HATS OFF TO NEW GRADUATES

Appointed Chief Dental Officer of NSW in 2005, Professor Clive Wright addressed our graduating Faculty of Dentistry students. Now, on his retirement from that critical post in oral health governance in Australia, he again inspired our new alumni as they enter the world of the oral health profession.

Read Professor Wright’s occasional address at: http://sydney.edu.au/dentistry/c_wright.pdf

On 16th March 2012 we proudly welcomed into the Great Hall, Main Quadrangle the following graduates:

- Bachelor of Dentistry
- Bachelor of Oral Health
- PhD
- Master of Philosophy
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent) (Special Care Dentistry)
- Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent) (Orthodontics)

- Graduate Certificate in Clinical Dentistry (GradCertClinDent) (Restorative)
- Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry (GradDipClinDent) (Oral Implants)
- Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry (GradDipClinDent) (Conscious Sedation and Pain Control)

View the 2012 Graduation and Prize Award Ceremony photos at: http://sydney.edu.au/dentistry/graduation

DEAN’S MESSAGE

At the mid-point of the year, it is timely to reflect on some of our achievements and where we are headed. As a faculty of international standing we are committed to education and research which makes a difference. We have developed a focus on chronic diseases and healthy ageing research themes and expect to see collaborations within our faculty and across the University sector to help meet the needs of the community. The Jaw Function and Orofacial Pain Research Unit has relocated to a refurbished space adjacent to the Institute of Dental Research, Westmead Centre for Oral Health and this will increase further research synergies.

Linked to this is our focus on research-informed teaching in our degrees. Our newest offerings the Doctor of Dental Medicine and Oral Surgery Graduate Diploma have a focus on “higher order” education objectives: students are not merely taught the material, there is a focus on how to use the material, integrate it with other educational experiences and even create new information. We are well underway with our review of the Bachelor of Oral Health and this will dovetail with the Dental Board of Australia’s accreditation review to improve its standing. Further, we are developing professional development for our clinical educators to assist them in best practice clinical training. We have commenced a professional staff review with a view to improved efficiencies across all administrative services in the Faculty.

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ALUMNI AND PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES RALLY IN SUPPORT OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF DENTISTS AND THERAPISTS

Students and their patients at the Sydney Dental Hospital are starting to reap the benefits of having four new operating microscopes installed in the clinics. Microscopes have been important teaching tools in the simulation learning environment, providing an opportunity for students to hone their clinical skills before proceeding to treat patients in the clinics. A mobile unit purchased through a donation from the Australian Society of Endodontology in 2008 has been invaluable in clinical learning but it was obvious so much more could be done if only microscopes were also available.

Led by Associate Professor Peter Duckmanton, a Sydney graduate, an appeal was launched and generously supported by many of our alumni, colleagues and professional bodies, making it possible to install not one but four microscopes at the Sydney Dental Hospital.

A heartfelt thanks is extended to all whose generous contribution is already making a difference to our students and, ultimately, the patients.

This, together with honorary clinical educators who provide clinical expertise, is another example of how the dental profession supports us striving for academic excellence.

Tom Shumack, BDent 3 student, writes: ‘the camaraderie of dental students extends well beyond the teaching clinics and leads to enriching and, hopefully, life-long friendships.

To balance the very hard work required in our dental program a number of us attack the other end of the spectrum with physically-challenging sport. As coach of our victorious rugby team against age-old university nemesis - the Medical School - and on the field confronting colleagues in Orange, we relish the opportunity to step outside our very demanding studies with intense training by cycling as a group from the Surry Hills campus to the Westmead clinics, feeling physically and mentally ready to take on the world.

On learning my intention to represent Dentistry at Sydney University in the ‘Day of Difference’ charity ride in April 2012, Faculty staff, students and colleagues enthusiastically rallied and support flooded in. A fund-raising drive organised in the guise of a ‘sporting Sunday’ provided, not only a great day out among friends, but also strong encouragement with donations pouring in.

The ride started at the Sydney Cricket Ground and finished at Old Parliament House. Feeling adventurous we added to the challenge by taking the longer route via Wollongong and the magnificent Brindabella Ranges, riding for three arduous days and covering just over 500km. In all, $40,000 was raised, which went directly to support critically-injured children at Westmead Children’s Hospital and their families during the first weeks of hospitalisation.

The combination of a love of sport and community venture is an experience I shall never forget and highlights the importance of continuous challenge. The grueling ride, with its three 12km climbs, reinforced how satisfying it is to set and finally achieve goals and ambitions.

For me, having interests outside of my dental studies is a fundamental key to my mental and emotional well-being and, ultimately, to achieving success. In a profession where phobias prevail, it is my belief that a well-rounded, focussed dental professional is far more approachable, creating better patient relations and yielding a more rewarding and satisfying career.’

Tom Shumack, Vice Secretary, Sydney University Dental Association

RIDING FOR A CAUSE

The ‘Day of Difference’ cyclists take a well-earned break to view the magnificent Brindabella Ranges
Many dentists care passionately about the wellbeing of their fellow man and one such dentist is Dr. Cecilia So, BDS 2003.

In 2008, learning of the plight of this country in strife, Cecilia established Project Cambodia-Dental Aid, a humanitarian Dental Aid project for disadvantaged children in Cambodia.

Whilst Cambodia is slowly recovering from a traumatic and bloody civil war raging between 1975 to 1979, dental treatment remains a luxury to the impoverished rural families whose combined daily incomes is often less than US$1 per day.

Since 2008, Cecilia has not only coordinated fifteen rotations of volunteer mobile dental teams to Cambodia, where treatment has largely involved emergency procedures to relieve pain and manage chronic infections, she has also led students’ supervised electives during their summer vacations. Urgent restorative dentistry is provided to enable Cambodian children to eat, speak smile again, and restore their self esteem. Preventive education is integral to the care given, with thousands of school children receiving their first toothbrush along with instructions in oral hygiene.

During the last visit, the team worked with local dental therapists to treat over two hundred children per week and each day saw a cart-towing motorbike with up to thirty children for treatment in the clinic which is completely funded and supported by the philanthropy of dental colleagues and generosity of industry partners.

Cecilia, whose career combines private practice, Special Needs Dentistry at Westmead and tutoring at the University of Sydney, again invites BDent 3 students to undertake elective placements in Cambodia under her supervision, as are dental volunteers welcome for tours of dental duty in the clinic.

For further information and contributions to Project Cambodia-Dental Aid, Cecilia can be contacted at ceciliamail@gmail.com or please click Project Cambodia on http://www.buddhistlibrary.org.au

This article was written by Dr Cheng-Yee Rossiter who again joins Cecilia in 2012 for his second tour of duty.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**DEAN’S MESSAGE, continued from page 1**

We have also commenced much-needed refurbishment of the student laboratories at Westmead Centre for Oral Health which is transforming them into state of the art multifunction laboratories that not only provide a facility for dental prosthetic laboratory work but also for life science laboratory teaching.

In the mid-term we hope to realise a more ambitious infrastructure project for a Westmead Academic Hub for Education and Research. This is in conjunction with the Westmead Millennium Institute and the Sydney Medical School and aims to integrate teaching, research and clinical practice. All in all it is a busy and exciting time as the faculty establishes itself as a premier academic endeavour in the region.

Chris Peck
In 2009 the University of Sydney introduced the COMPASS program to inspire disadvantaged communities and introduce post-school education to those young students unlikely to participate.

As the primary school students piled out of the COMPASS buses at the gates of the Main Quad on Wednesday, 30th May 2012, they were greeted by BDent 2 student, Jo-Yao Cheng, who introduced his colleagues and led our small visitors to a preview of the world of oral health and dentistry. ‘For the majority of the youngsters today’ Jo-Yao says, ‘this would be their first visit to a university campus and our challenge was to expand their horizons with a glimpse of campus life and opening a future beyond their considered barriers in an interesting, fun and non-confrontational manner.’

Our dental team provided a mix of activities, dental quizzes and demonstrated how to maintain a bright, healthy smile with the winning activity of the day forming dental impressions. Faculty staff and our volunteering BDent, BOH and DMD students were impressed by the care taken by the children as they assiduously applied themselves to pouring the dental moulds with precision. They learnt how the plaster casts were setting and when and why they would be used. Our enthusiastic guests responded by showering the students with questions on the profession, admission to university and details of the course itself.

The children, many of whom play contact sport, were reminded of the importance of a well-fitted mouthguard and two children were rewarded at the end of the day by winning a custom-fitted mouthguard. By close of day, it was rewarding to see that the effort put in by our volunteering students had paid off, with many of the young guests switched on to the possibilities of dentistry as a career, or simply inspired to consider tertiary education.

A special thanks is extended to the Australian Dental Association, Centre for Oral Health Strategy and all colleagues who generously contributed of their time and with products to the successful day, particularly Jo-Yao Cheng; Kenelm Chun Lam Chung; George Chen; Roland El Azzi; Miles Somers; Chun Lam Kwong; Bryant Magnus Shang Ting; Jo-Yao Cheng; Lisa Tong; and Nini Li.

For more information on the University of Sydney COMPASS Social Inclusion program, please contact:

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