Happy Holidays from Iowa!

On behalf of the entire department, best wishes for a healthy, happy new year! I would like to share transitions and achievements in 2016 that highlight the talents of our faculty and residents. I hope you will enjoy reading about the people who are shaping our future and knowing that they are setting the stage to welcome 2017 with outstanding possibilities.

Warmest wishes, Georgia

Effective July 1, 2016, Gustavo Avila-Ortiz, DDS, MS, PhD, Associate Professor, assumed the helm as the new Director of the Advanced Education Program in Periodontics. Dr. Avila joined our department in 2011. He was previously faculty member at the University of Michigan where he received his Periodontics Certificate and MS in 2009. Dr. Avila’s clinical research is focused on implant site development and is supported by multiple industrial grants. His research has led to over 50 publications in textbooks and journals. In 2015 he was a lead author in the American Academy of Periodontology Regenerative Workshop. He is a popular speaker at national and international meetings and is also a past recipient of the American Academy of Periodontology Teaching Fellowship. Gustavo and his wife, Irene, are proud parents of two beautiful daughters, Maria and Sofia.

Over the past decade, we have appreciated Dr. Lewis Humbert’s outstanding leadership and organizational skills as the Residency Program Director. On July 1, he reduced his appointment to half time. He has brought strong clinical experience with 30 years of Air Force experience to the program, and his expertise and leadership leaves a lasting positive impact. His door has always been open, and he has offered countless words of wisdom to our residents and has truly been their advocate. We are fortunate that he continues to teach in both the predoctoral and postdoctoral programs.

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Spotlight on New Faculty

The Department welcomed Dr. Theo Katsaros as a new Clinical Assistant Professor on August 31, 2016. Dr. Katsaros completed his DDS degree (2008) at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Following graduation, he served five years in the Greek army and practiced general dentistry prior to specializing in periodontics. He completed his MS and Certificate in Periodontics at Louisiana State University in New Orleans, LA in June 2016. His background in general dentistry is an asset, and he brings a fresh perspective to our predoctoral and postdoctoral programs.

New Visiting Faculty

In August, Dr. Leandro Chambrone, a periodontist from Brazil and a world renowned expert on mucogingival surgery and evidence-based dentistry, became a Visiting Assistant Professor. He lectured on evidenced based dentistry and gave a seminar on the application of different root coverage procedures based on contemporary evidence and clinical expertise. He was the lead author on the 2015 AAP Regenerative Workshop review on soft tissue grafting.

Meet Our New Residents

At the end of June, we welcomed our new Class of 2019 residents, Dr. Joseph Ballatore (DDS '16 University of Connecticut), left, and Dr. Nicholas Salava (DDS '16 A.T. Still). We look forward to seeing the contributions of Joseph and Nick to our specialty.

Congratulations, 2016 Graduates!

In June 2016, Dr. Christopher Hutton and Dr. Vrushali Abhyankar successfully defended their MS Theses. Dr. Hutton’s thesis was, “Comparison of Two Different Surgical Approaches to Increase Peri-implant Mucosa Thickness: A Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial”. His mentor was Dr. Gustavo Avila-Ortiz. Chris and his wife, Whitney, have established themselves in Milwaukee, WI where Chris has purchased a practice, and Whitney is a nurse. They are proud parents of a new baby girl, Shelby.

Dr. Abhyankar’s thesis was entitled, “The Chemokine and Cytokine Response of a Keratinocyte, Dendritic Cell, and T-cell Co-culture Model Treated with Porphyromonas gingivalis Hemagglutinin B”. Her mentor was Dr. Kim Brogden. Vrushali is moving to Houston, TX where she will be an associate in private practice. Vrushali and her husband, Pavan, have two young girls. Her husband will continue his position as a chief marine engineer.

Staff Changes

This summer, we honored Kyla Miletich, dental assistant, and Mary Bruning –Anderson, dental hygienist, for their outstanding service to our patients and practitioners. They are enjoying more time with their families. Kristal Cookman, RDH, joined our team late August, and Kelsey Fisk, CDA, started in November. They will both be assets to our programs.
2016 Leadership in Periodontics

Midwest Society of Periodontontology
In February 2016, Dr. Paula Weistroffer was installed as the President of the Midwest Society of Periodontology. She completed her term as Vice-President and has been active in the Society for the past several years. Dr. Weistroffer is also our D3 Clerkship Director. Adjunct faculty member, Dr. Mike Franzman, is the 2017 Program Chair, and Dr. Gustavo Avila-Ortiz serves on the Council. The MSP meeting in February offers world class speakers in a great venue.

Editorial Appointment
Dr. Satheesh Elangovan has been appointed Associate Editor of Newman and Carranza’s Clinical Periodontology, 13th edition, planned for 2018 release by Elsevier. This textbook is the most popular resource utilized nationally and internationally in predoctoral periodontal education and is the recommended text for our dental students.

Osteology Expert Council Election
Dr. Gustavo Avila-Ortiz was elected as a member of the Osteology Expert Council by the Osteology Foundation. He played an important role in the publication of Osteology Guidelines for Clinical Research and the development of the Osteology on line community platform, the Box, which was launched this spring. This platform contains tools designed to enable practitioners, researchers and educators to connect, share information and learn all together.: http://box.osteology.org/

Congratulations to Recent Diplomates
Congratulations to Drs. Chris Poulsen (Iowa 2014) Mitch Gubler (Iowa 2015) and Katie Smith (Iowa 2015) on the successful completion of Board Certification in Periodontics in May 2016. We are proud of their achievement of this outstanding career milestone! 100% of our graduates in the past five years have become Diplomates!

Graduate Student Research Project Updates
In addition to their Periodontics Certificates, all of our residents are working towards M.S. degrees in Oral Science. Their projects are studying wound healing post extraction and novel regenerative approaches.

Third year resident, Dr. Kelsey Tengan, is a co-investigator on a randomized clinical trial evaluating ridge preservation using Guidor Easy-Graft® Classic. Dr. Gustavo Avila-Ortiz received a $107,000 grant from Sunstar Americas (Schaumburg, IL, USA) to support this project.

Dr. Sarah Rinehart, 3rd year, is determining the impact of periodontal phenotype on post extraction volumetric changes in the alveolar ridge as assessed by CBCT images and digitized models.

Dr. Marian Antonius’ (2nd year) project is conducting a case series to study the combination of a mineralized/demineralized bone allograft in combination with a dense ePTFE membrane on healing of extraction sites with buccal dehiscences. Sarah and Marian are mentored by Dr. Avila-Ortiz.

Dr. Robert Swenson, (2nd year) mentored by Dr. Kim Brogden, is evaluating cell proliferation and cytokine release in response to 3-D bioprinting of hydrogels.
Thank you for your support!

The generous support provided by alumni has advanced our programs in many ways. We appreciate your donations which helped fund the modern facilities we now occupy and your contributions to Foundation funds designed to support program improvements and residency scholarships. We also value the contribution of time and expertise that alumni provide by serving as adjunct faculty members.

Our heartfelt thank you for your investment in the future of our specialty!

University of Iowa Department of Periodontics