

UMKC School of Dentistry Alumni News

Fall 2020

# EXPLORER

Vol. 77 No. 2

A photograph of four dental professionals standing in a modern dental clinic. From left to right: a man in teal scrubs and a purple face mask, a woman in light blue scrubs and a light blue face mask, a woman in dark blue scrubs and a light blue face mask, and a woman in teal scrubs and a light blue face mask holding a small object. They are all wearing lanyards with ID badges. The background shows dental equipment, including monitors and overhead lights.

**Ready for  
the future**

Amid uncertain times, the  
school and profession make  
plans for a promising future

Features



**8**     **The global pandemic** has shifted many plans for the future and the dental profession is no different. We catch up with industry leaders (including our alumni, of course) to get a glimpse into what the future holds. We also learn that those preparing our future dental professionals are not only adapting but thriving.



**12**     **Passion and excellent patient care** drive our alumni, and that can take them on a variety of paths. Two of our alumni share their unique experiences of how faith and the school’s dedication to service have guided them professionally.

Departments

- 2**     **Honor Roll of Donors**
- 6**     **New Scholarships**
- 15**    **Alumni News**
- 17**    **School News**
- 21**    **Coming Alumni Events**
- 21**    **Continuing Dental Education**



*Explorer* is published twice each year for alumni and friends of the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry. UMKC is an equal opportunity, affirmative action, ADA institution.

**INTERIM DEAN, SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY**  
Russell B. Melchert, Ph.D.

**MANAGER OF ALUMNI RELATIONS**  
Becky Higgins

**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**  
Hilary Wheat

**EXECUTIVE EDITORS**  
Lisa Mallow  
Anne Hartung Spenner

**EDITORS**  
Becky Higgins  
Bill Marse

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Bryce Puntenney

**DESIGNER**  
Jason Yates

**STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
John Carmody  
Brandon Parigo

**PUBLISHED BY:**  
UMKC School of Dentistry  
Office of Alumni and Development  
650 E. 25th St.  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
816-235-2060 | Fax: 816-235-5892  
Relay Missouri (TTY): 800-735-2966  
Email: [explorer@umkc.edu](mailto:explorer@umkc.edu)  
Web: [dentistry.umkc.edu](http://dentistry.umkc.edu)

**SOCIAL MEDIA**  
Facebook: UMKC School of Dentistry and UMKC Dental Alumni  
LinkedIn: UMKC Dental Alumni  
Instagram: @UMKCDentalAlumni  
Twitter: @UMKCDentalAlum



The School of Dentistry is a vital partner of the UMKC Health Sciences District, a group of health care institutions collaborating on research, clinical care, community wellness and health sciences education.

[www.umkchealthsciencesdistrict.org](http://www.umkchealthsciencesdistrict.org).

**I AM TRULY HONORED** to serve as interim dean of the School of Dentistry. For several years, I have taught in the dental curriculum and facilitated various interprofessional education activities, allowing me to see firsthand how great our students are — and to learn our staff, faculty and alumni are second to none. In my current role, this becomes more evident each day.



To me, “resilient” is the word that best describes our school — a family of students, staff, faculty and alumni on the front lines of oral health and critical health science research. Throughout the pandemic, everyone here remained committed to the health and well-being of our students, staff, faculty and patients. Everyone also worked hard to ensure our students remained on time for completion of their programs. Learning continued through video conferencing, recordings, online discussions and, of course, experiential education in clinics when we were able to reopen them. Indeed, we graduated another outstanding class of practice-ready dentists, hygienists, new specialists and scientists in 2020.

While the pandemic forced us to recalibrate and refocus, I believe we are emerging stronger and better prepared for the future. No doubt, it has been challenging in light of the severe, acute impact the pandemic has had on our educational and financial resources, especially when combined with the pre-existing and chronic financial strain placed on higher education by reduced state appropriations. The university continues to reevaluate all academic programs and search for efficiencies and will likely have to make some difficult decisions in the coming years. Given the key role our school plays in the university’s mission, and its role as the only publicly supported dental school in the state, I expect the School of Dentistry to maintain its prominence at both UMKC and within the UM System.

Though my role is temporary, I am absolutely committed to helping the school maintain its excellence and offer the most attractive dental school dean job in the country. I thank everyone for welcoming and teaching me about the key issues facing the school and the dental professions. A special thank you to the Rinehart Foundation and alumni boards for the continued and valued support given to our students, faculty and staff. Finally, I want to recognize and honor all donors contributing to our various programs. You are invaluable to our success.

With gratitude,

Russell B. Melchert, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean, UMKC School of Dentistry



A Message From the Chair



**I'M NOT SURE WHY**, but when summer turns to fall and the heat finally relents to cool autumn days, a wave of nostalgia flows through me. I am taken back to my high school, college and especially dental school days. Those dental school days I'm reminded of are now more than 20 years ago, the early days of internet and cellphones. I remember filling out financial aid forms, taking out loans and lamenting the high cost of higher education. When I received word I had been given a Rinehart scholarship my first semester at UMKC SOD, I was surprised and thankful. The alumni fund certainly eased my burden, and I was touched by the generosity.

And then I think about the plight of dental students today, especially in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. My burden 20 years ago seems minuscule compared with that of the current student. As many of you know, the amount of dental student debt is staggering. The pandemic has only increased the stress and burden on current students. The Roy J. Rinehart Foundation mission is to support these students, in addition to faculty and staff, through scholarships, endowments and professional development.

An example of this support is the Student and Staff Emergency Fund, which has been set up recently with the goal to help students and staff in emergency situations where they are experiencing financial hardship. Through this fund, I am proud to say that the foundation helped many students during this difficult time. Fourth-year dental students were unable to start work because of postponed board exams, and many other students who had jobs during school were unable to work those jobs because of the pandemic. The stories I have read on the applications are heart-wrenching and I am glad the school has this avenue to support its students.

I encourage all of you, as I do this time of year, to take a step back to your college days and remember what it was like to be a student. The roller-coaster ride of highs and lows, the fun and the stress. And remember those who helped and guided you through mentorship and generosity. Obviously, the current students need our help now, more than ever. Thank you from the Rinehart Committee, the staff and especially the students at UMKC SOD!

Dr. David Suchman (DDS '00)  
Chair, Rinehart Foundation

Thanks to Our Many Generous Donors

\$100,000+

Mr. Kent Sunderland  
The Sunderland Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

S. Orlando Somers Trust

\$25,000 - \$49,999

McDavid Dental Educational Trust

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Dr. Lawrence and Ms. Richelle Fujioka  
GFT Charity Inc.  
KC Orthodontic Support & Research  
Foundation  
Dr. Nancy L. Newhouse  
Noble Biocare  
Dr. Herman and Mrs. Ardyce Sakimoto

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Dr. Sam and Mrs. B. Jeannene Hayes  
Ms. Harriet Masunaga  
Dr. R. Wayne and Mrs. I. Joyce Thompson  
Thompson Family Foundation  
UMKC Dental Hygienists' Alumni  
Association

\$2,500 - \$4,999

AdventHealth Foundation Shawnee  
Mission  
AdventHealth Shawnee Mission  
Associates of Dentistry, LLC  
Dr. Charles and Mrs. Sally Cobb  
Commerce Bancshares Foundation  
Free Dental Clinic Trust Fund

Mrs. Judith B. Haynes  
Dr. Randall S. Honda  
Ms. Andrea Margolis  
Dr. Charles C. McGinty  
Dr. Richardson L. McGuire  
Dr. Allen B. Reavis  
Dr. Russell and Mrs. Loretta Tabata  
Tigras Charitable Foundation  
Mr. M. Dean Wright  
Dr. John and Ms. Frances Yoder  
Dr. Alvin and Ms. Colleen Yoshida

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Dr. Paul and Ms. Devon Albertson  
Dr. Richard Lawrence Anema  
Drs. Mark and Melodee Armfield  
Dr. Blake and Clare Borello  
Dr. Jerry and Dr. Richard L. Briscoe  
Ms. Sherry M. Burns  
Drs. Chris and Jayne Buttner  
Dr. Robert L. Claassen  
Dr. Fred W. Distelhorst  
Dr. David J. Dung  
Ms. Leslie Fankhauser  
Fidelity Charitable  
Dr. and Dr. Ken J. Frick  
Dr. and Mrs. Milton M. Fujiuchi  
Dr. Eric Gottman  
Dr. Stephen Harrison  
Ms. Karen E. Haynes  
Dr. Steven and Mrs. Leigh Hechler  
Dr. Ralph M. Hennessee  
Mrs. Paula M. Hiatt  
Dr. Stephen and Ms. Sydney Hiatt  
High Desert Dental  
Dr. Jay and Mrs. Rosalyn Hiramoto  
Dr. Laila B. Hishaw  
Dr. James Brian Indiveri  
Mrs. Ann L. Jett  
Dr. and Mrs. Harry Jett Fund  
Mark L. Johnson, Ph.D.  
Dr. Gordon M. Kanemaru  
Dr. Kurt and Ms. Stephanie Kavanaugh  
Dr. Charles and Mrs. Angela Leins  
Dr. Ronald Lemmo and Dr. Marsha Pyle  
Dr. T. Wayne and Ms. Linda Lewis  
Drs. Darren and Sarah Mahaffey  
Dr. Steven and Mrs. Donna Malmstrom

Mr. William A. Marse  
Ms. Carole P. McKnight  
Dr. Mark R. Medina  
Dr. Ward A. Meyerhoeffer Jr.  
Missouri Dental Association  
Missouri Fellows of the International  
College of Dentists  
Dr. Andrew S. Moore  
Dr. James G. Nail  
Nail Dental  
Dr. Julie E. Olson  
Dr. Pamela R. Overman  
Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Bonnie Pearson  
Dr. Bernard W. Petkovich  
Dr. Phillip M. Poynter  
Mr. William C. Quigg and Dr. Suzanne  
Newell Quigg  
Dr. Peter and Ms. Letticia Robinson  
Dr. Gary McCabe Ross, DDS  
Dr. and Ms. Allan Y. Segawa  
Dr. William F. Slagle Jr.  
Drs. David and Kelly Suchman  
Russell Tom, DDS  
University Dental Study Club  
Mr. Robin and Dr. Crystal Walker  
Drs. Robert and Loretta White  
Dr. Jarrod L. Williams  
Dr. Donald and Mrs. Kimberly Wilson  
Dr. Ralph and Mrs. Lynda Younger

*Every effort has been made to accurately list each donor who has supported the UMKC School of Dentistry from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020. If your name is misspelled, omitted or incorrectly listed, we sincerely apologize and ask you to call the Office of Alumni and Development, 816-235-2060, so corrections can be made.*

*Visit [dentistry.umkc.edu/foundation](https://dentistry.umkc.edu/foundation) to see a complete list of the school's donors.*

Estate Gifts

THESE DONORS HAVE indicated that the UMKC School of Dentistry is in their estate plan. We are grateful for the lasting legacy they are creating.

Dr. Lloyd Alquist*	Dr. Patrick K. Hardman	Ms. Ida Mae Niblo*
Anonymous Donor	Dr. Grant B. Hatfield Jr.*	Dr. James W. Osborne
Dr. Dan L. Blackwell	Dr. Richard M. Haun*	Dr. Robert E. Peterson
Dr. Robert E. Butler	Dr. William J. Hayden Jr.*	Dr. V. Leroy Riley*
Dr. James M. Callender III	Dr. Phil E. Held	Myrtle H. Rinehart*
Ms. Louise G. Chapman*	Mrs. Carolyn Abney Hodges	Dr. Gary McCabe Ross
Dr. Robert and Mrs. Lucille E. Cowan*	Dr. Frank J. Holtz*	Ms. Tomiyo Seo*
Florence Irene Dengel*	Dr. Harry Jett*	Dr. William F. Slagle Jr.
Dr. J. Dennis Dlabal	Mrs. Hazel Johns*	Mrs. Eloise Sloan*
Dr. David K. H. Dung*	Colonel Onas Johns*	Mr. John and Mrs. Effie Speas*
Dr. Adam Edwin Ericsson*	Dr. Gregory K. Johnson	Dr. Charles F. Squire
Mr. Leonard Faulconer Jr.*	Dr. Michael G. Johnson	Dr. Rodger L. Suchman
Dr. Newell O. Feeley*	Dr. Theron C. Johnson	Dr. Donald J. Thompson*
Dr. Brett L. Ferguson	Dr. Thomas A. Jones	Dr. George X. Trimble*
Dr. John E. Franks Jr.	Dr. J. Edward Kendrick	Ms. Rosemary L. Wiley*
Dr. Frank R. Fullerton Jr.*	Dr. Dan L. Lavitt	Dr. Terry C. Williams
Dr. Carl and Mrs. Marguerite Fyler*	Dr. Carolyn S. Magnuson	Professor Emeritus Leslie Young Jr.*
Dr. John D. Gardner	Dr. Grant W. Merritt	
Dr. Otis B. Gentry*	Dr. Michael L. Milford	
Mrs. Ruth Somers Gilman*	Dr. William and Mrs. Bonney Miller*	* Deceased



Brett Ferguson (DDS '81, OMS '90)

A New Way to Secure the Future

IN THIS ISSUE, Brett Ferguson (DDS '81, OMS '90) discusses how he took a different path to his estate gift. Through some forward-thinking financial planning, he was able to “make sure somebody gets the opportunity to do something I’ve done.” To find out more, check out the story “Planning for a Bright Future” on page 8.

Medallion and Pin Recipients

PHILANTHROPY MEDALLIONS  
The Rinehart Medallion honors the memory of Dr. Roy J. Rinehart, longtime dean of the UMKC School of Dentistry. The Rinehart Medallion is bestowed on alumni and friends of the school who have distinguished themselves through philanthropy or service. Each year, Rinehart Medallions are given to recognize lifetime donors of \$10,000 or more. Annual donations to the Rinehart Foundation provide the School of Dentistry invaluable support that enables it to improve the quality and expand the scope of its educational, research, clinical and outreach programs.

Medallions:  
Dr. David L. Suchman (DDS '00, AEGD '01)  
Dr. Liz Kaz (BSDH '86, MS '87)  
Dr. Damon Jensen (DDS '07)  
Dr. David L. May (DDS '77)  
Dr. J. Don Spillers (ORTHO '93)  
Dr. Jason E. Wagle (DDS '97, PERIO '99)  
Dr. Justin R. Kohlhorst (DDS '88, PERIO '90)  
Dr. Loretta R. White (BSDH '74, DDS '82, ORTHO '84)

RINEHART BENEFACTOR PINS  
Many of our alumni have continued to give long after they received their Rinehart Medallion. We recognize their continued generosity and the impact of their gifts by awarding a lapel pin to donors at the \$25,000, \$50,000 and \$100,000 lifetime-giving levels.

Pins:  
\$25,000 - \$49,999  
Dr. Crystal Walker (DDS '04, PEDO '06)  
Dr. James A. Dryden (DDS '66, ENDO '72)  
Dr. Scott S. Masunaga (DDS '82)



Your support ensures the UMKC School of Dentistry is among the elite dental schools for generations to come.

Protect What Matters Most, Now and Always

WITH SO MUCH uncertainty at the moment, our work to educate the highest-quality dental professionals is of vital importance. And while you may be unsure of a way to support the School of Dentistry right now, here are some key changes for the 2020 tax filing year that may be beneficial to you and your family.

- 1. **Additional Income Tax Charitable Deduction:** As part of the CARES Act, you can deduct up to \$300 above the standard deduction for individuals in charitable contributions. This is for everyone, even if you have no other itemizations.
- 2. **No “RMDs” from your IRA, but QCDS are still a smarter way to give:** For individuals with IRA accounts, the CARES Act specifies there are no Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) this year. However, giving pre-tax funds out of your IRA will still lower your future tax burden compared to giving cash. If you are interested in this method of giving, please contact your IRA custodian.
- 3. **Creating a planned gift costs you nothing today** and is a powerful way to make a lasting impact. Writing a will is one of the most important steps to take, though understandably scary or uncomfortable given the current crisis. But now more than ever, it’s important to protect what matters most to you and have a plan in place. We hope you will join the many people who have included us in their will, trust or beneficiary designations, and we are available if you would like some guidance in wording a charitable contribution as part of your estate.

We hope you find this information useful as you make important decisions about how to best support dental education this year. If you have any further questions or just want to reach out, please feel free to contact Hilary Wheat at 816-235-2173 or wheath@umkc.edu.



NEW SCHOLARSHIPS



Dr. L.E. Wiley (DDS '15)

Dr. L.E. Wiley Scholarship Fund

This scholarship was established upon her death by Rosemary Wiley in honor of her father, Dr. L.E. Wiley, a 1915 alumnus of the School of Dentistry. Although Dr. Wiley passed away in 1991, his legacy will continue with the hundreds of students this scholarship will help. Third- and fourth-year DDS students for decades to come will benefit from his and Rosemary’s planning and generosity.



Members of the Class of 1994 gather for a smile at a recent reunion.

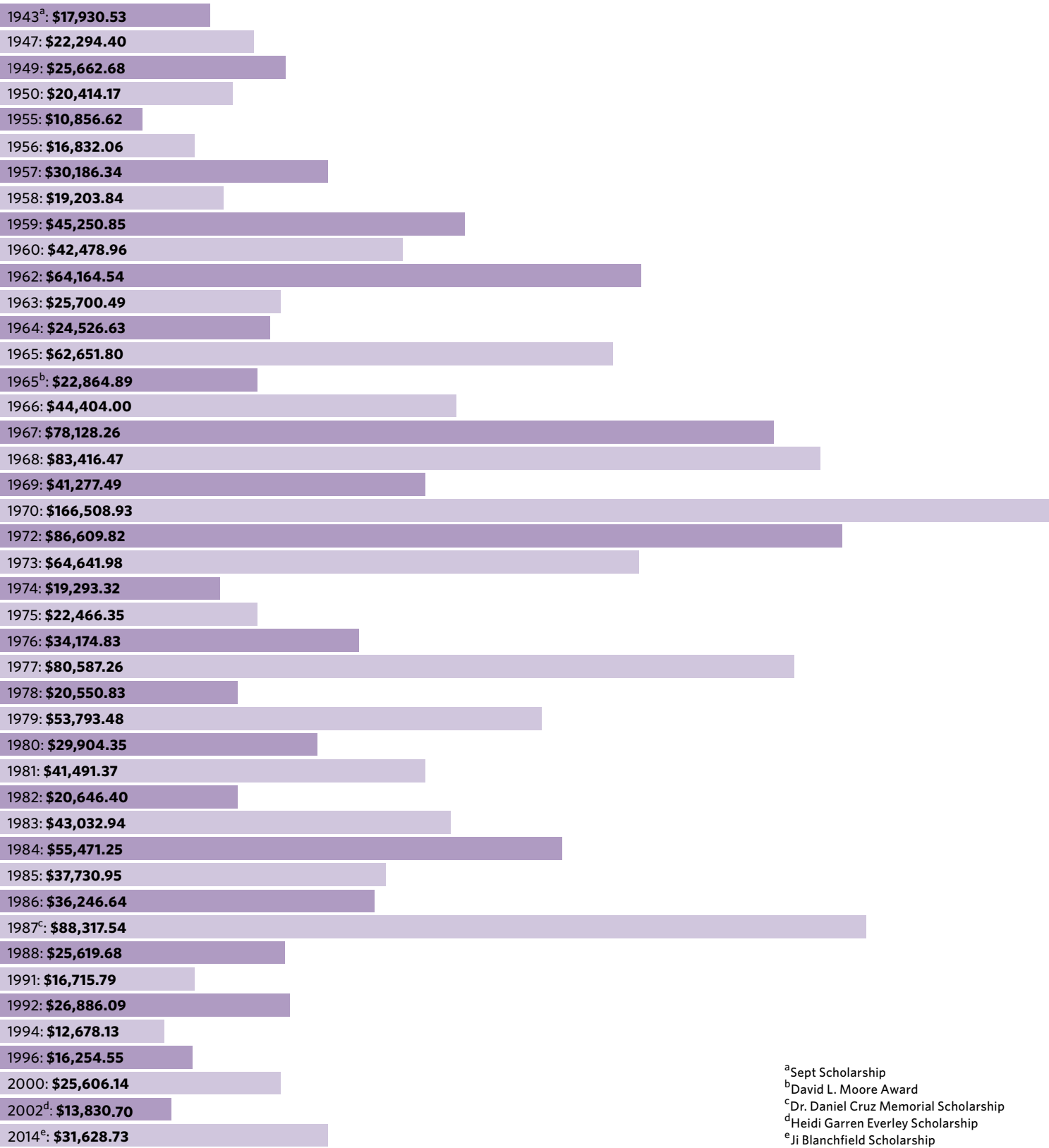
Class of 1994

The DDS Class of 1994 came together to establish a scholarship for DDS students in honor of their graduating class. May the recipients of this award enjoy long and thriving careers in the practice of dentistry like their generous benefactors.



Scholarships help support the next generation of oral health care professionals.

ENDOWED CLASS SCHOLARSHIPS



<sup>a</sup>Sept Scholarship  
<sup>b</sup>David L. Moore Award  
<sup>c</sup>Dr. Daniel Cruz Memorial Scholarship  
<sup>d</sup>Heidi Garren Everley Scholarship  
<sup>e</sup>Ji Blanchfield Scholarship

Not yet endowed scholarships\*\*

1948: \$5,000.00	1961: \$5,225.00	1995: \$8,650.00	2003: \$3,785.00	2008: \$600.00
1951: \$1,000.00	1971: \$8,826.00	1997: \$1,200.00	2004: \$1,000.00	2009: \$1,700.00
1952: \$5,530.00	1989: \$6,310.00	1998: \$4,407.80	2005: \$8,600.00	2010: \$300.00
1953: \$2,220.00	1990: \$1,100.00	1999: \$9,625.00	2006: \$850.00	2012: \$2,921.57
1954: \$7,093.56	1993: \$6,050.00	2001: \$1,750.00	2007: \$3,800.00	2017: \$3,099.36

\*\* When your class fund reaches \$10,000, we look forward to making your first award.





# PLANNING — FOR A — BRIGHT FUTURE

The UMKC School of Dentistry and the dental profession are thinking and moving forward. The COVID-19 pandemic made tomorrow's plans happen right now.

By STACY DOWNS

**T**he forecast for the UMKC School of Dentistry and the profession itself: bright, and something to smile about.

To get a glimpse into the future, we caught up with current profession leaders. By the way, we couldn't help but notice how many prominent national organizations are led by UMKC School of Dentistry alumni.

We also learned that even during the challenges and uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, those training future oral health professionals are demonstrating how to adapt, evolve and thrive.

## Going above and beyond

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the UMKC School of Dentistry is taking extra precautions to keep everyone safe. More than 300 students, faculty and staff treat 65,000 patients in a typical year in its clinics.

For starters, there are dozens of external oral suction systems (EOS) that quickly remove 98% of fluid-filled particles. A bipolar ionization filtration system, which kills viruses, has been added to the heating and air-conditioning system in the clinic.

Scheduling has changed to shorten wait times and reduce patient loads in

the waiting area, where easily disinfected and well-spaced plastic chairs have replaced densely packed cloth-covered ones. Patients are contacted the night before an appointment to make sure they are well, and they are screened again on arrival, including a temperature check.

Patients use one entrance; faculty, staff and students use another, with their swipe cards recorded to aid contact tracing should it be found later that someone in the building tested positive for the coronavirus.

The school has been helped in reopening by safety guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the American Dental Association and the Academy of General Dentistry.

"COVID-19 has changed everything," says Russell Melchert, interim dean of the UMKC School of Dentistry. "I'm proud of the faculty, students and staff who continue to teach and learn about the next generation of oral health care, by going above and beyond with new and better ways."

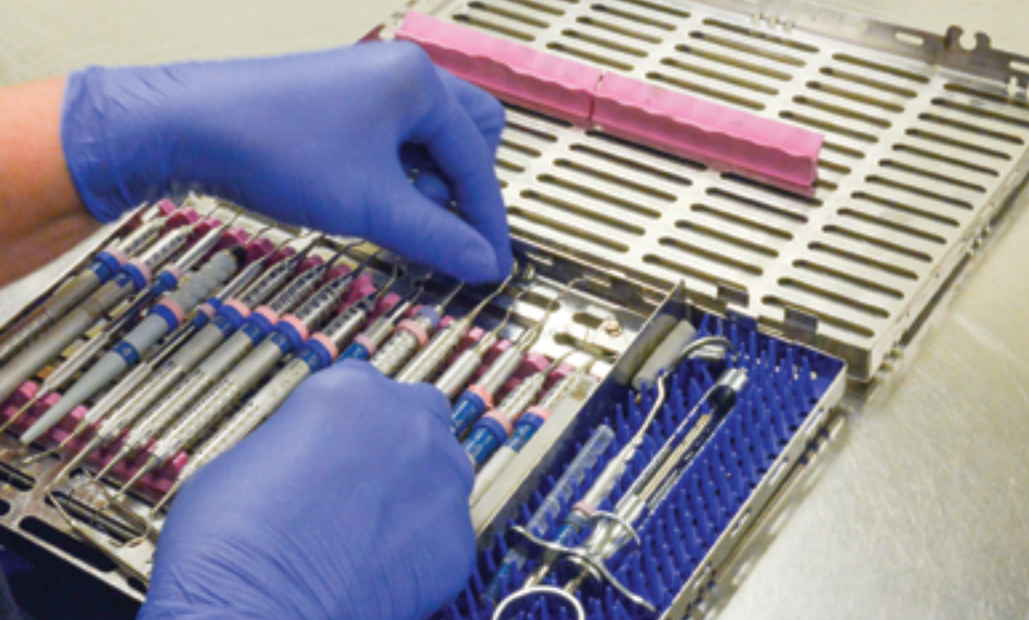
The change was dramatic, says Liz Kaz, associate dean for academic affairs and clinic associate professor (BSDH '86, MSDH '87). It meant

transitioning four years of didactic courses in dentistry and dental hygiene online. It meant certifying instructors in online teaching for accreditation purposes.

"We had to move fast and learn online ways of instruction on the fly," Kaz says. "Those who want to be in this profession tend to be 'people persons' so this was all challenging."

Pictured above, in an ever-evolving profession, the school is ready to prepare the next generation of oral health care professionals.





Patient safety remains paramount at UMKC.

In the Fall Semester, many courses are online but there is in-person instruction in clinics and for first-year students to help foster community and connection.

While much of the curriculum at the school already focuses on future dental trends such as group practice (versus solo practitioner) and new technologies, the pandemic pushed a foray this semester into teledentistry. This works by having patients see their general dentist, but receive guidance from a specialist elsewhere during that visit. It means convenience and less travel for patients, especially those in rural areas.

"This technology has taken off for medicine, and it has really moved us down that field," Kaz says. "This semester, we're piloting a program that sends information from clinic to clinic. It's showing what a teledentistry environment would mean in their practice."

### Next generation

Each year, U.S. News and World Report ranks top jobs based on categories including future demand and growth, work/life balance, and salary and stress levels. Consistently, dentists rank in the Top 5 (No. 2 in 2020), and orthodontists and dental hygienists rank high as well.

Will the pandemic affect this detrimentally? Leaders don't think so. "Dentistry was deemed an essential

medical service," says Craig Herre (DDS '81), who serves as first vice president of the American Dental Association and has a practice in Leawood, Kansas. "People were so happy about that because dentists are well-respected and are important to people's health."

Herre sees more dentists specializing in pediatric dentistry and focusing on health issues including sleep disorders and TMJ (temporomandibular joint dysfunction), and the opportunity for other niches including geriatric dentistry and serving those with developmental disabilities.

"There's something for everyone," he says.

According to Herre, the profession is always changing because of generational shifts and preferences. All his life, he's had a front-row seat to this evolution. His father, Bill Herre (DDS '53), was a dentist and the founder of their family's practice, and now his son, Tim Herre (DDS '08) is a dentist in the practice.

Most of today's dentists are Generation X with large numbers of millennials and Generation Z becoming dentists, Craig Herre says. Everything from how appointments are made to patient billing to service expectations is much different from what's typical of baby boomers, who are retiring. So much of this is due to technology.

For example, Grant Olson, (DDS '11) owner of Innovative Dental in



Online or in person, dental education carries on.

Springfield, Missouri, specializes in same-day dentistry.

With dental restorations, it often takes a few weeks for them to be made, as well as a few patient visits with trays of impressions, sending them to a lab to be made and fitted.

Instead, Olson uses CEREC or chair-side economical restoration of esthetic ceramic. This is a system that uses CAD and CAM — computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing — to fabricate dental restorations including crowns, inlays, fixed bridges, veneers, implants, dentures and orthodontic appliances. Olson's practice has six mills in the office.

"A patient can be in and out of here within an hour with a new crown, a new smile within the day," Olson says. "We have a lot of patients come in from out of town so this is convenient for them and the precision of the technology is more accurate and makes for a better restoration."

Most labs still do it the weeks-long way, he says. But now this type of digital dentistry is part of the education UMKC is delivering through its dental school.

"Technologies continue to advance," Olson says. "And the school is on top of that."

### A new way to secure the future

Brett Ferguson wanted to give back to the UMKC School of Dentistry. A graduate in 1981, today Ferguson is

chairman of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Truman Medical Centers, a past chair on the Rinehart Foundation Board and past president of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. And he is a proud School of Dentistry donor.

"What I wanted to accomplish was to give back and make sure somebody gets the opportunity to do something that I've done," he says. "I needed to find a way to give financial support to those entities that I care about."

Estate giving, by way of a life insurance policy, was his answer.

After calling his insurance company and explaining what he wanted to do, he learned he could do it through a life insurance policy.

"A policy wasn't that expensive and I could write it off," Ferguson says. "It's a great way for alumni donors to give because it doesn't really hurt but yet they can see what they are doing. It was very, very easy to do, and to get tax benefits on top of being able to provide for those you want to support, it was a no brainer."

As the school adapts to meet the changes in both the dental industry and the educational programming needed to prepare future dental professionals, support from its alumni becomes even more important.

Ferguson knows this well and encourages others to "find out what the school is trying to accomplish and in some aspect get involved. Keeping a strong line of attachment with the School of Dentistry is what we are trying to build." He advises to start small, create a connection and then ultimately move to talking about legacy gifts. "That is a good way to build up your corpus over time," he says.

### 'An awesome opportunity'

As you all know, the UMKC School of Dentistry has a great reputation. Starting when he was a kid in a dental chair in Western Kansas, Interim Dean Melchert grew up knowing about the school because his dentist was an alumnus.

So when Melchert started as dean at

the UMKC School of Pharmacy 11 years ago, he sought out the clinic for his dental care.

"I recommend it to everybody," says Melchert, who began his interim position in September following the retirement of Marsha Pyle, who had served as dean since 2009. A national search for the new dean of the UMKC School of Dentistry began in November.

"What an awesome opportunity for someone to lead a place that is known locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally for its research," Melchert says.

Founded in 1881 as the Kansas City Dental College, the UMKC School of Dentistry is the only public dental school in Missouri and Kansas, and most of the oral health professionals in those states are alumni.

The school also has a large alumni base across the ocean in Hawaii that dates back to World War II, when much of the United States was seized with fear of Americans of Japanese descent; the dean at the time took a different path and welcomed Japanese-American students with open arms. In 2016, the school was one of only three dental schools in the country to be recognized with a Health Professions

Health grants and attention from media around the country and the globe for its research in dental biomaterials and bone biology.

Like few others in the country, its learning environment is uniquely positioned as well. The UMKC School of Dentistry is part of the UMKC Health Sciences District, collaborating with the UMKC Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Studies, and Pharmacy, as well as Children's Mercy, Truman Medical Centers and city, county and state health institutions.

"The UMKC School of Dentistry is a huge asset to the Kansas City community, delivering clinical care to more than 65,000 patients each year," says UMKC Provost Jenny Lundgren. "We're looking for strong candidates who can build on the enormous impact of this more-than-century-old institution and continue to move the dental profession into the future through compassion, education and innovation."

Lundgren says the search committee also will be looking for a dean who can build on community engagement and fundraising. In 2019, the school opened a new state-of-the-

*"The UMKC School of Dentistry is a huge asset to the Kansas City community, delivering clinical care to more than 65,000 patients each year."*

— JENNIFER LUNDGREN, Ph.D.

Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education.

The UMKC School of Dentistry is known around the world for its research, consistently winning significant National Institutes of

art simulation lab funded through donor support, largely from alumni.

The next dean of the UMKC School of Dentistry is expected to be hired in the spring with an anticipated start in the summer of 2021.

"It's going to attract some of the best candidates in the country," Melchert says. "That's exciting!" ■



# Connecting and Caring

Faith, gratitude lead to unique careers and a focus on serving

By GREG HACK

Dakin and his wife, Karen, with a tribal king they befriended in Nairobi.

Alumni of the UMKC School of Dentistry share a passion for excellent patient care, but that can play out along many different paths, from private practices and community clinics to research and academia, and from military service to missions overseas. Here's a look at two alumni whose unique practices flowed from their faith and from living out the school's dedication to service to society.

## 'To make things better'

Rob Dakin (DDS '83) still recalls his "very adventurous initiation" into mission work, bringing dental aid to Albania in the early 1990s after the Communist government there collapsed.

"We flew in to remote mountain

villages in the northern Balkan Alps by helicopter," he said. "It really emboldened me to be able to go into other very remote and potentially dangerous places."

In 26 years of taking his dental practice overseas, Dakin has returned to Albania 19 times, along with trips to several other countries in Africa and Asia.

"I realized that there was a great unmet dental need among these people," he said. "I began going back to Albania during other times of the year to set up dental clinics in villages and Gypsy communities no matter how remote or secluded. This connection opened the doors to earthquake relief in Turkey, which encompassed six different trips in a year and a half.

I have been to Turkey nine times altogether. This got my name out there, so I was invited to set up clinics in orphanages and villages in Kazakhstan and Liberia. These led to teaching opportunities in Fiji, and Ontario, Canada."

Dakin also has had a practice in his native Wichita, Kansas for 36 years, which has helped finance his overseas work. He said he and his wife, Karen, share "a gift that comes with a burden."

"The gift is that we see the world full of people," Dakin said. "The burden is that we feel compelled to try to do what we can to make things better for them in whatever way we can, particularly through dentistry."

The Dakins also credit their Christian faith for leading them to be

generous and live humbly throughout their 44-year marriage.

Early in their marriage, the couple made a decision that would influence their life direction. "We decided that we would gauge our success not on how big our house was, or what kind of car we drove, or how much money we had in the bank, but rather on how significant we were in the lives of others," he said.

His interest in dentistry started early. His father was a dental lab technician and had a dentist friend who lived and worked in central Africa.

"This doctor would stay with our family any time he came back to the U.S.A. on furlough," Dakin said. "I was enamored with his stories and photos, as he was the only dentist in the bush of the Central African Republic." And after many years of hearing these accounts, "I decided I wanted to be a dentist when I was a junior in high school," he said.

After earning a biology degree at Wichita State, he was off to UMKC. "The School of Dentistry taught me the essentials, and gave me the confidence to practice and to continue to learn," Dakin said. "I still have many friends from those school days."

Besides his many trips to Albania, Dakin has worked extensively in the poverty-stricken Mathare Valley in Nairobi, Kenya, starting in 2009. He said he learned quickly that relief work needs to be immediate and temporary, so it will not foster dependence, and to enable communities to develop their own sustainable systems.

"I put together a detailed, step-by-step proposal on how to develop permanent, full-time health care in the Mathare Valley," he said. He presented that proposal to the Kenyan government's chief medical officer and chief dental officer, and it soon became reality.

He worked with many others, including U.S. dentists like himself, and they developed and built a clinic that is now staffed by Kenyan dentists.

"I most recently have set up clinics in the northeastern and northwestern



Their work in Africa required some interesting travel accommodations including landing on a dirt runway that needed camels run off before they could land.

regions of Kenya with the intent of developing permanent and full-time health care in those previously unserved areas," said Dakin, who has been to Kenya six times but had to put off two trips in 2020 because of COVID-19.

On other trips, he left what he calls "donkey-able" equipment — portable items you can pack on the back of a donkey and take anywhere — with local dentists so that they can carry on the work. "One dentist friend of mine who is a Kazakh has taken my equipment and done four dental missions of his own to Tajikistan. This is very gratifying."

Dakin also brings his volunteer efforts closer to home, where he serves as the vice president of the Kansas Dental Association and will serve as president in two years.

For Dakin, his overseas work has taught him a lot.

"I have learned the true meaning of hospitality, what unconditional love is, and what it means to be truly grateful," he said. "I have learned to depend on God, and I have learned to push through my fears and anxieties to get in among people and groups that are so totally different from my own."

And among his most important lessons? "Learning to love and call dear friends those who are of different cultures and religions," he said.

## Always ready to help

To say that J. Don Harris (DDS '64) has stories to tell is a bit like saying Safeway and Kroger have a few grocery stores.

There are stories of Harris starting clinics to help those in need, in both his native Oklahoma City and overseas. And then there's the story of Harris' first success treating a college football player and how it led to treating athletes from many teams and sports. There's even a story about his foray into the motion picture business.

The thread tying this unusual dental career together? A keen interest in virtually everyone he meets, and a desire to help those people any way he can. And Harris, 83, expects to keep collecting stories for years to come.

"I did finally sell my practice last year," he said, "but I still work two or three days a week at the Crossings Church's free clinic."

Accepting requests for help has been a hallmark of Harris' career. "The first



time was when a woman named Alice Kirk came to me and said she was starting a clinic and wanted me to be the dentist. I said I'd be glad to help, but didn't really expect to hear from her again."

But Kirk meant business. She was part of a growing social services network in Oklahoma City: the Neighborhood Service Organization, or NSO. She was back a few months later after securing a vacant building that needed rehabbing and equipping. Harris stepped up to help with those tasks and provided care. Soon, a free dental clinic was born.

Several years later, when the organization wanted to recognize his efforts, Harris got back in touch with Kirk and made sure she was recognized, too, for making the clinic a reality.

Over the years Harris helped with many church and community efforts, even traveling to Catacamas, Honduras, and mountainous outlying areas.

"We started with an abandoned school, and now they have a full hospital and surgical suite," Harris said. "I've been back three or four times."

His greatest outreach effort, however, began in 1986 in Oklahoma.

"Two of my daughters have developmental disabilities, so it was personal to me to start D-DENT: Dentists for the Disabled and Elderly Needing Treatment."

The non-profit organization has matched patients in need with 500 dentists throughout the state who donate their time. Over the years, Harris said, D-DENT volunteers have offered an estimated \$26 million in free care.

"I've been blessed and done my best to use the faith and skills God gave me," Harris said.

That included a natural ability to engage others. As he built his dental practice in Oklahoma City, he met his share of interesting and successful people who supported his community work.

"Whenever I attended a social function, I had a goal to get to know as many people as I could and to recruit at least two patients," Harris said. "I've taken care of several mayors and, being in the capital city, four governors over the years."

Such connections also led Harris to Barry Switzer, the University of Oklahoma Sooners football coach for 16 seasons, who called one day with a problem. "They were about to play Texas, the big rival for many years," Harris said. "Barry's kicker, Uwe von Schamann, had a terrible toothache and needed a dentist right away. I got the tooth drained and taken care of, and he was good by game time. I guess word got around after that."

Before long, more Sooners came to him for their dentistry, followed by pro golfers coming through town on tour, and players from the city's minor league hockey and baseball teams. His last regular work with a professional team was in the early 2000s, he said, with the



Whether it's in a clinic like this one in the mountain regions of Honduras or behind the scenes for the Oklahoma City Thunder, the common thread for Harris's career is connecting with people.

Oklahoma City Thunder in the National Basketball Association.

Sports dentistry might not provide the same workload of, say, being a National Football League team orthopedic surgeon or physician. But Harris, who played football in college, said it was enjoyable to be able to attend games and, in his Thunder job, rub shoulders with stars such as Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook.

Speaking of stars, Harris got to meet a few in a different field in the mid-1980s when he led Spectrum Cinema, a fledgling motion picture company. "The governor at that time, George Nigh, had wondered for years why we couldn't make some movies in Oklahoma and keep some of that Hollywood money here," Harris said. When several like-minded Oklahoma investors came together in 1986, Spectrum Cinema was born, with Harris at the helm.

Oklahoma and the movie business were not a great match, though, and the curtain came down on Spectrum after a few projects. But Harris added executive producer to his resume, working on Ruth Gordon's last movie,

Mugsy's Girls. "I also got to go to the Cannes Film Festival, which was something," he said.

Not bad for an Oklahoma boy who never expected to see the world. Or be a dentist, for that matter, until a local dentist's red sports car caught his eye. But that's another story.

"Dentistry has been a wonderful career for me," Harris said. "It opened a lot of doors for me, so I've always been ready to help." ■

## Greens for Green!

**AFTER BEING RESCHEDULED** from the original May date, golfers enjoyed fantastic weather and a fun, but safe, day of golf on Oct 1, a Thursday, at Shoal Creek Golf Course for the annual UMKC Dental Alumni Scholarship Golf Tournament. The 68 golfers and 11 hole sponsors enjoyed food, fun, putting contests, a few mulligans, and the new best dressed team prize.

The Alumni Scholarship Golf Tournament, now in its 20th year, has awarded more than \$260,000 in individual scholarships to UMKC School of Dentistry students. Thank you to the steering committee led once again by Dr. Joe Spalitto that included Dr. Chad Barth, Dr. Reese Graue and Dr. Michael McCunniff.

Thank you to all of the players and sponsors for a great day of golf, raising money for student scholarships! Don't miss out next year when we are back on a Friday.



## Alumni Virtual Game Night

**ALUMNI FROM CALIFORNIA**, Hawaii, Minnesota and of course closer to school all came together for a cut-throat game of virtual trivia on Oct. 14. There were five rounds of 10 trivia questions such as "What was the first toy advertised on TV?" and "What element is often referred to as quicksilver?" Each team had one minute to answer each question. Then teams had a chance for extra points from bonus questions about the School of Dentistry such as, "In how many U.S. states are there UMKC School of Dentistry alumni?" (The answer, by the way, is 49.) It was a close game, but only one team could reign supreme. The alumni of You Can't Handle the Tooth took all the glory (and prizes). It was a fun night and a great way to connect with alumni spread out across the country.

## In Memoriam

Dr. Edward G. Cantrell (DDS '88)  
 Dr. Bob E. Craven (DDS '65)  
 Dr. James V. Hall (DDS '64)  
 Dr. Dorwin E. Hawthorne (DDS '54)  
 Dr. John I. Hense (DDS '51)  
 Dr. Kirk C. Hoerman (DDS '47)  
 Dr. Mike A. Kippenberger (DDS '69)  
 Dr. Robert K. Klein (DDS '75)  
 Dr. Paul Dean Lambert (DDS '60)  
 Dr. Jacob Laudie (DDS '06)  
 Dr. Anthony W. Martin (DDS '65)  
 Dr. Jay F. Morris (DDS '66, PEDO '68)  
 Dr. Robert D. Pokorny (DDS '58)  
 Dr. Lonnie G. Prince (DDS '68)  
 Dr. Michael C. Reynolds (DDS '69)  
 Dr. C.E. Ricketts (DDS '78)  
 Dr. Ronald D. Sanders (DDS '57)  
 Dr. Norman A. Smith Jr. (DDS '81)



Class Notes

Classes of the 1960s

**J. Don Harris (DDS '64)** retired after 55 years of practice but reports that he is now working three days a week at Crossings Charity Clinic. He also retired from OKC County Board of Health, where he served for 50 years including as chairman of Partners in Public Health Foundation. He recently had the J. Don Harris Service Award named in his honor. He has retired from his team dentist role for the OKC Thunder and the Board of Directors of the Academy Professional Sports Dentistry. He received one of only eight Delta Dental Service Awards and founded D-DENT which has provided more than \$26.3 million in free dental care since 1985.

**James Elliott (DDS '66)** retired after 52 years of practice. He plays golf two to four times per week. He has a condo in Florida and spends three to four months a year there where he visits his four grandchildren. His wife, Judy, is still teaching Spanish for the University of Missouri's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

**Edward Read (DDS '66)** is retired and is working as a courier and playing racquetball.

Classes of the 1970s

**Robert Gillum (DDS '71)** retired in 2016 and now helps with child care and assists his son with building and remodeling houses.

**James Burke (DDS '72)** is a part-time associate clinical professor for the Department of Prosthodontics at the O.U. College of Dentistry.

**Ron Shrum (DDS '73)** has been retired since 2017. His family moved to Arizona in May of 2015 and he is happy in retirement spending quality time with family, working diligently on his golf game four or five days per week, and continuing exploration and painting with water colors.

Classes of the 1980s

All is well for **Floyd Tanoue (DDS '80)** after having practiced for 40 years. He continues to practice in Aiea, Hawaii, and has a daughter that is in her junior year at Creighton University School of Dentistry. She will join his practice when she graduates in 2022. He has a patient in the second-year class at the UMKC School of Dentistry. His son attends UNLV and hopes to enter its dental school in two years as he is currently a junior, majoring in biology.

**Daniel Kettelman (DDS '81)** is the director of the International Advanced Placement Program at Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine.

**Maria Kunstadter (DDS '81)** has four kids, two grandkids!

**Jerry Paz (DDS '81)** is keeping up with seven kids and 14 grandkids. He is enjoying being a grandparent with his wife, Barbara. He is preparing to retire to Lake of the Ozarks. He has been leading dental missions to Haiti since 1994.

**Joe Richardson (DDS '81)** retired after 39 years on June 30, 2020. He covers for the dentist who purchased his practice as needed. He also helps his wife at her health food store and chases his grandkids around when they are visiting from out-of-state.

**Richard Allinson (DDS '85)** started a job as assistant professor of restorative dentistry at A.T. Still University's Missouri School of Dentistry and Oral Health in Kirksville, Missouri, in July 2019.

**Mark Bentele (DDS '86)** retired from an Air Force career in 2007 and has been in private orthodontic practice in Colorado Springs since then. He is a member of the Children's Hospital Colorado Cleft Lip and Palate team, as well.

**Kenneth Frick (DDS '86)** is starting his ninth year as director of the Advanced Program in Endodontics.

**Mike Hawkins (DDS '86)** sold his practice in 2012 and fully retired in 2020. He enjoys the mountain lifestyle of Colorado and is waiting on grandchildren.

**Mark Herzog (DDS '86)** has been in private practice in Ellsworth since graduation.

**Kurt Kavanaugh (DDS '86)** is still working as an orthodontist in Kansas City. He has been married for 31 years and has three children: Tyler, 27; Matthew, 25; Molly, 20.

Classes of the 1990s

**Tressa (Bridges) Parkinson (DDS '96)** is teaching at the UMKC School of Dentistry.

Classes of the 2000s

**David Hart (DDS '06)** married Susan Kulakowski on Feb. 1, 2020.

Classes of the 2010s

**Adam McClellan (DDS '10, PERIO '12)** is enjoying his periodontal practices on both sides of the state line. He and his wife, Julia, are excited to welcome their first child — a little girl — in February. He is trying to play as much golf as he can, while he can.

**Cyndi Blalock (DDS '11)** is raising two kids and building a business! She is doing general dentistry and treating lip and tongue tie with laser. She enjoys serving mothers and babies and says they are such an amazing population of people. She is proud to empower mothers and help the tiniest patients in her practice. She and her husband treat oral facial pain patients together in the office they share. They have built a multidisciplinary practice and enjoy working together.

**Kyle Shull (DDS '11)** opened his own practice in Columbia, Missouri, in 2018 (Bear Creek Family Dental). In 2019, he was awarded the Fellowship in the Academy of General Dentistry (FAGD). He and his wife have three wonderful children, ages 6, 4, and 1.



Marsha Pyle, DDS, MEd

Dean Pyle Leaves Lasting Legacy

**SHORTLY AFTER** the opening of the School of Dentistry's state-of-the-art Pre-clinical Lab in 2019, Marsha Pyle, DDS, MEd, announced she would be stepping down as dean in 2020. She had spent nearly 12 years leading the dental school and securing its reputation as a leading academic program.

Rather than coast to retirement, however, Pyle oversaw multiple challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, which forced the closure of almost all school facilities in March. Pyle and her team worked tirelessly to shift classes online, shut down the school's dental clinics, revamp them with new safety equipment and procedures, and then reopen slowly and carefully.

At the same time, Pyle and her team made sure that the classes of 2020 would graduate on time, despite not being able to screen patients in anticipation of impending dental licensure board exams.

Making the Pre-clinic Lab a reality, navigating the pandemic and graduating the classes of 2020 were quite a trifecta to cap a career.

"I remain impressed by the level of education, research and service that we provide, daily by those who thoroughly love what they do," Pyle said.

Masks Can't Hide Excitement at Orientation

**THE SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY** held orientation sessions August 19-21, complete with masks and a review of extensive pandemic safety precautions, that certainly looked different from years past. But that didn't keep the new dental and dental hygiene students from bringing the same focus, enthusiasm and desire for learning.

Cole Daniel, one of the 109 members of the Dentistry Class of 2024, is from Little Rock, Arkansas, and earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Arkansas. But he said he came to UMKC because "it felt like home."

"From the interview to communicating with the admissions office I knew that UMKC would take care of me as a student," Daniel said. "The emphasis on being a great clinical school was also really important to me."

Daniel, who has several family members in dentistry, added, "I truly think it is a career that has everything you could ask for. Every day you get to see a tangible difference you made in someone's life, work with your hands and make a good living."

At UMKC they also have the one dental hygiene program in the Kansas City area that offers a full bachelor's degree. That was one factor in Shannon

Finneran's choice of UMKC, along with the school's "tremendous reputation and challenging academics."

Finneran moved to Kansas City from Illinois four years ago and completed her preliminary classes at UMKC, in addition to working as a dental assistant for three years.

"The hands-on experiences that I gained have renewed my passion for dental hygiene and solidified that I am meant to be a dental hygienist," Finneran said. "I thoroughly enjoy direct patient care. I want to be able to educate future patients on the importance of oral health for whole body wellness."

Starting their School of Dentistry education during a pandemic wasn't what the new classes originally had in mind. But with the school's extensive preparation and precautions making a good impression, students said they were both excited and reassured.

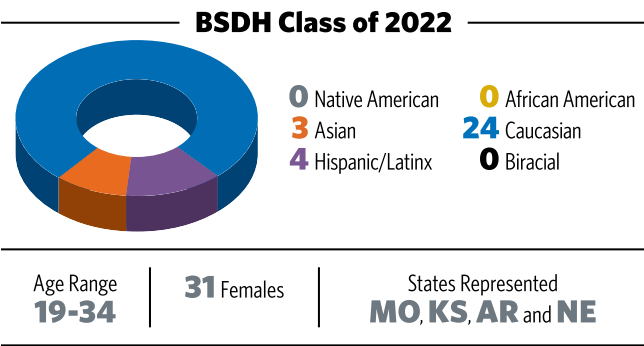
"It is definitely a weird time to be starting dental school ... a unique experience," Daniel said. "But all you can control is your attitude and respond to the situation you are given. I think UMKC is doing everything that can be done to prepare us and make this unusual time be as seamless as possible."



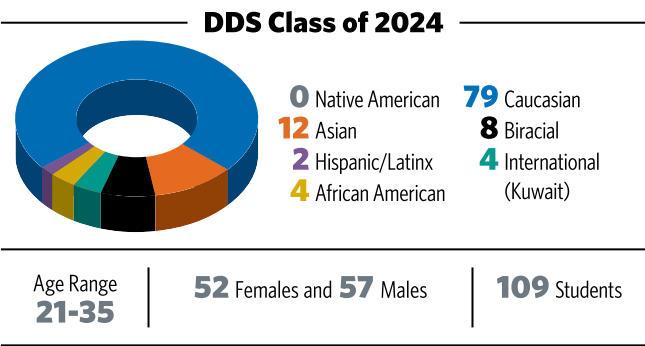
An eager student participates in this year's unique orientation experience.



Welcome Our Incoming Classes and See How They Stack Up!



Average SGPA: 3.5  
Average Cum GPA: 3.54



Average SGPA: 3.72  
DAT Average: 20.25 DAT

Legacy Students

THE SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY is proud to have many multigenerational families and realizes success comes in part from its rich history, with roots stretching back to 1881. Here are the legacy students from the DDS Class of 2024 and DH Class of 2022.

**Fares Alsafar:** Dr. Anwar Albanna, father's cousin (DDS '99)

**Piyom Aramoon:** Dr. Sophia Aramoon, sibling (DDS '18) Fatema Behbahani: Dr. Faraj Behbehani, cousin (DDS '96); Dr. Alaa Jamal, cousin (DDS '98); Mohammad Behbehani, cousin (DDS '20); Raghad Behbehani, cousin (DDS Class of 2021); Jumanah Behbehani, cousin (DDS Class of 2022)

**Collin Brant:** Dr. Dale Brant, father (DDS '88)

**John Burnett:** Dr. Bradley Burnett, father (DDS '93)

**Van Hopkins:** Dr. George Hopkins, grandfather (DDS '53)

**Riley Katsev:** Dr. Mike Katsev, father (DDS '86); Dr. Tracey Katsev, mother (DDS '86); Dr. Emily Franke, cousin (DDS '13)

**Annemarie LaBarca:** Dr. John LaBarca, father (DDS '94)

**Angela Marulanda:** Dr. Nidya De LaTorre, aunt (DDS '08)

**Connor Massey:** Dr. Mark Massey, father (DDS '95)

**Mollie Maupin:** Dr. Matt Niewald, cousin (DDS '01); Dr. David Mattingly, cousin's husband (DDS '10); Dr. Emily Mattingly, cousin (DDS '12)

**Alameen Nuru:** Dr. Mohammed Nuru, sibling (DDS '19)

**Zachary Ortinau:** Dr. Mark Ortinau, cousin (DDS '74)

**Hannah Ragsdale:** Rachel Ragsdale, sister (DDS '20)

**Lauren Reynolds:** Dr. Wendy Reynolds, mother (DDS '95); Jewel Frankebery, grandparent (DH '64)

**Nolan Sachse:** Dr. Michael Abels, uncle (DDS '83)

**Ashley Sankey:** Dr. Nealy Newkirk, aunt (DDS '05)

**Andrew Sheehy:** Tara Sheehy Craven, cousin (DDS Class of 2021)

**Saxon Teubner:** Dr. Daniel Teubner, father (DDS '85); Glenn Teubner, sibling (DDS Class of 2022)

**Jay Trivedi:** Vaidehi Trivedi, sibling (DDS '20)

**Matthew Wahle:** Dr. John Wahle, father (DDS '87)

**Allison Weber:** Dr. Jordan Weber, sibling (DDS '19)



Students were all smiles behind the masks at this year's ceremony.

A Different Look but Still a Cause for Celebration as Students Transition into the Profession

THE LOOK WAS different but the purpose was the same at this year's Transitioning Into the Profession Ceremony. The Dental Surgery Class of 2022 and Dental Hygiene Class of 2021 were welcomed to the clinical phase of their educational programs Sept. 18.

As with many things in education during the pandemic, the ceremony was a hybrid affair. The class members got their white coats in person at the School of Dentistry — in appropriately small groups, with masks and distancing. And their families, friends, faculty and staff were able to see them and celebrate them online.

The DDS class members were split into three groups and the DH students were a fourth group. Each group had its own ceremony, at which DDS students received their white coat and DH students their scrubs. Each student also was able to have a portrait taken without a mask.

The ceremony included remarks by interim Dean Russ Melchert, who praised the students' efforts and advancement. He also spoke of the importance of professionalism, noting that star athletes often display it — as do health care professionals such as Anthony Fauci, M.D., director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Faculty Appointments



**Tanya Villalpando Mitchell** (DH '95, MS '01), RDH, MS, professor and director of Graduate Studies, Division of Dental Hygiene, has been appointed to a two year term as the Chair of the Division of Dental Hygiene.



**Dr. Bhavika Thakkar**, clinical associate professor, Department of Restorative Clinical Sciences, has been appointed interim assistant director of the Advanced Education in General Dentistry program.



**Dr. R. Scott Conley**, associate professor, Department of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics, has been appointed director of the Advanced Education in Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics Program.

Paying Tribute to Retirees with Nearly 100 Years of Combined Service to the School

THE UMKC SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY faculty, staff and students shared a virtual farewell with Dean Marsha Pyle and six others who are retiring with nearly 100 years of combined service to the school. Colleagues paid tribute to Dean Pyle, who is leaving after almost 12 years at the helm, and these others:

**Dr. Sharon Furby (20 years)**  
Clinical Associate Professor  
Restorative Clinical Sciences

**Ms. Mona Jarman (17 years)**  
Dental Assistant II  
Dental Clinic

**Ms. Babs Landess (8 years)**  
Office Support Assistant IV  
(Patient Accounts),  
Dental Clinic

**Ms. Joy Neumann (10 years)**  
Dental Assistant II  
Advanced Education in General Dentistry

**Dr. Gerald Ogilvie (DDS '73) (7 years)**  
Clinical Assistant Professor  
Advanced Education in General Dentistry/  
Restorative Clinical Sciences

**Mr. John Pinkston (25 years)**  
Senior Research Assistant  
Oral & Craniofacial Sciences





Contour magazine

UMKC Dental Students Featured in Contour Magazine

THE AUGUST 2020 issue of ASDA Contour Magazine featured articles from the following students:

- How to Vote as an Out-of-State Student (p. 10) – Kika Masunaga, DDS Class of 2021

- Life-Changing Dental Care for Kids: TeamSmile (p. 14) – Geoff Kerns, DDS Class of 2021
- 5 Steps for Success for Running Your First Race (p. 36) – Alyssa Kieschnick, DDS, Class of 2021, District 8 Wellness Chair
- Book Review: “This is Your Brain on Sports” (p. 44) – Brianne Schmiegelow, DDS Class of 2021, Contour Contributing Editorial Board



Kika Masunaga



Geoff Kerns



Alyssa Kieschnick



Brianne Schmiegelow

UMKC School of Dentistry Predoctoral Periodontics Study Club Goes Virtual

THE UMKC SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY Predoctoral Periodontics Study Club hosted its first-ever virtual presentation, titled “Periodontal and Peri-implant Plastic Surgery,” with guest lecturer Dr. Lorenzo Tavelli, DDS, MS, on Oct. 7. Tavelli graduated from the University of Milan in 2017 and completed his three-year residency in periodontics and his master of science degree in 2020 at the University of Michigan. His main focus has been to conduct clinical research in periodontal and peri-implant plastic surgery, publishing more than 50 scholarly publications in international peer-reviewed journals and receiving several research awards. In July 2020, Tavelli joined the Department of Periodontics and Oral Medicine at the University of Michigan as a clinical lecturer.

Faculty News of Note



Timothy Cox, PhD

DR. TIMOTHY COX, professor and endowed chair in Dental & Mineralized Tissue Research, Department of Oral and Craniofacial Sciences, is an author on four publications:

**Nature:** Microcomputed tomography of craniofacial mineralized tissue: A practical user’s guide to study planning and generating quality data. Cox, T.C. (2020).

**BONE** (Invited review) doi: 10.1016/j.bone. Effects of multi-generational soft diet consumption on mouse craniofacial morphology. Hassan, M.G., Kaler, H., Zhang, B., Cox, T.C., Young, N. & Jheon, A.H. (2020)

**Frontiers in Physiology (Craniofacial Biology & Dental Research).** doi:10.3389/fphys.2020.00783. A synonymous exonic splice silencer variant in IRF6 as a novel and cryptic cause of non-syndromic cleft lip and palate. Sylvester, B., Brindopke, F... Cox, T.C...(9 authors contributed equally) (2020)

**Genes (Special Issue: Molecular Genetics of Facial Traits & Malformations)** doi:10.3390/genes11080903a. A survey of spiking activity reveals a functional hierarchy of mouse cortical and thalamic visual. Siegle, J.H...Cox, T.C...(90 authors contributed equally) (2020). Nature (accepted Aug. 31, 2020).

Also in the Cox Lab, Dr. SOUMYA RAO, postdoctoral fellow attended the 61st McKusick Short Course on Human and Mammalian Genetics and Genomics, which this year was held virtually July 20-30, 2020. Dr. Li Qin Zhang, research associate, joined the Cox Lab on Sept. 1. She was previously an NTT research associate professor in the School of Medicine.

Save the date for these upcoming alumni events

- Royals Opening Day  
Thursday, April 1, 2021
- Midwest Dental Conference and Alumni Class Reunions  
April 15-18, 2021
- Rinehart and Dental Alumni Board meetings  
Thursday, April 15, 2021
- Pouring from the Heart  
Thursday, April 15, 2021



For more information about alumni events and news, visit [dentistry.umkc.edu/alumni](http://dentistry.umkc.edu/alumni). You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

CARRYING ON CONTINUING EDUCATION IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

Because of COVID-19, we have made the difficult decision to cancel all in-person courses for the remainder of 2020, with the intention to begin our in-person courses again in 2021. We are working on setting up new dates and times for each in-person course, keeping in mind the safety of all attendees. We will be updating the courses on our **Continuing Education website** as dates are confirmed: <http://bit.ly/UMKCCE2021>

In the meantime, you can join us virtually for the following webinar, which has two available dates:

SPANISH FOR THE DENTAL PROFESSIONAL: Education and Dental Emergencies Webinar  
Nicole Montiel, LDH, Founder and CEO of ¡Anda! Language Solutions

<b>DATE</b> Dec. 1, 2020 or Dec. 12, 2020	<b>LOCATION</b> Done online via Ring Central webinar. Link to webinar will be sent out upon registration.	<b>TUITION</b> \$150	<b>REGISTER ONLINE AT</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/UMKCCE2021">http://bit.ly/UMKCCE2021</a>
<b>TIME</b> 7 PM – 8:30 PM or 9 AM – 10:30 AM Central	<b>COURSE NUMBER</b> 20121	<b>CREDITS</b> 3 ADA-Recognized hours	
		<b>AUDIENCE</b> Dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants	







University of Missouri-Kansas City  
School of Dentistry  
Office of Alumni and Advancement  
650 E. 25th St.  
Kansas City, MO 64108-2784

**SAVE** *the Date*



**MDC** '21

**MIDWEST DENTAL CONFERENCE**

**Kansas City  
Missouri**

**April  
15-18**

