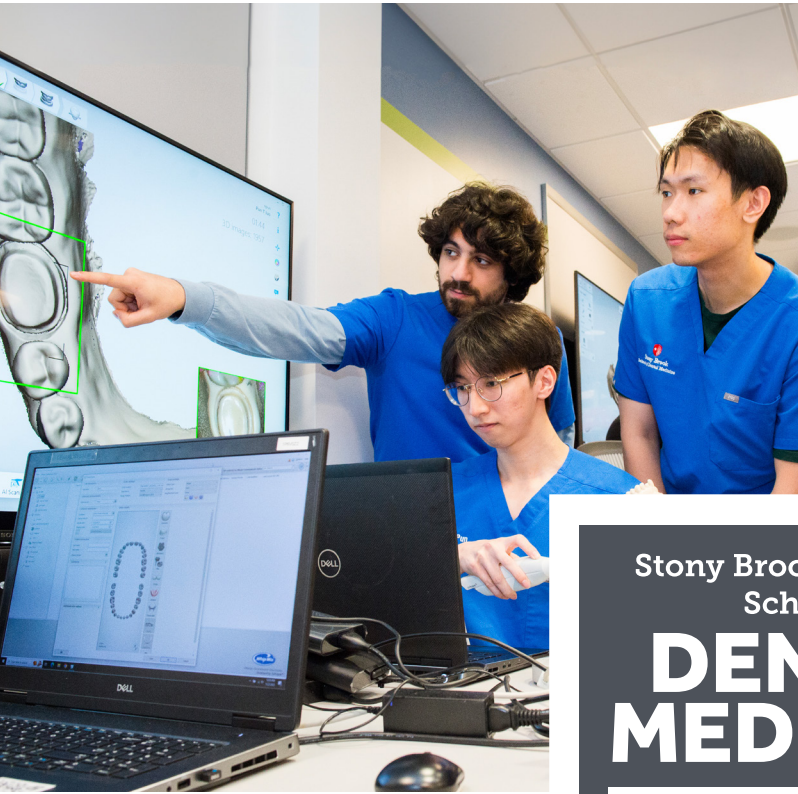


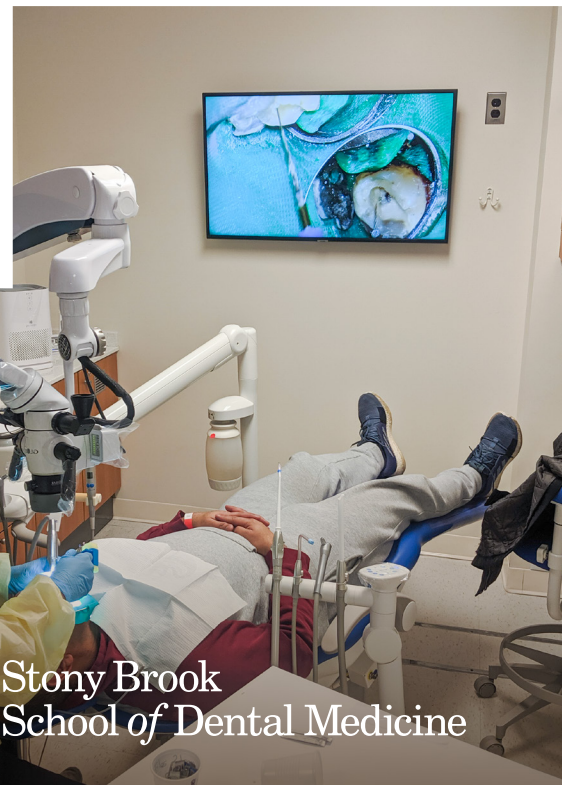
ON THE CUSP™

The Official Magazine of Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine • Fall 2023 • Volume 1; Issue 1



Stony Brook University
School of
**DENTAL
MEDICINE**

50 1973–2023



Stony Brook
School of Dental Medicine

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A LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Dear Colleagues,

Thanks to the work of many, we are pleased to premiere the School of Dental Medicine's new magazine — *On the Cusp*. As the name infers, we're on the verge of a new beginning, a point in the school's history when we set a trajectory for ourselves that will allow us to reach our full potential, something the founders of our school envisioned a half a century ago.

Front and center in this issue of *OTC* is our school's 50th anniversary. Take a look at the game board the university created and published in its spring magazine (pgs 32-3), which was shared with over 225,000 SBU alumni. It highlights seminal moments in our school's history and the people who shaped what it is today. We've been celebrating with enthusiasm since the beginning of the year and have lots more planned before year's end. I hope to see many of you at our grand celebration on Saturday, September 9.

Our feature story is about one of our pediatric dentistry graduates who "found her calling" several states away, caring for children most in need. I was so impressed to learn about what motivates her and how grateful she is for the education she received from our faculty and the experiences she had during her residency at Stony Brook.

Filling many pages of the magazines are stories and photos of the amazing things our students and faculty are doing, some right here on Long Island and others far away. These include awards and special recognitions for outstanding and extraordinary achievements. How proud we all should be to read these.

You will also find in this issue of *OTC* what some of our alumni are up to, both professionally and personally. Please think about what you would like to share with readers by sending something in for our Class Notes section (pgs 26-7). What better way to keep your classmates and those in school informed.

Although the magazine is intended primarily for our close community of students, residents, staff, faculty and alumni, a copy is sent to every dental school in the US and Canada, as well as leading dental organizations across the country. It is our way of sharing with them all the exciting and professional-influencing undertakings we are engaged in. This will help ensure that prospective dental students, residents and faculty will know about all that our school has to offer them and will consider our school as the next step in developing their careers.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *On the Cusp* as much as I did and that you'll look forward to getting the next issue.

All the very best,



Patrick M. Lloyd, DDS, MS
Dean, School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook University





JOIN THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND CELEBRATION

Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine is turning 50! It was on September 4, 1973, that the SDM held the very first lecture in its history. Since then, more than 1,500 aspiring dentists have used their education to develop their expertise, careers and lifestyles, to support their families, all while rebuilding and maintaining the oral health of countless patients on Long Island, in New York State, around the country and beyond.

Join us this September for a weekend full of festivities to celebrate this milestone anniversary. Reconnect and mingle with fellow alumni and faculty, and visit the place that you once called home. You will also hear from SDM luminaries who will share their memories about the history of the school, and about the bright future that lies ahead.

Weekend Schedule

Friday, September 8

6 – 9pm Cocktail Reception
Sunwood Estate
Old Field, NY

Saturday, September 9

12 – 1pm Barbecue
School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

1 – 2pm Student Panel Discussion
School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

2 – 3pm Campus Tour
School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

6pm 50th Anniversary Alumni Dinner and Celebration
Bauman Center
Stony Brook, NY (Cocktail Attire)

Conversations With SDM Luminaries

At Saturday evening's event, hear about the path that the school has taken from those who have helped lead the way.

Philius Garant, DMD
Acting Dean, 1979-1984
Dean, 1984-1992

Vincent Iacono, DMD
Tarrson Family Professor of
Periodontology and Chair
Department of Periodontics and
Endodontics

Ira B. Lamster, DDS, MMSc
Member
Inaugural Class of 1977



How to Register

The School of Dental Medicine is still accepting RSVPs for all 50th anniversary weekend events. To reserve your spot, visit stonybrook.edu/sdm50th

Questions? Contact Marc Soevyn at (631) 632-4995.

CATCHING UP WITH ... Dr. Philius Garant

Dr. Philius Garant, who served as acting dean of the School of Dental Medicine for five years before holding the permanent role from 1984 to 1992, navigated the school through periods of time that challenged its very existence. It all came while working to assure that its students were aptly prepared to face the challenges that came with a rigorous dental education.

As the school celebrates its 50th anniversary, *On the Cusp* caught up with Garant to learn about the path that he took to Stony Brook, and the path to which he directed the school as dean.

You followed Stony Brook's first dean, J. Howard Oaks, here from Harvard, coming on as a faculty member. What kind of person was Dr. Oaks?

When Howard entered the room, you knew it. He was this tall, imposing figure who was very smart. He spoke beautiful English. He could stand up and say something extemporaneously, and everybody would just turn and listen. Howard also had good connections in the world of dentistry and, more specifically, dental education because of his involvement in developing the central dental school application system.

How did your time as a Marine prepare you for dental school — both as a student and as a dean?

The Marine Corps gave me great confidence that I was not going to fail, no matter what. I really felt that nothing could bother me that much; look at what I had been through! And I think that my confidence rubbed off on some people — including the medical students we trained with at Harvard — when they saw that I was going to take on any challenge. Also, the Marine Corps made me conscious of certain qualities that I think a leader should have.

How did you help to grow the school upon arriving?

I knew people around the country who were of the caliber that we would want. First, there was Leo Sreebny, who had a solid reputation at the University of Washington and was about to become the director of a new research institute. I had also read a lot of good papers about dental caries by Israel Kleinberg up in Canada, and he



helped bring down good people from his department like John Gwinnett, Herschel Kaufman and Thomas McNamara. Also, Lorne Golub was a classmate of mine at Harvard who had done some outstanding research.

You served as dean during a period when many dental schools closed. Did you feel that Stony Brook's was in jeopardy?

It was never stated outright that the dental school was going to close for budgetary reasons, but we knew that conversations were going on. We had to do something. I couldn't sleep at night.

At that time, we had a graduate by the name of Jeffrey Sachs, DDS '78, who was as smart as a whip. He came into my office one day and gave me a pep talk like I've never had from anybody. He recommended that we get everybody on board to write letters of endorsement to the president. So that's what we did. Students, patients, other dental deans, people at the NIH, everybody started writing letters, all while I was making public pronouncements.

That continued for six or eight months, and we still didn't know what was going to happen. Then one day my phone rang and it was Jack Marburger, the university president. He reassured me that there was going to be a dental school at Stony Brook for a long, long time. I thanked him, hung up the phone, and I think I went home to celebrate. The stone that was on our backs got lifted just like that.

How do you look back on your experience as dean?

Like anything else, we had our ups and downs, but I have to look back on it with a great deal of pleasure. I met some very fine people here, and a lot of them believed in the school even more than they believed in advancing their own careers.

But I can't think of anything that pleases me more than the success of our students. There are so many of them on Long Island now, and they're doing well. That's what we're here for.

LETTER FROM THE DENTAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Dear Stony Brook Alumni,

Greetings from the Stony Brook Dental Alumni Association! As the President of this esteemed organization, it is my pleasure to connect with you all through our school magazine and share some exciting updates.

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication to our alma mater. Your continued involvement and contributions have played a significant role in shaping the vibrant Stony Brook community that exists today. On Stony Brook University's Giving Day, it was wonderful to see so many of you donate to the Dean's Scholarship for Underrepresented Students, which provides financial support for dental students from Health Professional Shortage Areas and empower them to pursue their educational aspirations at Stony Brook.

I am thrilled to share the enthusiasm surrounding the new leadership at Stony Brook. Dean Patrick Lloyd has brought a fresh perspective and a dynamic vision to our institution. His commitment to fostering academic excellence, promoting diversity and inclusion, and advancing research and innovation has invigorated our campus community. Under his leadership, Stony Brook continues to thrive as a hub of intellectual growth and opportunity.

In that vein, I am delighted to highlight a significant milestone in our history. The Class of 2027 has the highest percentage of women in the school's history. This achievement is a testament to the school's supportive environment in which every student can thrive and succeed.

I am also pleased to share that our Dental Care Center has resumed full operations. After navigating the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have returned to our pre-COVID intake, providing

comprehensive dental care to our community, as well as a fantastic forum for students and residents to learn from our faculty and practice their craft.

Lastly, I encourage you to join us at next month's 50th anniversary celebration. This milestone provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the tremendous achievements of our alumni, faculty, and students who have contributed to the field of dentistry.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and for being an invaluable part of the Stony Brook family. I look forward to connecting with you further through the school magazine and witnessing the continued success of our alumni.

Warmest regards,

Stacy Reisfeld, DDS '88

President, Stony Brook Dental Alumni Association



Alumni Board Members

Stacy Reisfeld, DDS '88
 Barry Bass, MS, DDS '81
 Mindy Brodsky, DDS '97
 Alec Ganci, DDS '12
 Thomas Grandville, DDS '11
 Lauren Heisinger, DDS '19

Gary Heitzler, DDS '92
 Jimmy Kilimitzoglou, DDS '02
 John Lupfer, DDS '20
 Joseph Manzella, DDS '21, MPH '21
 Robert Peskin, DDS '77

Jeannine Pistilli-Secko, DDS '04
 Bart Rizzuto, DDS '92
 Gerardo Romeo, DDS '05, MD, MBA
 Sandip Sachar, DDS '97
 Michael Shaffer, DDS '12

NEVADA STATE OF MIND



*Heather Parsons, DMD, Ped Dent '13, returned to her home state of Nevada to provide oral healthcare for those in and around Carson Valley.
Photos by Bryan Geiger*



Community Outreach Experiences Inspire Parsons '13 to Open a Rural Pediatric Dentistry Practice

By Liza N. Burby

Heather M. Parsons, DMD, Ped Dent '13, can point to four pivotal experiences that steered her toward buying a pediatric practice in Minden, Nevada, a small town north of the city of Reno that pulls from surrounding rural communities, with caregivers from as far as three hours away to access their child's dental care.

Getting braces when Parsons was in middle school was one of those events, or more specifically, going to orthodontist appointments. "Everybody was just so nice and the office was fun with a Hawaiian surfing theme on the walls, surfboard benches and all the giveaways," she recalled.

The whole experience was welcoming and friendly, and I loved the way my teeth looked afterwards. It changed my confidence, self-esteem and probably the trajectory of my life in the long run.

Later as a college sophomore, she was considering medical school when her advisor suggested she first check out the fields that interested her. So she shadowed her former orthodontist and was sold on her career direction. She just hadn't realized she had to go to dental school first. But she committed and was on track until her second year of dental school at Boston University. That's when two required internships — one in Nevada and one in Boston — changed her path.

"I was fortunate that both of those internship experiences were with pediatric dentists," Parsons said. "I had great mentors in welcoming offices. It was always positive and everybody that worked there loved the kids. That's when I decided I was going to do pediatric dentistry instead of orthodontics."



Parsons' desire to care for pediatric patients can be attributed in part to her participation in outreach events while she was a resident at Stony Brook.

Inspired By Class

She was further influenced by another more personal experience. Parsons, who is married and has a 3-year-old daughter, said she came from a resource-poor family, so from a young age she was very driven. "I wanted to do something where I knew I would be financially comfortable, but with flexible hours so I could have a family. So that's what I set out to do."

She was matched at Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine (SDM) for pediatric dentistry residency and spent two years here before she went back out west to be closer to family. She said she initially chose the SDM because she liked the east coast. When she got to campus, Parsons enjoyed working with the other residents and was particularly motivated by Dr. Fred Ferguson, the former director, who she said was passionate about his work.

"The classes at SDM are the foundation for everything I do," Parsons said. "Dr. Ferguson emphasized prevention and taking care of the more vulnerable groups. He loved special needs dentistry and we got a lot of exposure to that so it was easy for me to be passionate about it too."

And that led her to the fourth experience that solidified her career choice. To this day, the residency program incorporates a busy schedule of community outreach, according to Rhona Strizak Sherwin, DDS '78, clinical professor and director of pediatric dentistry outreach in the Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry. That includes using the Mobile Dental Care Center at community health centers, home visits for Head Start and WIC sites.

"When Heather was a resident, there were not that many pediatric dentists in Suffolk County, so we were very active, spending "full days at elementary schools" and with families at a homeless shelter," Sherwin said. "The good thing about our outreach program is there's a continuity of care because we return on a regular basis so the kids are getting full operative care."

I think that all the hours Heather spent as a resident in the mobile van doing school-based oral health education for Head Start and screenings gave her the impetus to feel that working with the underserved population was beneficial."



Creating Access To Care

Parsons concurred. “Stony Brook played a very big role in choosing the path I did, how I practice and how I feel about the populations that I get to treat. Seeing what little resources that some people have, and then seeing their desire to give a better life to their children and do whatever they can in order to make that happen was pivotal to me.”

Outside of dental school, she had a similar experience with international missions in Nicaragua and Panama where people in pain often had to wait in line for eight hours just to see a dentist.

“Knowing what parents went through to get their child’s dental treatments made me want to put myself in a position in a rural area where it’s harder to access those services, versus just being in a city where there’s many other dentists down the street,” she added.

After SDM, Parsons worked in a Long Island pediatric practice briefly then spent two years working in Reno. But she was drawn to the Minden practice, Valley Pediatric Dentistry, where she became an associate. She enjoyed the community, she said, so when the owner retired in 2016 she bought his

practice. Parsons kept on a crucial staff member, which helped her to learn the business side.

She has since discovered that having her own practice means she’s a small business owner and has to be good at leadership skills, interpersonal communication and know everything about how an office works — from the front desk to the financials to maintenance.

It takes humility, being open-minded and willingness to make mistakes,” Parsons said. “It’s not for everybody, and I think that it’s good to know that before you get into it.



Opportunities For Prevention

Parsons has a busy practice, seeing about 30 to 40 patients a day four to five days a week. Her patients range from infants to 18-year-olds and include both children and adults with special needs and disabilities “because a lot of practices don’t have the capacity to see these children and adults,” she said. She focuses on preventive and restorative treatments, treating patients using in-office general anesthesia, as well as “everyday dentistry while patients are awake.”

Her community outreach experiences as a resident continue to resonate in her current practice where she’s one of the only specialty offices to care for children in her community. “Their needs are beyond the scope of a local-to-them general dentist who doesn’t have the resources to treat children or people with special health care needs who need more intervention, such as sedation, or specialty care like pediatric crowns and pediatric root canals,” she said.

For many of the families she sees, dental care is a financial obstacle, so her practice accepts all of the state-funded insurance plans. But Parsons said the benefit of her office is that they try to price fees reasonably and give high-quality care to everyone. While hers isn’t a community health center, she does offer pro bono care through the Northern Nevada Dental Health Programs.

She has found that prevention awareness for children under five is lacking in Minden where many families rely on their general dentist who she said often have the philosophy that children don’t need to have a dental visit until age three to five. Parsons sees this as a missed opportunity for preventive education.

As a result, by the time she sees these young patients, she’s often dealing with “16 carious lesions”. She believes that more outreach and education would be helpful to get children referred at a younger age, no matter what dentist they see first.

“A lot of my job is education of the public, the general dentists and the pediatricians,” she said. “We do a lot of outreach events. We work with the local hospital and their community health fairs, and we do presentations in the preschools to get the word out to have their first visit by age one or by the eruption of their first tooth. But it’s an uphill battle for sure.”

Another difficulty of being in a rural area is finding staff who are willing to commute there. “Keeping a full team is very challenging because there’s not as many people available,” she said.



Making It Enjoyable

But Parsons’ favorite aspect of her job is watching the children grow and seeing how positive they feel about coming to her office.

“It’s a daily reaffirmation that we’re helping kids enjoy coming to the dentist. You have to go to the dentist for the rest of your life,” she said.

“For me it’s so important that these childhood experiences are positive because they are going to stick with them for their entire life.

We take very seriously that every kid who comes through our door needs to have a positive experience.”

Parsons said she doesn’t regret not becoming an orthodontist, but she does make sure that fun experience she remembers as a teen is available in her office with cheerful decorations, videogames, sugar-free lollipops and a toy machine.

In her seven years in the practice — and throughout her career — what has made her happiest is the relief on children’s faces when they’re out of pain. “There’s nothing like that look. Just knowing that you help that child have a better quality of life is important to me.”

Liza N. Burby is a freelance writer, editor and author who frequently writes about medical topics.



Parsons finds great joy in relieving a patient of their pain, stating "Just knowing that you help that child have a better quality of life is important to me."



CLASS OF 2023 TAKES FLIGHT

Forty-five Doctor of Dental Surgery students, as well as graduate students and residents of Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine's Class of 2023, received their degrees and certificates at the school's annual convocation ceremony held at the Staller Center for the Arts on the university's main campus in May.

Hundreds of family members and friends feted this year's DDS graduates, who continued their careers at 28 residency programs across seven states, furthering their education and training in general practice dentistry, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics and pediatric dentistry. Other 2023 graduates committed to begin their careers in private practice or enlisted in the United States Army.

"I congratulate all the members of the Class of 2023, who continue the tradition of excellence in dentistry spanning 50 years," said Patrick Lloyd, dean of the School of Dental Medicine. "In earning DDS degrees, graduate degrees and advanced education certificates, this year's classes has demonstrated not

only their great promise in the profession but also the wide spectrum and great depth of opportunities available here at Stony Brook."

Among the newest class of dentists was Mohit Varma, DDS '23, who graduated magna cum laude and with a Distinction in Research, and began a general practice residency at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Providence, Rhode Island, this summer. He became the second doctor in his family, joining his brother, Yash, a physician who hooded him during the SDM ceremony.

"It's been my grandparents' dream for someone in our family to work in healthcare, and being able to accomplish this with my brother, and for my entire family back in India and New Jersey, it's just a dream come true," Varma said. "It's been an amazing journey."

Jonathan Shiloah, DDS '23, described the day as "surreal." The class's president graduated magna cum laude and was one of five class members inducted into the prestigious Omicron Kappa Upsilon national



Family and friends gathered at the Staller Center to celebrate the Class of 2023, which was all smiles as they took the next step toward a career in dentistry.

dental honor society. Shiloah has gone on to join the orthodontics residency program at the Department of Dentistry at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx.

"It's amazing because you come into dental school with this goal in mind and you wonder how you're going to achieve it, but then you do all the things it takes to reach that goal," he said after the ceremony. "My goal was to become an orthodontist, and now that goal is coming to life. That is my next step, my next dream, and I can't wait to live it."

Helping see off Shiloah and his classmates was Dr. Michael Reddy, dean, professor and associate vice chancellor of oral health affairs at University of California San Francisco School of Dentistry, who served as the afternoon's Distinguished Convocation Speaker.

"You're entering an exciting time in your life, and I wish you all the best," Reddy said. "If you learn to work well with others, express gratitude and take a little time for yourself, and remember that what you

do matters, big success and happiness will follow."

Karen Doh, DDS '23, now a general practice resident at Brooklyn Methodist Hospital, delivered the ceremonial graduate address. True to Reddy's advice, she expressed gratitude for her classmates, and belief in them as newly anointed dentists.

"We are a true family unit and this is such a privilege that no other program experiences; we move together, feel together and pick each other up," she said in her address. "I hope you know how valuable and worthy you all are, and can see how important your contributions are and will be to society.

As we enter a larger scale of professionals, remind yourself where you started and where you came from, and that you are now a part of a small group of alumni from the prestigious Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine."

**See complete list of postgraduate positions on page 14*

Class of 2023 Postgraduate Placement

This year's graduates have joined advanced dental education programs in seven states, while others have begun their careers in private practice or the United States military.

Naftali Amsel

GPR
Veterans Administration
Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Weng Si Chan

GPR
Brooklyn Methodist Hospital
Brooklyn, NY

Daniella Chernoff

GPR
Northwell Health
Manhasset, NY

Christine Collins

GPR
Northwell Health
Manhasset, NY

Karen Doh

GPR
Brooklyn Methodist Hospital
Brooklyn, NY

Gerard Fischer

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Nassau University Medical Center
East Meadow, NY

Gavriel Gulamov

GPR
Jamaica Hospital Medical Center
Jamaica, NY

Morhlon Harris

GPR
St. Barnabas Hospital
Bronx, NY

Angela Hong

GPR
Nassau University Medical Center
East Meadow, NY

Parmvir Kaur

AEGD
NYU Langone Dental Medicine
Seattle, WA

Chae Young Kim

Private Practice

Jonathan Korabelnikov

GPR
Brooklyn Methodist Hospital
Brooklyn, NY

Arjun Kumar

Orthodontics
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, NY

Ashley Lau

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Carle Foundation Hospital
Urbana, IL

Jong Hyun Lee

AEGD
UConn Health Center
Farmington, CT

Shanlin Li

Private Practice

Shuning Liu

Pediatric Dentistry
NYU Langone Health
Brooklyn, NY

Robert LiVoti

GPR
Northwell Health
Manhasset, NY

John Luz

Private Practice

Vincent Mak

GPR
Veterans Administration
Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Joshua Matatov

GPR
NYU Langone-Long Island
Mineola, NY

Paulina Micek

GPR
NYU Langone Dental Medicine
Brooklyn, NY

Majd Pak

GPR
New York Medical College
Valhalla, NY

Sameer Panesar

Orthodontics
Saint Louis University
St. Louis, MO

Arielle Pistiner

Pediatric Dentistry
NYC Health & Hospitals/Woodhull
Brooklyn, NY

Jonathan Rabanipour

GPR
Nassau University Medical Center
East Meadow, NY

Ethan Razi

Orthodontics
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, NY

Daniel Reilly

GPR
Veterans Administration
Medical Center
Northport, NY

Caroline Roberto

GPR
Hackensack Meridian
Mountainside Medical Center
Glen Ridge, NJ

Gheorghe Roibu

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Kings County Hospital Center
Brooklyn, NY

Sylvia Rutkowski

GPR
NYC Health + Hospitals/Queens
Jamaica, NY

Jonathan Shiloah

Orthodontics
Montefiore Medical Center
Bronx, NY

Angad Singh

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital-
Weill Cornell Campus
New York, NY

Yiji Suh

GPR
St. Charles Hospital
Port Jefferson, NY

Maria Tamay

AEGD
NYU Langone Dental
Medicine
Brooklyn, NY

Adam Tanner

GPR
St. Barnabas Hospital
Bronx, NY

Michael Teichberg

GPR
St. Barnabas Hospital
Bronx, NY

Lauren Toledo

Private Practice

Saloni Trivedi

Private Practice

Allen Vakhler

General Dentistry
United States Army
San Antonio, TX

Mohit Varma

AEGD
Providence VAMC
Providence, RI

Vivek Viswanath

GPR
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, NY

Setareh Zareh

Pediatric Dentistry
Wyckoff Heights
Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Rui Zhang

Orthodontics
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, NY

Elise Zlotnikova

GPR
Englewood Hospital
Englewood, NJ



Allen Vakhler, DDS '23, second from right, with members of the United States Army at his swearing-in ceremony in May.

From Operatory to Military

A first-generation immigrant — and first-ever dentist in his family — Allen Vakhler, DDS '23, is underway with another new experience as a member of the United States Army Dental Corps.

Vakhler completed his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in May, and is excited to have started the next chapter in his journey, which began in Brooklyn, wove through Stony Brook and very well may take him around the world.

"I have always been intrigued by the idea of serving my community and country," he said. "Giving back to this country that has given my family and I so much would be something I can be proud of for the rest of my life. Furthermore, I have always pushed myself to seek out new challenges and adventure, and joining the Army has allowed me to do both."

After graduating, Vakhler went on to complete a six-week direct commissioning course in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and he is currently amidst a 12-week basic officer leadership course in San Antonio, Texas. Vakhler will then transition to a permanent duty station to treat members of the Army.

He is committed to service for a minimum of four years, at which point he has a number of options, including re-enlisting, moving into the US Army Reserves or National Guard, or entering private practice. Vakhler indicated he may even consider academia, with designs on serving as a mentor for students in the same way that Stony Brook faculty members did for him.

"I cannot thank the faculty at SBU enough," he said. "They truly made my experience at the dental school amazing. The faculty members are great leaders, educators, mentors, but most of all, friends."

That decision, however, is well in the distance, with Vakhler committed to helping US soldiers at home or, potentially, abroad, achieve optimal oral health.

"Not only will I be challenged and tested in new and unique ways, but I will also meet great people and have new stories to tell," he said. "Obstacles to overcome give us purpose; the lessons we learn give our memories value; but it is the relationships we foster that make life meaningful. I expect that going into the Army is the first step in doing all three."



Elizabeth Gebers, center, with Spencer Busia, left, and Dr. Mary Truhlar at a special retirement luncheon held in the Oaks Learning Center.

LONGTIME STAFF MEMBER BIDS FAREWELL

For more than 30 years at Stony Brook University – the last 14 at the School of Dental Medicine – Elizabeth Gebers brought her can-do attitude and upbeat spirit to work every day. In May, Gebers announced her retirement from the school, a decision that she described as “bittersweet” in a reception held in her honor in the J. Howard Oaks Learning Center.

“My years at Stony Brook gave me an opportunity to work alongside so many talented, enthusiastic and committed individuals,” Gebers said. “The strong work ethic and dedication of the staff and faculty I met along the way have truly inspired me. I have made many invaluable, lifelong friendships, and for this I am so very grateful and blessed.”

Gebers most recently served as the senior staff assistant in the school’s Office of Administration

and Finance, this after tenures in which she was a key element to the success of the Department of General Dentistry and the Office of the Dean. With her newfound time, she looks forward to spending more time caring and finding homes for four-legged friends at the Islip Animal Shelter.

When asked which of Gebers’ qualities she will miss the most, Mary Truhlar, DDS ‘84, MS, past dean of the SDM and professor in the Department of General Dentistry, said it was difficult to narrow down.

“Elizabeth has these fantastic interpersonal skills,” Truhlar said. “When she first joined the department, it had over half the faculty in the school. Her ability to forge relationships, work collaboratively with people inside and outside our department, and make sure that our programs ran smoothly was unsurpassed.”

Shelley Named SDM Director of Development

In July, the School of Dental Medicine welcomed Laura Shelley as its new director of development. As the liaison for the school’s more than 1,500 graduates of the SDM, Shelley looks forward to strengthening connections with alumni and raising awareness for the many triumphs at Stony Brook.

She comes to Stony Brook after spending more than 10 years at the University of Chicago’s New York office, where she served as

the associate director for regional major gifts from 2017 to 2023. Prior to that, Shelley worked in the university’s Booth School of Business, first as a development specialist and then as an assistant director of leadership giving.

Originally from New York, Shelley welcomes the opportunity to return to her roots. She encourages graduates to say hello by calling (631) 806-6280 or emailing laura.shelley@stonybrookmedicine.edu.



PERIODONTICS CHAIR RECOGNIZED BY HARVARD

Not long after graduating from Harvard University School of Dental Medicine, Vincent Iacono, DMD, came to Long Island to impart what he had learned and for 50 years, he's done just that, having taught every student who has ever come through Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine.

Iacono's exceptional achievements and contributions to dentistry – and to Stony Brook – were recognized by his alma mater recently as he received the school's prestigious Distinguished Alumni Award.

"I am incredibly humbled and honored to have received this award from Harvard School of Dental Medicine," said Iacono, Tarrson Family Professor of Periodontology and Chair for the Department of Periodontics and Endodontics, and SUNY Distinguished Service Professor.

Iacono founded the Advanced Dental Education Program in Periodontics at Stony Brook, and currently holds the position of director of postdoctoral education for all residency programs. He has received numerous accolades, including the Isadore Hirschfeld Award and Irwin Scopp Award from the Northeastern Society of Periodontists (NESP), the Oral Research Award and Fellowship from the Academy of Osseointegration (AO), the Charles W. Finley Visiting Scholar Education Grant from the AAP Foundation (AAPF), and the Outstanding Periodontal Educator Award and the Gold Medal from the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP).

Iacono's contributions also include volumes of



Dr. Vincent Iacono, right, accepted his award at a ceremony held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston.

groundbreaking research in periodontology. Iacono has authored more than 100 papers, abstracts and textbook chapters, while also playing pivotal roles in various professional organizations at regional, national and international levels.

"For the past 50 years, it has brought me great joy to share what I have learned and experienced with the students, staff and faculty at Stony Brook," Iacono said. "Best of all, it has been wonderful to see our graduates go on to make an indelible impact in their communities – through the services they have provided, and more broadly by advancing oral health practice through research and leadership roles in professional societies and dental education."

Mahdian Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure

Mina Mahdian, DDS, MDSc, a faculty member in Stony Brook's Department of Prosthodontics and Digital Technology since 2015 and current program director for the Advanced Education Program in Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, has been promoted to associate professor with tenure.

In addition to her role in academia, Mahdian has been active in research, with a focus on advanced imaging, optical coherence tomography, radiation

dosimetry and artificial intelligence. She maintains memberships on many SDM committees and provides radiology consultation to faculty in the SDM and practitioners in the community.

Mahdian earned her Doctor of Dental Surgery from Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences School of Dentistry in Tehran, Iran, and completed her Master of Dental Science and OMFR residency from the University of Connecticut.





Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine



Dr. Patricia Swanson has been a member of the School of Dental Medicine faculty since graduating from its prosthodontics residency program in 2018. Photo courtesy Glidewell Magazine

SWANSON EARNS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Patricia Swanson, DDS, Pros '18, a clinical assistant professor and director of dental student prosthodontics at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, was recognized on a national level by earning prestigious awards from the American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) and Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU) this academic year.

Swanson was acknowledged as the ACP's Junior Educator of the Year at the organization's annual meeting in Austin, Texas. In the spring, her teaching acumen was once again celebrated as she was presented with the Charles Craig Teaching Award by OKU, the national honor society in dentistry. This award, given annually, recognizes dental educators who have effectively incorporated innovative teaching techniques to advance the art, science and literature of dentistry.

"I consider these awards a reflection of the excellent mentorship I have received from the educators I had during my training, as well as my colleagues both locally and nationally," she said. "My greatest achievement as an educator will always be the success of my students, but I am proud to be recognized by my colleagues in the ACP and OKU."

Swanson's joined the Stony Brook faculty in

2018, assuming her current role as director of dental student prosthodontics. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she provides patient care in the school's affiliated faculty practice, and on the research side, has conducted studies focused on dental cements, dental implants and removable prosthodontics. Swanson also serves on various boards and committees, including the Suffolk County Dental Society, the New York State Dental Society and the ACP's Digital Dentistry Curriculum Committee.

"Dr. Swanson is a truly outstanding faculty member who is well respected by students, staff and faculty throughout the school," said Patrick Lloyd, dean of Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine. "We are pleased that she earned such prominent accolades as she is very much deserving."

Stony Brook faculty have been recognized by ACP and OKU in prior years. Dr. Kenneth Kurtz, director of the Division of Maxillofacial Prosthetics, received the Distinguished Clinician Award from the ACP in 2014, while Dr. Dolores Cannella, associate dean for education, and Dr. Maria Cristina Cordero-Ricardo, past director of dental student pediatric dentistry, were honored with the Craig Award in 2014 and 2015.



ADVANCING DENTISTRY THROUGH RESEARCH

More than 40 Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine students and residents participated in the 2023 Leo and Mickey Sreebny Lectureship and School of Dental Medicine Research Symposium, held at the Student Activities Center in April.

Stephen Walker, PhD, interim dean of research at the SDM, conferred awards to six students and residents for their exceptional research and presentations. Additionally, a representative of Dentsply Sirona, presented third-year dental student Catherine Scanapico with the American Association of Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR)/Dentsply Sirona Student Research Award for her evaluation of concordance between clinical and microscopic diagnoses of oral lesions. With the award, Scanapico will receive funding to present her findings at AADOCR's 53rd annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, in March 2024.

"Research Day is an outstanding tradition at the School of Dental Medicine, one that Dr. Sreebny undoubtedly would have been proud to see lives on," Walker said. "The dedication, depth of knowledge and attention to detail that each presenter showcased was very much evident to those who visited with them. We are thankful for the contributions that our students, residents and faculty made to make the day

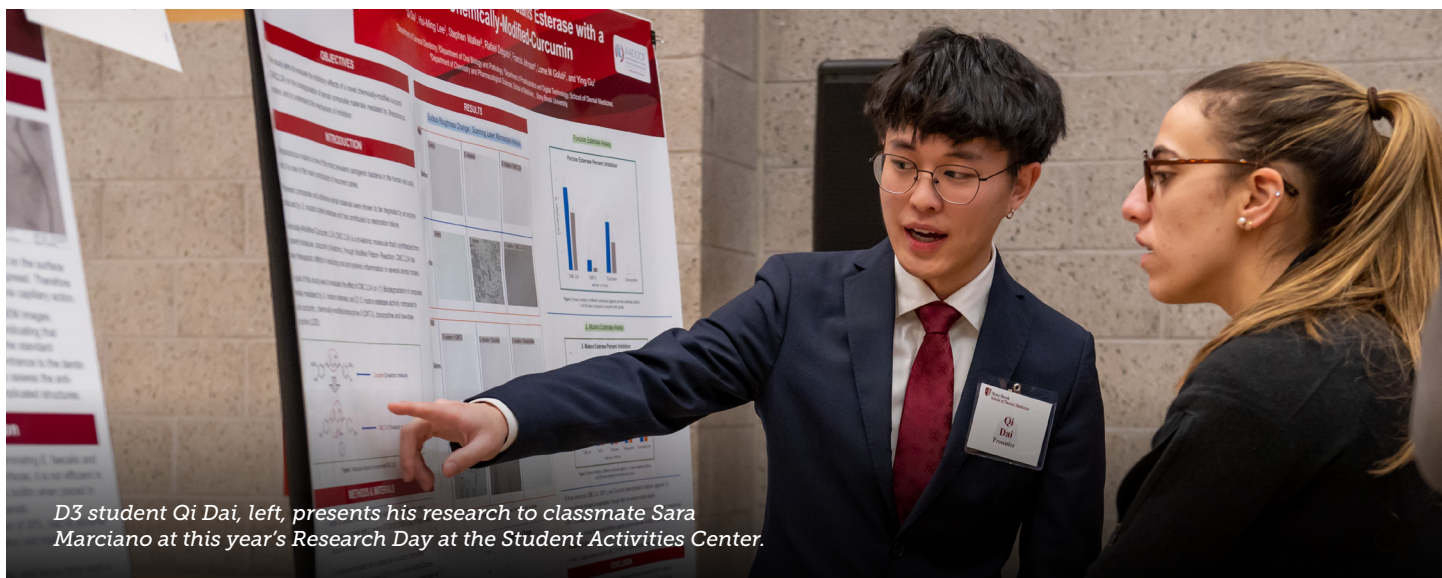
such a success, as well as the judges who carefully evaluated the research on display." "I was truly in awe of the commitment to excellence that each student, resident and faculty member demonstrated leading up to and during Research Day," added Patrick Lloyd, dean of the School of Dental Medicine. "It is important that we continue to promote research opportunities as our community must not only seek chances to improve as dental practitioners but to advance the profession."

Brian Foster, PhD, associate professor in the Division of Biosciences at The Ohio State University College of Dentistry, kicked off the day's events by serving as keynote speaker for the event, sharing a presentation titled "Key Regulators of Periodontal Mineralization: Lessons for Tissue Repair and Regeneration."

The symposium is named after Dr. Leo Sreebny, who served as dean of the School of Medicine from 1975-1979, and was a decorated member of the SDM faculty through 2005. Sreebny was a passionate advocate for research and innovation, and was committed to promoting discovery to SDM students and residents. Before his passing in 2020, Sreebny and his wife, Mickey, pledged their support for fostering such developments by backing the school's annual Research Day.



D3 student Raina Singh fields questions about her research.



D3 student Qi Dai, left, presents his research to classmate Sara Marciano at this year's Research Day at the Student Activities Center.

2023 Leo and Mickey Sreebny Lectureship and School of Dental Medicine Research Symposium Award Recipients

AADOCR/Dentsply Sirona Student Research Award

Catherine Scanapico, D3 student (with Rekha Reddy, DMD; Nora Odingo, BDS, DMD, MPH)

Topic: Evaluating Concordance Between Clinical and Microscopic Diagnoses of Oral Lesions

AADOCR National Student Research Day Award

Lauren Mistretta, D2 student (with Georgios E. Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent; Rafael Delgado-Ruiz, DDS, MSc, PhD)

Topic: Wettability of Zirconia Implant Surfaces after Glycine and Erythritol Treatment

Resident/Fellow Research Award

Erin Son, DDS, GPR '21, PGY2 oral and maxillofacial radiology resident (with Nina Anderson, PhD; Dan Colosi, DDS, PhD; Mina Mahdian, DDS, MSc)

Topic: Incidental Findings (IF) in Limited Field-of-View (FOV) CBCT for Endodontic Procedures

Graduate Student Research Award

Qi Dai, D3 student (with Hsi-Ming Lee, PhD; Stephen Walker, PhD; Rafael Delgado-Ruiz, DDS, MSc, PhD; Francis Johnson, PhD; Lorne Golub, DMD, MSc, MD(hon); Ying Gu, DDS, PhD)

Topic: Inhibition of *Streptococcus mutans* esterase with a Novel Chemically Modified Curcumin

OKU Sigma Tau Chapter Research Award

Zhong Wang, D3 student (with Georgios E. Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent; Ker-Chau Li)

Topic: Drilling speed on stability of short implants with different diameters

Hinman Symposium Award

Daniel McErlean, D3 student (with Prashansa Gautam, D3 student; Nina Anderson, PhD; Nora Odingo, BDS, DMD, MPH; Rekha Reddy DMD)

Topic: Smoking Cessation: A Targeted Approach to Quitting

AADOCR LI Section Student Research Award

Maryam Hafeez, D2 student (with George Kokkinos, D2 student; Rafael Delgado-Ruiz, DDS, MSc, PhD; Georgios E. Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent)

Topic: Differential Temperature Produced by Er,Cr:YSGG-Laser Irradiation on Ceramic Implants



Stony Brook
School of Dental Medicine



Class of 2026 students gather outside the Wang Center following their White Coat Ceremony.

FIRST YEARS READY FOR PATIENT CARE

The Class of 2026, coming to the close of their first year at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, were recently outfitted with some new attire — their white coats, representing the responsibility they are undertaking in caring for patients at the Dental Care Center on the South Campus — and beyond.

They received their official welcome to the profession at their White Coat Ceremony, held at the Charles B. Wang Center in front of family and friends in April. It marked the 20-year anniversary of the first such event held by the School of Dental Medicine in 2003.

“Of the many significant traditions associated with today’s ceremony, none is more important than the public nature of the event,” said Patrick Lloyd, dean of the School of Dental Medicine, in his opening address. “We, as a greater community, are

here to witness this moment, as our students affirm their commitment to professionalism, integrity and high ethical standards. I know I speak for the entire School of Dental Medicine family when I say congratulations. We look forward to supporting you in this meaningful passage in your journey toward becoming Doctors of Dental Surgery.”

“The White Coat Ceremony has become an amazing tradition, a rite of passage, and an academic ritual in healthcare,” added Steven Zove, DDS ‘83, interim associate dean for clinical operations and patient care. “Today, you transition from preclinical to clinical practice, from student to healthcare professional. With this transition comes power and responsibility that one obtains with the acquisition of sophisticated knowledge.”

Who’s Next?

As one class of students took the next step in their careers, another will join Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine for the 2023-24 academic year. Like those that came before it, this year’s class welcomes highly driven and qualified students to the north shore of Long Island.

Class of 2027 by the numbers



Applications: 892



Positions: 45



GPA: 3.80



Science GPA: 3.75



Identified gender:
Female 80%, Male 20%



Residence:
91% in state,
9% out of state



DAT: Academic average 21.7;
Science average 21.6; Perceptual average 20.9

STUDENT GARNERS FIRST PLACE NATIONAL AWARD FOR COVID-19 BEHAVIOR RESEARCH

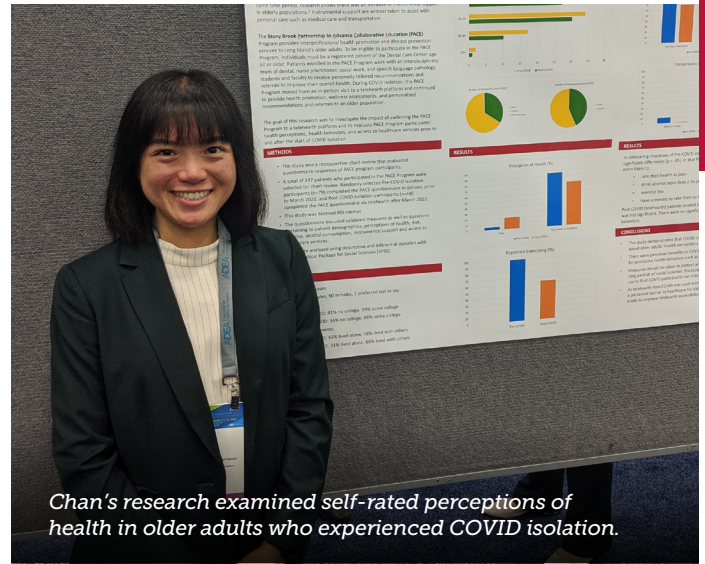
Dana Chan, now a fourth-year student at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, received first place in the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Student Poster Award competition at the organization's annual meeting in Portland, Oregon, in March.

Her poster, titled "The Impact of COVID Isolation on Self-Rated Perceptions of Health in Older Adults," was chosen among more than 170 presentations from dental schools across the United States.

"As I was presenting at the conference and amongst my peers from around the country, I was impressed by all of their knowledge and presentations, and because of that, when I was notified that I had won this recognition, I was in disbelief," Chan said. "In that moment, I felt the culmination and satisfaction of hard work from my team and me."

Ms. Chan and her team evaluated the health perceptions, behaviors and healthcare access of geriatric patients connected with Stony Brook's Partnership to Advance Collaborative Education (PACE) program — before and after COVID isolation. Overall, she and her colleagues learned that isolation negatively impacted Long Island older adults' health perceptions and behaviors such as alcohol consumption and exercise, but increased support for protective health behaviors such as having a friend or family member facilitate a doctor visit.

The research was completed by Chan and fellow fourth-year students Mingi Park, Michelle Lee and Jane Song, with support from Dr. Dolores Cannella, associate dean for education; Dr. Mary Truhlar, professor in the SDM's Department of General Dentistry; Dr. Renee Fabus, associate professor and chair of the Department of Speech-Language



Chan's research examined self-rated perceptions of health in older adults who experienced COVID isolation.

Pathology; Dr. Cheryl Meddles-Torres, nurse practitioner and director of psychiatric mental health; and Dr. Kathleen Monahan, associate professor and director of the Family Violence Education and Research Center.

"I am so proud of the dedication and commitment to excellence demonstrated by Dana and our entire research team," Cannella said. "The COVID-19 pandemic affected communities of all demographics, and learning more about our PACE patients' behaviors when faced with such adversity will help shape the healthcare decisions that our providers will make in the future."

Chan received her Bachelor of Science in public health from Rutgers University, and in addition to her pursuing her Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) at the SDM, she is pursuing a Master of Public Health (MPH) through Stony Brook Medicine. Upon graduating next spring, she looks forward to improving the oral health outcomes of children, adults and elderly patients through providing quality dentistry and preventive care.

"I've always acknowledged the privileges I've been granted by having a healthy dentition," she said. "Unfortunately, many others are denied opportunities and jobs if they can't put their best smiles forward during interviews or in their day-to-day lives. My long-term goal in the field of dentistry is to provide charitable dentistry in the hopes of elevating individuals through their hardships and mobilizing them to higher socioeconomic levels."



Chan shared her findings at the American Dental Education Association annual meeting in Portland, Oregon last spring.



*Heather Ercolano,
DDS '21*

CLASS NOTES

2001

Edward Gottesman, DDS '01, Perio '04, was appointed president of the Northeastern Society of Periodontists (NESP). Gottesman, who practices periodontics in New York City and also serves on the clinical faculty at Weill Cornell Medical College, was elected in to his new position last fall and will lead the organization through the end of 2023. For his goals as the NESP's 64th president, Gottesman listed further development of the organization's continuing education programs, a higher percentage of membership, particularly among the younger generation of periodontists, as well as public health awareness of the importance of periodontal health.

2002

Ying Gu, DDS '02, PhD '02, GPR '03, chair and professor in the Department of General Dentistry at Stony Brook, was inducted into the Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Dental Honor Society at a ceremony held in May. She was welcomed to the organization along with Stephen Walker, MSc, PhD, interim associate dean for research, as well as five graduates from the 2023 class.

2019

Stephanie Sager, DDS '18, opened up the Brooklyn Dental Collective in April 2023, with a mission to provide comprehensive oral healthcare for those in and around Williamsburg. Dr. Sager is on the board of the Second District Dental Society.

Lauren Heisinger, DDS '19, was inducted into the Pierre Fauchard Academy at the New York State Dental Association House of Delegates in June. She joined alongside Joseph Graskemper, DDS, JD, clinical associate professor in the Department of General Dentistry at Stony Brook.

2020

Erin (Down) Thompson, DDS '20, recently relocated from Salt Lake City to upstate New York to work at a community health center in Warrensburg, just north of Saratoga Springs. She completed her general practice residency at the University of Utah and then spent two years at a community health center in Ogden, but it was always her and her husband's intention to move back home. Thompson looks forward to continuing to serve as a member of the National Health Service Corps Student to Service program, as well as getting involved with the local and state dental societies.

2021

Heather Ercolano, DDS '21, an orthodontics resident at Stony Brook, received the American Association of Orthodontists Foundation (AAOF) Research Aid Award this spring. Ercolano's study will investigate the side effects of treating transverse maxillary deficiencies that are treated with palate expanders, including the widening of the maxilla and nasal cavity, and potential soft tissue expansion of the nose, lips and cheeks. The research is being done in concert with David Gu, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Computer Science, and his graduate students at Stony Brook University's Center for Wireless and Information Technology (CEWIT).

2023

At the American Prosthodontic Society's annual meeting in Chicago, chief prosthodontics resident **Jennifer Jacobson**, DMD, Pros '23, was awarded second place in the Graduate Prosthodontic Student Research Competition for her research titled "Susceptibility to stain of aged denture based acrylic resins."

Do you have some news you would like to share?

Submit brief notices about milestone events and activities to brett.mauser@stonybrookmedicine.edu, or by mail to Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, 123 Rockland Hall, South Drive, Stony Brook, NY 11794.



Robert Schindel, DDS '90, accepted his award at the School of Dental Medicine White Coat Ceremony this spring.

SCHINDEL NAMED 2023 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENT

Robert Schindel, DDS '90, came to Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine first as a student in the mid-1980s, and for nearly three decades, he has imparted his learnings on SDM students whose influence on patients and the field of dentistry will reverberate for years to come.

For his excellence in orthodontics, and as a teacher at Stony Brook, Schindel was presented with this year's Distinguished Alumni Award at the School of Dental Medicine White Coat Ceremony this spring.

"I'm beyond humbled to receive this award," Schindel said in his address to the Class of 2026, his latest group of mentees. "I'm so proud of this not as an alumnus who is coming back to his school but one who's never really left."

Since 1994, Schindel has served as a faculty member in the orthodontics, pediatric dentistry and oral biology and pathology residency programs, as well as the dental student program. In addition to his role in academia, Schindel has been a fixture in the community of East Northport, New York, where he

has provided orthodontic care for them for more than 20 years.

Schindel is a member of the prestigious Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontists (EHASO), to which only five percent of orthodontists in North America belong, and serves on its editorial board, *The Angle Orthodontist*. Schindel has also presented at numerous national and international meetings and has had his findings published in *The American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics*, *The Journal of Clinical Orthodontics* and *The Angle Orthodontist*.

More than 30 years since his graduation, when Schindel calls Stony Brook home, it is hardly an exaggeration.

"When I walk around the school today, the memories flood in of the special faculty members who were mentors to me, my fellow dental students and residents who are friends to me, and all the residents and students I have taught over the years who are like sons and daughters to me," he said.

IN MEMORIAM

Richard Truhlar, DDS '83

Richard Truhlar, DDS '83, past clinical assistant professor in the Department of Periodontics and Endodontics, passed away on February 23, 2023, after a long battle with multiple sclerosis. He was 65.

Truhlar graduated first in his class at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine. He went on to obtain his general practice residency certificate from Brigham & Women's Hospital in Massachusetts, before serving as chief resident in the GPR program at Nassau County Medical Center in East Meadow, New York.

He practiced general dentistry in Westbury, New York, before completing a certificate in periodontics from the Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1988. He then accepted a faculty position in the Department of Periodontics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine.

A native Long Islander, Truhlar was recruited to the Northport VAMC in 1990, where he initially served as the dental service's periodontist and was later promoted to dental service chief in 2000.

While at the VAMC, he was an active member of our school's faculty, with an appointment as a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Periodontics and Endodontics, sharing his wealth of knowledge and experience with students and residents of his alma mater.

Steven Zove, DDS '83, remembers his friend and roommate for his quiet yet friendly demeanor, and his commitment to excellence in resident education and patient care.

"Richard was very well respected at our school," Zove said. "He always exhibited professionalism to the nth degree, and he was a walking encyclopedia in many ways. Perio residents who rotated through the VA gained so much from his background and knowledge."

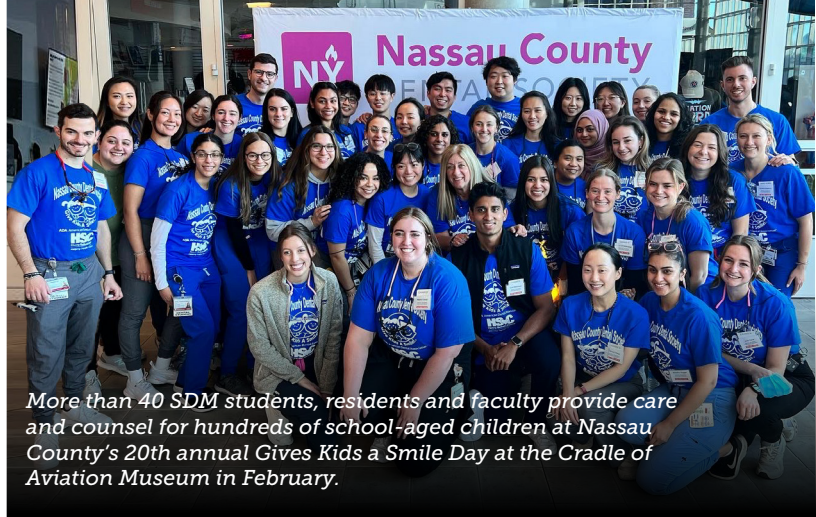
In addition to his wife, Mary, Truhlar is survived by his three children, Allison, Brian and Michael; and his grandson, Robin Skye.

"Rich was a caring husband and father who whole-heartedly loved and supported our children and me, and was proud of all our accomplishments, big and small," said Mary Truhlar, DDS '84. "He was a wonderful listener and an engaging and respectful

conversationalist. Rich was always interested in knowing all the goings on at the Stony Brook Dental School and what was happening with classmates and colleagues. We miss him in so many ways every day".



Richard Truhlar, DDS '83



D3 student Amanda Rota captured this year's edition of Prosthodontics Jeopardy, outdueling some fierce competition from runner-up Adam de la Bastide (D3) and third-place finisher Joshua Golbari (D3). The event was held as part of the SDM's celebration of National Prosthodontics Awareness Week.

More than 40 SDM students, residents and faculty provide care and counsel for hundreds of school-aged children at Nassau County's 20th annual Gives Kids a Smile Day at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in February.



Alumni, faculty and friends connect at the Greater Long Island Dental Meeting (GLIDM).



Residents, faculty and graduates gather for an alumni reception at the American Association of Endodontics Annual Meeting in Chicago.



Class of 2023 members Arjun Kumar, Jonathan Shiloah, Eric Zhang, Gerard Fischer and Mohit Varma are inducted into Omicron Kappa Upsilon at a ceremony on the eve of their graduation.



For 12 hours, SDM students, staff and faculty demonstrated great creativity and dexterity in a unique Crochet-a-thon fundraiser, helping to raise funds for oral healthcare services for underserved children through the KinderSmile Foundation.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 2023

August 17 • 5pm

All-School Barbecue
School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

August 31 • 2pm

Give Kids a Smile Day
School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

September 2023

September 8 • 6pm

50th Anniversary
Cocktail Reception
Sunwood Estate
Old Field, NY

September 9 • 6pm

50th Anniversary Alumni
Dinner and Celebration
Bauman Center
Stony Brook, NY

September 20 - 23

American Association
of Oral and Maxillofacial
Surgeons Annual Meeting
Orlando, FL

October 2023

October 5

World Educators Day

October 5 - 7

American Dental
Association SmileCon 2023
Orlando, FL

October 6 • 7pm

Alumni Reception
Hilton Orlando, FL
Champion Gate Room

October 16 - 19

American Academy of Oral
and Maxillofacial Radiology
Atlanta, GA

October 21

Stony Brook University
Homecoming
Stony Brook University

October 25 - 28

American College
of Prosthodontists
Annual Meeting
San Diego, CA

November 2023

November 9 - 12

American Academy
of Periodontology
Annual Meeting
Austin, TX

November 12 • TBD

AAP Alumni
Reception
Austin, TX

November 28

Greater New York
Dental Meeting
New York, NY

November 28 • 6pm

GNYDM Alumni
Reception
NY Marriott Marquis
New York, NY

December 2023

December 1 - 2

Greater New York
Academy of
Prosthodontists Meeting
New York, NY

December 7

Fall Faculty
Development Retreat
Hilton Garden Inn
Stony Brook, NY

December 19

SDM Holiday Party
School of Dental
Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

March 2023

March 6 - 9

Academy of
Osseointegration
Annual Meeting
Charlotte, NC

March 9 - 12

American
Association for
Dental Education
New Orleans, LA

March 13 - 16

American Association
for Dental, Oral and
Craniofacial Research
New Orleans, LA

March 28

Sreebny Lectureship
and Research
Symposium
Stony Brook, NY

A TRUE GAME CHANGER

This spring, *Stony Brook University Magazine's* theme was "Changing the Game," which the SDM has done since opening its doors in 1973. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we take a moment to look back at our many accomplishments.

To read the full story, visit mag.stonybrook.edu/dental-school



1990s to 2000s

STUDENTS TRAVEL FAR AND WIDE to provide care to those in need, including in underserved areas throughout the world as well as international outreach trips.

1990
CREATED THE GERIATRIC DENTISTRY PROGRAM

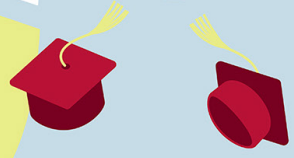


1980
FIRST POST-DDS PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

1980
Professor Fred Ferguson initiates training students to care for special needs patients, later establishing the special needs dental care program.



1977
First class of 23 new dentists graduates.
WIN A NEW TOOTHBRUSH.



1974
FIRST BOOK PUBLISHED BY SDM FACULTY
Periodontal Disease in Children and Adolescents

1974
PATIENT CARE CLINIC OPENS
MOVE THREE STEPS AHEAD.

1973
FIRST CLASS ENROLLS
GET A FREE TURN.



Oaks begins recruiting faculty.
6 DEPARTMENT CHAIRS hired in three years.
MOVE AHEAD TWO SPACES.

1968
Howard Oaks, DMD, appointed inaugural dean of the School of Dental Medicine



Oaks (with bow tie) with his first recruits.



WIDE
ading
U.S.,
ips.

**Look, Mom!
No
cavities!**
ROLL THE DICE
FOR AN
EXTRA PLAY.

2002
CAVISTAT,
a cavity-fighting
agent shown to
be significantly
more effective than
fluoride, began
clinical trials.

*CaviStat was developed by
Distinguished Professor
Israel Kleinberg, who is
widely considered as the
"grandfather" of modern
oral biology.*



85,000+
**PATIENTS TREATED
IN 2022**

2023
The game
continues as
SDM peers into
the future.

2019
Officially
opened the
doors to its
Center for Implant
and Digital
Technology.

2012
The Mobile Dental Clinic debuts. In
its 12 years of use, the van has traveled
33K+ and **12K+**
MILES served **PATIENTS**
in communities across
Long Island.



**Missed
your dental
cleaning.**
TWO STEPS BACK.



**SDM FACULTY
HOLD
394** ★★★
PATENTS
MOVE THREE
STEPS AHEAD.

2013
Launched a school-based dental
health program through which
SDM provided free preventive oral
healthcare services to elementary
school students in the
Riverhead Central
School District.



2017
Selected as one of five
academic institutions by
the American College of
Prosthodontists to pilot a
digital dentistry
curriculum.



1,500+
DDS GRADUATES
ROLL THE DICE
FOR A PRIZE.



In 2017, our first DDS graduates
reunited in honor of their
40th anniversary.

MORE THAN A TOY STORY

Periodontist Turns Creative Juices into Uplifting Children's Book

Sam Morhaim, DDS '90, wrote for his high school newspaper, and continued that hobby as an undergraduate college student. It was just that however — a hobby — with Morhaim writing short stories on occasion while maintaining a busy periodontics practice in Great Neck, New York.

"I never intended for it to amount to anything else," he confessed.

However, in 2019, he blended his creative talent with the itch to tell the story of how his family emigrated from Cuba to the United States, doing so from the perspective of his older brother, Jaime — "Jimmy" in the book — who was just 5 years old at the time. It resulted in "Where Are All My Toys?", a 38-page children's book published in February 2020.

We caught up with Morhaim to learn more about the book, and how his parents' choice to defect from Cuba paved the way to his career in dentistry.

How did "Where Are All My Toys?" come together?

When my parents left Cuba in 1962, they had nothing but a suitcase and 50 dollars in their pocket. My brother, like a lot of kids, didn't know what was going on at the time — why we had to go, why he couldn't bring his belongings, why we ended up in Brooklyn.

Over the years, I told the story of my family to so many people, and they found it intriguing, so I started to jot down some ideas on how I could piece it together. With those ideas, I sat down at a Starbucks one day and began writing. Since that first draft, the toughest part was making the story more concise. I wanted to make sure that, even though the book talks about very serious issues, we wanted to bring it out in a very positive light and have it written at a level that children could understand. And everything is positive. It's all about how you persevere.

In what ways was Brooklyn the right place for your family to land?

Brooklyn was and is really a microcosm of our society. Coming from Cuba, my family had never experienced that kind of diversity, and we moved to Canarsie and were able to co-mingle with people of all backgrounds. Things were simpler back then, with block parties and bicycles and street games.

Everybody was kind of on the same socioeconomic level and had the same mentality. We were all connected, and there was such a positive energy to it. Growing up in Brooklyn gave us all a great foundation.

What moral would you like for readers to take from your book?

My brother's story is so similar to other people's stories, and the whole idea was to get the conversation started and to raise awareness for how great of a country the United States is thanks to the freedoms that we have. I'm proud to have been able to convey the story of my family, which has been the cornerstone of my personal development all these years. Sometimes I think about how differently my life would have been if we stayed in Cuba; truthfully, I don't even know if I would have been born given the political state there. I'm grateful that my parents saw the importance of being able to grow up in a free and democratic environment.

You showcased your book at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books in April. What else is on the horizon?

We are in the middle of translating "Where Are All My Toys?" into Spanish. I also have two other books that I'm in the middle of writing, and each ties back to my roots in Brooklyn. It can be difficult finding the time to do it, but I enjoy it when I can, and I think they are stories that are important and relatable.

How do you look back on your time as a Stony Brook dental student?

I'm grateful to have had an opportunity to go to a great and progressive school. It was very competitive to get in to, much like it is now, and it propelled me to move on to do my General Practice Residency, and to get into the periodontics program at Boston University, which was my top choice. From there, I was fortunate enough to be a senior partner at a multi-specialty group practice. I sold it in 2015 but have maintained a presence there two days a week, mostly doing digitally driven full arch reconstruction with implants. I also visit four other offices consistently, working with a team of specialists on a lot of laser surgical procedures.



Sam Morhaim, DDS '90, turned his brother's journey from Cuba to the United States into an acclaimed children's book. Photo by Rob Tannenbaum



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