

# ALUMNI NEWS

## pediatric dentistry

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

VOLUME 5 • NUMBER 2 • 2008



Sara Paul photo

“DAWG DASH” DENTAL KITS: Two young participants receive toothbrushes, toothpaste and oral health information from UW Pediatric Dentistry at the 23rd Annual Dawg Dash at Husky Stadium. ECOH volunteers behind them include Dr. Mariella Garcia of the pediatric dentistry faculty and residents Dr. Suzy Chatzopoulos and Dr. Travis Nelson, who was one of the runners. Dana Robinson Slote, ECOH marketing manager (right), said 2,000 dental kits were distributed. ECOH FAQ on pages 4-5.

## Calling all dentists—kids need you

“**WE MUST DELIVER** on our nation’s promise of access to care for our youngest and most vulnerable children,” said Dr. Joel Berg this fall while representing the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program at a conference in Maryland.

Cont. on p. 2

Spotlighting  
our  
CLASS of 2008  
page 3

## It all started back in 1964...

*“Medicaid has touched the lives of half of all the low income young adults of prime military service age.”*

*— 2005 policy brief from George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services*

*What is the connection between Medicaid and military service?*

*It is all laid out in a 1964 study, “One Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service.” The study, by the Task Force on Manpower Conservation, explored the reasons for a 50 percent rejection rate among young men drafted into the military in 1962. The task force traced the problem back to treatable and correctable physical, mental and developmental conditions—poor health status—of draftees.*

*Findings in that report led directly to Medicaid insurance for low-income children, specifically the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment program for children. The 2005 policy brief, “National Security and U.S. Child Health Policy: The Origins and Continuing Role of Medicaid and EPSDT,” analyzes Medicaid’s child health policy roots in national security and directly relates the comprehensive coverage of the EPSDT to the findings in **One Third of a Nation**. The report found a direct relationship between the poor health of military rejectees and their low-income status. Even beyond ramifications for military preparedness, this evidence had long-term implications for the nation’s productivity. Common themes which needed to be addressed were extreme poverty, limited education, and families living under conditions of significant stress from poverty.*

Find out more by going to our web site: [uwecoh.org](http://uwecoh.org).

## Access to care features ABCD program

*Cont. from page 1.*

“But it will take all of us, general and pediatric dentists, to fulfill the promise,” explained Dr. Berg, *Lloyd and Kay Chapman Chair for Oral Health*.

The Maryland State Dental Association’s (MSDA) first annual Access to Care Day focused on ways to prevent another child’s unnecessary death from an abscessed tooth. In February, 2007, a 12-year-old Maryland boy, Deamonte Driver, died. Bacteria from the untreated tooth spread from his mouth to his brain. Medicaid’s Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis & Treatment (EPSDT) program for children’s dental care would have covered his care.

“I was proud to be from Washington state, home to trailblazers like Drs. Peter Domoto and Peter Milgrom who worked to improve access to care for children. Along with far-sighted leaders in Spokane, they developed the successful ABCD program,” said Dr. Berg. In the discussion, he presented critical elements of ABCD which help reduce health disparities for Medicaid’s low-income children. ABCD-certified dentists qualify for enhanced reimbursement when they treat Medicaid-insured children. Because there are so few pediatric dentists, general practitioners are crucial to overcoming the access-to-care barrier. Now in 30 Washington State counties, ABCD emphasizes the importance of a child’s dental visit by age one when screening and assessment can reveal underlying problems.

Expanding upon that program, Dr. Berg explained the focus of the UW Department of Pediatric Dentistry and our newly launched Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH) program.

Emphasizing the importance of children’s oral health and a dental visit by age one, Dr. Berg noted that the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) made oral health one of its top three children’s healthcare priorities: dental caries is the most common chronic disease affecting children in the United States.

In September the federal General Accountability Office (GAO) reported that “preventive dental care can make a significant difference in health outcomes and has been shown to be cost-effective.” The report noted a 2004 study showing that the average dental-related cost for low-income preschool children who had their first preventive dental visit by age one was \$262 compared to \$546 for children receiving their first visit at age four to five.

According to the Washington State Department of Health, dental care tops the list as the most frequent cause for treatment in the operating rooms at Seattle’s Children’s Hospital. The cost can be as much as \$4,500 per child compared to \$40 for three preventive fluoride varnish applications.



*A Public Service Announcement featuring Dr. Joel Berg in his capacity as the Dental Director of Seattle Children’s Hospital is now in rotation on KOMO TV and in Spanish on Univision, bringing more attention to the topic of oral health to thousands of households, and is available online.*

# We congratulate our 2008 GRADS



*The 2008 graduates are (front l-r) Dr. Roopa Purushothaman, Dr. Elizabeth Velan, Dr. Chris Piper, Dr. Athena Seegert, and (back l-r) Dr. Troy Hull, and Dr. Ashley Tercero.*

**AFTER GRADUATION** ceremonies in June, the Class of 2008 joins the small but growing number of pediatric dentists in the nation.

**Dr. Roopa Purushothaman** is continuing her PhD research in the Department of Oral Biology after being awarded a \$10,000 grant from the American Cleft Lip and Palate Association. She maintains a strong connection with our department as a research assistant and at Seattle Children's in the dental clinic and the craniofacial center.

**Dr. Athena Seegert** and her husband Greg moved back to Boston after graduation. She plans to join an existing practice in the Boston area and hopes to start work in the next few months.

**Dr. Ashley Tercero** opened a pediatric dentistry practice in Yakima. She and her husband Ryan have a new daughter Kya, born on August 14. Her pediatric dentistry practice is a great success.

**Dr. Troy Hull** went to Ireland for a much-needed vacation after receiving his three year concurrent MSD/MPH degree. He is working in Marysville part-time with pediatric dentistry alumnus Chris Lugo and is keeping his options open.

**Dr. Chris Piper** opened Piper Pediatric Dentistry in Bellingham in September. He and his wife, Emily, have another Piper to introduce to the community. Their son, Jonathan Baird Piper, was born on July 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Dr. Elizabeth Velan** has joined the pediatric dentistry practice of Dr. Mary Elizabeth Bisese in Bellingham. She also sees patients in the OR at Seattle Children's where she works with our current residents. She and her husband Tomas expect a baby boy in December.

The University of Washington Department of Pediatric Dentistry presented a Frequently Asked Questions series for school faculty, staff and others interested in

the ECOH 2010 in the for Early C

# ECOH FA

For more information, including links to news articles and lectures, as well a detailed floor p

## A little history...

The UW School of Dentistry and Seattle Children's Hospital have joined forces to combat the growing crisis of childhood dental disease with the development of a pediatric dental facility, the Washington Dental Service Building for **Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH)**. The new venture will ensure that the region's children receive the highest quality oral health care at an early age (birth to age three) when disease can be prevented.

### **Will you treat youth older than 3 years?**

Our patient base encompasses all children with emphasis on children with special needs from Western Washington and across the state. We serve children from birth to age 21, with programmatic focus on early childhood (birth to age three).



### **How is the building project funded?**

Project Total Cost: \$18 million

Seattle Children's Hospital: \$1 million for capital expenses and \$500,000 for outreach efforts

Washington Dental Service & Washington Dental Service Foundation: \$5 million

Department of Pediatric Dentistry: Financing \$12 million borrowed from UW Internal Lending Program

### **ECOH contains two key areas:**

First, the ECOH program is a virtual center encompassing research, education, public policy, and service.

Secondly, the facility at Magnuson Park (formerly known as Building 25) is called the *Washington Dental Service Building for Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH)*.

### **How does ECOH affect the School?**

The ECOH program and Department of Pediatric Dentistry remain part of the School of Dentistry but will be located in the Washington Dental Service Building for Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH) at Magnuson Park. All pediatric dentistry clinical activity will occur at this location, including student rotations.

program which will open in September  
 the Washington Dental Service Building  
 Childhood Oral Health (ECOH).

# AQ

If you have more questions, please contact:

**Dana Robinson Slote**, Marketing Manager  
 drslote@u.washington.edu

**Sara Paul**, Program Operations Manager  
 sarapaul@u.washington.edu.

plan and our fact sheet, please visit our web site: [www.uwecoh.org](http://www.uwecoh.org) or call (206)543-4885.

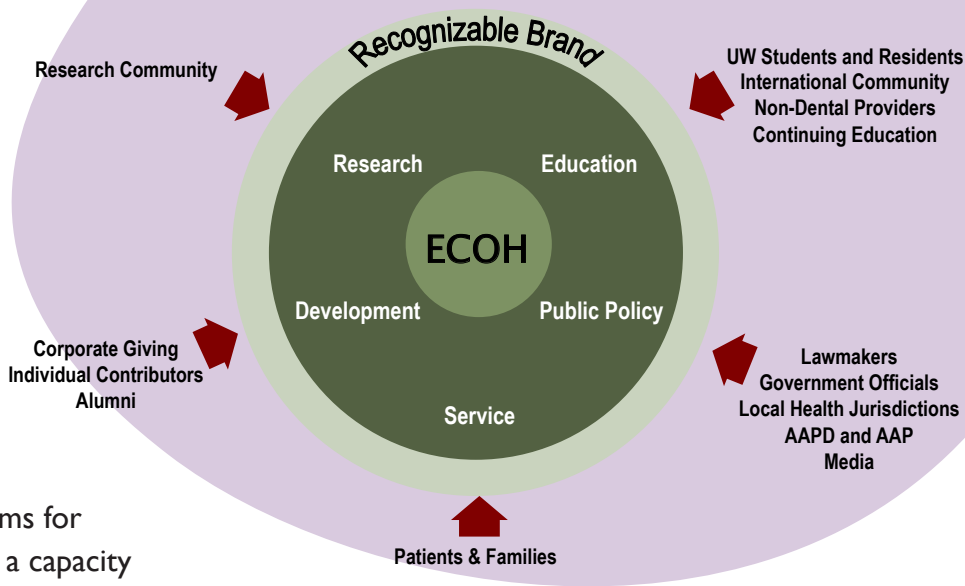
### What happens to Children's Dental Medicine?

Children's Dental Medicine will combine with the UW Department of Pediatric Dentistry. All ambulatory Children's dental patients will be treated at the Washington Dental Service Building for Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH).

In-patient consults, craniofacial orthodontics and dental emergencies after 5 pm daily, on weekends or holidays will be treated at a new 4-chair clinic in Children's Hospital.

Children's will lease surgical space in the ECOH building from the UW School of Dentistry. The operating wing is contiguous with the clinical suites. Three operating rooms for dental/surgical procedures are planned with a capacity of more than 2,000 cases/year.

### ECOH as a Virtual Center



### How will you attract new patients?

Two-thirds of all Medicaid-eligible children do not see a dentist. The ECOH program will provide an additional option for those patients and others who require complex care, or are subject to lengthy waiting periods.

We will strive to improve access to oral health services throughout the region by collaborating with our colleagues in the oral health community.

#### Donate through the School of Dentistry

web site: [www.dental.washington.edu](http://www.dental.washington.edu)

1. Click Departments
2. Click Pediatric Dentistry
3. Click Support This Department
4. Select ECOH Fund

# STAFF & FACULTY NEWS



Dana Robinson Slote

## Dana Robinson Slote

ECOH Marketing/Outreach Manager

Dana Robinson Slote brings a decade of public service and political expertise to the position of Community Outreach and Marketing Manager for the Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH) program. Her responsibilities include marketing, media relations, and outreach strategies on a local, state, national and international level.

Prior to joining the pediatric dentistry team, Ms. Robinson Slote served as director of communications for the UW School of Dentistry for three years. Before that, she provided governmental and community relations expertise to non-profit organizations, government entities and political committees including the Washington State Department of Health and the City of Seattle's Office of Policy and Management. Along the way, she gained experience in communications on campaigns including the 2003 – 2004 Seattle Public School Levy campaign.

## Amanda Ryan

Administrative Assistant

Amanda Ryan is no stranger to the Pediatric Dentistry Department. A student helper since September 2004, she is a 2008 University of Washington graduate with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Ms. Ryan assumed full-time duties as administrative assistant to Dr. Joel Berg as well as assisting with the Early Childhood Oral Health (ECOH) and Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) programs.

## Carol Harvey

Clinic manager's "exceptional work" noted

Clinic manager Carol Harvey's exceptional work in coordinating the Western Regional Board Dental Licensing Exam at the University of Washington earned her the honor of being invited to join the Western Regional Examining Board (WREB) as part of their traveling team to administer the Western exam as an auxiliary coordinator.



Amanda Ryan

# THE POWER OF

## Did I say...Thank you, Dr. Domoto?

### Editor's Note:

UW School of Dentistry alumnus, Dr. Gary Heyamoto from Bothell, WA, is the incoming Region 11 Trustee of the Washington Academy of General Dentistry. This article appeared in their newsletter **Today**, Summer 2008. We are pleased to reprint it with permission.

**HOW MANY TIMES** in our everyday encounters do we take our coworkers, friends, family or professional acquaintances for granted? I know we acknowledge their presence, expect them to "do their jobs" and sometimes criticize or complain. On the other hand, we also praise, applaud and appreciate what they do, but how often do we celebrate them, really appreciate them and tell them so?

Every evening, when my dental team has gone home, I review the events of the day. Where did we do well, where did we go wrong, who did we inconvenience, and who did we "go the extra mile" for? I am so grateful for all the people I work with. I am also grateful for being able to be part of this great profession...

# UPDATE ON ALUMNI

## **Dr. Scott Rowley ('04)**

After Scott Rowley graduated from the UW Pediatric Dentistry residency program in June of 2004, he and his wife Amy made a home in the Grays Harbor area where they both grew up. Scott opened a practice in Aberdeen and was the only pediatric dentist in the Harbor area. After a few years working alone in a very busy practice, Scott went to work with Greg Psaltis in Olympia (and was soon joined by UW dental school graduate, Ben Ruder). Scott continues to work in Aberdeen on a part-time basis seeing ABCD and Medicaid-covered children by referral. He and Amy have two young daughters, Elli – 4, and Olivia-2, and are in the process of moving to Olympia. “Life is good,” Scott says. “I have found a good balance here.”

## **Dr. Christine Tweedy ('99)**

Christine Tweedy, a 1999 graduate of the residency program, has been in practice in her West Seattle office for 9 ½ years. She is an active member of the West Seattle community. Her two daughters attend elementary school within walking distance of her home and she often rides her bike to her office. Her practice is very busy and for the last year and a

half, Dr. Mai Le, also a graduate of the UW pediatric dentistry residency program, has worked with her. Christine has extensive experience working with special needs patients. She was a hygienist before starting dental school, and received a certificate in dental care for the disabled from DECOD (Dental Education in the Care of Persons with Disabilities).

In 2006, Christine was named one of Seattle Magazine’s “Top Dentists” in the greater Seattle area.

## **Dr. Leena Bitar King ('07)**

Leena King graduated from the UW Pediatric Dentistry residency program in 2007. She was in the second cohort to complete the three-year concurrent degree program, earning her MSD and her Master’s in Public Health in Health Services with a Maternal and Child focus. She is working full-time at the Marysville Sea-Mar Dental Clinic where she sees children from low-income families. Many of these children are Hispanic and Leena is able to use her Spanish language skills. She and her husband John plan to relocate north of Seattle after the birth of their baby in December.

# OF A MENTOR

but, I never said “Thank YOU!” to the one person I should have.

This has bothered me for over 30 years. I’ve never told anybody about this, let alone commit it to print, but I’m convinced I entered the UW dental school in 1976 because of a strong written recommendation. In my mind, it couldn’t have been my volunteerism, G.P.A. or D.A.T. scores. No, it was a written recommendation that was the “tipping point” that has allowed me to do what I do today.

I’d like to say “Thank You” to Dr. Peter Domoto for seeing something in me, something that indicated to him that I could be an asset to this great profession. Thank you for writing a letter of recommendation on my behalf. Thank you for allowing me, as an

undergraduate, to participate in the Pedodontic Department’s activities. Thank you for accepting me for myself. I know that none of what I’ve done, what I do now or what I’ll accomplish in the future would be possible if not for you. Thank you for being a mentor, a role model and, most of all, a friend.

**What about you, readers?** Who do you owe “thank you” to? I urge you to go back in your past and thank those who helped you along in your journey. And while you’re at it, take time to thank those who are assisting you today as well.

Thank You, Dr. Domoto.

Gary E. Heyamoto, DDS, MAGD



**Dr. Joel Berg**  
Professor,  
Lloyd and Kay Chapman  
Chair for Oral Health

## ***Access to care: With your support we can deliver***

**Recently I had the honor** of representing Washington State's Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program, our ECOH programs and the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at the Maryland State Dental Association's (MSDA) first annual Access to Care Day. Held before the main MSDA meeting, this special full-day program paid tribute to Deamonte Driver, the 12-year-old Maryland boy who died in 2007 from a brain infection that started in his tooth. His death raised awareness and focused national attention on access to dental care—or lack of access—for low-income children insured by Medicaid or with no insurance at all. There was indeed strong interest and motivation to explore possible solutions for the access to care crisis.

I started the program with an introduction to a major health problem, caries in children. The process of caries is foreign to most people who only recognize its result – cavities. Because most people don't think about the cause, process, or infectious nature of caries disease, few consider the dire ramifications, and in this instance deadly consequence, of the disease.

Later a thoughtful panel discussion brought together various "players" in the dental care world in Maryland: The state dental director, advocates for children's oral health, and those who were well informed about the sequence of events that lead to young Deamonte's death. The dialogue focused on actions that will be needed to improve the circumstances for the many children and families who find themselves in a similar situation—unable to locate a provider who accepts Medicaid reimbursement.

In the afternoon, I spoke about ABCD, our Washington State program which addresses this problem by certifying dentists in pediatric screening so that they can receive enhanced reimbursement. Lack of adequate payment is one of the major problems for dentists. I was proud to be from a state, home of trailblazers—Drs. Peter Domoto and Peter Milgrom—who developed ABCD to improve access to care. ABCD training is so portable I was able to train the dentists and other health professionals attending the conference.

After the program's conclusion, I was delighted when the MSDA officers informed me they want to bring an ABCD-like program to their state. In addition to Maryland, several other states have expressed strong interest in adopting what we have. Now, we in Washington State must do more to carry out the intent of ABCD – to deliver on the promise of access to care for the youngest and most vulnerable children.

I urge you to take the simple step of becoming ABCD certified. Each of you can help fulfill our obligation to care for our state's children.

Alumni News is published by the Department of  
Pediatric Dentistry  
University of Washington  
Heather Marks, MSW, Editor  
Cheryl Shaul, Contributing Editor

Box 357136  
Seattle, WA 98195  
Phone: 206-543-4885  
Email: hmarks@u.washington.edu

---

### UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

School of Dentistry  
Department of Pediatric Dentistry  
1959 NE Pacific St.  
Box 357136  
Seattle, WA 98195-7136