuses her research on regenerative medicine and tissue engineering.

During the virtual ceremony, Lowe offered warm thanks to Smith and Paterakis. "With honor and privilege come responsibility — and I am sincerely committed to contributing to and leading interdisciplinary research aimed at providing innovative solutions, translational discoveries, and technologies that will enhance patient care and economic development in Maryland and beyond," she said.

As an endowed professor, Lowe received a special medal in recognition of her accomplishments. Its front features an etching of the UMSOD building and images of Horace H. Hayden and Chapin A. Harris, who in 1840 founded the school — the first dental college in the world. The back of the medal lists the name of the endowed professorship as well as a description of the school's purpose: Advancing Oral Health. Improving Lives.

To view the virtual investiture ceremony, please visit [www.dental.umaryland.edu/TaoLoweInvestiture](http://www.dental.umaryland.edu/TaoLoweInvestiture). 

## Accolades



▲ Dental hygiene students **Paige Christensen, BS/MS '22**, **Heeyeon Kim, BS '22**, and **Kristin Yates BS '22**, received top honors in the Maryland Dental Hygiene Spring Scientific Research Presentation Sessions for “Assessing Postpartum Oral Health Literacy and Needs as Medicaid Expands.”

Second place went to **Cailin Gollubier** and **Lauren Miller**, both Class of 2022, and third place went to **Bianca Ascenzi**, **Alexa Arrington**, **Marleigh Korell**, all Class of 2022, and **Carly Miller, BS/MS '22**.

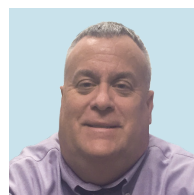


◀ **Frederick Flanagan, DDS '22**, received a \$50,000 Future Icons grant from medical apparel provider FIGS, Inc. As FIGS notes on its website, “Driven by the power of second chances, community leader and non-traditional student Freddy went into

dentistry to help recovering addicts restore their smiles.” View Flanagan’s FIGS Future Icons Grant Video here: <https://youtu.be/DDcOkOm6yJg>.



◀ **Cailin Gollubier, Class of 2022**, was selected as the 2021-2022 UM Alumni Association International Scholarship recipient. The scholarship recognizes undergraduate, full-time students who are Maryland residents and have demonstrated leadership engagement and high academic achievement.



◀ **William F. Hoffman Jr., MAS**, research administrator, co-presented two discussions last April at the Society of Research Administrators International Northeast-Southern Section Meeting in Philadelphia: “Same Goal, Different Paths: NIH and a Recipient Organization Talk About Grants” and “Human Resources Management and Best Practices for the Department Administrator.”

## Collaborative Efforts Earn Recognition

Photo by Matthew D’Agostino / UMB



Zack Mahan and Christopher Cruz

Christopher Cruz, DDS '22, received the 2021 Hinman Student Research Symposium’s Most Outstanding Presentation in Clinical Research

Award in recognition of his presentation, “Peri-Implant Soft Tissue Biocompatibility with Four Different Titanium Abutments.”

Overseen by the University of Maryland School of Dentistry’s (UMSOD) Tao Ma, PhD, research associate, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences, and Hanae Saito, DDS, MS, CCRC, clinical associate professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, his research explored how different materials used for abutment in support of implants affect their longevity and success.

In a pandemic-related twist, the honor also reflects work completed as

part of UMSOD’s Summer Research Program by third-year dental student Zack Mahan. In 2019, Mahan, also working with Ma and Saito, presented a poster featuring his research into the interface between implants and the surrounding soft tissue. His poster earned a spot at the 2020 Hinman Student Research Symposium, scheduled for fall 2020 and canceled because of COVID-19.

A year later, when the symposium was held, Mahan was immersed in other studies, and Cruz, whose investigation further explored the effect on implants by the materials used to support them, was selected to represent UMSOD. **MD**

# ByTheNumbers

## Providing a Dental Home to Children in Need

Through a program called Oral Health for Uninsured, Underserved Children (OH-UUC), the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's Division of Pediatric Dentistry strives to increase access to oral health care for Maryland children. With partners such as the Maryland Department of Health, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Foundation, and Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, the OH-UUC program aims to identify youths up to age 18 who are under- or uninsured and/or undocumented and provide them with a dental home. It provides preventive, restorative, sedation, and urgent care services during more than 1,500 patient visits annually.



**Percent of Marylanders under 17 who lack sufficient health insurance:**

**25**

**Number of Marylanders under 17 who lack sufficient health insurance:**

**375,000**

**Approximate number of Maryland children who don't have access to health insurance because of undocumented status:**

**48,000**

**Number of children treated through the OH-UUC program in the last year:**

Ages 0-12: **463**

**Number of treatments provided annually:**

nearly **6,000**



**Number of OH-UUC care providers:**

**6**

full-time faculty

**8**

pediatric dental residents

**250**

dental students on a rotational basis

*Source: 2018-19 National Survey of Children's Health and UMSOD records from April 2021-February 2022.*

# Innovation + Discovery



Photo by Holly Selby

UMSOD's Marcela Romero-Reyes and Simon Akerman

## Headache Relief

**UMSOD Researchers to Study Novel Migraine Treatment with Collaborative \$5.3 Million Grant**

BY LAURA LEE

The University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) and Saint Louis University School of Medicine (SLU) have received a combined \$5.3 million from the Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health to study a new way to treat and prevent migraines by “switching off” specific pain receptors.

Migraine, a complex brain disorder that brings on throbbing headaches as well as a host of other symptoms including nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, and mood changes, affects 30 million people in the United States, including children as young as 5.

The team proposes a novel approach that will target two distinct receptors, sphingosine-1-phosphate receptor 1 (S1PR1) and adenosine A3

receptor (A3AR), to turn off pain signals involved in inflammation. The treatment will be especially helpful to the approximately 50 percent of migraine patients who get little relief from existing medications.

The collaboration brings together Simon Akerman, PhD, research assistant professor, and Marcela Romero-Reyes, DDS, PhD, clinical associate professor, both from UMSOD’s Department of Neural and Pain Sciences, and Daniela Salvemini, PhD, professor and chair, SLU Department of Pharmacology and Physiology.

The grant will allow Akerman and Romero-Reyes to combine their basic science and clinical expertise in migraine and orofacial pain with

Salvemini’s extensive experience in pain disorder drug development to pursue a promising new approach to migraine pain relief and prevention.

The research is particularly promising because drugs targeting these receptors already exist, including one that is FDA approved to treat multiple sclerosis (MS). As a part of this study, the team will conduct pre-clinical screening, speeding the way to possible clinical trials repurposing these compounds for migraine pain.

“Our approach is exciting because it could fast-track relief for millions of people affected by migraine,” Akerman said.

Romero-Reyes agreed, saying, “The S1PR1 class of drugs we are testing both already have FDA approval for MS. That is a huge advantage because the development of the drug itself has already been done, but we are able to repurpose these molecules to dissect a completely novel mechanism and therapeutic approach in migraine.”

Calling her UMSOD colleagues “world experts in migraine,” Salvemini said, “Our collaboration over the years has led to remarkable findings that can now be pursued with the ultimate goal of translating our discoveries from the bench to the bedside, hopefully impacting the lives of many individuals.” **MJ**

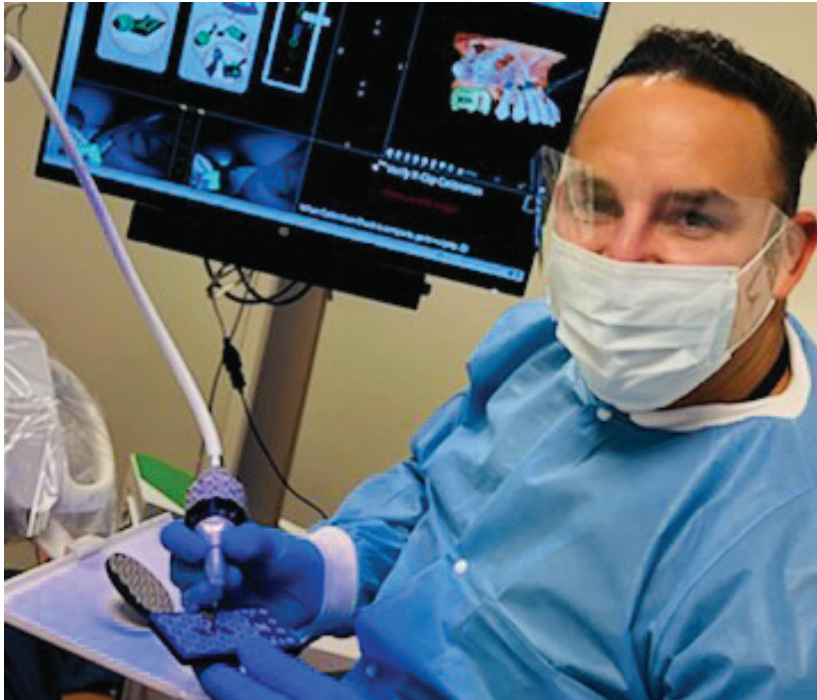


Photo courtesy of Frederico C. Martinho

## A New Use for Innovative Technology

Frederico C. Martinho, DDS, MSc, PhD, is an expert on endodontic advanced technology who has introduced it to residents and dental students at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD), where he is clinical associate professor and predoctoral director, Division of Endodontics, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics.

### Why did you begin using X-Guide, a product originally developed for implant dentistry by X-Nav Technologies, LLC?

Our lab at UMSOD focuses on the newest and developing technologies. A 3D Dynamic Navigation System (3D-DNS) falls under the modern concept of “target endodontics.” It delivers minimally invasive procedures with accuracy and efficiency. It also has potential application to several other areas in dentistry as well as different treatment modalities in endodontics.

Currently, my research group is applying this technology in several studies. Previous investigations showed accuracy and efficiency of the system to locate calcified canals, remove root posts with reduced tooth structure loss, and perform minimally invasive osteotomy and root-end resection.

### How has your research team, including students and residents, helped to advance the field?

Research was funded by the Foundation for Endodontics. This support allowed the lab to conduct independent research that aided in obtaining approval by the Food and Drug Administration of the X-Guide Surgical Navigation System specifically for endodontic access procedures.

Our study results were published in the *Journal of Endodontics* and the *International Endodontic Journal*, which are the publications of the

American Association of Endodontists and the British Endodontic Society, respectively.

### How does it work?

X-Guide is like a global positioning system (GPS) for your handpiece. It allows the dentist to see the tip of the drill during live surgery. The clinician plans virtually the “ideal” procedure using a preoperative cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) scan and X-Guide software. The dentist navigates in three dimensions (3D) and in real time. Overhead tracking cameras capture the patient’s jaw position and the operator’s burr movements. To enable tracking, clinicians have placed a clip containing fiducial markers on the teeth. Software provides interactive feedback, with turn-by-turn guidance. Real-time visualization of the position and angulation of the drill allows altering the “ideal” plan during the procedure, if needed. Because the clinician is looking at a screen, 3D-DNS potentially enables treatment in areas with typically difficult visualization, including maxillary and mandibular molars.

### What do you want other endodontists to know about 3D-DNS?

Both novice and experienced endodontists quickly master it. The learning curve was not steep. 3D-DNS has demonstrated promising results to improve accuracy and efficiency and to reduce operation time and the number of mishaps. This helps to perform simple cases more accurately but, foremost, to treat complex cases with greater precision and safety. Such complex cases carry risk of damage to important anatomic structures, including roots with proximity to maxillary sinus, mental foramen, and mandibular canal. Unlike some other endodontic technologies, 3D-DNS has a multidisciplinary function, and the dentist can benefit from its other applications. **MD**

*Interview by Patricia Fanning*





# FocalPoint

## Investigations into Microvascular Disease in the Eye Have Direct Implications for Oral Health Care in Diabetic Patients

BY SILVIA MONTANER, PHD, MPH

Our lab in the Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) received a \$2.3 million National Institutes of Health (NIH) R01 grant to study novel mechanisms for the treatment of pathological neovascularization.

Dysregulated angiogenesis (formation of new vessels from pre-existing ones) and vascular permeability are events associated with numerous diseases, including cancer, wound healing, inflammation, and ocular disease. Using the eye as a model, we examine the role of angiogenic mediators in ischemic retinopathies. The most prevalent ischemic retinopathy, diabetic eye disease, is the most common microvascular complication in patients with diabetes; retinal

microvascular disease affects 37 percent of patients with diabetes and remains the most common cause of vision loss in working-age Americans.

Our studies on diabetic microvascular disease in the eye have direct implications on oral health care in diabetic individuals. Studies suggest an association between diabetic retinopathy and periodontitis, an inflammatory condition with high prevalence in diabetic patients. It is speculated that the inflammatory mediators seen in periodontitis may have an association with the ones involved in the clinical complications seen in the diabetic population, including diabetic retinopathy. We are exploring this association.

The R01 award is a continuation of 15 years of funding from NIH to our lab. I started my independent research program in 2004 when I was appointed as an assistant professor at UMSOD. At that time, we used the vascular tumor, Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), as a model for dysregulated angiogenesis. Our studies helped identify angiopoietin-like 4 (ANGPTL4) as a major pro-angiogenic and pro-hyperpermeability factor in KS. For the last 12 years, we have been investigating the molecular mechanisms by which ANGPTL4 causes dysregulated angiogenesis. ANGPTL4 has subsequently been implicated in cardiac and lung diseases, nephrotic syndrome, atherosclerosis, joint diseases, wound healing, and tumor metastasis. In addition to KS, we have reported a role for ANGPTL4 in oral squamous cell carcinoma, the most common malignant epithelial neoplasm affecting the oral cavity.

In collaboration with the Wilmer Eye Institute at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, our lab is doing translational research on the role of ANGPTL4 in the pathogenesis of blinding eye diseases associated with vessel growth and leakage. This includes diabetic eye disease, sickle cell retinopathy, and macular degeneration. We are very excited about the possibility of improving the clinical outcomes for patients suffering from myriad diseases in which pathological angiogenesis, and ANGPTL4, play a role.

*Montaner is a professor in the Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry and the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center. Md*

# BY PLANE

# BOAT OR



John and Joan Sargent have dedicated their careers to delivering oral health care to members of native American communities.

# SLED

Family members sometimes would travel to receive dental care on foot or by sled or snow machine.



## The Sargents Bring Dental Care to Native Alaskan Communities

BY PATRICIA FANNING

Photos courtesy of the Sargents

In Western Alaska, children in indigenous communities needed to see their dentist. So, John Sargent, DDS '64, and his wife Joan, a dental hygienist, took their practice on the road. Except there was no road.

Instead, the Sargents packed a mobile X-ray unit and other tools for transport by plane, boat, or sled. If by sled, they took at least two snowmobiles connected to sleds, one to haul the equipment and the other for people. The traveling party sped along frozen waterways, bundled against the cold.

"Frostbite was a danger for all of us," John Sargent says. "We'd watch out for each other's nose."

These days, despite having settled in Alaska's Alexander Archipelago — four time zones west of Baltimore — Sargent fondly recalls his days at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry. In recognition of their importance, the Sargents last year chose to support current students, helping to fund the Dean's Scholarship for Leadership & Excellence.

Continuing to bolster the School of Dentistry's scholarships is a priority for the school, says Janet Wiley, assistant dean of development and alumni relations. The Sargents' two gifts, both of which were made in support of scholarships, "are greatly appreciated and will have a significant impact."

"Looking back," John Sargent says, "the dental school had a great deal to do with what I accomplished."

During the late 1970s and early '80s, Sargent worked out of remote St. Mary's, Alaska. His general dentistry practice had fee-for-service contracts with the federal government that limited adult treatment to emergencies such as extractions. The focus was on comprehensive treatment for children 18 and younger.

Tooth decay was widespread, he says, in part due to a practice of sugary bottle-feeding and older kids' fondness for sweet drinks. An oral health status survey, conducted by the U.S. Indian Health Service in 1983-84, found Indian children on reservations and in Native Alaskan communities had twice the incidence of dental caries as the national average.

Sargent treated patients in a 4,000-square-mile service area. Most lived in one of six Yup'ik villages on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta where the practice provided care annually.

During the summer, the Sargents commercially fished to supplement their income. "We certainly learned a lot really fast as we had no experience in drift net fishing, and the Lower Yukon River is mighty and wide," he says.

Come fall, it was back to a routine of treating children where they were: the classroom. At a two-room school in Nightmute, Alaska, for example, the Sargents slept on the floor by night and set up their dental equipment by day. Students often gathered around as friends and siblings received oral care. Parents came to observe.

At community events, it was the dentist's turn to observe. Visitors were invited to a potlatch, a type of gift exchange, and to performances that featured beaded hand fans and sealskin drums.



Joan Sargent offers oral health care to a child while others wait their turn.

**“WE CERTAINLY LEARNED A LOT REALLY FAST AS WE HAD NO EXPERIENCE IN DRIFT NET FISHING, AND THE LOWER YUKON RIVER IS MIGHTY AND WIDE.”**

— John Sargent, DDS '64

Yup'ik villagers often referred to the Sargents and other outsiders as Gussucks, a derivation of Cossacks. The term is a remnant of Russian colonization, much like the onion domes atop Orthodox churches — one of many features that distinguish Alaska.

Its scenic wilds had captivated Sargent during boyhood, when he completed a cross-country trip with relatives. "That trip left a lot of memories," he says.

Later, Sargent had the opportunity to return to Alaska when, during six years in the U.S. Army Dental Corps, he first served in Germany and then opted to serve at Fort Richardson near Anchorage. He left as a major in 1970.

He and Joan met while both were employed by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters at an Anchorage clinic for union laborers building the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. "These guys hadn't seen a dentist in years," she recalls.

Next came the period of bush dentistry among the Yup'ik. Deciding to step back from roughing it, the Sargents moved to Fairbanks. John ran a private practice for three decades and Joan taught high school while raising their children.

In 2013, John Sargent retired from dentistry, boating and traveling in a recreational vehicle that he and Joan called home until they finished building a house in Wrangell, Alaska.

Now, as John Sargent reflects on their efforts to improve the oral health of the indigenous people of Alaska, he says, although the challenges were great, the setting was ideal: "We fulfilled this childhood dream." **MJ**



Photo courtesy of Eleanor Fleming

# CHANGING DIRECTION CHANGING LIVES

**Events of 2020 Sent Eleanor Fleming  
on Quest to Focus Her Career  
on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

BY JOEL KABOT

**PREVIOUS PAGE:** UMSOD faculty members Eleanor Fleming, assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion (second from left), and Valli Meeks, DDS, MS, RDH, clinical professor in the Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences (far right), met in March with medical professionals at Bushenge Provincial Hospital in the Nyamasheke District to learn about oral health needs in Rwanda.

**RIGHT:** Eleanor Fleming, UMSOD's first assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion



Photo by Matthew D'Agostino / UMB

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the death of George Floyd changed the world. One after another, those significant events also changed the career trajectory of Eleanor Fleming, DDS, PhD, MPH, FICD, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) inaugural assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

Fleming was working for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Hyattsville, Md., as a dental epidemiologist when COVID-19 forced her to take stock of her career and decide she wanted to work directly with students and impact the next generation of oral health leaders.

"The pandemic was really a wake-up moment," Fleming said. "In March 2020, I thought about where I was and the path I was on. Watching things unfold, I felt that I needed to do more, and I felt that I could do that in the dental education world."

She left the CDC for her dental alma mater, Meharry Medical College, in her home state of Tennessee, where she served as an associate professor in the Department of Dental Public Health and director of the school's Center for Educational Development and Support.

"I'll be honest — I never saw myself leaving Meharry," she said, but another historical moment — the death of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police in May 2020 and the social activism that followed — sparked a second re-examination.

"I didn't really see dentistry engaged in the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion," Fleming said. "That's not to say organizations weren't doing anything. But the needs were so great, I wasn't sure my job at Meharry would lend itself to making an impact."

When she heard of the new DEI position at UMSOD, she immediately saw its potential for effecting positive change.

"There's something about this position being at the world's first dental college," she said. "I believe that when we get this work right in Maryland, we will demonstrate to the dental community that this is how you do the work. This is how you build an inclusive community in which you let people be their authentic selves. UMSOD is uniquely positioned to lead in this space."

After taking "a leap of faith" and applying for the position, Fleming was hired in November 2001 after a national search.

Thinking broadly about the job, Fleming said, "I see myself as a connector. In many respects, I am the person who will connect with faculty, staff, and students to help us do the work."

**"I'M TRYING TO CREATE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, TRYING TO BE A RESOURCE SO THAT AS WE WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO MAY BE DIFFERENT THAN US — HOWEVER WE DEFINE 'DIFFERENT' — WE CAN WORK IN AN INCLUSIVE WAY, WITH KINDNESS."**

— Eleanor Fleming, UMSOD's assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion



Eleanor Fleming leads a discussion about the book *Permission to be Human: The Conscious Leader's Guide to Creating a Values-Driven Culture* with author MaryBeth Hyland at a UMSOD hybrid event held June 14.

**“I BELIEVE THAT WHEN WE GET THIS WORK RIGHT IN MARYLAND, WE WILL DEMONSTRATE TO THE DENTAL COMMUNITY THAT THIS IS HOW YOU DO THE WORK. THIS IS HOW YOU BUILD AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY IN WHICH YOU LET PEOPLE BE THEIR AUTHENTIC SELVES. UMSOD IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO LEAD IN THIS SPACE.”**

— Eleanor Fleming, UMSOD’s assistant dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion

And that takes everyone, she notes.

“I emphasize the ‘us,’ because this isn’t about me putting together my vision of where we’re going to go,” she said. “I can inform it, and I’m responsible for the portfolio of what we have to do, but we all have to be willing to support our institution, our culture, and ourselves in being better.”

As one example, she said, “Maybe that means asking people about their pronouns, and what that means about how they are received as a patient or member of our community.”

Speaking of community, Fleming challenges UMSOD “to understand where we sit, not just in relation to West Baltimore, but to the rest of Baltimore and the policies and practices that created the Baltimore of today.”

“I believe that if you can understand and acknowledge your history, you can move forward,” she added. “I’m trying to create a learning environment, trying to be a resource so that as we work with people who may be different than us — however we define ‘different’ — we can work in an inclusive way, with kindness.”

Part of that history is Deamonte Driver, a 12-year-old from Prince George’s County who died in 2007 after suffering from a toothache. Without a dental home, Deamonte was unable

to see a dentist, and the infection from his tooth spread to his brain.

It is another moment that partially inspired Fleming, who left her promising career as a political science professor to begin her journey into dentistry. In many ways, then, her career has reached its fitting place: in Maryland, at the state’s only dental school.

“If I can, in a tiny way, help someone in the state where Deamonte Driver lived to have access to care, and to hopefully prevent a death due to oral disease, then I will have made a difference,” Fleming said.

Such disparities in oral health go well beyond just access, Fleming notes.

“If we look at the dental profession as a whole, we know that the workforce doesn’t always represent the patient population,” she said. “Are there opportunities to create that workforce that is going to be needed in the 21st century, not just clinically, but also in policy, administration, and education?”

While much work has been done on these issues going back decades, Fleming wants to challenge the school to “do more, to expand.”

“We have to be open to change, and embrace it,” she said. **MD**  
*Lou Cortina contributed to this article.*

## UMSOD

# Continuing Education Courses

The University of Maryland School of Dentistry 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 its upcoming classes, all of which will be conducted live via Zoom. Please check our webpage (listed below) for information about future in-person classes.

### September

- **Esthetic Concepts in Implant Dentistry**  
Presented by HimaBindu Dukka, BDS, MSD, MPH  
Friday, Sept. 9, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- **Prevention and Management of Oral Complications in Medical Oncology**  
Presented by David Dean, DDS, MSD, DABOM, FDS RCSED, FACD  
Wednesday, Sept. 14, 8 - 10 p.m.
- **Collaborative Health Care for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities**  
Presented by David Fray, DDS, MBA  
Monday, Sept. 19, 8 - 10 p.m.
- **Cone Beam CT: Technical Aspects to Get the Most Out of It in the Clinics**  
Presented by Gustavo Machado Santaella, DDS, MS, PhD  
Sunday, Sept. 25, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

### October

- **How to Practically Manage the Side Effects of Mandibular Advancement Devices in the Treatment of Obstructive Sleep Apnea: An Interactive Webinar**  
Presented by Julia Cohen-Levy, DDS, MSc, PhD  
Saturday, Oct. 1, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- **Recognizing and Managing Critical Oral Pathology**  
Presented by Sarah Glass, DDS  
Thursday, Oct. 6, 8 - 9 p.m.

- **Alternative Medicine for the Dental Health Care Provider**  
Presented by Pamela Alberto, DMD  
Monday, Oct. 17, 8 - 10 p.m.
- **Top 5 Prescribed Drugs: What Do You Need to Know?**  
Presented by Aviv Ouanounou, BSc, MSc, DDS, FICO, FICD, FACD  
Friday, Oct. 21, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- **Cracked Teeth: Diagnosis and Management from an Endodontic Perspective**  
Presented by Feng-Ming Wang, DDS, PhD  
Tuesday, Oct. 25, 8 - 10 p.m.

### November

- **Implant Dental Malpractice: Avoiding the Inevitable**  
Presented by Arthur Curley, JD  
Thursday, Nov. 3, 8 - 9:30 p.m.
- **Caries Management in Practice**  
Presented by John D.B. Featherstone, MSc, PhD  
Monday, Nov. 7, 8 - 10 p.m.
- **The Worn Dentition: Finding Ways to Meet and Treat the Challenges ... From Planning Through Execution**  
Presented by Marshall D. Fagin, DDS  
Thursday, Nov. 10, 8 - 9:30 p.m.
- **Bad to the Bone: Dental Oncology for the Restorative Dental Team**  
Presented by Matthew Messina, DDS  
Tuesday, Nov. 15, 8 - 10 p.m.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OR FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
CALL 410-706-2282 OR VISIT [WWW.DENTAL.UMARYLAND.EDU/CE](http://WWW.DENTAL.UMARYLAND.EDU/CE).

## UMSOD Board of Visitor member Sylvan Feldman helped save the life of his longtime friend Leonard “Boogie” Weinglass, which led to the creation of a UMSOD scholarship

BY PATRICIA FANNING

A friendship formed in Baltimore more than six decades ago has been chronicled in a movie and a book and, most recently, has led to the establishment of a scholarship at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD).

Baltimore native Leonard “Boogie” Weinglass established the Dr. Sylvan Feldman Periodontal Scholarship Endowment last year in honor of a clinician’s good work. But to fully grasp its underpinnings, let’s turn back the clock to the late 1950s, when a group of teenage boys competed on city playgrounds and got together over burgers.

Their hangout was the iconic setting for the 1982 film *Diner*, drawn from writer-director Barry Levinson’s background. The long-lasting nature of the group’s camaraderie also was the subject of the 1989 book *Diner Guys* by the late Howard “Chip” Silverman, PhD, MPH, MS, a group member.

A central character in the film and the book is smooth-talking Boogie, a jokester based on Weinglass, who went on to earn fame and fortune as a businessman, bidder for sports teams, and proprietor of a trendy diner in a Colorado ski town.

One of the pals, known as Van, chose a career in dentistry. His choice would turn out to be a lifesaver for Weinglass.

“He did well in his world. I did well in my world,” says Sylvan “Van” Feldman, DDS ’65, MLA, a member of the UMSOD Board of Visitors and a clinical associate professor of periodontics on the Dean’s Faculty. At 81, he is a diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology and practices in Towson, Md.

# A LASTING LEGACY IS ROOTED IN A

# LASTING



ABOVE: Leonard “Boogie” Weinglass  
ABOVE RIGHT: Sylvan Feldman

**“HE REALLY IS A GENIUS AT HIS PROFESSION. I’M NOT JUST SAYING THAT BECAUSE HE’S MY FRIEND. HE IS THE MOST CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE GUY.”**

— Leonard “Boogie” Weinglass



**RIGHT:** A favorite eatery frequented by Sylan Feldman and Leonard “Boogie” Weinglass and friends was the iconic setting, depicted here, of the 1982 film *Diner*, drawn from writer-director Barry Levinson’s background.



Scene from the 1982 film *Diner*, written and directed by Barry Levinson. (MGM)

**“HE DID WELL IN HIS WORLD.  
I DID WELL IN MY WORLD.”**

— Sylan “Van” Feldman

Weinglass’ world was retail. He founded Merry-Go-Round Enterprises, Inc., a publicly traded company with a chain of nearly 1,500 clothing stores. Its merchandise was stylish and edgy, like the persona of its founder. Next, Weinglass ran Boogie’s, a combo clothing store and diner in Aspen, Colo., where he is known for his philanthropy.

Now 80, Weinglass makes his home on 21 acres, called Merry-Go-Ranch, near Aspen. But he lives part of the year in Maryland where, in 2012, he made a routine visit to his dentist.

That’s Feldman, of course. During the oral health exam, Feldman says, he spotted a telltale swelling and swiftly referred Weinglass to a specialist. A same-day biopsy revealed oropharyngeal cancer. Weinglass was treated and recovered.

“I had no idea. None,” Weinglass says. “He saved my life.”

More recently, Weinglass was troubled by other worrisome symptoms. Feldman referred him to an oral pathologist for a diagnosis and treatment through UMSOD’s Faculty Practice.

In a tribute to Feldman, Weinglass donated \$100,000 to UMSOD to endow scholarships for postgraduate students in periodontics.

“He really is a genius at his profession. I’m not just saying that because he’s my friend. He is the most creative, innovative guy,” Weinglass says, describing Feldman’s approach to dental care. “Whoever he helps teach will go on to be successful.”

Weinglass defers to his friend when asked for career advice to give future scholarship recipients. Replies Feldman, who earned a master’s degree at midlife: “Stay on top of things; continue educating yourself.” **MD**

# FRIENDSHIP

# In Appreciation

## of the 2021-22 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. THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LAST YEAR, THE SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY'S DEAN'S FACULTY MEMBERS CONTINUED TO 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

Bana Al Haydar, DDS

Guy Alexander, DDS

Lori Andochick, RDH, DDS

Roghieh Atapour, DDS

Ali Azad, DDS

Shamim Azad, RDH

Christopher Bailey, DDS

William Barrett, DDS

Thomas Barron, DDS

Ali Behnia, DMD

Louis Berman, DDS

Alan Berne, DDS

Ignacio Blasi, DDS

Gonzalo Blasi-Beriain, DDS

Warren Brill, DMD

Solomon Brotman, DDS

Ashley Brown, DDS

Saul Burk, DDS

Paul Bylis, DDS

Jerome Casper, DMD

Iysha Cawthon, DDS

Natalia Chalmers, DDS

Dina Chehab, DDS

Charles Chen, DDS

Richard Cheskis, DDS

Barry Cohan, DDS

Harvey Cohen, DDS

Gary Colangelo, DDS

James Coll, DMD

Paul Corcoran, DDS

Nathaniel Dancykier, DDS

Antara Daru, BDS

Wendy Daulat, DDS

Henry David, DDS

Ronald Davis, DDS

Richard Diaz, DDS

Vincent DiFabio, DDS

Charles Doring, DDS

Andrey Doroshenko, DDS

Douglas Drewyer, DDS

Allan M. Dworkin, DDS

Bruce Dye, DDS

Karim Elrafei, DDS

Fazel Fakhari, DDS, MS, PhD

Henry Fasteau, DDS

Sylvan Feldman, DDS

Cynthia Finfrock, RDH

Fred Fink, DDS

Ivan S. Fried, DDS

Jacqueline Fried, RDH, MS

Stephen Gandel, DDS

Philip Gentry, DDS

Edward Gillis, DDS

David Gordon, DDS

Louis Gorman, DDS

Gordon Groisser, DDS, MSD

Jennie Hager, RDH

Lawrence Hand, DDS

David Harmon, DDS

Michael Hartman, DMD

Joseph Heher, DDS

Edna Hirsch, DDS

Daniel Hoch, DDS

Robert "Mark" Horner, DDS

Andrew Horng, DDS

Michael Hsu, DDS

Peterson Huang, DMD

Julius Hyatt, DDS

Laudan Izadi, DDS

Jeffrey Jarvis, DDS

Chao Ji, BDS

Beverly Jimenez, DDS

Hiba Kamel-Kassab, DMD

Mary Kang, DDS

Saif Kargoli, DDS

Daniel Karlin, DDS,

Susan Katz, RDH

Mark Keiser, DDS

Wahn Khang, DMD

Su Kim, DDS

Dushanka Kleinman, DDS

Morgan Kneib-Baker, DMD, RDH

Shari Kohn, DDS

Catherine Kolasny, DDS

Charles Kovalchick, DDS

Hakan Koymen, DDS

Richard Kramer, DDS

Neal Kravitz, DMD

Richard Kuntz, DDS

Melvin Kushner, DDS

Henry Lee, DDS

Wonhee "Alan" Lee, DDS, MS

Lili Leon, DDS

Richard Leupold, DDS

Martin Levin, DMD

Stephen Levin, DDS

Christopher Liang, DDS  
Chang Lin, DDS  
Mao Lin, DDS  
Morris Lustman, DDS  
William Maas, DDS  
Marion Manski, RDH, MS  
Philip Markin, DDS  
Christiana Markova, DMD  
Miluska Masaschi-Sanchez, DDS  
Austin Maxwell, DDS  
David Mazza, DDS  
Patricia McGuire, RDH, BS  
Eugene McNinch, DDS  
John Meredith, DDS  
Elaine Miginsky, DDS  
Julian Moiseiwitsch, BDS, PhD  
Ronald Moser, DDS  
Niki Moutsopoulos, DDS  
Kevin Murphy, DDS  
Sathiyathanan Nadarajah, DMD  
Basem Nashed, DMD  
Christina Nave, RDH  
Mimi Nguyen, DDS, PA  
Angela Noguera, DDS  
Robert Noppinger, DDS  
Ali Nosrat, DDS  
Lawrence Nurin, DDS  
Youssef Obeid, DDS  
Augustine Paik, DDS  
Gilbert Palmieri, DDS  
Dong Park, DDS, MS, PhD



Dean's Faculty member Edna Hirsch, DDS, discusses a treatment plan with Shivang Patel, DDS '22.

Mary Passaniti, DDS  
Jeffrey Posnick, DDS  
John Powers, DMD  
Frederick Preis, DDS  
Steven Pruce, DDS  
Xinhong Qiu, DDS  
Michael Raderman, DDS  
Roham Rafat, DDS  
Steven Rattner, DDS  
Michael Rethman, DDS  
Thomas Ritter, DDS  
Deborah Rodriguez, DDS  
Paul Rosen, DMD  
Tarun Saini, DDS  
Viney Saini, DDS  
Aala Salimian, DDS  
Peter Samuels, DDS  
John Sawchuk, DDS, FAGD  
Richard Schlossberg, DDS  
S. Craig Schneider, DDS  
David Seminowicz, PhD  
Suzanne Setayesh, DDS  
Juheon Seung, DDS

Mohammad Shahegh, DDS  
Nahid Shahry, DDS  
Stuart Sheer, DDS  
Preston Shelton, DDS  
Paul Shires, DDS  
Deven Shroff, DMD  
Victor Siegel, DDS  
Carl Simon, PhD  
Michael Singer, DDS  
T.P. Sivakumar, BDS  
Terry Slevin, DDS  
Wilbur King Smith, DDS  
David Somerville, DDS  
Andrew Sorkin, DMD  
Leonard Spector, DDS  
Dennis Stiles, DDS  
Marie Stiles, DDS  
Jon Suzuki, DDS  
Gary Swiec, DDS  
Garima Talwar, DDS  
Renju Thackenkary, DDS  
Robert Tigani, DDS  
Stephen Tigani, DDS  
James Tong, DDS

Mahmoud Torabinejad, DMD  
Keyla Torres, DMD  
Bradley Trattner, DDS  
Amanda Turner, RDH  
Margaret Valega, DDS  
Kim-Thi Van-Dinh, DDS  
Robert Vandre, DDS  
John Vanik, DDS  
Devender Verma, DDS  
Prashant Verma, DDS  
Jordan Virden, DDS  
Mark Wagner, DDS  
William Wahle, DDS  
George Whitaker, DDS  
Robin Williman, DDS  
Christina Woo, DMD  
Jenin Yahya, DDS  
Lobna Zada, DDS  
Stuart Zaller, DDS  
Mehdi Zamani, DDS

# Lasting Impressions

## Laurels



**Simon Akerman, PhD**, research assistant professor, Department of Neural and Pain Sciences, received a five-year, \$2.4

million grant from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for “Molecular Basis for Adenosine A3 Receptor Agonists in the Treatment of Migraine.”



**Goot Alkhubaizi, MS, ABGD, FADM**, program director, Advanced Education in General Dentistry; **Howard Strassler,**

**DMD**, professor, and **Mary Anne Melo, DDS, MSc, PhD, FADM**, interim chair, all from the Department of General Dentistry, co-authored “Errors in Light-Emitting Diodes Positioning When Curing Bulk Fill and Incremental Composites: Impact on Properties After Aging,” which was published in the *Journal of Restorative Dentistry & Endodontics*.



**Patrik M. Bavoil, PhD**, professor, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis, was named to the executive

committee of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases’

Biomimetics Cooperative Research Center Network for a five-year term, as well as to the Transition Advisory Committee of the University of Maryland, Baltimore’s (UMB) Animal Care and Use Program.

**John F. Caccamese Jr., MD, DMD, FACS**, clinical professor and vice chair, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, was elected president-elect of the American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association and will assume the role in 2023.

**Aleah Cho, DDS**, assistant general practice director, and **Nisha Ganesh, DDS, MEd**, vice chair, both from the Department of General Dentistry, co-authored “Dental Students’ Perception of a Blended Learning Approach to Clinic Orientation,” which was published in the *Journal of Dental Education*.



**Emily Chu, DDS, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of General Dentistry, co-authored “Orthodontic

Tooth Movement Alters Cementocyte Ultrastructure and Cellular Cementum Proteome Signature,” which was published in *Bone*.



**Joyce T. Da Silva, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Neural and Pain Sciences (NPS);

**Michael L. Keaser**, senior research analyst, NPS; **Timothy F. Meiller, DDS, PhD**, professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences; and **David Seminowicz, PhD**, associate professor, NPS, were among the co-authors of “Time of Day Influences Psychophysical Measures in Women with Burning Mouth Syndrome,” which was published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*. Also, Da Silva was selected as the first UMB PROMISE Academy Fellow, part of a National Science Foundation-funded program created to increase the number of historically underrepresented minority tenure-track faculty within the University System of Maryland.



**Gary D. Hack, DDS**, clinical associate professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics,

will present virtually on the discovery of the myodural bridge at the 20th Congress of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists in August 2022. Hack also had an abstract, “Progress on Tooth Desensitization Based on NovaMin Bioglass,” accepted for the International Association for Dental Research’s General Session and Exhibition held in June 2022. He additionally co-authored “Development, Maturation, and Growth of the Myodural Bridge Within the Posterior Atlanto-Axial Interspace in the Rat,” which was accepted for publication by the *Journal of Morphology*.



**Kuei-Ling Hsu, DDS, MS**, clinical assistant professor, Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry; **Mary Anne Melo,**

**DDS, MSc, PhD, FADM**, director, Division of Operative Dentistry, and associate professor and interim chair, Department of General Dentistry; **Vineet Dhar, BDS, MDS, PhD**, clinical professor and chair, Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry; and **Norman Tinanoff, DDS, MS**, professor, Division of Pediatric Dentistry, were among the co-authors of “Mapping Evidence on Early Childhood Caries Prevalence: Complexity of Worldwide Data Reporting,” which was published in the *International Journal of Clinical Pediatric Dentistry*.



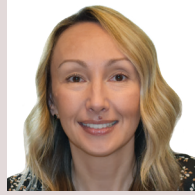
**Radi Masri, BDS, MS, PhD**, professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, was elevated

to president of the American Board of Prosthodontics, effective in November 2021.



**Mary Anne Melo, DDS, MSc, FADM**, interim chair, Department of General Dentistry; **Huakun Xu, MS, PhD, FADM,**

professor and division chief, Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering; and **Michael Weir, PhD**, research assistant professor and lab manager, Department of Advanced Oral Therapeutics, were among the co-authors of “Magnetic-Responsive Photosensitizer Nanoplatfor for Optimized Inactivation of Dental Caries-Related Biofilms: Technology Development and Proof of Principle,” which was published in *ACS Nano*. They also were among the co-authors of “Bifunctional Composites for Biofilms Modulation on Cervical Restorations,” which was published in the *Journal of Dental Research*.



**Oksana Mishler, RDH, MS, DHSc**, clinical assistant professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and

Therapeutics (AOST); **Se-Lim Oh, DMD, MS**, clinical associate professor, AOST; and **Thomas Oates, DMD, PhD**, professor and chair, AOST, co-authored “Senior Dental Students’ Perceptions of Evidence-Based Dentistry,” which was published in the *European Journal of Dental Education*.



**Se-Lim Oh, DMD, MS**, clinical associate professor, Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics

(AOST); **Oksana Mishler, RDH, MS, DHSc**, clinical assistant professor, AOST; and **Christine Barnes, RDH**, clinical instructor, AOST, co-authored “Effectiveness of Remote Simulation-Based Learning for Periodontal Instrumentation: A Non-Inferiority Study,” which was published in the *Journal of Dental Education*.



**Eung-Kwon Pae, DDS, MSc, PhD**, associate professor, Division of Orthodontics, Department of Orthodontics

and Pediatric Dentistry, co-authored “Potential Mechanisms Underlying Hypoxia-Induced Diabetes in a Rodent Model: Implications for COVID-19,” which was published in *Children*.



**Abraham Schneider, DDS, PhD**, associate professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences,

was senior author of “Fatty Acid Synthase Mediates High Glucose-Induced EGFR Activation in Oral Dysplastic Keratinocytes,” which was published in the *Journal of Oral Pathology and Medicine* in August.



## Porter, Longtime Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruitment, Retires

Judy Porter, DDS, MA, EdD, associate dean of admissions and recruitment, retired Dec. 17, 2021. Porter had guided the University of Maryland School of Dentistry’s (UMSOD) Office of Admissions for nine years. Under her leadership, the school’s entering Doctor of Dental Surgery classes maintained their status among the nation’s elite, admitting approximately one in 16 applicants.

After earning her Bachelor of Arts and Doctor of Dental Surgery degrees from West Virginia University, Porter practiced dentistry for 25 years in Charleston, W.Va. She completed her master’s and doctoral degrees in education at Marshall University and joined UMSOD in 2003.

During her tenure as associate dean, one of Porter’s priorities was the recruitment of underrepresented minorities. Through her efforts, the school continued to increase the diversity of its student population. Of the Class of 2025, whose members entered UMSOD in her last year in the Office of Admissions, 21.5 percent are Black, 7 percent are Hispanic, and 29 percent are Asian.

In June 2020, intent upon reaching as many aspiring dental school students as possible even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Porter led 15 virtual information sessions that drew 800 participants.

Before opening the online discussion to questions, she shared qualities that UMSOD is looking for in incoming students. In addition to the required scores, recommendations, and prerequisites, the school is looking for good communicators with integrity, she said. **MD**

— HOLLY SELBY



**Sheryl Syme, RDH, MS,** program director and associate professor, Division of Dental Hygiene, Department of

Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics, and UMSOD alumnus **Jotham Siozon, BS '21, RDH,** co-authored "Controlling Aerosols with Dental Extractor Technology," which was published in *Dimensions of Dental Hygiene*.



**Darien Weatherspoon, DDS, MPH,** assistant professor, Department of Dental Public Health, was

appointed to the American Institute of Dental Public Health's Board of Directors.

**Robert Windsor, DDS,** director of clinical operations, and **Louis G. DePaola, DDS, MS,** associate dean of clinical affairs and professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences, were inducted into the International College of Dentists in November for their "conspicuous service rendered in the art and science of dentistry." DePaola also received the Presidential Award from the Maryland State Dental Association for his efforts to lead the profession during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Ord, Chair of Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Retires**

**Robert A. Ord, DDS, MD, FRCS, FACS, MS, MBA,** professor and chair, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, and associate dean of professional development, retired

from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) on June 30.

Ord enjoyed a highly distinguished career at UMSOD and the University of Maryland Medical Center, specializing in surgical oncology of the head and neck. He pioneered innovative surgical procedures to offer cancer patients and survivors a greater quality of life. Ord's interest in basic science and clinical research in head and neck cancer has led to chemoprevention trials for precancerous lesions.

Ord, who joined the UMSOD faculty in 1991, maintained a heavy commitment to surgical training and comprehensive cancer patient care at the residency and fellowship (post-residency) levels. In addition to his clinical work and mentorship, he has published more than 140 scientific papers and 60 book chapters and co-edited the books *Oral Cancer: The Dentist's Role in Diagnosis, Management, Rehabilitation, and Prevention*; *Textbook and Color Atlas of Salivary Gland Pathology*; and *Operative Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*.

Ord also is the oncology section editor for the *International Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery* and sits on the editorial board of the *European Journal of Cranio-Maxillofacial Surgery's* oncology section. He lectures widely at national and international meetings.

A former examiner for the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (Scotland), and the University of Singapore, Ord received a lifetime achievement award in 2017 from the William F. Harrigan Society honoring an individual who has made "outstanding contributions to the specialty."

He has received many other honors including the University of Maryland, Baltimore's 2019 Catalyst for Excellence Award, which celebrates individuals for their "powerful advocacy for success, achievement, and philanthropy for their respective schools while serving as visionaries for future progress." **MD**

— JOEL KABOT



**Schneider Named UMSOD Assistant Dean of Admissions and Recruitment**

**Monica Schneider, DDS, MS,** was named the University of Maryland School of Dentistry's (UMSOD) assistant dean

of admissions and recruitment in December 2021. A clinical associate professor in the Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry, she joined UMSOD in 2005.

Schneider is certified by the American Board of Orthodontics and holds diplomate status. She received a doctoral degree from Cayetano Heredia University in Lima, Peru, and completed specialty training in orthodontics and a master's degree in dental sciences at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry.

For the last nine years, Schneider served as UMSOD's director of predoctoral orthodontics and spent significant time in the postgraduate orthodontics clinic,

training residents in all aspects of the specialty. She has been a member of the admissions committee for the Doctor of Dental Surgery program and postgraduate orthodontics program for many years.

In her new role, Schneider said her goal is to cultivate an increasingly competitive and diverse student body.

"Higher education is my passion," she says. "Being part of our students' dental education and seeing how they become competent and caring health professionals has always been the most rewarding parts of my work." **MD**

# Alumni

## From the Alumni Association



Dear Alumni,

My congratulations to our newest alumni: the members of the Class of 2022! Their year-end ceremony was the third I have attended at UMSOD and brought to mind my graduation in 1979 and my daughter's in 2013. The experience reminded me that UMSOD has always provided one of the finest dental education programs in the country.

As I watched the Class of 2022 process, I thought about all that its members have accomplished in the past four years — and how much resilience and flexibility they have shown. Since March 2020, the entire dental profession proved how swiftly and effectively it can adapt in the face of challenge. Just as it adopted new guidelines for infection control and Universal Precautions in the 1980s, when HIV/AIDS struck, so it did again when the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Guided by Louis DePaola, DDS '75, MS '84, UMSOD's associate dean of clinical affairs and professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences, the school transformed its safety protocols for students, patients, staff, and clinicians. I applaud the school for its commitment to safety and our recent graduates for the successful and timely completion of their educations!

We celebrated our All-Alumni Reunion on June 3 with a daylong, in-person event. We began by marking the 50th anniversary of our orthodontics graduate program. (In May 1972, the first two orthodontics residents completed the program; five decades later, another 162 dentists have completed UMSOD's orthodontics program.) Festivities included research presentations, a reception, and keynote speaker J. Martin Palomo, DDS,

MSD, professor, orthodontics program director, and director of the Craniofacial Imaging Center at Case Western Reserve University.

The day's events continued at the Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry with a reception and awards presentation celebrating our 2022 alumni award winners (see p. 30).

This year's class dinners, honoring those who graduated in years ending in two or seven, are scheduled for Sept. 10, which falls during the Maryland State Dental Association's annual conference, which will be held Sept. 8-10 at the Live! Casino & Hotel Maryland in Hanover.

I would like to thank our board members for effectively using virtual formats to stay in touch throughout the pandemic. As an outgrowth of UMSOD Connect, our LinkedIn networking community, we hosted two virtual events this year. Both were well-attended and allowed students interested in a particular specialty to meet alumni in that field.

At our June 14 Alumni Association Board of Directors meeting, we brainstormed new ways of expanding the reach of our LinkedIn community. Since my tenure as president continues for another year, I welcome your thoughts or questions.

I would like to thank Janet Wiley, assistant dean, Office of Development and Alumni Relations; Joshua Hiscock, PhD, executive director of annual giving and alumni relations; and Nicole Nash, assistant director of stewardship, for their steadfast help, and welcome newcomer Brandie Metcalf, assistant director for alumni relations, who recently joined UMSOD.

Best regards,

**Marc Nuger, DDS '79**

*President | Alumni Association Board of Directors*

**For more information** about the Alumni Association or events, please contact Brandie Metcalf, assistant director of alumni relations, at 410-706-7418 or [bmetcalf@umaryland.edu](mailto:bmetcalf@umaryland.edu).

If you have news to share, please send it to [hselby@umaryland.edu](mailto:hselby@umaryland.edu).



## 2022 Alumni Award Winners

BY CARRIE BAGLEY

### Distinguished Achievement Award

Wanda G. Wright, DDS '88, MS, MSD



This award honors a graduate for significant professional accomplishments in science, dentistry, or education. In 2022, it recognizes Wanda Wright for her dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and her contributions to public health in the dental field.

Wright serves as the assistant dean for DEI at the East Carolina University (ECU) School of Dental Medicine. In this role, she oversees all DEI initiatives and programming. One such program is the ECU Poverty Simulation Exercise, a yearly event that provides health sciences students and residents opportunities to gain a personal look at how poverty impacts patients' lives at every level.

Wright earned her Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 1988 from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry. She also holds a Master of Science in health services administration from D'Youville College. She completed a Master of Science in dental public health and a certificate of advanced graduate study in dental public health at Boston University. A diplomate of the American Board of Dental Public Health, she also holds a certificate of clinical investigation from Tufts University.

Before her appointment as assistant dean at ECU, Wright served as a faculty member in the Department of Health Policy and Health Services at the Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine and head of the Division of Public Health, Advocacy, and Outreach at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine.

Wright's research interests include oral health disparities, oral health-related quality of life, and access to care. She has received funding from the Duke Endowment to improve access to dental care for schoolchildren in rural North Carolina. She also has received several grants from the Health Resources and Services Administration to diversify the oral health workforce and develop a Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry and Master of Public Health combined program at Tufts University; she served as program director at Tufts from 2011 to 2015.

In addition to her work at ECU, Wright is a member of several associations including the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, International and American Association for Dental Research, National Dental Association, American Public Health Association, American Dental Education Association, and American Association of Women Dentists.

### Distinguished Public Service Award

Garner D. Morgan, DDS '80



This award recognizes a graduate for meritorious professional leadership and service to the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) and the community. The 2022 recipient is Garner Morgan, in recognition of his dedication to providing

excellent dental care to those most in need.

Morgan graduated from St. Mary's College of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science in Biology in 1976. He went on to earn his DDS in 1980 from UMSOD, then known as the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery. He served as the 1979 class vice president and president of the Gamma Pi Delta Prosthodontics Society during his time at the school. In 1980, Morgan established a private practice in Mechanicsville, Md. Since opening his dental practice, he has remained an active member of the American Dental Association. He is the immediate past president of the Maryland State Dental Association (MSDA) and a member of the Southern Maryland and Patuxent Study clubs.

His commitment to the community is evident through his service on numerous boards, including those of the St. Mary's Nursing and Rehabilitation Center; St. Mary's Hospital; Mother Catherine Academy; Southern Maryland Wood Treatment Task Force; St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce; St. Mary's County Business, Education, and Community Alliance; and the Rotary Club. Additionally, Morgan is a lifelong member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Bushwood, Md.

During his tenure as president of MSDA, Morgan was instrumental in developing a protocol for over 40 Mission of Mercy events throughout Maryland that set the tone for the initiative and allowed thousands of uninsured and underserved Marylanders to receive oral health care. Mission of Mercy programs ranged from providing necessary treatment and dentures to groups of approximately 50 patients at one Mission of Mercy event to providing essential care to over 700 patients during a two-day dental clinic. Morgan and a team of passionate colleagues founded the Southern Maryland Mission of Mercy. Their first clinic was held at a high school in rural St. Mary's County. In addition to serving as chair for these clinics, Morgan delivered direct patient care. His dedication was recognized in 2012 with the Maryland Rural Health Association's Outstanding Rural Health Practitioner Award.



## Rising Dental Health Leader Award

Jordan L. Virden, DDS '17



This award recognizes 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 2022 award honors Jordan Virden, in recognition of her

efforts to provide evidence-based oral health education to parents and caregivers and her commitment to helping create the next generation of dental students and pediatric dental residents.

After graduating from Virginia Tech in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences, Virden went on to earn a DDS in 2017 and a Pediatric Dental certificate in 2019 from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD).

As an associate pediatric dentist at Smiles4Children, Virden provides dental care for patients ranging from 1-year-olds to young adults and patients with special health care needs. In addition to her role at Smiles4Children, she serves as a UMSOD Dean's Faculty member in the Division of Pediatric Dentistry. She also is involved with the Maryland Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (MDAPD) and the Maryland State Dental Association, serving on the New Dentist Committee.

Virden created the Instagram account *@smallteeth\_bigworld*, which focuses on pediatric dental care and has nearly 11,000 followers. Through it, she provides evidence-based pediatric dental information to parents and health care providers. Using social media, she works to combat misinformation online, create easily understood and shared content, and provide resources to pre-dental and dental students interested in the pediatric field. Virden was featured in *Romper* magazine as one of its "9 Dentists to Follow on Instagram for Kids' Teeth Tips."

The recipient of numerous honors and awards, Virden earned an MDAPD award in May 2017 for best performance in pediatric dentistry, the Delta Dental Student Leadership Award, and the Katharine Toomey Plaque for devotion to the school and to the profession.

## Linda DeVore Dental Hygiene Award

Oksana P. Mishler, RDH '09, MS '12, DHS



This award recognizes a dental hygiene graduate of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) who represents the integrity, intellectual curiosity, community-mindedness, and leadership epitomized by the late Linda DeVore, RDH,

MA. The 2022 award recognizes Oksana Mishler, a clinical assistant professor in UMSOD's Department of Advanced Oral Sciences and Therapeutics.

Mishler earned a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene, focusing on education, from UMSOD in 2009. In 2012, she completed a Master of Science in Dental Hygiene Education from the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and, in 2019, a Doctor of Health Sciences from A.T. Still University.

A recipient of many honors, Mishler earned UMSOD's 2009 Leadership Award, which recognizes leadership in the dental hygiene program; the Teacher's Development Scholarship from 2009 to 2010; and the UMB President's Fellowship from 2012 to 2013. She was named Teacher of the Year by the dental hygiene Class of 2013 and received the Frank J. Sinnreich Jr. Award for Excellence in Teaching by the dental Class of 2019. Already a member of the Dental Hygiene Honor Society, Mishler was inducted into the National Dental Honor Society in 2018 and serves as secretary-treasurer of the Maryland chapter.

Mishler has served on UMB's Faculty Senate in various leadership capacities and contributed to many Universitywide projects and initiatives through UMB committee service. She leads and contributes to numerous research initiatives, including interprofessional educational and community-based research projects with faculty at other UMB institutions. Under her leadership and guidance, a dental hygiene student research project won second place in the Maryland Dental Hygienists' Association's spring 2022 research competition.

Mishler additionally provides patient care in the Postgraduate Periodontics clinic and directs a dental hygiene maintenance program that simulates a private practice experience for students and residents. She is an accomplished artist, and her work has been published in *1807: An Art & Literary Journal*, which is published by UMB's Council for the Arts & Culture.



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Co-authors Harry Goodman, DMD, MPH, former director of the Office of Oral Health, Maryland Department of Health; Barbara Klein, MPA, former associate vice president of government and community affairs at the University of Maryland, Baltimore; and Norman Tinanoff, DDS, MS; professor in the Division of Pediatric Dentistry, University of Maryland School of Dentistry, have been advocating for greater access to pediatric oral health for more than a decade.

# AgentsOfChange

## The Legacy of Deamonte Driver

### Death of 12-Year-Old Spurred Effort to Expand Access to Oral Health Care in Maryland and Beyond

BY NORMAN TINANOFF, DDS, MS; HARRY GOODMAN, DMD, MPH;  
AND BARBARA KLEIN, MPA

In February 2007, a dental infection led to the needless death of Deamonte Driver, a 12-year-old Maryland boy. The tragedy spotlighted the longstanding lack of access to oral health care for poor children in Maryland and throughout the United States. However, Deamonte's death spurred an impressive legacy, resulting in changes in the law that enable poor children in Maryland and nationwide to access dental benefits and a new Maryland law to provide dental care for adults enrolled in Medicaid.

Fifteen years ago, the story of Deamonte's death, as reported in *The Washington Post*, led to Maryland legislative and U.S. Congressional hearings. At that time, Maryland data revealed that 71 percent of children (ages birth to 20) covered by Maryland Medicaid received no dental

services in the previous year and that more than 11,000 of those children had not seen a dentist in four years. Incredibly, nearly one-third of Maryland's elementary school children were living with untreated cavities. Because of low reimbursement rates that failed to cover the cost of care, only 12 percent of Maryland dentists fully participated in the Medicaid program.

To overcome this crisis for Maryland's poor children, then-Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene John Colmers, MPH, convened a Dental Action Committee (DAC) to examine the oral health care system in the state. In a comprehensive report in September 2007, DAC called for a "dental home" for every Medicaid-eligible child. To accomplish this vision, the committee made seven key recommendations:

1. Provide adequate Medicaid reimbursements to dentists,
2. Carve out a single Medicaid dental vendor system, separate from the medical system, to achieve a simpler structure that is more responsive to dental providers and to the public,
3. Ensure a more expansive statewide “safety net” consisting of local health departments and Federally Qualified Health Centers to provide dental care for Medicaid children,
4. Enable dental hygienists to provide more services in public health programs,
5. Develop a culturally sensitive public education campaign to prevent dental diseases,
6. Incorporate dental with vision and hearing screenings in public schools,
7. Provide additional training for dentists and physicians to detect and prevent dental disease.

Thanks to the collective vision of the Maryland governor and General Assembly, professional dental organizations, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry, and many other stakeholders and partners, the seven recommendations were enacted, and some became Maryland law with significant new funding. As a result, between 2009 and 2019, the number of dentists engaged in providing care for children with Medicaid insurance nearly tripled. Additionally, children accessing a dental service increased from 52 percent in 2007 to 69 percent in 2019, even as the number of children enrolled in Medicaid doubled.

Even more significantly, Deamonte’s death spurred major federal reforms. In 2009, the reauthorization of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) required states to provide dental benefits to children who did

not qualify for previous CHIP or Medicaid coverage. In 2010, the Affordable Care Act required that all insurance include oral care for children. Sen. Ben Cardin’s remarks in 2013 to the U.S. Senate captured the achievements: “In the CHIP Reauthorization Act that passed a few months after Deamonte’s death, we established a guaranteed oral benefit for children. Then in 2010, we passed the Affordable Care Act, which included a landmark provision to improve oral health.” In 2012, the late congressman Elijah Cummings also commented on the consequence of Deamonte’s death, saying, “At the federal level, his memory was a key factor that drove the inclusion of several dental provisions in the Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act that was signed into law in 2009. ... His legacy was also a factor in the comprehensive dental provisions included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that was signed into law in March 2010.”

Now, thanks to extensive advocacy by the Maryland Dental Action Coalition, the nonprofit successor to DAC, Maryland policymakers were convinced of the critical need for dental services by Medicaid-eligible adults. As a result, in the 2022 Maryland legislative session, Gov. Larry Hogan provided \$82.3 million in the state budget to expand Medicaid dental coverage for eligible adults, and the legislature passed this expansion in House Bill 6/Senate Bill 150. Under this new law, Medicaid will provide adult oral health care, including diagnostic, preventive, restorative, and periodontal services, for adults with incomes up to 133 percent of federal poverty levels.

We cannot wait for another child or adult to needlessly die from a preventable oral health problem. There is far more work to do, but Deamonte’s legacy lives on with many more poor children and adults who now can access oral health care. **M**

## In Memoriam

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

Jeffrey S. Almony, DDS '89  
Lester M. Breen, DDS '61  
Stanley L. Brown, DDS '56  
Anthony E. Curcio, DDS '65  
John H. Dempsey, DDS '57

David M. Eppel, DDS '52  
George W. Greco, DDS '57  
James R. Hemler, DDS '72  
Omar J. Jones III, DDS '73  
Paul S. Keller, DDS '56  
Irvin M. Krawitz, DDS '52  
Richard J. Landino, DDS '63  
James S. Lekas, DDS '60,  
Perio '72

Francis X. McNulty, DDS '56  
George G. Mittelman, DDS,  
Pros '88  
M. Paul Nestor, DDS '57  
Adrian L. Patterson Jr., DDS '75  
Jose R. Prieto-Hernandez,  
DDS '56  
Rex E. Rader Jr., DDS '75  
Jeffrey B. Rizzolo Jr., DDS '69  
Gary P. Schoppert, DDS '67  
Peter Anderson Spangenberg,  
DDS '03

Robert J. Stag, DDS '57  
Arthur H. Streeter, DDS '62  
Paul D. Torre, DDS '51  
Clyde O. Wells Jr., DDS '52  
J. Fred Wilson, DDS '55  
Roland J. Zwiebel, DDS '69

\*The school learned of the passing of these alumni, faculty, and friends between Aug. 24, 2021, and April 25, 2022.



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