

# ALUMNI NEWS

## pediatric dentistry

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

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# *A brief History* THE UW DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

SINCE THE CREATION of the University of Washington Department of Pedodontics in 1948, several leaders have played significant roles in shaping the University of Washington Pediatric Dentistry program.

This issue profiles some of these remarkable department educators—Chairs and Professors.

All have championed access to dental care for children from low-income families as a core value and policy of the department.

### CHAIRS

Department of Pediatric Dentistry  
(Department of Pedodontics)

1948-72

Dr. David B. Law

1961-62, 1986-87

Dr. Thompson M. Lewis (as acting chair)

1972-75

Dr. John C. Peterson, Jr.

1975-76

Dr. John M. Davis (as acting chair)

1976-2002

Dr. Peter K. Domoto

2002-03

Dr. Douglas Ramsay (as acting chair)

2003-2012

Dr. Joel Berg

2012-13

Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario (as acting chair)

2013-

Dr. Rebecca Slayton

**THE DEPARTMENT'S FIRST CHAIR,** Dr. David B. Law, was followed by Drs. Thompson M. Lewis, John C. Peterson, Jr., John M. Davis (as acting chair), Peter K. Domoto and Joel Berg. Its current chair, Dr. Rebecca Slayton, was appointed in 2013.

Among other faculty members who have made major contributions to the program are Drs. Devereaux Peterson, Bertha Barriga, Penelope Leggott and—prior to being appointed chair—Dr. Slayton. Two major players—Ana Lucia Seminario and Douglas Ramsay—served as acting chairs. Others have contributed in other important ways, but are not included in this edition.

## CHAIRS: DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

### *Dr. David B. Law*

#### **Chair 1948-1972**

A year after the UW School of Dentistry began teaching its first class in 1946, Dean Ernest M. Jones recruited Dr. David B. Law from Northwestern University where he was a member of the pedodontic faculty.

Dr. Law established many of the department's programs, policies and philosophies that continue to resonate decades later.

In the formative years of the department, Dr. Law was responsible for all the pre-doctoral and post-doctoral courses in children's dentistry, which he taught with the help of some part-time faculty.

In the early 1950s Dr. Law established a post-graduate training program in pediatric dentistry. Also a scientist, he made significant contributions to research and to scientific literature. Jointly with Drs. Thompson M. Lewis and John M. Davis, he co-authored *An Atlas of Pedodontics*, an acclaimed textbook that was translated into more than five languages.

Dr. Law was a national leader in dental education, serving on the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry and as chair of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. He was described as a quiet, intelligent, kind man who loved children. Dr. Law passed away in 1986.



### *Dr. Thompson M. Lewis*

#### **Acting Chair 1961-1962 and 1986-1987**

Dr. Thompson Lewis was appointed acting chair of the UW Pedodontics Department for eight months while Dr. Law, an army reservist, was on active duty in the winter of 1961.

Dr. Lewis came to the department as one of its first graduate students in 1954. After earning his





MSD in 1955, he remained as a full-time faculty member. He became assistant professor in 1956, associate professor in 1963, and full professor in 1970.

Early in its history, the department established a close relationship with Children's Hospital in Seattle. In 1963, Dr. Lewis was appointed director of Children's dental department and continued in that capacity for more than 25 years. Under his direction, the department expanded services for children with disabilities and medical issues.

Dr. Lewis believed children's dentistry required treating the whole child, taking into consideration the child's personality and circumstances. He believed that effective behavioral management of children is essential for successful clinical dentistry, early intervention is key, and fluoride and good nutrition greatly enhance dental health.

### **Drs. Law and Lewis honored by professorship**

The Pediatric Dentistry Department's first professorship evolved from the successful Law-Lewis Lectureship created in 1992. Through generous contributions from alumni and retired faculty members and friends, the Law-Lewis Endowed Professorship in Pediatric Dentistry was first awarded in 2010.

The professorship aims to foster a multidisciplinary team approach to healthcare delivery, research, education and public policy.

The current Law-Lewis Endowed Professor of Pediatric Dentistry is Dr. Rebecca Slayton, department chair. The Law-Lewis Lectureship continues at the UW as a well-attended and informative annual pediatric dentistry event.



## *Dr. John C. Peterson, Jr.*

### **Chair 1972-1975**

Dr. John Peterson took over the leadership of the department from his mentor and friend, Dr. David Law, in 1972. A graduate of Washington State University, he earned his DDS degree from the University of Oregon School of Dentistry in 1951. After serving briefly in the U.S. Navy, he turned to his real interest, pediatric dentistry, earning his MSD degree from the UW in 1961.

During this period, the department benefited from a powerhouse of teaching talent. In addition to Drs. Law, Lewis, and Peterson, UW pediatric dentistry faculty included Drs. John Davis, Peter Dmoto, and Bertha Barriga.

Dr. Peterson was described by peers as a "friend of the student: affable, liked by everyone and a great clinician." Based on his popularity he was one of five professors invited in 1996 to the 25th reunion of the Class of 1971, held in Seattle just three months before his death. Dr. Peterson was remembered as a kind man with a great sense of humor.



# Dr. John M. Davis

## Acting Chair 1975-1976

Raised in Wenatchee, WA, Dr. John Davis graduated from the University of Washington with a DDS degree in 1961. In 1965 he entered the two-year pedodontic residency program at the University of Washington and completed his MSD in June of 1967.

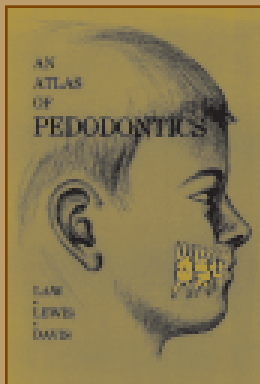
He then joined the UW pediatric dentistry (pedodontics) faculty and worked with Drs. David Law and Thompson Lewis to complete two editions of *The Atlas of Pedodontics*. Dr. Davis authored the current edition of *The Atlas* with Dr. Devereaux Peterson of the UW Department of Pediatric Dentistry. The Atlas is widely used by dental students in many countries and in several languages.

In the early 1970s Dr. Davis was instrumental in initiating a three-year combined program of pediatric dentistry and orthodontics with the objective of training dental educators of the future to meet the needs of children and young adults.

In 1973 he became an associate professor with tenure.

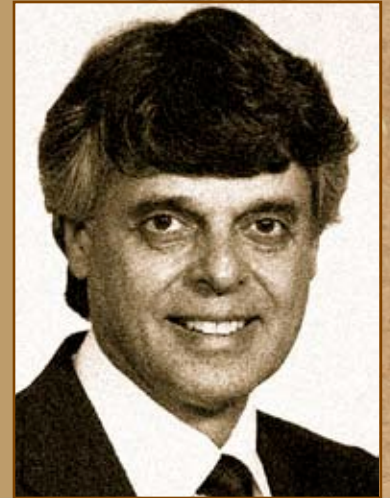
Upon the departure of department Chair Dr. John Peterson, Dr. Davis served as acting chair of pedodontics from 1975 to 1976 and assisted in recruiting and hiring a new permanent chair, Dr. Peter Domoto.

In 1976, after nine years at the UW, Dr. Davis reduced his schedule to half time and began private practice in Seattle. Sometime in the 1970s the department name changed from Pedodontics to Pediatric Dentistry.



In 1997 the board of trustees of the Dental Alumni Association selected Dr. Davis as the 15th recipient of its Distinguished Alumnus Award.

In 2000 Dr. Davis retired from the University of Washington School of Dentistry after 33 years of service, and in 2008 he retired from private practice.





# *Dr. Peter K. Domoto*

## **Chair 1977 – 2002**

Dr. Peter Domoto (who prefers to be called “Pete”) served as department chair for 25 years. He is known nationally for his work on behalf of children who are at high risk of oral diseases and lack access to dental care. His interest started early in his career.

After receiving his Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry at the UW, he continued as a clinical assistant professor and served three years as dental director of the Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic in the Central District of Seattle. At Odessa Brown he gained valuable insights into barriers to care for the poor.

He completed studies for a Master’s Degree in Public Health in 1975 and shortly afterward was appointed acting chair of the UW Department of Pediatric Dentistry. After a national search, he was invited in 1977 to assume the chairmanship. He reached full professor status in 1996.

Dr. Domoto recognized the connection between children’s early oral health and their overall health as adults. He and his faculty promoted initiating dental care for children by age three. That age has since been lowered to one year.

In the late 1980s, Dr. Domoto collaborated with Rona Levy, MSW (now PhD and professor) from the UW School of Social Work to identify and address barriers to care.

They added children with physical and developmental disabilities as well as those living in poverty to the list as populations at high-risk for poor oral health. They set up several one-credit courses in several dental school departments on understanding and caring for high-risk populations and addressing barriers to care. These courses became a requirement for all future dentists.

Based on this work, the UW led the way nationally in advocating for better access to oral health care for all children.

In 1994, Dr. Domoto and Professor Peter Milgrom of UW Dental Public Health Sciences led a massive study of oral health care data from third grade students in 37 of Washington State’s 39 counties.

The team identified barriers to care ranging from the need for transportation and interpreters to fear of dentists and dental procedures by children and their parents. To better serve children of poor families, pediatric dentists realized they needed to improve their communication skills and better understand behavioral sciences.

The study led to the creation of Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD), a new prevention-based program for low-income, socially disadvantaged families. It is funded by the Medicaid.

The ABCD program emphasizes early intervention for infants and toddlers and continuity of preventive care for young children across the state. The program continues to serve low-income families around Washington state and has become a national model for expanding comprehensive oral health care for infants and toddlers.



In order to more fully integrate experience with diverse populations into the UW curriculum, Dr. Domoto initiated rotations for students with the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, Seattle area and rural community clinics, and the Bellingham Interfaith Family Health Center. The rotations became a graduation requirement for pre-doctoral students. Dr. Domoto also restored the residency program in pediatric dentistry, which had been discontinued for a number of years.

Looking for someone to continue this direction, for nearly a year before retiring in 2002 Dr. Domoto led a nationwide search for his successor.

He found in Dr. Joel Berg a national leader in dental education and research who also shares his dedication to extending early oral health services to all children by helping them overcome barriers to care.

Dr. Domoto continues to be recognized for his accomplishments during his professional career.

### **Domoto Fund for Children welcomes gifts**

**Upon retirement in 2002 friends and colleagues honored Dr. Domoto by establishing the Peter Domoto Fund for Children. The fund ensures access to oral health care at UW Pediatric Dentistry for economically disadvantaged, at-risk children. The Domoto Fund has been heavily used, especially since the economic downturn that started in 2008, and the need for this type of assistance continues to grow.**

**Contributions can be made in Dr. Domoto's name, payable to the UW Foundation, University of Washington Dentistry Advancement Office, Box 357137, Seattle, WA 98195.**

## *Dr. Douglas Ramsay*

### **Acting Chair 2002-2003**

Dr. Douglas Ramsay was appointed acting chair after Dr. Domoto retired. A professor in pediatric dentistry, Dr. Ramsay's career started when he received a B.A. in psychology from Franklin & Marshall College in 1979 and a DMD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1983.

He came to the UW in 1983 as a senior fellow and in 1985 entered the UW's NIH-funded Dentist-Scientist Training Program, which supported his doctoral studies in psychology (PhD, 1988) and specialty training in orthodontics (MSD, 1990). He joined the UW faculty as an assistant professor in 1990 and was promoted to professor in 2001.

After his year as acting chair of pediatric dentistry, Dr. Ramsay went on to chair the UW Department of Dental Public Health Sciences. In 2011, the Departments of Dental Public Health Sciences and Oral Biology were merged to form the Department of Oral Health Sciences, and Dr. Ramsay currently serves as chair of this department.





# Dr. Joel H. Berg

## Chair 2003 - 2012

Dr. Joel Berg, who was appointed Lloyd and Kay Chapman Chair for Oral Health at the School in 2003, embraced Dr. Domoto's commitment to serving the poor.

Dr. Berg earned his dental degree in 1983 and completed his training in pediatric dentistry (1985) at the University of Iowa. Before joining the UW, he served on the dental faculty of the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Texas.

In the private sector, Dr. Berg served as executive vice president for research and clinical affairs for 3M ESPE America Inc. and vice president for clinical affairs for Philips Oral Healthcare.

Dr. Berg has been a strong advocate for addressing the barriers to oral health care for underserved populations nationwide, testifying on their behalf before a Congressional subcommittee in 2011 and, later, in his role as spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. He also created one of the first pediatric dentistry social work programs in the country in 2007.

He actively promoted lowering the age of a child's first check-up from three years of age to one and revitalized the ABCD Program started by Dr. Domoto. In addition to his duties as UW Pediatric Dentistry department chair, Dr. Berg also served as dental director for Seattle Children's, associate dean for hospital affairs at the School of Dentistry and as a national AAPD spokesperson.

Dr. Berg is perhaps best known for his role in creating The Center for Pediatric Dentistry at Magnuson Park in NE Seattle. The Center, which opened its doors in the fall of 2010, was a collaborative venture involving the UW Department of Pediatric Dentistry, Seattle Children's and the Washington Dental Service and its foundation. Having come to the UW with entrepreneurial skills in addition to outstanding academic and research credentials, Dr. Berg was in a unique position to guide the collaboration among the UW School of Dentistry, Children's and the Washington Dental Service as partners in creating the new Center.

The Center for Pediatric Dentistry provides complete dental care in one location with state-of-the-art equipment and ample free parking. The Center allows residents and dental students an especially wide range of learning experiences including treating more patients and those with special needs.

Dr. Berg was widely praised for his leadership in the department and in 2012, following a national search, he was named Dean of the UW School of Dentistry, beginning August 2012.



# *Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario*

## **Acting Chair 2012 – 2013**

Dr. Ana Lucia Seminario served as acting department chair after Dr. Berg's promotion to School of Dentistry Dean in 2012 until Dr. Rebecca Slayton became chair in August of 2013.

Trained in pediatric dentistry and epidemiology, Dr. Seminario is an assistant professor in Pediatric Dentistry. She was graduate research director of the UW pediatric dentistry residency program until December 2011.

Her academic interests include research methodology, global oral health, access to oral health, oral health among immigrant populations, and early childhood oral health.

She earned her DDS, MS and certificate in pediatric dentistry from Peruvian University, Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru. She received a PhD in stomatology from the University of Charles in Prague, Czech Republic, and a certificate in public health from the institute of public health, also in Prague, and later earned an MPH from the UW. She is a board-certified and a diplomate of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry and member of several other national and international pediatric dentistry organizations.



# *Dr. Rebecca Slayton*

## **Chair 2013—**

In 2012, after a national search, Dr. Rebecca Slayton was named chair of the department. This was a return to Seattle for Dr. Slayton who served as associate professor and graduate program director in the department from 2004 to 2008.

She served as chair of the UW dental school's faculty council and on numerous committees, and was also interim clinical director of the department of dental medicine at Seattle Children's from 2007 to 2008. From 2002 to 2004, she was chair of pediatric dentistry at Oregon Health & Science University.

In July Dr. Slayton was also named the UW School of Dentistry Law/Lewis Endowed Professor. The professorship honors the memory of department pioneers Dr. David Law and Dr. Thompson Lewis. Dr. Slayton's other roles are director of The Center for Pediatric Dentistry, associate dean for graduate studies at the School of Dentistry, and dental department director, Seattle Children's.

Dr. Slayton was professor and chair of the department of pediatric dentistry at the University of Iowa before assuming the UW post in 2013.





Dr. Slayton holds a BA in biology from Earlham College and an MS in engineering, a DDS, a certificate in pediatric dentistry and a PhD in genetics, all from the University of Iowa. Her current appointments include consultant to the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation and ad hoc reviewer for several leading dental journals.

## FACULTY INSTRUMENTAL IN SHAPING THE DEPARTMENT

### *Dr. Bertha Barriga*

Dr. Bertha Barriga enjoyed a long career that worked well for her and for the pediatric dentists she helped train. Among the secrets to her satisfaction was her ability to create a balance between private practice and teaching and her interest in classical music and fine arts.

Dr. Barriga was born in the small city of Oruro, near La Paz, in the Altiplano of Bolivia. Her father was a superior court judge in Oruro who encouraged his four daughters to break the mold that was cast for women by seeking professional careers. Despite the male-dominated culture of her country, it was not uncommon for women to become dentists in Bolivia.

After receiving her dental degree in La Paz, Dr. Barriga came in 1959 to the United States to pursue endodontics. However, once in the states she discovered a bias against women in dentistry. A counselor at New York University School of Dentistry steered her away from endodontics and into "children's dentistry since she was a woman."

Pursuing children's dentistry she moved in 1962 to Seattle for a residency at Children's Hospital. At that time the program consisted of only one resident.

After finding that she could not be certified in the states without graduating from a U.S. or other recognized dental school, she applied to dental school at the University of Washington. At the UW she was brushed away with the explanation that the school had "little experience working with women." Of the few women who had been admitted, said her advisor, only one ever completed the program. Dr. Barriga was surprised that in the United States she encountered more discrimination against women in dentistry than she ever saw in Bolivia.

In 1963 she was accepted at Oregon Health and Science University School of Dentistry in Portland, Oregon, where she graduated with a DMD three years later.

She returned to Seattle in 1966 where she went into private practice, initially with Dr. Alta Campbell. The practice was small and she limited her schedule to half time.

In 1971, she received an MSD in Pediatric Dentistry at the University of Washington. Dr. David Law hired her as an instructor at the UW School of Dentistry. By limiting her private practice to half time, she was able to teach in pediatric dentistry. Dr. Barriga was considered an exceptional teacher.

She and Dr. Thompson Lewis, also on the faculty, developed an excellent working relationship, and Dr. Lewis invited her to be part of his children's dental practice. Their professional relationship became a lasting bond for both.



Drs. Lewis, Barriga, Wesley Odani and Peter Domoto helped create a lectureship in pediatric dentistry called the Law-Lewis Endowed Lectureship in Pediatric Dentistry. The lecture continues as a popular and well-attended annual event. The original endowment has been increased to the professorship level.

After selling her practice and retiring in 2004, Dr. Barriga taught one day a week in UW Pediatric Dentistry as a volunteer until 2006.

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## *Dr. Devereaux Peterson*

During his career Dr. Devereaux Peterson (who prefers to be called “Dev”) helped train more than 2,500 dentists at four universities. In addition to being a respected educator in pediatric dentistry, he is also credited at the UW for bringing thousands of color illustrations to the department’s signature textbook, *The Atlas of Pediatric Dentistry*.

Following service in the Air Force in SE Asia and at the Pentagon during the war in Vietnam, he graduated from dental school and trained in pediatric dentistry at the University of Pittsburgh. He then took a post-doctoral fellowship at Michigan.

After three years on the faculty of Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, he came to the UW School of Dentistry as an associate dean in 1982.

During the 1990s and early 2000s he collaborated with Dr. John Davis, who had more than 40,000 images of dental exams and treatments, to expand and illustrate the Atlas. During that time, the name of the textbook evolved into *The Atlas of Pediatric Dentistry*, or simply *The Atlas*.

The new version of *The Atlas* was not cost effective to print so he had it adapted for use with computers and on the Internet. In its electronic format, the authors were able to keep the textbook affordable and easily portable.

*The Atlas* was used to educate more than 1,000 dentists, mostly in the state of Washington and continues to be available as an Internet download.

Dr. Peterson continues his involvement with the Pediatric Dentistry Department by collaborating with Dr. Simon Lin to teach Pedo 520/525 during summer quarter.

Pedo 520/525 has had a seamless evolution of course directors over the past 35-plus years, from Dr. John Davis, to Dr. Peterson, and then to Dr. Lin. The highly rated course has played a role in stimulating and solidifying interest in pediatric dentistry as a specialty, and has been one of the launch pads for more than 50 UW graduates who have pursued a career in that field.





# Dr. Penelope Leggott

Dr. Penelope Leggott played a key role in two formative events at UW Pediatric Dentistry.

In 1994, Dr. Leggott helped Dr. Peter Domoto return the pediatric dentistry graduate program from Children's Hospital to the UW School of Dentistry after several years of hiatus and then served as director of the UW pediatric dentistry graduate program.

In 2003 she was co-principal investigator with Dr. Wendy Mouradian on a grant that launched the department's Maternal & Child Health (MCH) Center for Leadership Training in Pediatric Dentistry (LEPED). Dr. Leggott served as PI of the grant from 2003 through 2012 when funding ended.

The Maternal & Child Health (MCH) Leadership Training Program in Pediatric Dentistry is one of three academic tracks that graduate-level students can pursue in Pediatric Dentistry at the UW. Participants in this track receive a concurrent Master of Science in Dentistry (MSD) and Master of Public Health (MPH) over the course of three years. In addition to their pediatric dentistry clinical training and their public health degree, MCH residents are encouraged to be leaders in the communities they serve.

Dr. Leggott joined the faculty of the University of Washington's Department of Pediatric Dentistry as associate dean for academic and clinical services in 1993 and also served as graduate program director of the advanced program in pediatric dentistry (1995-2001).

Dr. Leggott is also in part-time private pediatric dental practice in Mount Vernon, a rural agricultural area north of Seattle where many children are from low-income families.

She served on the faculty of the University of California, San Francisco and then was the chair of the Division of Pediatric Dentistry at the University of British Columbia.

Spending her early years in Africa, she attended boarding school in England and received a BDS at University of Bristol School of Dentistry in 1970. In 1980 she received an MS and Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

*Sources for this document included original interviews and writing (some by the former faculty members) and publications such as the University of Washington Dental Alumni News magazine, the UW Pediatric Dentistry Alumni Newsletter at [dental.washington.edu](http://dental.washington.edu) and other websites. Corrections and updates are welcome. This is a living document appearing primarily on-line.*



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Rebecca Slayton, DDS, PhD  
Law-Lewis Endowed Professor  
Of Pediatric Dentistry.

## *Thanks to our 2012-13 donors*

From all of us at The Center for Pediatric Dentistry, thank you for your generous support! Your gifts make all the difference for our program and our patients.

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