

# ALUMNI NEWS

## pediatric dentistry

U N I V E R S I T Y O F W A S H I N G T O N

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# Free screening event a BIG hit for all involved

by Rhona Schwartz

**FIFTY CHILDREN** – from toddlers to pre-teens from throughout the Seattle area – received a screening exam and a fistful of healthful treats at The Center for Pediatric Dentistry's first free dental screening on February 25.

Held on a Saturday during National Children's Dental Health Month, the new event was well publicized via local media outlets, blogs and other social media.



"My kids had never been to the dentist before," said a mom who brought in three children ages 3 to 6. "This seemed like a good way to introduce them to the dentist."

"We don't have any money or insurance, so I really wanted to bring my kids to get their teeth screened today," said another parent.

Organized by outreach coordinator Kimberly Hanson Huggins, the screening involved residents, dental assistants, faculty, staff and volunteers. Parents had a chance to see the new state-of-the-art facility and learn more about the

importance of good oral health among young children.

The event got high marks from graduate program director Dr. Marcio da Fonseca and acting assistant professor Dr. Travis Nelson.

"Our resident dentists and many members of our amazing staff volunteered their time.... (and) we were able to introduce many fearful young children to the dental office in a way that was fun and reduced their anxiety," said Dr. Nelson. "We're looking forward to seeing many of those who were screened back in the clinic as new patients."

"An event like this is great. It's raising awareness," said Nelson. "Children who have a bad experience don't come back to the dentist as adults. We're trying to give them a positive experience."

In preparation for the event, the Center's social worker Heather Marks connected with three patient families who needed extra help with transportation and assistance in feeling comfortable with the procedures.

Those providing service during the screening included residents James Cannava, Mai Dinh, David Avenetti, Steve Tseng, Kari Sims, and Glenn Canares; faculty Marcio da Fonseca, Amy Kim and Travis Nelson; assistants Elizabeth Sullivan, Katie Evans, Teresa Pelayo (the Glamorous Tooth Fairy), Becka Benedict (the popular Mr. Molar), Chalet White and Brittany Jipp.

Volunteers including Van Anh La, Viktoriya Fedorova, Sofia Tangcharoens, Jennifer Singh, AJ Dhanoa, Melanie Overman, Therese Canares, and Zoya Tharani signed families in and showed them to the screening area. Staff members Camille Baltuck, Tonya Greer and Tara Cannava helped out where needed, while Kimberly Hanson Huggins provided general oversight.

"Based on the success of this screening, we plan to offer more of these on Saturdays throughout the coming year," said Dr. da Fonseca.

*Above left: Dr. Mai Dinh shows Liliana Roberts proper brushing techniques at the screening. Background photo: "Mr. Molar" greets Julius Jackson. Steve Steinberg photo.*

## bites news bites news

### New Post-Doc Program to Provide On-site Learning In Areas of Greatest Need in the WWAMI Region

Starting this summer, UW pediatric dental residents will learn skills in working effectively in dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) at clinical sites around the WWAMI region. WWAMI stands for Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho, states that are served by the UW School of Dentistry.

The new postdoctoral educational track in UW Pediatric Dentistry residency training called the Pediatric Rural Educational Program (PREP) will be headed by faculty member Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario.

In addition to providing valuable hands-on experience for pediatric dental residents, this new Title VII grant-funded program aims to improve access to oral health care for children in the greatest areas of need in the Northwest, and strengthen community linkages with regional HPSAs.

### Visiting Turkish scholar returns to home and family

At the end of April we bid farewell to pediatric dentist Dr. Cenkhan Bal, DDS, PhD, when he returned to his native Turkey after five months as a visiting scholar in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry. During that time he assisted in two research projects with faculty members Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario and Dr. Penny Leggett.

Dr. Bal graduated from Gazi University Faculty of Dentistry in 1998, and finished his PhD at that university's Department of Pediatric Dentistry in 2003. He practices in a local area clinic in Ankara.

His wife and seven-year-old daughter remained in Turkey. In March his wife gave birth to their son.

"I have had a great experience in The Center for Pediatric Dentistry," said Dr. Bal. "I want to thank everybody for their kindness and interest."



Dr. Cenkhan Bal

### Dental assistants from CPD prepare dinner at the Ronald McDonald House

Residents of the Ronald McDonald House dined on a special dinner in April--special because it was prepared and served by a volunteer group of our dental assistants and their families organized by Heather Robinson and Shelly Ashford.

Shown here (left to right) with Ronald himself are Carol Harvey, Heather Robinson, Shelly Ashford, Jessica Woods, Elizabeth Sullivan, Kooroush Mansourzadeh, Linda Chau, Becka Benedict, Chalet White and Stuart Sullivan. Not pictured are Maria and Gary Shinn, Ezra Robinson, Larry Harvey, and Amanda and Dennis Foster. Organizers also thank those who donated food or money. Another volunteer dinner event is scheduled this summer.







## Dr. Joel Berg Named Dean of the UW School of Dentistry

**IN ADDITION TO THE MANY HATS** he is already wearing, Dr. Joel Berg will soon apply his energy and vision to the entire School of Dentistry. After serving as Chair of UW Pediatric Dentistry since 2003, Dr. Berg has been named Dean of the School of Dentistry, following a national search.

His selection has been widely hailed by faculty, staff, and alumni. Dr. Berg is recognized as a visionary leader in early caries detection and prevention and as a champion of access to oral health care for all children, regardless of their parents' ability to pay.

He will succeed former Dean Dr. Martha Somerman and Interim Dean Dr. Tim DeRouen (2011-2012). His start date as Dean is August 15, pending ratification by the UW Board of Regents.

Dr. Berg led the creation of the state-of-the-art Center for Pediatric Dentistry in Northeast Seattle where he serves as director. The Center, a collaboration between UW Pediatric Dentistry and Seattle Children's Hospital, opened in fall 2010.

Dr. Berg is also Dental Director for Seattle Children's, associate dean for hospital affairs at the UW School of Dentistry, and national spokesman and president of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD).

At the UW, he revitalized the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program that connects Medicaid-eligible babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers with dentists around the state who know how to work with young children.

He has fostered a pioneering program that integrates social work practices into the fabric of the department to improve access to care for children of poverty and increase sensitivity to families from a wide range of backgrounds.

Most recently, he chaired a task force that evaluated the School's system of patient intake and recommended improvements. In 2011, he was named the Washington Dental Service Foundation Distinguished Professor for Dentistry.

Dr. Berg received a DDS degree in 1983, a Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry in 1985 and an MS degree in oral biology in 1985, all from the University of Iowa. Before joining the UW, he served on the dental faculty at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Texas.

He also has private-sector experience as executive vice president for research and clinical affairs for ESPE America, Inc. and vice president for clinical affairs for Philips Oral Healthcare.

Please see Dr. Berg's column on back page.

# Poverty puts the squeeze on patients' health & behavior: pediatric dentists can advocate for families

by Dr. Marcio da Fonseca, Residency Director

**THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL RECESSION** and the increase in food and fuel prices, among other factors, have thrown millions of people into poverty which, in turn, has affected people's access to healthy foods and dental care.

Children in the US experience the highest level of poverty and social deprivation among Western developed nations, especially during their formative years. Nearly half of immigrant children in the US live in poverty, although 97% of their parents work.

The latest US Census Bureau survey of food security (2008) revealed that almost 50 million people lived in food insecure households, including 22.5% of the child population. Over 5 million children lived in a state of very low food security which has more than doubled since 2000.

Poverty leads to adverse health outcomes in children and adolescents such as harmful effects on learning, psychosocial development, physical health, productivity and family life. Children who are food insecure are more likely to be in poor health.

The effects of poverty are not only seen in poor dental health due to malnutrition or incorrect diet but also in the child's behavior in the dental office. Low-income families have high levels of stress. Food insufficiency affects children through parental anxiety and parenting behavior, including less nurturing and more abusive behaviors.

Lacking basic family necessities may also affect the social, emotional and cognitive development of pre-school and school-age children, leading to anxiety, depression, school suspensions, difficulties getting

along with peers, and behavioral problems. Food deprivation causes irritability, distractibility or emotional changes, impacting academic scores and psychosocial behaviors. Children may also experience anxiety as a result of unpredictable and intermittent meals and housing.

One of our second year residents, Dr. Mai Dinh, is investigating the prevalence of food insecurity and fast food consumption among 212 patients who attend our clinic. Preliminary results indicate that 28% were food insecure and 58% had fast food consumption within the previous week. No significant

association was found between food insecurity and fast food consumption but food insecurity was significantly associated with younger age, lower income, and job loss.

Increasing awareness of the public and health-care professionals regarding the causes and consequences of poverty can help combat the problem. Pediatric dentists should advocate for improved access to healthy diets for low-

income families, know their community resources, and thus, lower health care costs by decreased hospitalizations.

Understanding the culture of poverty would also contribute to a reduction in the stereotypical attitudes toward low-income patients, ultimately improving the quality of their interactions in the dental office.

*This is based upon an article by **Dr. Marcio da Fonseca**, director of our residency program. The full article, The effects of poverty on children's development and oral health appeared in **Pediatric Dentistry, 2012; 34:32-8.***

**'The effects of poverty are not only seen in poor dental health... but also in the child's behavior in the dental office.'**

# Greetings, class!

PREP | 2 YR



**Dr. Katherine Lane**  
**Oregon Health Sciences**  
A 2006 graduate, Dr. Lane comes from Klamath Falls, Oregon where she was dental director of Klamath Open Door Dental Clinic, a multi-service community health center. She mentored 4th-year dental students who provided direct care during their external rotations.

MSD | 2 YR



**Dr. Janice Duong**  
**University of British Columbia**  
Dr. Duong, a 2010 graduate of University of British Columbia, was class valedictorian. Since graduation, she has practiced dentistry in Coquitlam, BC, for families, including those newly immigrated to Canada. UBC faculty describe her as an exceptional student.

MSD/MPH | 3 YR



**Dr. Elise Watson**  
**University of North Carolina**  
Dr. Sarvas finished dental school in June where she received several awards for high scholarship, leadership and volunteerism. She was the president of the dental student government organization.



**Dr. James Heidenreich**  
**University of Connecticut**  
A 2010 graduate, Dr. Heidenreich completed an AEGD residency in Michigan while he pursued a graduate degree in public health at the University of Michigan. He worked at a community health clinic gaining experience with special needs children.



**Dr. Ya-Chun (Christine) Wang**  
**University of Washington**  
Dr. Wang is a 2012 graduate. She has a strong background in research and was employed as a research scientist before entering dental school. During dental school Christine volunteered in several activities relating to people with disabilities.



**Dr. Brianne Butler**  
**University of Washington**  
A June graduate, Dr. Butler taught a dental Spanish class and was the recipient of two Rotary International Service Scholarship Awards, allowing her to partner with the Peace Corps to develop an oral hygiene education program for children in Suriname, South America.

## Memory of his childhood toothaches prompts Floyd U. Jones to contribute

**WHEN HE WAS A CHILD IN RURAL MISSOURI**, Seattle philanthropist Floyd U. Jones thought toothaches were just part of growing up. “People had no idea how important dental care is during early childhood; and, of course, there was no fluoridation,” says Mr. Jones.

With this memory still vivid in his mind, Mr. Jones contributed \$35,000 to support the salary of a part-time pediatric social work assistant in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry for a year.

In one of the first programs of its kind in the country, pediatric social worker Heather Marks, MSW, works directly with families to help them surmount increasingly complex challenges ranging from transportation issues to the lack of dental insurance coverage.

Since the Center for Pediatric Dentistry—a collaboration between the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Children’s—opened in 2010 in northeast Seattle, Ms. Marks’ workload has more than tripled.

Her new part-time assistant helps families get their children to appointments, apply for Medicaid coverage when appropriate, and surmount other challenges. Ms. Marks handles the more complex issues, trains residents in relating to people from widely disparate backgrounds, and conducts outreach to organizations with similar missions.

Mr. Jones, 84, is a Seattle stockbroker and founder of the Floyd and Delores Jones Foundation. On March 20, after a guided tour of the Center, Mr. Jones presented his gift directly to Dr. Joel Berg for the Chair’s Fund for Excellence to be used in the social work program.



Floyd Jones toured CPD with Dr. Joel Berg, social worker Heather Marks and volunteer Cliff Sanderlin.

## WE SALUTE OUR DONORS FOR 2011!

*Thank you to all the wonderful donors who supported the Department of Pediatric Dentistry programs to promote oral health in children in 2011.*

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Dr. Joel Berg

## Transition gives perspective on all we've accomplished

**IT HAS BEEN A WHIRLWIND** nine years in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry for me. Since my arrival in March of 2003, we dreamed of many things including upgrading the ABCD program, improving the curricula of our pre-doctoral and postgraduate programs, and of expanding our program's reach to the other side of the Cascades and beyond. We also imagined a new facility in which we could teach more efficiently, offer a place where faculty could practice, and provide a world-class environment for one of the most spectacular residency programs on the planet.

Well, with the help of all of you and many others, we have exceeded our own lofty expectations. As I transition into my new role as Dean of one of the greatest dental educational institutions in the country, I am honored and thrilled that I will be just "down the street" and can keep an eye on our creations as they grow and develop.

We have created the structure for an even more outstanding residency and a top-notch pre-doctoral program. We have expanded the residency program with our Yakima program and now into a new PREP program, which will take residents into a five-state area as part of their training. We have worked out the kinks and paved the way for success going forward. My successor will be well positioned to take things to a much higher level.

As a result, many more patients will be seen, many more clinical research activities will occur and many great people will be attracted. Most importantly, more children will benefit from the collective wisdom and hard work of a team of more than 100 people in the department—faculty, staff, residents, and volunteers—all working for the improved oral health of children.

I give my heartfelt thanks to all of you for allowing me the opportunity to accomplish all that we have done together. Even though I will have many new responsibilities as Dean, I will "be there" for the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and the Center for Pediatric Dentistry. I certainly look forward to seeing them and our other exciting programs around the state excel beyond anything we could have imagined.

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