Dr. William Giannobile Named New Dean of HSDM
Give Kids a Smile Highlight

At HSDM’s annual Give Kids a Smile event in February, nearly 40 children ages one to 17 were seen for dental exams, cleanings, and treatment. The event was organized by predoctoral students Emily Chen, DMD 21, Jennifer Lee, DMD21, Ethan Tan, DMD22, Ruchika Agrawal, DMD22, Jessica Murphree, DMD23, and Alisha Nanji, DMD23.
Dear Alumni and Friends,

As I write, it’s been nearly two months since Harvard University and Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM) took unprecedented measures to protect the health and safety of our community and those around us from the threat of coronavirus (COVID-19). We shifted to online teaching and learning, ramped down our research labs, and transitioned the Harvard Dental Center to emergency care only. Our students, faculty, and staff have been resourceful and resilient in adapting to the new HSDM; you can learn about our response in this issue. In the days ahead we hope to share what the path forward will look like for HSDM.

A bright spot in the School’s future will surely be the leadership of our new dean, William Giannobile, DMSc96, PD96. An educator and leader in the field of periodontology and an internationally recognized scholar, Will was named dean of HSDM in April. As an alumnus who is familiar with the HSDM community, Will knows the School’s distinctive history and is well-poised to shape its future. I’m delighted to welcome him back to HSDM and to work with him when he joins us on September 1.

This is the time of year we celebrate our students and their accomplishments at Research Day, Commencement, and Class Day. While we can’t meet in person this year, we will connect and celebrate our students virtually. In this issue you can read about a team of HSDM students who are planning for a learning environment where video instruction supplements classroom instruction. Their inventive and timely idea has earned them a spot as semi-finalists in the 2020 President’s Innovation Challenge, a University-wide venture capital competition.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated community of alumni and friends who care about each other and the School. This spring we’ll miss seeing you in person at Alumni Day and Reunion, but hopefully it’s not long before we can all gather once again. We are a small school with a big heart. Let’s continue to look out for each other.

Vicki Rosen
Interim Dean
William Giannobile Named New Dean of Harvard School of Dental Medicine

William V. Giannobile, DMSc96, PD96, an educator and leader in the field of periodontology and an internationally recognized scholar in oral regenerative medicine, tissue engineering, and precision medicine, has been named dean of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. The appointment was announced April 23 by Harvard Medical School Dean George Q. Daley.

Giannobile is an alumnus of HSDM, with an advanced degree in periodontology and oral biology. He completed his postdoctoral training in molecular biology at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard Medical School (HMS). Giannobile served as an HSDM faculty member and worked at the affiliated Forsyth Institute early in his career.

Giannobile is the Najjar Endowed Professor and Chair of the Department of Periodontics and Oral Medicine at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry. He has served as chair of the department for the past eight years and is also a professor of biomedical engineering in the University’s College of Engineering.

“I am thrilled to welcome Will back to the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and the Longwood Medical Area,” said Daley. “Having roots in our community and experience as a passionate and productive leader of a major department at a premier dental school make him perfectly suited to take the helm at HSDM during this unprecedented time. Our medical and dental schools are inextricably linked, and I look forward to Will’s partnership toward our shared mission of improving health for all through education, research, and service.”

Giannobile will assume the role of HSDM dean on September 1, succeeding Bruce R. Donoff, DMD67, MD73, who stepped down at the end of 2019 after serving 28 years in the post.

“The Harvard School of Dental Medicine is an extraordinary institution with a remarkable history of
advancing research and education in service to humanity,” said Harvard President Larry Bacow. “We are so pleased to welcome Will Giannobile, a leader who will help to ensure the School’s continued success as we seek more opportunities to support and expand the work of the University’s diversely talented biomedical community.”

As HSDM’s dean, Giannobile will advance the School’s predoctoral and postdoctoral educational programs, transform clinical care, and further enhance HSDM’s reputation as a renowned leader in research and dental education. He will work closely with Dean Daley and other Harvard University leaders, as well as affiliated hospitals, institutions, and community clinics to advance HSDM’s mission.

“The Harvard School of Dental Medicine is a pillar of the Harvard life-sciences ecosystem, integrating oral health with medicine. It has deep connections within the Longwood community and throughout the University,” said Harvard Provost Alan Garber. “Will Giannobile, with his wide-ranging accomplishments as a scholar, leader, teacher, and practitioner, is uniquely suited to head a school whose approach to dental health draws heavily on medicine, bioengineering, and public health. He brings to the role a deep set of relevant experiences and a longstanding commitment to the field of dental education. I am confident that under his leadership HSDM will augment the strengths of the broader Harvard community.”

“I feel honored to continue building on the legacy of outstanding leadership at Harvard.”

—Dr. William Giannobile

“I am so appreciative of President Bacow, Provost Garber, and HMS Dean Daley for this incredible opportunity to serve the HSDM community as the new dean,” Giannobile said. “The tradition of excellence of the School as a leader in global education, research, clinical care, and societal impact creates exciting new avenues of interactions with our diverse array of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends. The Longwood Medical Area and fruitful partnerships with the Medical School and affiliates create opportunities for collaboration to promote science, innovation, and education.”

Giannobile brings an extensive scientific background to the role. At the University of Michigan, he leads a laboratory that explores methods for growth factor delivery, such as gene therapy, for restoring periodontal tissue loss. His continuously-funded National Institutes of Health (NIH) research program focuses on oral and periodontal regenerative medicine, tissue engineering, and personalized medicine. He also serves as the co-principal investigator of the NIH-funded Michigan-Pittsburgh-Wyss Regenerative Medicine Resource Center. Additionally, he is the former editor-in-chief of the Journal of Dental Research, the official journal of the International Association for Dental Research.

“Will Giannobile is that rare clinician-scientist who excels in both the science and practice of dentistry. His distinctive scientific accomplishments, combined with his strong leadership experience and reputation at Michigan, across the U.S., and throughout the world, ideally prepare him to lead a distinguished school of dental medicine like Harvard.”

—Dr. Laurie McCauley, Dean
University of Michigan School of Dentistry

Giannobile has been recognized for his teaching and research with several accolades. In 2003, he received the Henry Russel, Jr. Faculty Award for Excellence in Research and Teaching from the University of Michigan. He is also a recipient of the Distinguished Scientist Award from the Academy of Periodontology. In 2018, he was recognized with the American Dental Association’s Norton M. Ross Award for Excellence in Clinical Research.

In announcing Giannobile’s appointment, Dean Daley expressed gratitude to the search committee and to those in the HSDM community who contributed their valuable input to the process. He also thanked Vicki Rosen, co-chair of the committee, and interim HSDM dean.

“I’m delighted to welcome Will as the new dean of HSDM. I know he will bring an exciting new vision to HSDM,” said Rosen. “As an alumnus who is familiar with the HSDM community, he knows the School’s distinctive history and is well-poised to shape its future. I’m looking forward to working with him in the months ahead.”

The new dean takes the helm at a time when HSDM will enroll its most diverse predoctoral class in recent history. An important focus of the School is to advance diversity, inclusion, and belonging, and encourage those underrepresented in health care to consider careers in dentistry.

“Dr. Giannobile arrives at the School of Dental Medicine with a strong reputation for supporting the entry and advancement of diverse students, trainees, faculty, and staff,” said Joan Reede, HMS dean for diversity and community partnership. “I extend a warm welcome and look forward to future collaborations between HSDM and the Office for Diversity Inclusion and Community Partnership that bring us closer to actualizing our shared missions and values.”

An important goal of mine will be to help support our amazing students for their success during their time of attending one of the very best institutions for dental education and oral health research in the world,” said Giannobile.
Dental Education in a Time of COVID-19

In early March 2020, Harvard University and Harvard School of Dental Medicine began closely monitoring the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. As the situation changed rapidly, the top priority remained the health, safety, and well-being of students, faculty and staff, on and off campus.

The School began working on several contingency scenarios and taking decisive, informed action to limit the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring the continuity of teaching, research and patient care. These efforts involved rapidly moving to virtual learning, ramping down research labs, limiting patient care, and moving to a remote workforce.

Providing Care in a Crisis

By March 16, the Harvard Dental Center halted all clinical services except dental emergencies for existing patients. The number of faculty, staff, and students handling emergency services was cut back, with very few students assigned to the emergency rotation. This dramatically reduced the clinic caseload, which went from seeing 200 patients a day to just a nominal number for urgent care.

The scale-back was aimed at protecting students, faculty and staff from exposure, while keeping emergency dental treatment going to ease the expected strain on hospitals and the health system in the coming weeks.

“As health systems will be challenged and tested in the coming weeks (or months), lack of access to dental emergencies treatment will only make it worse for both the hospitals and patients with true dental emergencies,” said German Gallucci, Raymond J. and Elva Pomfret Nagle Associate Professor of Restorative Dentistry and Biomaterials Sciences and executive director of the Harvard Dental Center.

“The best way the dental community can help mitigate this global health crisis is by keeping a minimal service for urgent dental care. We should take care of our own emergencies without adding additional stress to the soon-to-be overloaded health system by being available for the ones who really need us,” he said.
“Seeing everyone’s face on the Zoom screen, is both reassuring and it helps maintain a sense of community.”

—Dr. Samuel Coffin

The Harvard Dental Center also began seeing patients virtually through on-call/offsite tele-dentistry staffed by faculty and advanced graduate education students.

Jennifer Gibbs, director of the Division of Endodontics, said, “This could be our new normal for an extended period of time. Even when the spread of the coronavirus is under control, we will have to learn how to practice with this disease among us.”

**Learning Curve**

As all Harvard students were asked to move off-campus, instructors had to quickly redesign courses to move class online. For HSDM, this meant deferring practical sessions until students could have access to facilities where they could take radiographs and intra-oral photographs and practice oral exam techniques. Regular meetings and advising turned virtual with online sessions and small tutorials on Zoom and Facetime, and faculty took creative approaches to teaching their courses.

“I teach in the HMS course: Practice of Medicine (POM),” said Samuel Coffin, an instructor in Restorative Dentistry and Biomaterials Sciences. “We brought our patient interviewing part of the course (POM/Interviewing and Communication Skills) online using role plays and simulated interviews since we could no longer interview real patients in the hospital.”

“While we may be doing things differently, we are still facilitating learning and focusing on the same skills. I believe that the silver lining to this dark cloud is that it has made us innovate. Some of these new teaching skills we will continue to utilize when the clouds have cleared,” he added.

**Virtual Visit**

While HSDM’s current students adjusted to taking their courses online, a new crop of recently admitted DMD students participated in a virtual “Revisit” weekend. Revisit weekend is held each spring to give newly admitted HSDM and HMS students the opportunity to return to campus and solidify their plans. Faculty, current students, and staff welcomed the incoming class with a variety of academic and social events. Incoming DMDs were matched with first year virtual student hosts who helped to personalize their experience. “The virtual format enabled more incoming students to attend than ever before and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Sarah Troy-Petrakos, director of Admissions.

“Everything was put together and organized fantastically,” said a student in the Class of 2024. “I cannot wait to be a part of the Harvard community!!”

As professional and educational methods have shifted, so have traditional social occasions that hold the community together. Students, faculty and staff miss HSDM’s tea time, a chance to connect with friends and colleagues. However, new traditions fill the void with Zoom social hours.

“Seeing everyone’s face on the Zoom screen is both reassuring and it helps maintain a sense of community. From this also comes the experience of confronting the unexpected and learning how to overcome a significant obstacle. It may not seem so now, but we may be stronger for having lived it,” said Sam Coffin.
“My Dental Key” Unlocks Learning Potential for a New Generation of Students

A entrepreneurial team of Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM) students is working to enhance the way dental students learn with a concept that has already attracted the attention of several Harvard startup initiatives and earned them a spot as semi-finalists in the 2020 President’s Innovation Challenge, a University-wide venture capital competition.

“Today’s students use YouTube and Google for everything. We realized we could make dentistry more applicable to the modern learner. We saw a need for our generation to have access to modern videos and technology, while learning and developing their clinical skills in dental school,” Leela Breitman, DMD21, said.

Breitman, along with teammates Jennifer Lee, DMD21, Emily Van Doren, DMD22, Karen He DMD21, and Alice Li, DMD23, recognized their HSDM classmates and peers from other dental schools were often going to YouTube to brush up on dental procedures they learned in class.

However, YouTube videos made by professional dentists aren’t usually at the student’s skill level, nor are they academically verified as an educational resource. That’s how the concept of “My Dental Key” came about. The team envisions My Dental Key as an online platform that will compliment classroom instruction by providing student-focused video demonstrations, illustrations, and step-by-step, best-practice instructions for basic dental procedures.

“We learn dental procedures in lecture and practice in the preclinical lab, but when you’re faced with performing the procedure on a patient three or four months later, this tool will be a great reference to look back to,” Lee said.
“Their invention could be one of the most innovative educational technologies to enhance student learning in the dental curriculum.”

—Dr. Supattriya Chutinan

The team enlisted faculty mentors Drs. Supattriya Chutinan, instructor in Restorative Dentistry and Biomaterials Sciences, and Hiroe Ohyama, assistant professor of Restorative Dentistry and Biomaterials Sciences and director of Predoctoral Operative Dentistry, to help advise them along the way.

“We’re building our videos and platform from the student perspective, and everything is verified by our faculty to ensure clinical accuracy,” said Breitman, whose background in art has been useful in creating medical illustrations for the videos.

Each member of the team brings different expertise and perspectives from their various class years.

“We’re trying to make the videos very relevant, modern, and concise for new learners,” added second-year student Emily Van Doren. She and first-year student Alice Li are currently learning some of the concepts in class that will be in the videos, so they provide valuable feedback in real time as they learn the new concepts.

“The first time I learned about the idea of using the web-based teaching tool in the dental curriculum, I was immediately impressed by this innovation. These students have been working very hard and are so creative,” said faculty mentor Supattriya Chutinan.

“Their invention could be one of the most innovative educational technologies to enhance student learning in the dental curriculum.”

The team is currently working on preclinical operative videos with amalgam and composite procedures that are applicable to early-stage learners. They plan to tackle restorative preclinical procedures next.

“Dentistry is a field that is changing constantly. With My Dental Key, we can provide up-to-date information in an easily accessible way,” said Karen He.

The My Dental Key team was initially awarded a grant from the American Dental Education Association, as well as three grants from Operation Impact, an organization funded by the Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching (HILT) that supports budding entrepreneurs in education. With the initial funding, they were able to purchase video equipment and editing software, electronic illustration software, and website hosting that enabled them to create a pilot version of their product.

In January, the team entered Harvard University’s 2020 President’s Innovation Challenge to compete with student startups across the University and they were invited to pitch their idea at the Harvard Innovation Lab (i-lab).

“While the other teams were in suits, we were the only team that showed up in scrubs because we are always running out of the door of the clinic to get to the i-lab in Allston. ‘You must be the dental students’ people said, so scrubs have kind of become our trademark,” said Breitman.

My Dental Key was chosen as a semi-finalist within the i-lab Life Science Track and the team is now part of an intense incubator program designed to accelerate the progress of their venture and prepare them to compete for the grand prize of $75,000 in May. They participated in a mentor matchmaking event and connected with a mentor with a background in management consulting who will advise them on business strategies.

The experience has been time-consuming for the students as they juggle class and clinic, but they wouldn’t have it any other way.

“A lot of us want to be educators so this is our way to make our mark on dental education. We’re learning a lot in the process of making this,” said Lee.

“As a student I often feel I’m going through the curriculum as a passive receiver of information, so this project has been an amazing opportunity to be on the other side of it and to help improve something I’m a part of,” said He.

Ultimately, the students have high hopes that the project will serve as a means of standardizing and democratizing dental education globally.

“I am so proud of the students and their accomplishments,” said faculty mentor Hiroe Ohyama. “My Dental Key is a unique concept and I’m excited to see its potential to teach dental students not only at HSDM, but also nationally and globally.”
Meet the Office of Diversity and Inclusion’s New Director

Dr. Vincenzo G. Teran

Vincenzo G. Teran joined Harvard School of Dental Medicine in January as director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and instructor of Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology. Dr. Teran also serves as an instructor in the Department of Psychology at Harvard Medical School and as a staff psychologist at the Cambridge Health Alliance.

Tell us more about your background and what appealed to you about the Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion role at HSDM?

I am originally from Lima, Peru and moved to the U.S. with family at a young age. Similar to most immigrant families, my parents made the tough decision to leave their home country in pursuit of a better life and educational opportunities. Growing up in the States as an immigrant and around people from different backgrounds, I developed a deep interest and appreciation for cultures. As a first-generation college graduate, I pursued this desire to learn more about the influence of culture on how we think and interact with others through doctoral studies in clinical psychology from a multicultural perspective. Taken together, these experiences have influenced my career interests and trajectory. Whether I am providing clinical services, teaching, engaging in research, or working within systems to cultivate diversity and inclusion, I rely heavily on a multicultural framework to inform my approach and practice. When I first learned about the role of Director of Diversity and Inclusion at HSDM, I recall an excitement about the opportunities the position would afford me in terms of championing diversity and inclusion efforts at a renowned academic institution. In particular, I am enthused about collaborating with the School to recruit and support future generations of multicultural healthcare leaders to work in a diverse society, while fostering an inclusive academic environment that enables all to thrive and reach their fullest potential.

What do you look forward to accomplishing in this role?

It has been well established that a diverse and inclusive learning environment is essential in promoting creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Outside of academia, and in healthcare in particular, a workforce that reflects the Nation’s diversity is an invaluable step toward eliminating our country’s health disparities and inequities. I am excited about working with HSDM on efforts that will propel academic excellence and help address the national health disparities and inequities simultaneously through diversity and inclusion. Prior to my arrival at HSDM, my predecessor laid a strong groundwork for many diversity and inclusion initiatives. I plan to build on these initiatives, while also being mindful of areas that require attention, implement novel approaches informed by best practices, and establish a mechanism for measuring progress and outcomes to guide the way forward. I am also interested in expanding the relationship and collaboration between HSDM with HMS and the Harvard T.H. Chan School.
“I am excited about working on efforts that will propel academic excellence and help address the national health disparities and inequities simultaneously through diversity and inclusion.”
—Dr. Vincenzo G. Teran

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) Student Fellows have taken an active role and interest in fostering diversity at HSDM. How can members of the HSDM community be involved in diversity efforts?

I recently had the privilege to meet many of the ODI Student Fellows and learn about their efforts at HSDM—what a talented, committed, and passionate group of students. The Office, as well as HSDM as a community, have benefitted from their excitement and involvement in raising awareness on the importance of diversity and inclusion in dental education and beyond. I am confident that their efforts will continue to inspire us to come together as a collective to learn, celebrate, stand together during challenging times, reflect on our past and critically engage with the present. In terms of involvement, while the ODI Fellowship is one of the main avenues for students to engage in diversity and inclusion projects, the Office welcomes everyone across the student, faculty, and staff bodies to join our initiatives. Some exciting projects involving the Office center around pipeline programs promoting dental education to middle and high school students in Greater Boston; national recruitment efforts of underrepresented minority (URM) students to join the HSDM community; and activities and programming based on diversity and inclusion topics. In the spirit of the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child,” it is going to require the efforts of many from our HSDM community to cultivate and nurture diversity and inclusion. I hope that you will come join us!

Why is it important for HSDM/Harvard in general to lead the way in diversity and inclusion?

As a premiere academic institution, colleges and universities look to Harvard to lead the way in many areas. When it comes to diversity and inclusion, it is no exception. Harvard is in a unique position to play a leading role in advancing institutional culture and climate of diversity, inclusion, and equity excellence through best practices. Under the leadership of Dr. John Silvanus Wilson, Jr., along with the great efforts spearheaded by leaders of various schools at Harvard serving on the Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Leadership Council, I am hopeful about the direction Harvard is taking in pursuing and implementing effective strategies to move the needle on diversity, inclusion, and equity. HSDM is integral to this process, and it is a privilege to represent the School and work with the University in this pursuit.

What can we do about discrimination that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Unfortunately, there has been an alarming surge of racism and xenophobia directed at people of East Asian and South Asian descent around the globe. In the U.S., according to the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council, “over 1,500 reports of physical and verbal attacks directed at Asians and Asian-Americans have been documented since mid-March 2020. Understandably, Asians and Asian-Americans are expressing confusion, fear, and anxiety with being out in public and the increased risk of being targeted. In times like these, it is essential for us to be an ally and stand with our Asian and Asian-American friends, neighbors, and loved ones and there are a few actionable steps we can take to do so. For one, language matters. We can be intentional about our language use, ensuring that it is in line with how scientists and public health officials speak about COVID-19, and we can encourage those in our communities to do the same. Second, if someone we know has experienced a hate incident, reaching out to them to listen and validate their experience goes a long way. If appropriate, we can assist them in filing an incident report. Third, we could register for a course on intervening as a bystander. These courses typically offer concrete skills on ways to intervene and offer support without compromising our safety. Following these actionable steps as a community, we can have a meaningful impact during this challenging time.
New Graduate Finds His Niche in Community Care

For Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM) student Ryan Lisann, DMD20, completing one of the last requirements of his four-year DMD program—a three-month externship at Charles River Community Health Center in Brighton—was an experience that will shape his career.

“I’m really passionate about education and wanting to work with kids, so getting to work in a community health setting and treating pediatric patients confirmed the path I want to take,” Lisann said.

“Seeing patients arrive at a clinic, particularly young children, with a mouth full of cavities is incredibly disheartening. It’s clear that education is part of the solution.”

Lisann hopes to use early childhood dental education to address disparities in oral health and fill gaps in care to lessen the need for fillings. After graduation, when his peers go to residency programs and dental practices around the country, he plans to pursue a master’s degree in Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education before applying for a pediatric dentistry residency. He was recently chosen as a Zuckerman Fellow—a program that provides tuition to those in the fields of medicine, law, and business to pursue degrees in public service.

On a Friday in January at Charles River Community Health Center, Lisann was treating 10-year-old Diego. Speaking reassuringly in Spanish to the young Venezuelan, Lisann explained the procedure he would be using to fill two cavities.

“The biggest thing is building trust,” Lisann said. “Many kids we treat here are seeing a dentist for the first time.”

The center serves a large number of recent immigrants from Central America. During his externship, Lisann spoke in Spanish to better connect with patients. He also developed techniques to build children’s confidence once they’re in his chair, like counting down and focusing on deep breathing before Lisann uses a needle to administer a shot of anesthetic. He tells Diego the sensation will be like a quick mosquito bite and asks him to give a thumbs-up to let him know he’s OK.

Fourth-year HSDM students like Lisann complete a community-based general dentistry externship to expand their perspective of oral health delivery systems, and build on their medical and dental knowledge by providing care in a community setting. Besides Charles River Community Health Center, other HSDM externship sites include Boston Health Care for the Homeless, Brookside Community Health Center, Community Health Center of Cape Cod, The Dimock Center, Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital, Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center, Lynn Community Health Center, Mattapan Community Health Center, and the VA Boston Healthcare System.

Once on site, students collaborate with community dentists to develop treatment plans and treat underserved populations. HSDM students spend 12 weeks in
“I’m really passionate about education and wanting to work with kids, so getting to work in a community health setting and treating pediatric patients confirmed the path I want to take.”

—Ryan Lisann, DMD20

Each externship, twice the typical six-week externship at other dental schools, which gives them time to build a closer connection with the patients, dentists, and staff at the sites.

“We love working with HSDM students,” said dental director Janice Cho at Charles River Health. (She is also a lecturer at the School.) “We look forward to having the externs rotate through the health center as they bring a positive energy and provide compassionate care to patients who need it the most,” she said.

Charles River Community Health Center serves the communities of Allston, Brighton, and Waltham by providing comprehensive, coordinated care. The Center’s roots are in Allston-Brighton, where it was first established as the Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center more than 35 years ago. Dental services have been offered since the beginning, and HSDM students have been part of dental care at the Center for nearly 20 years.

“The aim of Charles River Community Health is to provide a dental safety net experience that externs hopefully enjoy, learn and grow from,” said Cho.

“There’s such a great need for community dental care in the U.S.,” Lisann said. “This experience has taught me so much and opened my eyes to areas where I can have the most impact.”

Commencement and Class Day were held virtually this year with online ceremonies and celebrations. A few members of the Class of 2020 reflected on their HSDM experience.

Jeffrey Taylor II, DMD20

“The times that I’ve been able to give care to patients through community service, as well as during clinic, have been the most meaningful part of my time at HSDM. Because I came into this field to serve, I was very happy to serve at any given opportunity.”

POST-HSDM PLANS: Residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at Emory University

Kristin Sweeney, DMD20

“My classmates and professors have been the most influential aspect of my time at HSDM. Whether in or outside of school, I have been learning almost non-stop over the course of the past four years.”

POST-HSDM PLANS: Residency in pediatric dentistry at Ohio State University

Kelly Suralik, DMD20

“My time at Harvard has been made possible by the mentorship and friendship of outstanding faculty, staff and peers. I will always be grateful for their support.”

POST-HSDM PLANS: Residency in prosthodontics at the Mayo Clinic

David Danesh, DMD20

“Our experience at HSDM has molded us to become doers and solvers, crafting us into the leaders and thinkers that the world needs.”

POST-HSDM PLANS: Residency in pediatric dentistry at Ohio State University
Bridging Gaps

Dr. Colleen Greene is an advocate for oral health equity in her home state of Wisconsin.

Colleen Greene, DMD13, uses the word “fun” a lot when talking about work. A Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM) graduate who also has a master’s degree from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Greene is given to saying things like: “It’s fun to work toward humanizing the concept of a dentist,” “What’s fun about advocacy is that you have to constantly step back and think through what isn’t working,” and “That there are ways to improve systems makes it super fun to continue chipping away at it.”

It doesn’t take long to figure out that what Greene means by fun involves turning challenges into opportunities.

A first-generation college student from a lower-income household, Greene earned a bachelor’s degree from a small college in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and planned a career in health care based on a chemistry teacher’s recommendation.

Midway through her time at HSDM, Greene became president of the American Student Dental Association and founding president of the Oral Health Progress and Equity Network — roles that allowed her to help educate other dental students about debt prevention and scholarship opportunities, and to push for inclusion and diversity in the American Dental Association. After dental school, Greene matched to a residency program at Children’s Wisconsin, where she saw another problem in search of a solution.

“Our clinic sees over half of all kids in Milwaukee County who are in foster care,” Greene said. “The world of foster care gets really complicated when it comes to health care consent. In dentistry, most kids under a certain age would benefit from using nitrous oxide (commonly known as laughing gas) when they get their dental care.” But in Wisconsin, laughing gas was classified as a specialized treatment. “We had to jump through hours’ worth of hoops per case to try and obtain appropriate written consent from the legal guardian.” A process that was made even more complicated when it was unclear whom the current guardian was.

So when a State task force on foster care reform reached out to her clinic looking for input, Greene wrote an impassioned letter to the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Health in support of a bill that would reclassify laughing gas. A few months later, the bill was passed.

“As small as it was, just changing the classification of laughing gas, from a specialized, additional benefit and instead considering it routine care, meant that we no longer had to have our residents and our staff go through tremendously unnecessary paperwork to just get kids the care they needed,” she said.

Working so closely with foster children yielded an additional benefit. “My husband and I became pretty curious about becoming foster parents. We took a leap of faith and applied in 2016, and our son was placed with us in 2017. He was adopted in May 2018, and a little girl was placed with us last December and adopted in October.”

While Greene has her hands even more full now, she has no plans to slow down.

“I’m having a lot of fun so far, and I have a feeling that there will be many years of work to do.”

This story was featured in the To Serve Better project — a yearlong Harvard Gazette project exploring the connections between members of the Harvard community and neighborhoods across the United States. It celebrates Harvard students, alumni, faculty, and staff who are committed to public purpose and to making a positive difference in communities throughout the country.
In Gratitude

Honor Roll of Donors

We are grateful to the following individuals and organizations for gifts received during the 2019 calendar year, from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

HENRY C. WARREN SOCIETY
Henry Warren made the first planned gift to HSDM in 1899 in the form of a bequest for $10,000.00. The school is grateful to those who have expressed their intention to provide for HSDM in their financial planning.

To recognize this thoughtfulness, the School established the Henry C. Warren Society.

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James D. Billie, DMD73, PD77 and Corinne Billie
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We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of these lists. Please let us know of any errors or omissions so that we may correct our records. Email: bulletin@hsdm.harvard.edu, or call 617-432-3533. Degrees listed reflect HSDM and affiliated degrees only.

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Alumni News

Massachusetts Dental Society President Dr. Janis Moriarty presents Dr. Michael Cognata with Clinician of the Year Award

Michael Cognata, MMSc81 and PD81, was presented with the Clinician of the Year Award at the Yankee Dental Congress Awards Ceremony held in January in Boston. The award recognizes New England dentists who have stood out as lecturers and volunteers. For the past 35 years Cognata, who has practices in Marblehead and Boston, has provided orthodontic care for children and adults with the full spectrum of malocclusions and dentofacial problems. He also has spent more than 28 years on faculty teaching part-time at the Forsyth Dental Center and at HSDM.

Stephen Colchamiro, DMD70, who celebrates his 50th reunion this year, retired after more than 40 years at Brookside CHC and the Faculty Dental Practice, both of which he had the honor and pleasure to be the Founder. He and his wife Ida are well and enjoy family time with their three boys and their spouses, and five grandchildren. He hopes to continue volunteering with second-year students in their pre-clinical lab work.

Dr. Carla A. Evans, DMSc75, was selected as the 2020 Dale B. Wade Award of Excellence in Orthodontics by The American Board of Orthodontics. The award recognizes an exemplary senior clinician and board-certified orthodontist who demonstrates exceptional dedication to orthodontics through clinical excellence and/or devoted teaching. She will be honored at the March 2021 College of Diplomates of the American Board of Orthodontics (CDABO) annual meeting. Evans is a clinical professor in the Department of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics at Boston University.

John Manhold, DMD44, celebrated his 100th birthday last August with a dinner with 40 guests at St. Petersburg Yacht Club. He is an active reader and swimmer and swims daily.

Linda C. Niessen, DMD77, MPH77, PD82, has been named the founding dean of the College of Dental Medicine at the Joplin campus of the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. As dean, Niessen will oversee the development of all academic, research and service activities and administration of the dental college. She will lead all program components, including the oversight of the dental college’s compliance with accrediting bodies; the recruitment of faculty and students; the development and implementation of the curriculum; and the creation of partnerships with the region’s oral health community. Niessen previously served as dean and professor at the Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and as vice president and chief clinical officer for DENTSPLY International.

Michael S. Reddy, DMD86, DMSc89, PD89, has been named the next editor of the Journal of Dental Education (JDE) by the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Board of Directors. Dr. Reddy is dean of the University of California, San Francisco, School of Dental Medicine, and a past chair of the ADEA Council of Deans. He previously served on the JDE and JADA Editorial Review Boards, was an associate editor of the Journal of Periodontology and editor of Clinical Advances in Periodontics. He has contributed more than 130 original reports, eight book chapters, 136 abstracts and papers, and nearly 160 invited lectures and presentations. Dr. Reddy will succeed Nadeem Y. Karimbux, DMD91, MMSc93, PD93, who was appointed JDE Editor in 2011.

The International Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (IAOMS) elected Steven M. Roser, DMD68, MD72, as their 2019 Distinguished Service Award recipient. Dr. Roser has chaired the IAOMS Global Surgery Committee, its Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Committee, and has been a representative to the Global Alliance for Surgical, Obstetric, Trauma and Anesthesia Care (The G4 Alliance). Roser is the DeLos Hill Chair and Professor of Surgery and the chief of the Emory University School of Medicine Division of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. He has an extensive history of international service including work with the Missions Abroad Program of Healing the Children since 1992.
Sophia G. Saeed, DMD07, has been named associate dean for patient care at UTHealth School of Dentistry at Houston, effective March 2. Saeed earned her dental degree from HSDM and completed a residency at the University of California, San Francisco, as well as an educational fellowship through UCSF’s Teaching Scholars Program. She served as director of the General Practice Residency (GPR) and Hospital Dentistry Practice in 2009 at UCSF, holding both positions through 2013. In 2013, Saeed redirected her career to focus on predoctoral education, curriculum, and evidence-based educational practices. Just prior to joining UTHealth School of Dentistry at Houston she served as professor in residence and chair of the Department of Clinical Sciences at University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Dental Medicine.

Faculty News

Steffany Chamut, instructor in Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology, was a speaker at the international Mexican Dental Association meeting where she shared the forum with the president elect of FDI (World Dental Federation). Chamut gave talks about women in dentistry, public health, and healthy aging.

Luis Lopez joined HSDM as a senior tutor for DMD students. Lopez comes to HSDM from the Geiger Gibson Community Health Center in Boston where he has practiced dentistry focusing on patient-centered comprehensive care.

Zachary S. Peacock, assistant professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and pediatric oral and maxillofacial surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital, received the HMS/HSDM Young Mentor Award. The Excellence in Mentoring Awards recognize the value of quality mentoring relationships and the impact they have on professional development and career advancement in clinical medicine, teaching, research, and administration.

Brittany Seymour, MPH11, was promoted to associate professor of Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology. Seymour’s work has focused on three domains: global oral health, oral health workforce, and health communication. Her course “Global Oral Health: Interdisciplinary Approaches” is now part of the predoctoral, GPR, and Dental Public Health Residency core curricula and is tied to a spring experiential field course in rural Costa Rica. The course was also developed into an open-access online curriculum, the Global Health Starter Kit, that is now being integrated into courses and training programs in 25 countries. This fall, the course will expand to Harvard College. The new college course, titled Global Oral Health, will be part of a diverse array of course offerings and will challenge students to incorporate the global burden of oral diseases into foundational concepts of global health and world development.

Vincenzo G. Teran joined HSDM as director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and instructor of Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology. Teran received his Doctor of Psychology (2013) and Master of Arts (2010), both in Clinical Psychology from William James College (formerly, Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology). He completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Cambridge Health Alliance-Harvard Medical School and an APA-accredited internship at the Center for Multicultural Training in Psychology at Boston University School of Medicine. He also received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Latin American and Latino Studies. Teran is also an instructor for the Department of Psychology at the Harvard Medical School and a staff psychologist at the Cambridge Health Alliance.

Student News

William “Brennan” Arden, DMSc21, was named one of the American Dental Association’s “10 Under 10” award recipients. This award recognizes unsung heroes in the dental profession who demonstrate excellence early on in their careers. Arden served in the U.S. Navy as a dentist for four years, which included initiating and planning the first dental summit in Vietnam. He also spent two months in Rwanda teaching dental students and implementing a new Endodontic curriculum. He is a devoted philanthropist, and recently participated in a year-long humanitarian initiative where he led a team in treating 4,000 dental patients and performing more than 12,000 dental procedures.
Aisha Ba, DMD21, was awarded the Pierre Fauchard Academy Oral Health Foundation Student Scholarship. Ba has served as vice-president of her class for the past three years, and is an active member of the American Student Dental Association (ASDA) where she participated in the ADA Lobby Day as a representative from HSDM. She has also been a devoted Office of Diversity and Inclusion Fellow, where she was actively involved in many activities to make HSDM more inclusive. Additionally, she was selected to serve as a student representative for HSDM on the President’s task force on Inclusion and Belonging. She has applied to serve in the National Health Service Corps after graduation.

Leela Breitman, DMD21, was awarded the 2020 ADEA/Crest Oral-B Scholarship for Predoctoral Dental Students Pursuing Academic Careers. The scholarship is awarded to two dental students each year, and supports dental students demonstrating a firm commitment to becoming dental educators.

Emily Chen, DMD21, was named the winner of the 2019 American Dental Association Healthy Literacy in Dentistry essay contest. Emily’s essay, “Community Water Fluoridation: Water That’s Good for Your Teeth,” is currently being featured on the American Dental Association’s Mouth Healthy blog. Emily was also invited to attend the ADA’s upcoming celebration commemorating the 75th anniversary of community water fluoridation.

Eight HSDM advanced graduate education students have been awarded Harvard Presidential Scholarships for the 2019-2020 academic year. The full-tuition scholarship is awarded to DMSc students who have committed themselves to careers in public service or academia. This year’s accomplished recipient’s academic interests range from pursuing clinical and basic science research, to teaching and mentoring students, to furthering oral health policy and information systems. Harvard School of Dental Medicine's 2019-2020 Presidential Scholars are: Chiho Ahn, a DMSc candidate in the Periodontology program, Wonwoo Jang, a DMSc candidate in the Periodontics program, Yu-Chun Lin, a DMSc candidate in the Prosthodontics program, Jevae L. Nelson, a DMSc candidate in the Dental Public Health (DPH) program, Bunmi Tokede, a DMSc candidate in the Orthodontics program, Diana Wang, a DMSc candidate in the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology program, Fan Yang, a candidate in the Periodontology program, and Anna Yi, a DMSc candidate in the Prosthodontics program.

Staff News

Richard “Chad” Bergeron joined the Office of Dental Education as an Instructional Technologist. Bergeron comes to HSDM from Brandeis University where he previously served as the Academic Systems Administrator.

Rebecca Murphy joined the Office of Development and Alumni Relations as development operations coordinator. She previously served as coordinator for Reunion and Annual Campaigns with the Harvard College Fund. In her new role she works closely with HSDM alumni databases and supports alumni relations, donor stewardship and office administration.

Nitasha Rizvi joined the Harvard Dental Center as a digital dental technician.
HSDM has launched *Continuing Professional Education Today (CPE Today)*, a series of free webinars that respond to changes in the field of dentistry experienced due to COVID-19. These discussions with dental and other healthcare professionals provide scholarly and practical conversations on how we can navigate the challenges we are facing as a dental community. They are offered free of charge without CE credits.

View video recordings of the following talks at: hsdm.harvard.edu/cpe-today

**Building Trust between Dentists and Patients with Compassion**

Drs. Brittany Seymour, Lisa Thompson, and Isabelle Chase address concerns as dental professionals begin to reopen their practices when stay-at-home restrictions are lifted. Panelists discuss infection control procedures, how to best serve pediatric and geriatric populations, factors affecting patient decision-making for visiting the dentist, and managing the concerns of both the provider and the patient with compassion.

**Endodontic Emergencies in a State of Emergency**

Drs. Jarshen Lin and Brooke Blicher present an evidence-based approach to managing endodontic emergencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this presentation they review up-to-date protocols including the incorporation of telehealth into endodontic diagnosis, modifications to definitive care, and recently updated guidelines for pain and antibiotic prescription.

**Oral Medicine and Pathology During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Oral Medicine and Pathology specialists provide care for patients with medically complex conditions that can cause significant morbidity and even increase mortality risk if left undiagnosed and untreated. This webinar explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Oral Medicine care delivery and how the field is adapting and looking toward the future. They specifically address the feasibility and value of teledentistry and examine if some aspects of it may remain part of routine care in the post-pandemic world.

To learn about upcoming CPE Today webinars and other Continuing Education programs go to: hsdm.harvard.edu/continuing-education
Congratulations to the Class of 2020!