

ON THE CUSP[®]

The Official Magazine of Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine • Spring 2026 • Volume 3; Issue 1



Shaping Dental Education

Stony Brook Teaching the Next Generation of Dentists, Professors

New Mobile Clinic Hits Road

.....16

Student Lab Shines

.....19

Matches Made

.....22



Stony Brook
School of Dental Medicine



AT YOUR SERVICE: At CommUniversity Day 2025, patients seized the opportunity to receive free oral health screenings from the School of Dental Medicine's outreach crew.



RAINBOW BRIGHT: SDM students and pediatric dental residents shined bright like a rainbow at the school's annual Give Kids a Smile event in the fall.

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On the cover: School of Dental Medicine dental students enrolled in Stony Brook University's Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration program (left to right): Anusha Siddiqui, D2; Emily O'Reilly, D2; Olivia Schmitt, D4; Madisen Downs, D2; Lauren Brown, D4.

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A Letter from the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

How pleased we are to showcase in this issue of *On the Cusp*® how our school and its graduates are shaping dental education. While we have recently taken steps to help students who are considering a career in teaching, as presented on the cover and described on page 15, our school has a record of graduates going into academia, some of whom were interviewed for the magazine. Their stories include what motivated them to pursue a career in dental education, the special rewards they find in helping create the next generation of oral healthcare providers and what keeps them enthused about their work. With this coverage in the magazine, we hope to attract pre-dental students interested in careers in dental education and recruit faculty who want to be at a school that is doing its part in addressing the shortage of educators among dental schools.

Facility upgrades and enhancements are critical to offering a contemporary education for both dental students and residents. Next in your reading will be a collection of photos and text detailing the unique features and use of our new mobile dental clinic. Learn about the recognition it has received on Long Island and the awards its earning from the community that it is serving. Also included in this section is a report on our new, enlarged and fully equipped student wet lab. It's where our students are learning how to use basic technology and developing an appreciation for the materials that create treatments for patients. Months of planning and significant support from the state made this all possible.

Spotted elsewhere in this issue are pieces that detail how our students, staff and faculty are moving the profession forward, through their innovations in educating our learners, discoveries in their research labs and the professional and public service in which they are engaged. Please give special attention to the Q&A session on page 21 with one of our key staff members, whose job it is to get things ready for our students so that they can be as productive as possible. His comments about working in the School of Dental Medicine are quite telling. I hope you'll agree.

Earlier this year, our school was singled out for having the highest percent of graduates in the country who matched in residency training programs. We have dedicated several pages that highlight our students' successes in the match, how the process works and who is going where next year. We couldn't be prouder of this year's match results. I'm confident they'll keep us up in the front of all other schools for yet another year.

Our annual Research Symposium, and all that made up the occasion — from our keynote speaker, to our record number of posters, to the awards presented — is covered beginning on page 26. Many of the presentations were later given at national meetings, further benefitting the profession from the discoveries our students and faculty have made. Making much of this possible are the donations made by our alumni and friends of the school, who are listed in the follow-up pages. Without their support, this event and other school-sponsored programming would not be possible, and for this we are all very grateful.

Closing out this edition of *On the Cusp*® are photos of receptions and school gathering at meetings around the country and right here on our campus. Special attention is given to the fall class reunions, both those in 2025 and those planned for 2026 — the perfect time to reconnect, remember and stay updated on all your alma mater is doing.

All the very best,

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



A COMMITMENT TO HIGHER EDUCATION



Kim-Berman's passion for teaching future dentists cultivated at Stony Brook

By Liza N. Burby

When it came to her career goals, Hera Kim-Berman, DDS '91, MMSc, said she was influenced by her father, Il-Ha Kim, DDS, a graduate of Seoul National University in South Korea, who served in the South Korean army as a major working in the dental department.

"He did three tours in the Vietnam War as an ally of the United States. He did a lot of trauma cases, going out on helicopters and into the field," said Kim-Berman. "When he immigrated to the US in 1973, he got trained at New York University and started teaching there. He really enjoyed his time, even though it was difficult for him to teach part-time as an adjunct and have a practice. He was a great influence and support to me."

So when she was considering her path, her father, a generalist, recommended she pursue orthodontics and teaching. He pointed out that she began showing an innate desire to teach when she was a second grader living in Jamaica, New York, she said.

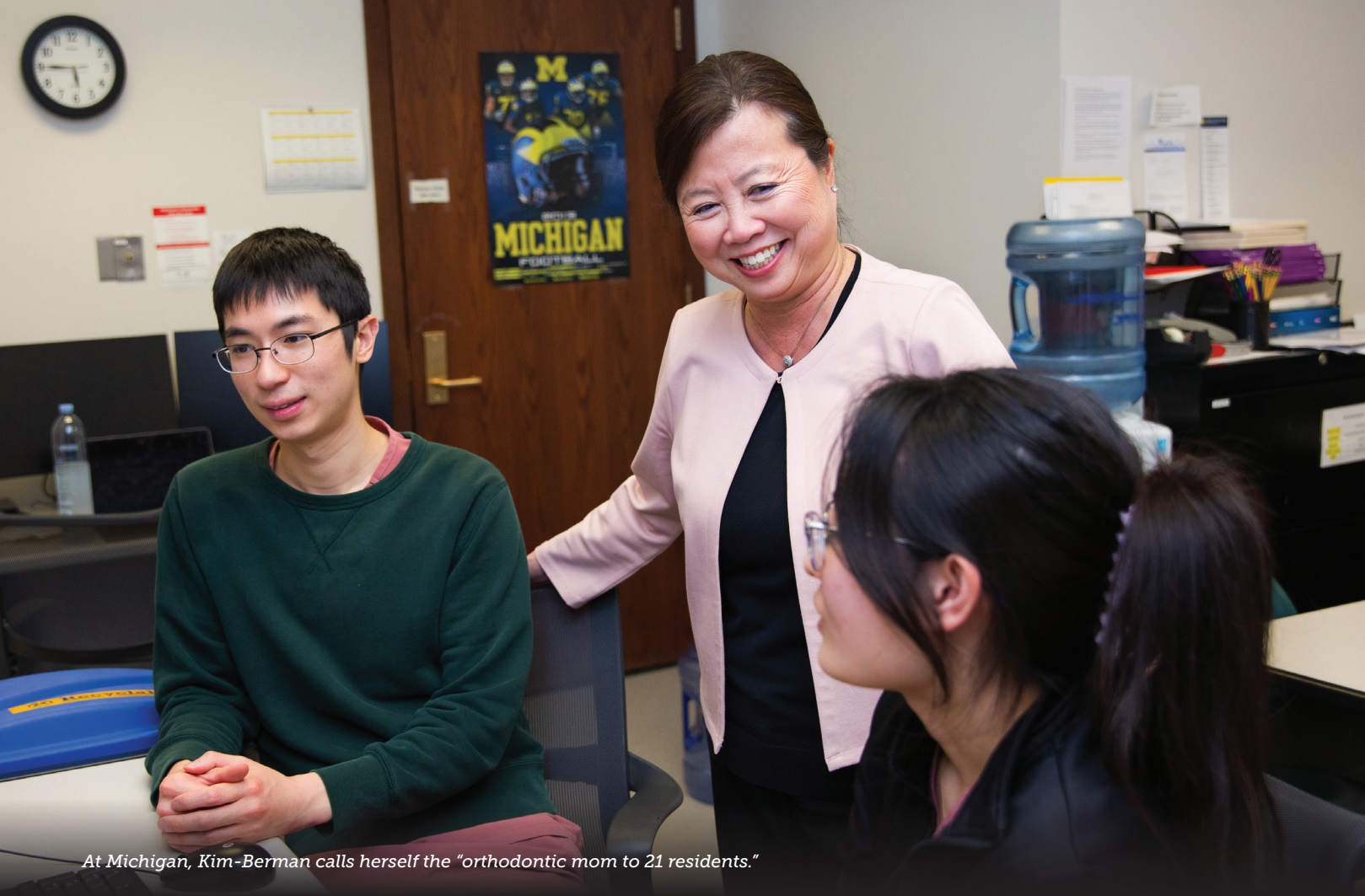
"I always liked the thought of learning and sharing information and helping out my peers and friends, and I liked that type of a formal environment," Kim-Berman said. "I got great satisfaction in helping somebody understand."

She still does.

As a clinical professor, Robert W. Browne Professor of Orthodontics and the graduate orthodontic program director at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry in Ann Arbor, Kim-Berman said she's "empowering the next generation of teachers and the next generation of orthodontists. We have to prepare the succession plan to make sure that the public is taken care of and that students are taken care of — all of that so that we can actually do what we want to do together: help people."

KIM-BERMAN, continued on page 8

Left: Kim-Berman, a faculty member at the University of Michigan who received her dental degree from Stony Brook, revels in seeing students reach their potential.



At Michigan, Kim-Berman calls herself the “orthodontic mom to 21 residents.”

Family-Like Community

Kim-Berman said she first felt the value of helping other students as a teaching assistant in organic chemistry during her undergraduate studies at Stony Brook University, where she majored in biology. She continued as a teaching assistant when she started at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine in 1987.

“I got great satisfaction in helping somebody,” said Kim-Berman. “I loved Stony Brook. It gave me a chance to pursue a field and discover myself in a really nurturing environment. For me, it felt like a tight-knit community that was very family-like. Actually knowing everybody in the school is an important part of the learning environment.”

A standout extracurricular experience was working with faculty on one-on-one research projects. “I was selected to represent the school in a student research competition at a dental meeting sponsored by Dentsply Sirona,” she said. “That was the first time we were looking at dental bleaching. My first mentor in research was Mark Wolff, DDS ‘81, PhD ‘97, who is now dean at the Penn School of Dental Medicine. I was awarded second place, which everybody thought was great. That was the point where I had exposure to doing research and sharing it with people who are interested, and actually getting some credit for it. I remember that feeling quite well.”

Kim-Berman said she also knew early on in her dental school training that she was going to follow her father’s advice. “Orthodontics was something that I had an affinity for. A lot of the treatment planning was an esthetic-driven specialty. I thought that I would really enjoy orthodontics.”

She is still in contact with her first orthodontic professor at Stony Brook, Richard Faber, DDS, MS, now clinical professor of orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics in the Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry. Faber remembers first meeting Kim-Berman when she was still a student.

“She always wanted to be an orthodontist, and at that time, we didn’t have an orthodontic program; we had what’s called an orthodontic elective,” he said. “It was for seniors interested in orthodontics, and they had one morning a week where they would treat orthodontic patients in the clinic. But I also think she had the bug for teaching.”

Interest in Teaching

After graduating from Stony Brook, Kim-Berman earned a Master of Medical Science from Harvard University. Her master’s thesis project on ceramic materials was performed at the ceramic processing lab at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. When she was interviewed for the orthodontic program, she told them she wanted her career to include

“The joy of watching students reach their potential is unmatched.” — Hera Kim-Berman, DDS ‘91, MMSc

teaching and research. “I don’t think I was always taken seriously, but I actually really meant it.”

She got support for her goals from the head of orthodontics, Carla Evans, DDS, DMSc, her advisor, whom she still refers to as her “orthodontic mom.” “She was a big mentor to me and still is. Somehow she recognized that I was serious and gave me a chance,” said Kim-Berman.

Evans, now clinical professor of orthodontics at Boston University, said it was a time when there weren’t many women in the field.

“It was a very male-oriented specialty, and to have women in leadership positions, people were pretty skeptical. But Hera has always known where she’s going,” Evans said. “From the time she was in the group of residents at Harvard, it was very clear that she understood the dynamics of being in a group situation; that she identified complex things and knew how to make them simple for other people there. She has a lot of intuition about how things work and how to move the field forward.”

After Harvard, in 1994, Kim-Berman went to West Virginia University School of Dentistry as an assistant professor and then became the graduate orthodontic clinic director.

Detour from Academics

But after four years there, Kim-Berman said she thought she needed some clinical work, and she wanted to move closer to her family in New York. In 1998, she took “a detour from academics” and bought a solo orthodontic practice in Bayside, Queens, where she practiced for 15 years. She didn’t give up teaching though, and from 2004 to 2014, she also taught at Cohen Children’s Medical Center of New York, serving as the director of orthodontics, and at Long Island Jewish Hospital in the pediatric residency program.

“Even after graduating from school, I was still learning,” she said. “I was learning at West Virginia as a young academician.

I was learning as a clinician in practice in New York, and I was also learning from pediatric residents and hospitals.” While in New York, she also got involved with the Hagedorn Cleft Palate and Craniofacial Center at North Shore University Hospital. She said she had been interested in craniofacial anomalies during orthodontic training, so this renewed her interest.

“It’s a very vulnerable and special population with lots of needs from infancy all the way to adulthood. They’re the most complex cases, and they can’t really do it without an orthodontist who is part of the team,” she said.

KIM-BERMAN, continued on page 10



Value in Dual Roles

In 2014, when Kim-Berman turned 50, she took stock of her career. "I was in a solo practice and I felt like there must be something more," she said. "I really wanted to pursue my first passion."

She applied to an assistant professor opening at the University of Michigan and was offered the job. She sold her practice, and she, her husband and son, moved to Michigan.

Today, she teaches orthodontic and pediatric dentistry residents as well as the postdoctoral craniofacial fellow. Now she's "orthodontic mom to 21 residents." Her clinical and research interests continue to be in the treatment of cleft lip and palate and craniofacial anomalies, and she treats patients and teaches students as the senior clinician, she said. Her research focuses on integrating emerging technologies to dental education and clinical care.

While she sometimes wonders if she should have taken that detour as a sole practitioner because it took longer to achieve her teaching goals, Kim-Berman said there's value in her dual career experiences.

"I think having that clinical experience gives me street cred," she said. "Being out there, running a practice, understanding the environment, and then trying to translate it in the classroom, presenting the realistic point of view, and the differences in how to run a practice—it's all positive. I know I gained strength from it, but transitioning from academics to private practice was difficult, and transitioning back from private practice to academics is also very challenging."

She added, "However, currently, I can give a broad perspective, not just technique-wise, but how we really treat the patient holistically."



Of Stony Brook, Kim-Berman said, "It gave me a chance to pursue a field and discover myself in a really nurturing environment."



Kim-Berman described teaching as her first passion, and at age 50, she sold her private practice and returned to academia.

Empowering the Next Generation

That's why, Kim-Berman said it's necessary for dental schools to retain their faculty. "It's important for somebody to be valued for their desire to teach for less financial gain than private practice. If you can find these individuals who want to be academicians, you have to really nurture them and mentor them and make them feel successful."

Kim-Berman acknowledged that there are financial barriers to pursuing academia. She said being able to attend Stony Brook with a state university tuition permitted her to make career choices and "to pursue my passions rather than being in debt with student loans. Removing the

financial barrier is an important aspect of faculty development and faculty support."

The biggest reward of her chosen path is seeing her students succeed. "When I won that research award as a student at Stony Brook, I thought that was fantastic. I can't even imagine what my faculty felt. As a parent, you probably enjoy your child's success more than your own. As an academic, when one of my students got a similar award to what I received in dental school, my heart was full for them."

She added this advice: "For those interested in teaching, the joy of watching students reach their potential and grow in their own unique ways is unmatched and brings genuine purpose. It makes every challenge worthwhile."

Alumni in Academia

On the Cusp® caught up with four graduates who are teaching full-time at institutions around the country, learning how they got into it, what they enjoy most, and what advice they have for students considering such a path themselves.

Erin Key, DDS, GPR '21, OMFR '23

Assistant Professor, Department of Diagnostic and Biomedical Sciences, UTHealth School of Dentistry, Houston, Texas

What prompted you to pursue a career in academia?

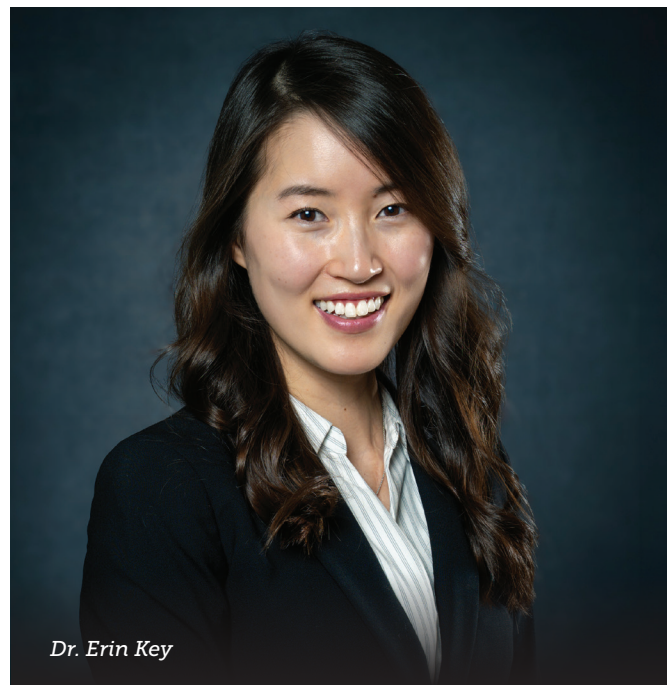
I always knew I wanted to go into academia eventually, but I didn't expect it to happen so soon. When the opportunity arose, I decided to try teaching part-time. I enjoyed it far more than I anticipated, and that experience ultimately led me to transition into a full-time academic role.

What have you found to be most rewarding?

The most rewarding part is witnessing students' growth over time and being able to play a role in that journey. Learning new concepts can be challenging at first, but it is incredibly fulfilling to see students progress, gain confidence and deepen their understanding with each interaction.

What advice would you give to a student who is considering a career in academia?

Keep your options open and even starting part-time can be a great entry point. Academia offers meaningful opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and mentor the next generation. It is a diverse and dynamic career path.



Dr. Erin Key

Thomas Manders, DDS '91

Clinical Associate Professor, Director of Endodontics, Director, Advanced Dental Education Program in Endodontics Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, Stony Brook, New York

What prompted you to pursue a career in academia?

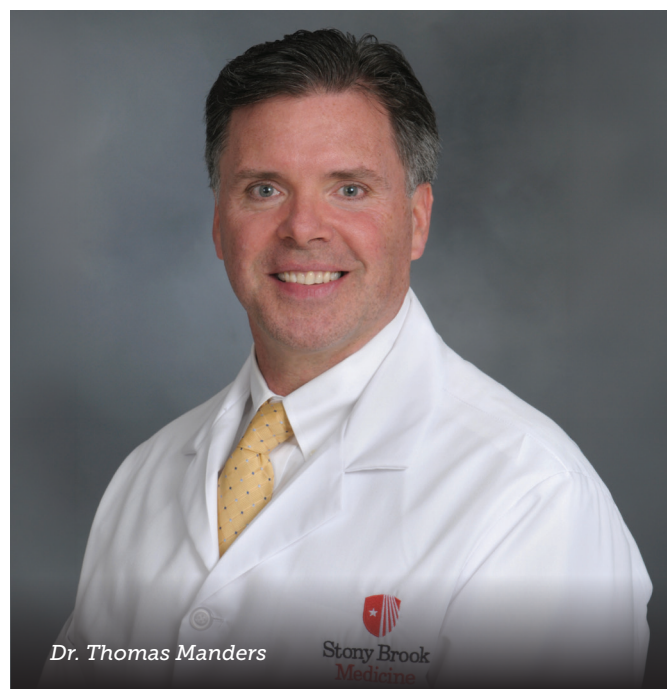
Academia wasn't always in the cards. I thought I would be in private practice my whole career. But my old mentor who is now the director of NYU postgraduate endodontics called and asked me if I could teach one day a week, and after starting there, I realized that I really enjoyed teaching. So, when the position opened at Stony Brook, I made the decision to teach full time.

What have you found to be most rewarding?

What's most rewarding is seeing the little light bulb turn on above the student's or resident's head when they learn something for the first time. It's amazing!

What advice would you give to a student who is considering a career in academia?

Definitely think about teaching no matter what you do in your career — private practice, a mix of both academia and private practice, or research. Teaching will always keep you up to date and sharp on the subject you are teaching.



Dr. Thomas Manders

Stony Brook
Medicine

Jason Starace, DDS '06, Perio '09

Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Periodontology and Implant Dentistry, Director, Advanced Education Program in Periodontics, New York University College of Dentistry, New York, New York

What prompted you to pursue a career in academia?

I always had an interest in teaching. Both my father and maternal grandfather were high school teachers, and whenever I ran into people they taught, I was really inspired seeing just how much of an impact they had on their students. My path initially took me in a different direction towards dentistry and healthcare, but then a former mentor at Stony Brook, Dr. Steven Engebretson, became chair of the perio department at NYU and asked if I wanted to teach part-time. Part-time eventually led to full-time.

What have you found to be most rewarding?

I think like most people who are educators, it's witnessing the development of your students. I take great pleasure seeing them grow from a nervous dental student or resident doing their first procedure to a skilled clinician who's knowledgeable and passionate about their craft in just a few short years. Additionally, as an educator, you get to be the bridge between the past and the future by taking what was given to you by your own teachers and mentors and passing it on to the next generation.

What advice would you give to a student who is considering a career in academia?

Follow your passion. There are so many different paths you can take in dentistry today and the good thing is you are not limited to just one. If academia seems like something you want to consider, try it out. Being in academia does not mean giving up treating patients, most institutions allow you to still treat your own patients even if you are full-time. If you want to focus primarily on your private practice, there are plenty of volunteer or part-time positions you can seek out.



Dr. Jason Starace

John Basile, DDS '93

Associate Professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences University of Maryland School of Dentistry, Baltimore, Maryland

What prompted you to pursue a career in academia?

I practiced general dentistry for three years and learned that I didn't love the "business" end of it. I felt like it was like running a restaurant or some other commercial entity.

What have you found to be most rewarding?

I enjoy working with and teaching students and pathology residents. My job also allows me to stay current with the latest advances in pathology, oral medicine and dentistry in general, and to interact with faculty and students from all of the dental specialties. In my opinion, academia is much less isolating than private practice.

What advice would you give to a student who is considering a career in academia?

If you want to go into academics, I recommend training in lab-based or clinical research, in addition to a specialty. I've noticed that unless a new grad has some research experience and/or a degree, it's difficult finding a position. Universities want faculty that have the potential to acquire research grants, in addition to teaching and generating income through a faculty practice.



Dr. John Basile



School of Dental Medicine faculty shares pearls of wisdom with students considering a career in academia on Dental Educators Day.

SDM Inspires Next Generation of Academics

As part of its continued commitment to help address the dental school faculty shortage across the United States, Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine celebrated its third annual Dental Educators Day event on the South Campus.

Dental Educators Day festivities are held during the first week of each October. It was established at Stony Brook in 2023 as dental schools face an ever-growing need for faculty. A recent study published in the *Journal of Dental Education* noted that more than 40 percent of full-time dental faculty at United States schools were over the age

of 60. Additionally, increased vacancies nationwide have contributed to higher faculty:student ratios, as well as repercussions negatively impacting education and morale.

“National data indicate that less than two percent of US dental school graduates go on to be full-time academics,” said Patrick Lloyd, dean, School of Dental Medicine. “With so many new schools popping up in the country, the need for more faculty has never been greater. We need each dental school to do more to encourage this generation to consider a career in dental education.”

To commemorate the event, students met with a faculty

panel that included Jennifer Englebright, DMD, clinical assistant professor, Department of General Dentistry; Brian Howe, DMD, MS, associate dean for clinical operations and patient care at the SDM’s Dental Care Center, and associate professor, Department of General Dentistry; and Patricia Swanson, DDS, clinical associate professor, Department of Prosthodontics and Digital Technology.

Englebright joined the SDM faculty last year after spending 15 years in private practice on the north shore of Long Island. She got a taste of teaching when she served as an attending in the general dentistry residency program at St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson, New York, an experience that she called especially fulfilling. From a family of teachers, it reinforced her own interest in teaching, and now on faculty at Stony Brook, Swanson has gained even more perspective.

“When I was an undergraduate at Stony Brook, I had a professor who really helped shape my character,” she said. “Now that I’m looking back on my experience through a different lens, I realize what she did for me, and that’s the same kind of impact that I want to have on students.”

Howe came to Stony Brook from the University of Iowa College of Dentistry, where he was on faculty as a clinical associate professor and also the director of clinics. Previously, he had spent several years in private practice in both Iowa

City, Iowa, and Madison, Wisconsin, but found better work-life balance and overall satisfaction in academia.

“Private practice can be monotonous, and I found that I needed something else,” Howe said. “Here you have this variety, whether it’s with teaching courses, in clinic, research or administrative tasks to help improve the operation of the school.”

Swanson, a graduate of the school’s Advanced Dental Education Program in Prosthodontics, gravitated toward teaching when, as a resident in the program of which she is currently a part, she was tutored by a resident one year ahead of her. This tutelage helped her understand the material, with time management and with other facets of being a successful resident. She paid it forward, tutoring residents who followed her, an experience that nurtured her interest in teaching.

“I like being able to help people reach their full potential, and I felt that I could do that more consistently and fully in an academic environment than in private practice,” she said. “As faculty, we’re able to witness so many firsts — a student’s first crown prep or denture or impression — all these things that they’re so worried about. It’s then fun for us to see these light bulbs go on in students’ heads over and over again.”

On the Cover: Academics in the Making

When students enroll in the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) program at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, they also have the opportunity to advance their careers in academic administration through Stony Brook University’s Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration program.

And at no additional cost.

This year, D4 students Lauren Brown and Olivia Schmitt, as well as second-years Madisen Downs, Emily O’Reilly and Anusha Siddiqui, are earning their master’s degree concurrently with their dental school coursework, paving the path for them to succeed as academics in the future.

“A background in higher education administration empowers dental students to lead, teach and influence the evolution of the profession beyond clinical practice,” said Dolores Cannella, MA, PhD, associate dean for education at the SDM.

As an alternative to the 36-credit master’s pathway, students can earn a certificate in higher education administration with just 18 credits. Courses combine theory and practice to prepare students for real-world roles in dental academia.

For more information, visit stonybrook.edu/commcms/higher-education-administration.



The SDM’s Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration students

Improving Smiles on Long Island

ushering in a new chapter in pediatric dentistry outreach, Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine (SDM) held a special ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new Mobile Dental Care Center (MDCC).

Its creation resulted from a \$750,000 grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation to continue the school's commitment to delivering comprehensive dental care and oral health education to underserved youth throughout Long Island.

Patrick Lloyd, dean, School of Dental Medicine, welcomed senior university leadership and administrators, students, staff and faculty from the SDM, as well as legislators in the region, to officially launch the new 45-foot vehicle, through which faculty, residents and students at the school can provide restorations and extractions, as well as preventive care such as cleanings, fluoride treatment and sealants.

"While those passing by our mobile dental care center on the highway may think of it as a 'dental office on wheels' that makes it more convenient for people to get their teeth taken care of, it is, in reality, so much more," he said in his welcome address. "For many, it's their first dental experience, one that will likely shape how they react to seeing the dentist for the rest of their lives, and how they will take care of their teeth throughout their youth, adulthood and beyond."

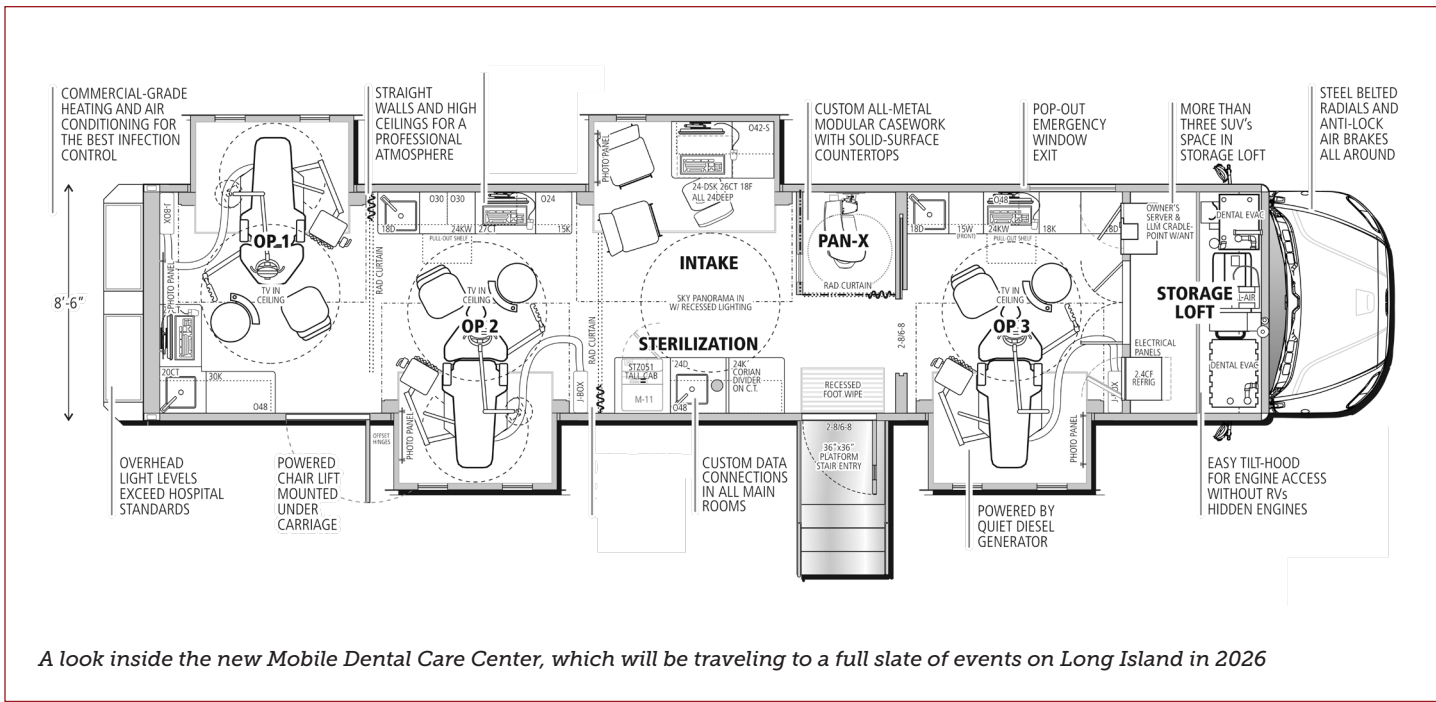
Among attendees on a picturesque morning outside Sullivan Hall was Andrea Goldsmith, PhD, Stony Brook University's new president, who expressed her excitement about how the Mobile Dental Care Center would contribute to the overall mission of Stony Brook University and provide much-needed care to those in need of it most.

"This mobile unit represents Stony Brook at its very best — combining excellence in education, cutting-edge clinical care, and a deep commitment to serving those who need it most," Goldsmith said. "Its impact will be measured not just in procedures performed, but in pain alleviated, confidence restored, and health outcomes improved."

OUTREACH, continued on page 18

Left: Stony Brook University Dr. Andrea Goldsmith does the honors, cutting the ribbon on the School of Dental Medicine's new Mobile Dental Care Center.





OUTREACH, continued from page 17

William Wertheim, MD, MBA, executive vice president of Stony Brook Medicine, lauded the outreach team's efforts in the 2024-25 academic year, a campaign that included more than 130 events at elementary schools, libraries, family shelters, Head Start and WIC programs, and community health fairs. In total, outreach services treated more than 2,600 pediatric dentistry patients across Long Island as well as provided oral health education to over 13,000 children and adults.

"With this new mobile clinic, we'll be able to reach even more children and families in the coming years," Wertheim said. "This

mobile dental care center is an investment in the future well-being of our entire region."

The new MDCC features four extensions that provide a more comfortable, spacious area for practitioners and patients as compared to the previous mobile clinic. A panoramic x-ray machine, which enables providers to evaluate the dental growth and development of each child, is a new addition to the clinic's patient assessment technology. Additionally, through the on-board Starlink internet service, practitioners can chart a patient's record of care immediately, with a direct connection to the School's Dental Care Center and Stony Brook University Hospital.

SDM Opens Doors to New Wet Lab

The School of Dental Medicine celebrated the opening of its state-of-the-art student wet laboratory with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in September. The new facility promises to enhance the dental student experience by providing an advanced, hands-on learning environment designed to foster skill development, expand knowledge in dental laboratory technology and learn about innovations in prosthodontics.

Sixty-four percent larger than its predecessor, the lab is equipped with the latest dental lab equipment, including integrated knee control electric handpiece units and suction units at each of its workstations, as well as monomer extraction units. It also features several high-end model trimmers, vibrating tables and an array of other advanced lab devices such as electronic vacuum mixers, MiniSTAR

thermoforming units, a sandblaster machine, air chisels and more. The lab's area dedicated to model fabrication and trimming doubled in size, allowing for the installation of a center island workstation.

"We are so pleased to open this lab for our students to help them hone their laboratory skills, develop their appreciation for the fundamentals of prosthodontics, and create customized prostheses for patients," said Patrick Lloyd, dean of the School of Dental Medicine. "The lab's development will only enhance the student journey here at Stony Brook, and we are thankful to those who helped bring it to life."

Doing the honors in cutting the ribbon was Patricia Swanson, DDS, clinical associate professor in the **LAB**, continued on page 20



LAB, continued from page 19

Department of Prosthodontics and Digital Technology, who coordinated the project's design. She and Dean Lloyd were joined at the ribbon-cutting ceremony by William Wertheim, MD, MBA, executive vice president of Stony Brook Medicine; Michael Murray, director of design in Stony Brook University's Department of Campus Planning, Design and Construction; project engineer Laura Pellizzi; as well as partners at the university and dentistry responsible for the lab's creation. These partners included representatives from Benco Dental Supplies who worked closely with Nevin Laboratories in the restoration of the lab and the installation of the equipment.



The lab features a host of new equipment for student use.

"I'm honored to have been involved in the lab's redesign," Swanson said. "Not only is the physical space larger than before but it was reimagined in a way that greatly improves the workflow and experience of those utilizing the space. The state-of-the-art machinery and improved health and safety controls included in the room design make the space ideal for student instruction. I believe the students will be inspired by the beauty and functionality of the space when fabricating customized prostheses for our patients."

The lab's opening comes just months after the SDM unveiled its new prosthodontics residency laboratory, which was created so that residents can learn, experiment and master how to best use the newest innovations in prosthodontics.



D4 student Ahmed Abdullah tests the new electric handpieces, with integrated magnification and suction.

Student and Resident Accolades

Eric Zhang, DDS '23 (below), a third-year resident in the Advanced Dental Education in Program in Orthodontics at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, was awarded first place in the Northeastern Society of Orthodontists (NESO) Cup Poster Competition at the organization's annual meeting in Bonita Springs, Florida.

His research, titled "Investigating the Leaching of Plastic Particles from Orthodontic Clear Aligners and Retainers", was selected from research presentations given by residents and early-career orthodontists. "I am sincerely thankful to NESO for recognizing our work with this award and for their commitment to advancing orthodontic scholarship," Zhang said. "I'm excited to receive this distinction and eager to continue building on these findings."



D4 student William Kollmer (right) was honored with an Outstanding Student Leader

Award by the American College of Dentists at a ceremony held at the Penn Club in New York City. Kollmer will continue his training in the General Practice Residency program at Stony Brook this upcoming academic year.



At the New York Dental Association's annual Stony Brook Night in New York City, fourth-year students Shahan Kamal, Tomas Pamparas, Eve Pomazi and Olivia Schmitt were recognized by SDM faculty for their academic excellence and positive contributions to the school.

D1 student Angela Lao received the 2026 Summer Dental Student Research Award from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR). Through the internship program, Lao will further explore her research interests at NIDCR headquarters, based on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus in Bethesda, Maryland.

Always Ready

No matter when School of Dental Medicine students come into the simulation lab, they can find their stations and equipment ready for use thanks in large part to John Kryjak. For 15 years — as of last month — Kryjak has served as an instructional support technician for the student labs, a crucial role to students' and the school's success. *On the Cusp*® connected with Kryjak on another busy day to learn more about his role.

In what realm did you work before Stony Brook?

I was in the defense industry for most of my career. Prior to coming to Stony Brook, I spent 12 years at BAE Systems in Greenlawn as an optical mechanical technician working on surveillance cameras for the Navy. These cameras would go on F-18 Hornets and other jets.

What are your primary responsibilities in the lab?

When the sim lab opened up in 2011, I was the guy. Today, if there's anything that needs repairs in the student lab or wet lab, and I can do it, I do it. If not, I find someone who can. I also work closely with the manager of student instruments to organize and keep track of supplies, such as waxes and different stones, as well as student kits.

You have been at the school for 15 years. What has kept you coming back?

The work environment is excellent. The people I work with are like family. And I get great pleasure helping students out with supplies or repairing a piece of equipment if it breaks down. It's tremendously satisfying. I also like talking about everyday things with them. I get made fun of for it, but I like watching old reruns of *The Bachelor* or *The Bachelorette* on TV and talking to them about those, and also sci-fi movies like *Star Wars*. It's nice to connect with people in the school on both a professional and a personal level.

It's also nice to see them when they graduate. For example, when I went to my dentist, a former student said, "John, is that you?" He was filling in that day and saw my name on the log and came in to visit. It was really nice.

Looking ahead, what does your future look like here?

I don't plan on leaving anytime soon, as long as my health is where it needs to be, I'll keep going. I'm not the type who's looking to retire and go play golf all the time. I need to do something. I'd rather be here. I get the satisfaction here that I don't get at any other place. My worst day here is better than my best day in a lot of the places I've worked.



John Kryjak has been a vital part of students' success at the School of Dental Medicine for more than 15 years.



The Class of 2026 will head off to 34 different residency programs.

Matches Made for D4 Students

For the School of Dental Medicine's Class of 2026, their future came into focus with another strong showing in the Postdoctoral Residency Matching Program. This summer, the 44 soon-to-be dentists will continue on to residencies in five states, training in general dentistry, dental anesthesiology, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics and prosthodontics. Additionally, two graduates are excited to begin their careers in private practice.

"I couldn't be prouder of the Class of 2026 and the dedication it has shown in preparing to take this next step," said Patrick Lloyd, dean, School of Dental Medicine. "Our school has a proud legacy of training compassionate, highly skilled dental professionals, and I am confident this year's class, too, will thrive in residency."

Many graduates will remain in New York, with 34 entering residency programs in 11 cities and towns statewide. Among those who will continue their training in-state is Steffanos Selearis, who called matching into New York University's oral and maxillofacial surgery program at Bellevue Hospital "an absolute honor."

"After externing, interviewing and returning for a second visit with NYU/BHC, I felt I had truly understood what the program had to offer and that I would be a great fit with their team," Selearis said. "I am eager to become a part of a specialty that can provide life-changing care to patients in need, often in a single treatment encounter."

Stony Brook's DDS program has long been a reliable feeder of its advanced dental education programs. Six Class of 2026 graduates matched into residency positions at the SDM, including Amaris Han, who will join its periodontics program this summer.

"I am thrilled to continue my perio journey at Stony Brook, where I've found exceptional mentorship and the opportunity to pursue both my periodontics residency and PhD degree," Han said. "I look forward to working alongside distinguished attendings and, most importantly, providing continuous, comprehensive care to the Long Island population and even continuing to see my own GPP patients."

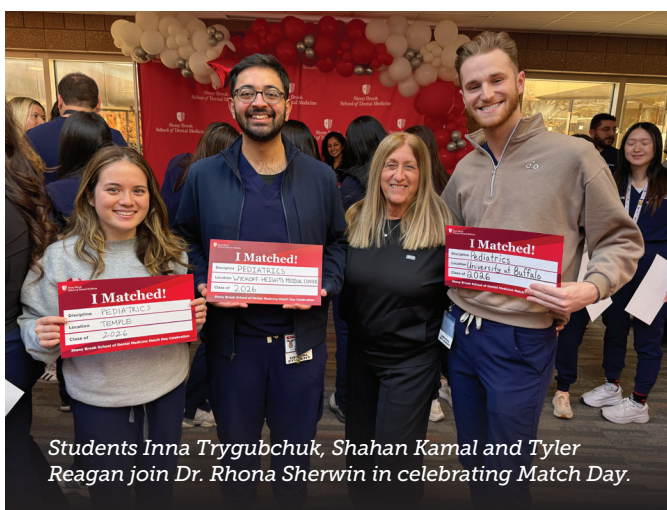
In addition to residency placements in New York, this year's class will also complete their residency training in Colorado, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Texas.



A customized cake to celebrate the occasion



Smiles spread from ear to ear on Match Day.



Students Inna Trygubchuk, Shahan Kamal and Tyler Reagan join Dr. Rhona Sherwin in celebrating Match Day.

Next in Line

By Olivia Schmitt, D4 student

My passion for teaching and mentoring began in my undergraduate years with my experience in tutoring and serving as a teaching assistant. I witnessed firsthand the impact that I had on students' interest in academics and working toward their personal and professional goals. This passion grew in dental school as I gained further experience supporting peers in both classroom and clinical settings.

To strengthen my ability to contribute to academic dentistry, I am pursuing a Master's in Higher Education Administration (MHEA). While dental school focuses intensely on clinical competency and patient care, I wanted to gain insight into organizational leadership, policy development and student affairs, all of which have helped me better contextualize my own experience as a dental student. The coursework complements my dental training by sharpening skills such as communication, creativity and critical thinking. Balancing the program with dental school responsibilities has required strong time management, but the flexibility and relevance of the curriculum have made it manageable and rewarding.

What I enjoy most about the MHEA program is the opportunity to step back from the operator and engage



D4 student Olivia Schmitt

with higher-level questions about education, equity and leadership. It has also been refreshing to collaborate with classmates from diverse professional backgrounds, offering perspectives outside of healthcare. Looking ahead, I envision a career in dentistry that combines clinical practice with academic leadership, potentially as faculty where I can contribute to shaping dental education and mentoring future clinicians.

Class of 2026 Postgraduate Placement

Ahmed Abdullah
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Texas A&M College of Dentistry
Dallas, TX

Jasmina Agalliu
General Practice
NYU Langone
Brooklyn, NY

Shaheer Ahmad
Private Practice

Sean Altemose
General Practice
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

Lasya Anantuni
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

Michael Anderson
General Practice
VA Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Nina Aronov Matatov
General Practice
SBH Health System
Bronx, NY

Daniella Borukhov
General Practice
NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue
New York, NY

Lauren Brown
General Practice
St. Charles Hospital
Port Jefferson, NY

Meishan Chen
General Practice
NYC Health + Hospitals/Queens
Jamaica, NY

Michael Chen
General Practice
SBH Health System
Bronx, NY

Chien-Yi Chou
Orthodontics
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY



Adam Elbordiny
General Practice
SBH Health System
Bronx, NY

Ahmad Esmielsadah
General Practice
NYU Langone
Brooklyn, NY

Monica Feng
General Practice
NYC Health + Hospitals/South
Brooklyn Health
Brooklyn, NY

Sonali George
General Practice
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

Jennifer Guevara
General Practice
NYP – Columbia University
Medical Center
New York, NY

Courtney Hakimian
General Practice
VA Medical Center
Northport, NY

Jiayue Han
Periodontics
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

Alina Kachar
General Practice
VA Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Shahan Kamal
Pediatric Dentistry
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Grace Kang
General Practice
Montefiore Medical Center
Bronx, NY

William Kollmer
General Practice
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

Brittney Krasnov
General Practice
Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center
New York, NY

Danny Li
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Allegheny General Hospital
Pittsburgh, PA

Kerry Lin
General Practice
Jamaica Hospital Medical Center
Jamaica, NY

Rayyan Moton
AEGD
Eastman Institute for Oral Health
Rochester, NY

Naomi Newen
General Practice
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Stony Brook, NY

Selin Ozturk
General Practice
Hackensack University Medical Center
Hackensack, NJ

Tomas Pamparas
Orthodontics
Montefiore Medical Center
Bronx, NY

Eve Pomazi
Private Practice

Makenna Psinakis
General Practice
NYU Langone
Mineola, NY

Tyler Reagan
Pediatric Dentistry
University at Buffalo
School of Dental Medicine
Buffalo, NY

Danielle Saar
Periodontics
Rutgers School of Dental Medicine
New Brunswick, NJ

Olivia Schmitt
General Practice
Northwell Health
Manhasset, NY

Steffanos Selearis
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
NYU Bellevue Hospital Center
New York, NY

Shameera Sheeraz
General Practice
VA Medical Center
Brooklyn, NY

Anjali Thannikal
General Practice
SBH Health System
Bronx, NY

Richard Thorpe
General Practice
Denver Health Medical Center
Denver, CO

Julia Tran
General Practice
St. Charles Hospital
Port Jefferson, NY

Inna Trygubchuk
Pediatric Dentistry
Temple University Hospital
Philadelphia, PA

Maria Anna Tzirani
General Practice
NYU Langone
Mineola, NY

Ronald Yeung
General Practice
Hackensack Meridian Health
Paramus, NJ

Allen Young
Dental Anesthesiology
St. Barnabas Hospital
Bronx, NY



Undergraduate student Alyssa Pasciuta (right) presents her research to SDM faculty member Dr. Rafael Delgado-Ruiz.



The 2026 Research Symposium award winners

Record-Setting Research Day

Advancing innovation and expanding the frontiers of dental science, Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine (SDM) held its annual Research Symposium on March 3 at Stony Brook University's Student Activities Center (SAC). A record 54 presenters — including undergraduates, dental students, residents, as well as master's and PhD candidates — shared original research spanning a wide range of disciplines.

Eight participants were recognized with awards for excellence. Among them was second-year dental student Linda Cesark, recipient of the American Association of Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR)/Dentsply Sirona Student Research Award for her project, Data Collection Accuracy Based on Artificial Intelligence in Academia. The honor includes support from Dentsply Sirona to present her work at the organization's 56th annual meeting next year in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"This symposium is an event in which all students and their mentors can take immense pride," said Patrick Lloyd, dean, School of Dental Medicine. "Each year, it provides a platform for them to showcase the knowledge they've gained through countless hours of work — all while managing rigorous didactic, clinical and lab coursework. These efforts translate into discoveries that enrich our profession."

The program opened with the Leo and Mickey Sreebny Distinguished Lectureship, presented this year by Kyle Vining, DDS, PhD, assistant professor of preventive and restorative sciences in the School of Dental Medicine as well as the Department of Materials Science in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. His lecture, Engineering Biomaterials for Restoring Oral Health, drew an audience of more than 175 students, residents, faculty and staff to the SAC's Sidney Gelber Auditorium.

"Dr. Vining's timely and thought-provoking lecture was the perfect way to begin a day showcasing the many ways that we as scientists can advance the profession of dentistry," said Stephen Walker, interim associate dean for research at the SDM.



Drs. Clarisa Amarillas Gastelum and Guenter Jonke cast their votes as Research Symposium judges.

Research Day Award Recipients

AADOCR/Dentsply Sirona Student Research Award
Linda Cesark, D2 student; Advisor: Georgios Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent

Topic: Data Collection Accuracy Based on Artificial Intelligence in Academia

Hinman Symposium Award
Anaya Zaineab, D3 student; Advisor: Georgios Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent

Topic: Wettability of Titanium Implants Utilizing Hyaluronic Acid and Bone Grafts

AADOCR National Student Research Day Award
Hannah Lloyd, D1 student; Advisors: Rafael Delgado-Ruiz, DDS, MSc, PhD; Georgios Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent

Topic: Evaluation of the Capability of a Large Language Model for Smile Analysis and Smile Design Generation in the Anterior Esthetic Region

AADOCR Long Island Section Student Research Award
Luke Tzagournis, D3 student; Advisor: Rekha Reddy, DMD

Topic: Successful Treatment of Proliferative Verrucous Leukoplakia with Topical Imiquimod

Omicron Kappa Upsilon Sigma Tau Chapter Research Award
Lauren Brown, D4 student; Advisors: Lorraine Danowski, PhD, RD; Dolores Cannella, MA, PhD

Topic: Navigating CODA Standards on Nutrition Counseling: Interactive Ideas to Implement

Resident/Fellow Research Awards
Anthony Allison, DDS, Orthodontics Resident; Advisor: Richard Faber, DDS

Topic: The Slot Height and Dimensional Accuracy of 3D-Printed Zr-Based Brackets

Graduate Student Research Award
Huiting Luo; Advisors: Miriam Rafailovich, PhD; Marcia Simon, PhD

Topic: Structural Analysis of a Collagen-Fibrin Scaffold which Promotes Osteogenic Differentiation and Templated Biomineralization of Dental Pulp Stem Cells

Undergraduate Student Research Award
Lingjie Pan; Advisors: Miriam Rafailovich, PhD; Marcia Simon, PhD

Topic: Collagen as a Biophysical Transducer of Static Magnetic Fields in Dental Pulp Stem Cell Differentiation

Kurtz Leading Organized Prosthodontics

Kenneth S. Kurtz, DDS, clinical professor in the Department of Prosthodontics and Digital Technology at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, was elected president of the American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) at the organization's annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana.

"I am honored to lead the college at this point in time, as there are a number of important issues at present to address," he said, noting a restructuring of the organization's Education Foundation Board of Directors as well as a change in the American Board of Prosthodontists certification examination process. "Together with President-Elect Daniel Givan and Vice President Louis DeSantis, I hope to lead coordinated efforts, with the approval of the Board of Directors, to advance the specialty. I am always open to member feedback, and am already encouraged by a number of new faces volunteering to assist on committees."

At Stony Brook, Kurtz serves as the director of the Division of Maxillofacial Prosthetics. He has also been committed to advancing the profession through research, specializing in studies on fatigue of implants as well as restorative materials. Prior to joining Stony Brook, Kurtz taught for 15 years at his alma mater, New York University College of Dentistry.



Dr. Kenneth Kurtz

Swanson Heads ACP Messenger



Dr. Patricia Swanson

Patricia Swanson, DDS, Prosth '18, clinical associate professor in the Department of Prosthodontics and Digital Technology, was named editor-in-chief of *The ACP Messenger* at the 2025 American College of Prosthodontists board of directors meeting in August.

The publication has published articles covering current prosthodontic trends, challenges and successes for more than 50 years. The first issue under Swanson's leadership was published in January.

"*The ACP Messenger* connects nearly 4,000 members worldwide with updates in education, board certification, and treatment modalities," Swanson said. "It is an honor to represent my prosthodontic colleagues as editor-in-chief and contribute to the voice of the specialty."

Swanson obtained her Doctor of Dental Surgery from the University at Buffalo, graduating summa cum laude, before earning her Certificate in Prosthodontics at the SDM. She became a diplomate of the American Board of Prosthodontics in 2018.

Swanson's recent accolades include receiving the ACP's Junior Educator of the Year Award in 2022, as well as the 2023 Charles Craig Teaching Award from Omicron Kappa Upsilon, dentistry's national honor society, of which she is a member.

Romanos Receives National Accolades

Georgios Romanos, DDS, PhD, Prof Dr med dent, a professor in the Department of Periodontics and Endodontics at Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, has been awarded the International Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (IADR) 2025 Distinguished Scientist Award in Prosthodontics and Implant Research. Presented annually at the IADR's annual meeting in Barcelona, Spain, the award recognizes an individual who has contributed significantly to advancing knowledge through dental research.

Romanos' research credentials include publishing more than 450 scientific peer-reviewed articles and eight scientific books. He has also been the mentor on more than 100 student research projects while at Stony Brook.

"Being honored by an institution as esteemed as the IADR is profoundly humbling," Romanos said. "I thank my colleagues at Stony Brook for their support and collaboration, and the residents and students at Stony Brook, whose passion for advancing research in periodontics and dentistry in general is very inspiring."

A faculty member at Stony Brook since 2012, Romanos previously held professor appointments at Eastman Institute of Oral Health at the University of Rochester, New York University College of Dentistry, and the University of Frankfurt in Germany.



Dr. Georgios Romanos

Outreach Coordinator Wins Coveted Stony Award

Christine Marsh, RDH, community outreach coordinator at the School of Dental Medicine, received the Community Award at the 2025 Stony Awards ceremony.

Since 2008, Marsh has played a central role in sustaining the SDM's outreach efforts, including its Mobile Dental Care Center, school-based partnerships and public health initiatives across Long Island. As a dental hygienist, she is deeply committed to improving public health outcomes and bridging dental education with community need, creating meaningful opportunities for students and residents to engage in compassionate, service-driven care.

"I am truly humbled by the nomination and honored to receive the Stony Award for community outreach," Marsh said. "This recognition reflects the hard work of our outreach team, students, residents and community partners who are dedicated to expanding access to care. Together, we are making a real difference in the lives of children and families."

"The Stony Awards is where the magic of Stony Brook University is on full display as we recognize the exceptional Seawolves at the heart of our success and upward

momentum," said Stony Brook University President Andrea Goldsmith, PhD. "I can see why this event is among our university's most cherished, as it celebrates our faculty, staff and medical professionals for their outstanding contributions to our excellence in research, teaching and healthcare, as well as for mentoring, inspiring, supporting and lifting up members of our community."



Christine Marsh (bottom left) with President Goldsmith and other Stony Award recipients

School of Dental Medicine Donors

Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine gratefully acknowledges the following individuals and organizations who supported the school's mission with gifts of \$100 or more during the 2025 fiscal year. It is through contributions like these that we can continue to provide a comprehensive education, cutting-edge research opportunities and state-of-the-art oral healthcare for our patients. Gifts reflected as of June 30, 2025.

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For information on how to make a contribution, please contact Ms. Laura Shelley, Director of Development, at (631) 806-6280 or laura.shelley@stonybrookmedicine.edu.

SAVE THE DATE

ALUMNI RECEPTION

THIS YEAR'S CLASS HONOREES

1981	1996	2011
1986	2001	2016
1991	2006	2021

Saturday, November 7

AM: Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
PM: Stony Brook University (location TBD)

We look forward to celebrating your milestone graduation anniversaries each year. Details to follow. Contact Janet Masini, Alumni Relations Coordinator, at janet.masini@stonybrook.edu to become a class ambassador!



A Letter from the Dental Alumni Association President

Dear School of Dental Medicine Alumni,

As President of the Alumni Association for the Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine, I am continually reminded of the strength and dedication of our alumni community. Our graduates make meaningful contributions to their patients, their communities, and to the profession of dentistry every day. Whether practicing locally or across the country, Stony Brook alumni carry forward the values of excellence, integrity, and service that define our school.

Our alumni network remains one of the School of Dental Medicine's greatest assets. The relationships built here extend far beyond graduation. Through mentorship, collaboration, and shared experience, alumni help shape the next generation of dental professionals. Many of you return as guest lecturers, mentors, and supporters of our students, reinforcing the strong connection between past and present members of the Stony Brook community.

This past year has also been exciting for alumni engagement. We have seen continued growth in participation at our reunion events, and it has been incredibly rewarding to watch more alumni reconnect with classmates and colleagues. Reunions provide a wonderful opportunity not only to catch up with old friends, but also to return to campus and experience the school once again.

For many alumni, visiting campus is especially meaningful because they can see firsthand how the school continues to evolve. Recent renovations have enhanced the learning environment for our students, including the unveiling of our new student laboratory last year. These improvements reflect the school's ongoing commitment to innovation and excellence in dental education.

We are also proud to share that the school filled its entering class in less than 24 hours this year — the fastest in our history. The credentials of these incoming students are truly outstanding, reflecting both the strength of the applicant pool and the growing reputation of the program.

Another exciting development was the opening of our new Mobile Dental Care Center last November. This impressive

vehicle expands the school's ability to bring care directly to communities in need while giving students valuable hands-on experience in community-based dentistry. It's an incredible addition and will be on the road throughout the year.

We are excited about the continued growth of our reunion program and look forward to keeping the momentum going later this year.

Warmest regards,
Stacy Reisfeld, DDS '88
 President, Stony Brook Dental Alumni Association



Do you have some news you would like to share?

Submit brief notices about milestone events and activities for the Class Notes section of the School of Dental Medicine magazine. Email Brett Mauser, director of communications, at brett.mauser@stonybrookmedicine.edu, or scan the QR code to access and complete the information form. View this edition's Class Notes section on page 36.





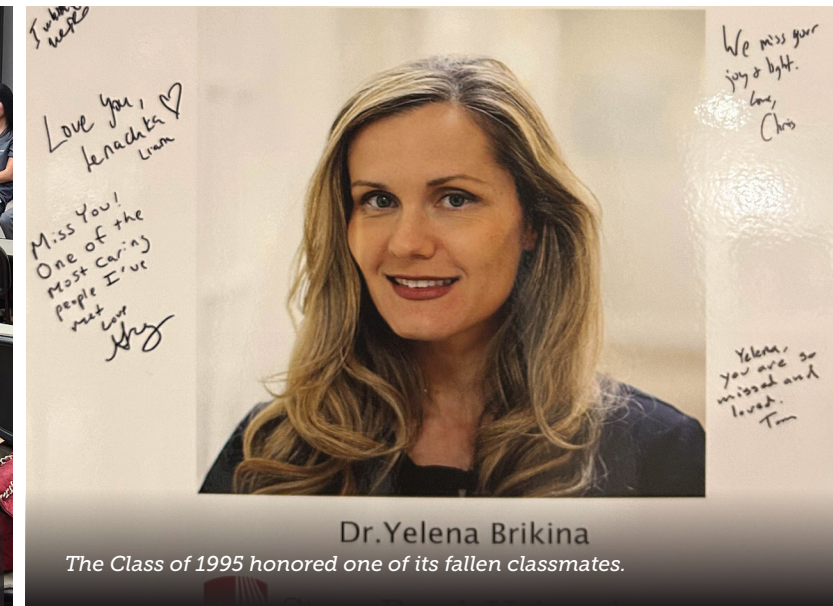
Graduates from throughout the school's history enjoyed a festive evening at Port Jefferson Country Club.



Attendees were all smiles at the reunion dinner held at Port Jefferson Country Club.



Reunion attendees sit in on a question-and-answer session with current dental students.



Dr. Yelena Brikina

The Class of 1995 honored one of its fallen classmates.

Like "Being with Family" Again

Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine hosted its second Alumni Class Reunion on November 8, welcoming graduates back to the north shore of Long Island to celebrate their milestone anniversaries.

The event included an afternoon barbecue, a question-and-answer session with current students, and a tour of the school led by Patrick Lloyd, dean, School of Dental Medicine. The day concluded with a cocktail hour and sitdown dinner at the Waterview at Port Jefferson Country Club.

For many alumni, the reunion provided an opportunity to revisit the campus and see how the school has changed since their graduation. Attendees were able to view ongoing multi-million-dollar renovations, which include new open-concept biomaterials and basic science research laboratories, as well as expanded and upgraded student and prosthodontic resident labs.

Gregory Maddalena, DDS '95, chief dental officer at Sun

"Even with all those years gone by, the reunion felt like being with family again. We picked up right where we left off, and it was such a wonderful night."

– Gregory Maddalena, DDS '95

River Health said, "I'm impressed with the changes at the school and look forward to seeing the plans for constructing a new dental school building come to life."

Maddalena and his fellow 1995 graduates also appreciated the opportunity to honor one of their late classmates.

"We all felt the loss of Yelena Brikina, DDS '95, and the tribute made for her was excellent," he said. "It helped us keep the memory of the kind-hearted and amazing person we knew alive."

Dean Lloyd said the school looks forward to continuing the reunion tradition each year, with the next installment taking place this November.

"By advocating for the school and supporting efforts to strengthen education, expand programs, and serve New Yorkers, our graduates play a vital role," he said. "They also help recruit students and residents and represent the school in meaningful ways."

The School of Dental Medicine will host its next alumni reunion on **Saturday, November 7** for members of the classes of: **1981 • 1986 • 1991 • 1996 • 2001 • 2006 • 2011 • 2016 • 2021**

Alumni interested in serving as class ambassadors may contact:

Janet Masini, MA, Director of Alumni Programs
Office of Alumni Relations
janet.masini@stonybrookmedicine.edu



Dr. Bernadette Sawa (left) was sworn in as secretary of the Richmond County Dental Society in February.



Dr. Edward Gottesman



Dr. Edward Zhou



Dr. Dimitrios Kilimitzoglou at his new restaurant, Enology



Dr. Nicole Hinchy as grand marshal at the University at Buffalo's commencement



Dr. Devin Klein (second from left) was installed as president elect of the Suffolk County Dental Society at a ceremony this winter.

Class Notes

1970s

Robert Peskin, DDS '77, was re-elected as speaker of the House of Delegates for the Academy of General Dentistry at the AGD's annual meeting in Chicago in November. Peskin will serve in this role through 2027. He is also president of the American Institute of Parliamentarians.

1980s

Alan Berman, DDS '83, was installed as vice president of the Suffolk County Dental Society at its annual officer installation, held in Smithtown, New York.

Craig Aronson, DDS '88, was inducted as an associate fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry (AAID) at the organization's annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, in November. Aronson is the president and founder of Premier Dental and Premier Smiles, located in Rockland County, New York, for nearly 40 years. In addition to his AAID fellowship, he will be its Northeast District Trustee for 2026-27.

2000s

Edward Gottesman, DDS '00, Perio '04, was inducted as a fellow of the New York Section of the American College of Dentists at the organization's annual awards banquet, held at the Penn Club in New York City. Gottesman has owned and operated Perio NYC for more than 20 years, and is also clinical faculty member in the Department of Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College.

Josephine Sullivan, DDS '01, was named vice chair of oral and maxillofacial surgery at NYC Health + Hospitals/ Jacobi | North Central Bronx — the very facility where she was born. In addition to her administrative role, Sullivan has practiced at Pelham Bay Dental Associates in the Bronx for more than 20 years.

Dimitrios "Jimmy" Kilimitzoglou, DDS '02, AEGD '04, clinical associate professor in Stony Brook's Department of General Dentistry, opened up Enology Wine Bar &

Bistro in St. James, New York, in November. He was inspired by his father, who ran a Greek/French fusion restaurant in Brooklyn Heights. Kilimitzoglou also owns and operates e.s.i Healthy Dentistry in St. James.

Bernadette Sawa, DDS '06, was named secretary of the Richmond County Dental Society at the organization's annual installation of officers in February.

Edward Zhuo, DDS '07, returned to Stony Brook as a part-time faculty member, joining as a clinical assistant professor in the Department of General Dentistry. Zhuo also operates EZ Dental based in Queens, New York.

Alisa Neymark, DDS '11, joined Park Slope Dentistry Seventh Avenue in Brooklyn this past summer, continuing her career in private practice in New York City.

Devin Klein, DDS '19, Ortho '22, MS '22, was named president-elect of the Suffolk County Dental Society at its annual officer installation.

Lauren Heisinger, DDS '19, was named the District 2 representative on the American Dental Association New Dentist Committee for 2025-26. She served in a similar role for the Suffolk County Dental Society, helping new graduates get on their feet in their early careers. Heisinger currently practices with the Pediatric Dental Group of New York, with three locations in and around Albany, New York.

Tara Earls, DDS '19, Ped Dent '21; Minsuk Cha, DDS, Ped Dent '23; and Natalie Brick, DMD, Ped Dent '24, all graduates of Stony Brook's Advanced Dental Education Program in Pediatric Dentistry, became diplomates of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry, having successfully challenged its Oral Clinical Examination.

Nicole Hinchy, OMFR '21, was named associate dean of clinical affairs at the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine. Additionally, Hinchy is an associate professor in the Department of Oral Diagnostic Sciences and the director of radiology at the school. She was named the 2024-25 educator of the year at UB, and served as the grand marshal at the 2025 convocation ceremony.

Remembering Our Own

Thomas Donahue, DMD, Ortho '93, was an orthodontist who cared for patients in northeastern Pennsylvania for more than 30 years. (December 12, 2024)

Hillary Kerpel, DDS '78, a general dentist in Westchester County, New York, passed away after a decades-long battle with multiple myeloma. (August 28, 2025)

Amir Sedaghat, DDS '97, Endo '00, passed away after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Sedaghat was an endodontist who practiced in Great Neck, New York, and was a charter class graduate of Advanced Dental Education Program in Endodontics at Stony Brook. (December 2, 2025)

Out and About with the SDM

Throughout the year, members of the School of Dental Medicine community can be found at numerous annual meetings held around the country. For these get-togethers, the school welcomes students, residents, staff, faculty and alumni to receptions, which are great opportunities for attendees to reconnect with their classmates, share stories, or provide updates on their careers or the latest happenings at the school.

There is another full slate of events coming up this fall, to which you are all invited. This includes SDM reunion festivities here at Stony Brook University.

Take a peek at where we've been and what we have in store in the upcoming months. We look forward to seeing you!



2025 American Academy of Periodontology Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



2025 American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology Annual Meeting, Charlotte, North Carolina



2025 Greater New York Dental Meeting, New York City



2025 American Academy of Prosthodontics Annual Session, New Orleans, Louisiana

Upcoming Events

April 2026

April 15 – 18

American Association of Endodontists Annual Session
Salt Palace Convention Center
Salt Lake City, Utah

April 16 • 7pm

AAE SDM Reception
Hyatt Regency
Salt Lake City
Salt Lake City, Utah

April 26 – 27

Greater Long Island Dental Meeting
Hilton Hotel
Melville, New York

April 26 • 5:30pm

GLIDM
SDM Reception
Hilton Hotel
Melville, New York

May 2026

May 1 – 3

American Association of Orthodontists Annual Session
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Florida

May 19 • 3pm

SDM Convocation
Staller Center Main Stage
Stony Brook University

May 21 – 24

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Annual Session
Caesars Forum Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nevada

May 23 • 6pm

AAPD SDM Reception
F1 Arcade Las Vegas
Las Vegas, Nevada

June 2026

June 2

Full- and Part-Time Faculty Retreat
Student Activities Center
Stony Brook University

June 5 – 6

New York State House of Delegates
Atlantic City, New Jersey

June 10 – 13

Society of American Indian Dentists (SAID) Conference
University of Minnesota School of Dentistry
Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 24 – 27

Academy of General Dentistry Annual Session
Caesars Palace
Las Vegas, Nevada

Help the School of Dental Medicine build its historical archive

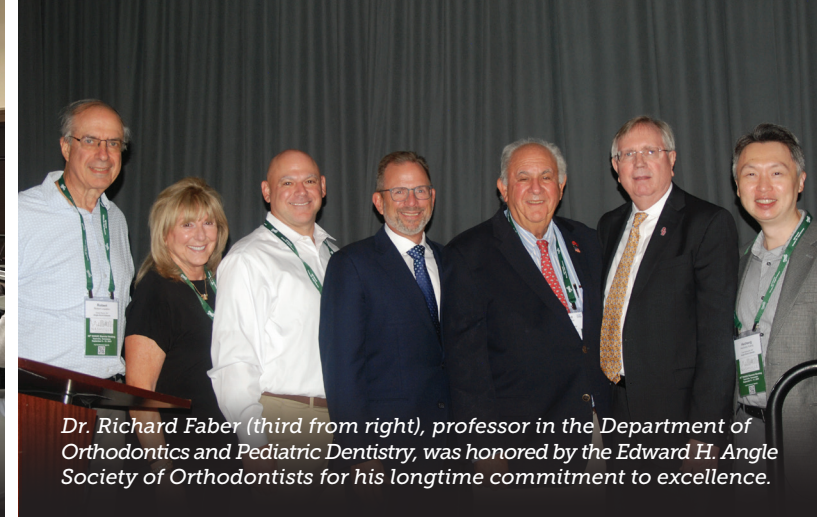
In its 50-plus years, many students, residents, staff and faculty have passed through the halls of Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine. So many memories have been created, and so much has been celebrated. To help preserve its history, the school has recently created an archive space that includes yearbooks, photos, publications and other items from our past. Do you have anything that you would like to contribute? This collection already offers great insight into years gone by, and we would love to add to it!

Send items to:
Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine
Office of Communications
101 South Drive, Stony Brook, NY 11794





Admissions director Joseph Franza presents to the Stony Brook University Pre-Dental Club.



Dr. Richard Faber (third from right), professor in the Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry, was honored by the Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontists for his longtime commitment to excellence.



The holiday party's grand prize was very cool.



Hats off — and thank you — to Lisa Borzumato (left), periodontics program manager, and Linda Calvagna, dental student program manager, who retired after a collective 40-plus years at the SDM.

TOOTH PICS



Staff members laced up their boots to participate in a country line dancing class in Oaks Learning Center.



Long Island Business News recognized the pediatric dentistry outreach team for its excellence in community service during a ceremony this winter.



Dental students visited with patients at Stony Brook Children's Hospital to provide bright smiles and helpful oral healthcare tips.



Smiles were abound at Senior Portrait Day.



The sun shined bright at the school's Welcome Back Barbecue.



The SDM came out in force for the Nassau County Dental Society's annual Give Kids a Smile event at the Cradle of Aviation Museum.



Drs. Rita O'Dwyer (left) and Pember Edwards presented at the State of Women's Health on Long Island in Bridgehampton.



The Geriatric Dental Group of the School of Dental Medicine collaborated with Stony Brook Medicine to visit Jefferson's Ferry Senior Living Community

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