

# HARVARD

## School of Dental Medicine

### OFFICE OF RESEARCH

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## HSDM WELCOMES FORMER STUDENT BACK AS DEPARTMENT CHAIR

**D**r. Magda Feres, a periodontal researcher and educator, will become the new chair of Harvard School of Dental Medicine's (HSDM) Department of Oral Medicine, Infection, and Immunity (OMII) beginning on March 15, 2023.

An alumna of HSDM, Feres will return to the school after serving a 22-year stint at Guarulhos University in Brazil as dean for Dental Research and Graduate Education and chair of the advanced Graduate Program in Dentistry. During her time as a student of oral biology, Feres also conducted clinical and translational research at The Forsyth Institute, where she received a certificate in microbiology and later went on to become an associate professor.

Additionally, she has earned a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from Gama Filho University, a Master of Science in Periodontology from Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and a Master of Business Administration from Guarulhos University.

"I'm thrilled to be returning to HSDM, where I received my postdoctoral training and where my research interests were first developed," said in a statement. "I look forward to working with the talented faculty, students, and researchers within the department of OMII to build on the excellence of the department, grow its renowned educational programs, and advance its clinical research aspirations."

Feres' research centers around oral and periodontal microbiology and the clinical outcomes of periodontal and peri-implant therapies. Her work has been funded by the Sao Paulo Research Foundation, the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development in Brazil, the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, just to name a few.

Outside of her research achievements, Feres is recognized as an educational mentor to her students. She has spearheaded projects such as the Young Scientist Program and the Forsyth/UNG Student Scholars Undergraduate Summer Program. She is also a vocal advocate for future generations of female clinical researchers, for which she was honored with the International Association for Dental Research Women in Science Distinguished Female Mentor Award.

Feres is taking over for Dr. Howard Howell, who has served as interim department chair since July 2021.

"Succeeding Dr. Howard Howell as the chair of the OMII department is an honor and a huge responsibility that I take with great joy," Feres said in a statement. "Dr. Howell interviewed and accepted me into the DMSc program in Oral Biology in 1996. Having the chance to come back and add value to the department where I was trained is an honor that truly humbles me."



Dr. Magda Feres will be the new chair of the Department of Oral Medicine, Infection, and Immunity.

# RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

## *The Power of Collaboration in Research*

The collaborative effort of a group of periodontal researchers from Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Tufts University School of Dental Medicine and the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine has landed their article on the January 2023 cover of *Compendium of Continuing Education in Dentistry*.

Their article, “Minimally Invasive Coronally Advanced Flap Techniques for Correction of Gingival Recession Defects: A Review,” seeks to supply clinicians with contemporary surgical techniques that offer esthetic results with reduced patient morbidity.

Traditional mucogingival surgery methods for treating gingival recession defects often require tissue grafting from the palate, which is associated with postoperative pain, swelling, bleeding, and a potential for difficulty chewing and eating. In recent years, however, clinicians have created new techniques designed to avoid those outcomes.

“Our article aims to cover these different options that clinicians have and inform them on how these procedures are performed and the indications for them,” Jessica Latimer, DDS, a Periodontology resident and Doctor of Medical Sciences (DMSc) candidate in Oral Biology at HSDM, and one of the article’s authors said. “We’re trying to supply people with more knowledge and empower them to give their patients optimal care.”

A rise in minimally invasive techniques follows a larger trend in medicine moving from “patient-centered” to “person-centered” care. It is becoming more common for practitioners to consider their patient’s values, goals and preferences when making clinical decisions.

This philosophy should extend into educational training as well, according to Irina Dragan, DDS, DMD, MS, a practicing periodontist, HSDM lecturer and one of the article’s authors. There are times when Dragan finds that her resident students get so caught up in getting practice conducting procedures they can overlook other less involved options. Instead, she teaches that sometimes a simpler approach, or even delaying care until a safer time, is ideal for patients.

“As faculty, you have two key populations that you have to take care of: patients and students,” she said. “So with this type of research, we are actually also moving from student-centered to person-centered and we’re highlighting that the best education that we can offer to our residents is actually the best care for our patients.”

Beyond spreading awareness of minimally-invasive mucogingival techniques, Dragan and Latimer



Compendium cover story. Originally published in: Duffy JM, Latimer JM, Fried RM, Dragan IF. Minimally invasive coronally advanced flap technique for correction of gingival recession defects: a review. *Compendium*. 2023;44(1):36-41. Copyright © 2023 to BroadcastMed LLC. All rights reserved. Used with permission of the publisher.

hope their article can showcase the power of collaboration. The team deployed a vertical mentorship approach to their work, with each of the authors at a different stage in their career providing unique and essential contributions.

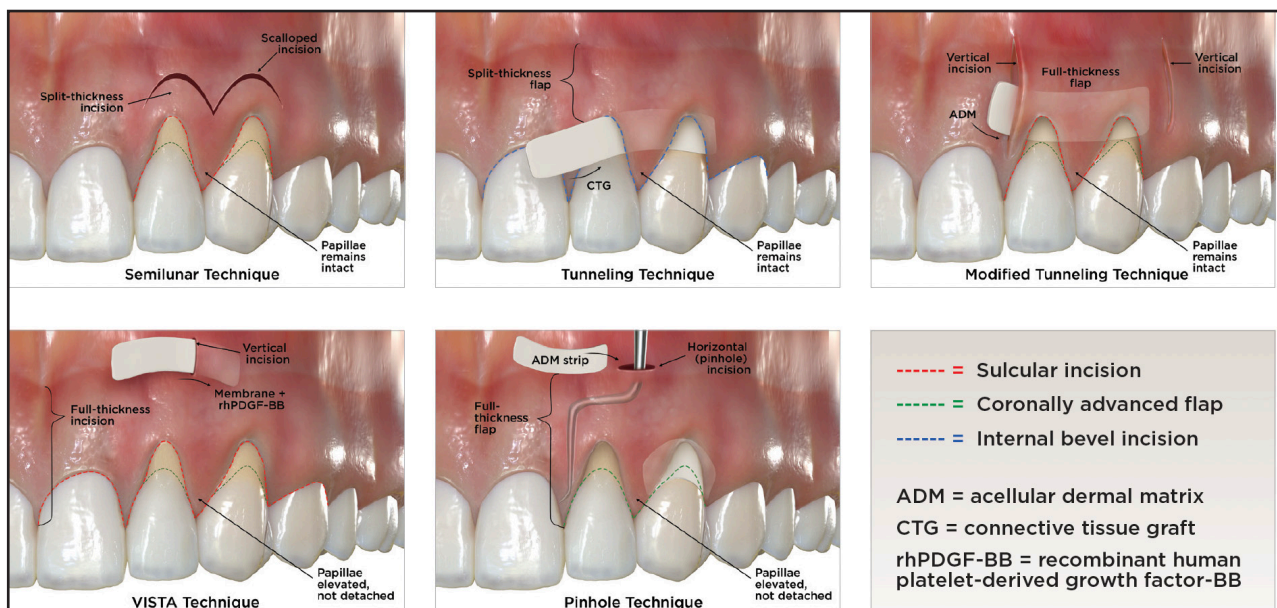
Jennifer Duffy, DMD, who was a dental student at Tufts while working on the article and is now in UConn's Periodontology Residency Program, worked closely with the team's expert librarian to scour databases for research related to minimally invasive mucogingival techniques.

Latimer, who has a background in art, in addition to her expertise in science, created each of the illustrations depicting the various techniques described in the article.

Dragan and fellow author Ronald Fried, DMD, MMSc, HSDM alumnus and former faculty member, were able to select the clinical cases used in the article from the pair's extensive private practice database.

In the end, it was this bi-directional teaching and learning experience that stuck with the researchers.

"Mentorship is so important in dentistry because you don't just finish dental school or residency and then know everything there is to know," Latimer said. "It takes a whole lifetime and everything is always changing. So you always need someone with more experience than you to help you, even once you've graduated or are practicing."



Dr. Jessica Latimer's illustrations of minimally-invasive mucogingival surgery techniques. Originally published in: Duffy JM, Latimer JM, Fried RM, Dragan IE. Minimally invasive coronally advanced flap technique for correction of gingival recession defects: a review. *Compendium*. 2023;44(1):36-41. Copyright © 2023 to BroadcastMed LLC. All rights reserved. Used with permission of the publisher.



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Submit questions, comments and HSDM news to  
[mallory\\_hackett@hsdm.harvard.edu](mailto:mallory_hackett@hsdm.harvard.edu)



# AWARDS & GRANTS

## *2023 Education Innovation Grant Recipients*



Dr. Roxanne Bavarian for Maxillary and mandibular anesthesia techniques including the use of “dry injections” on dental anesthesia manikins.

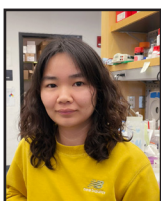


Dr. Fadie Coleman for Shared Learning on Anti-racism—Educating Future Leaders in Oral Medicine.



Dr. Peter Grieco for Building a library of pre-recorded content for Fixed Prosthodontics.

# NEW RESEARCHERS



Manyun Yang, MS, PhD, is a new research fellow in the Yang Lab. Yang completed a BS in Biology, Animal and Plant Quarantine at Hunan Agriculture University in China before earning her graduate degrees at the University of Massachusetts. At HSDM, her research will focus on identifying the cellular and molecular mechanism whereby the Wnt/planar cell polarity signaling pathway regulates stem cell migration and differentiation.



Juan-Juan Zhu, MD, PhD, joins HSDM as a visiting scholar in the Department of Developmental Biology's Yang Lab. Coming from the Affiliated Hospital of Guizhou Medical University in China, where she works as an associate chief physician, Dr. Zhu's research here will focus on the role of Hippo signalling in regulating liver metabolism. She is serving a two year research appointment.

# UPCOMING EVENTS


**Student Research Day 2023**

Tuesday, April 11

REB Lobby/109



**Launch of the African Regional Summary of the  
Global Oral Health Status Report Online Event**  
Tuesday, March 21 | 7:00-9:00AM EST



**HARVARD**  
School of Dental Medicine Initiative  
INTEGRATING ORAL HEALTH & MEDICINE  
**Global Symposium 2023 - Integrating Health Systems: Policies  
and Programs that Work**  
Monday, March 27 - Tuesday, March 28 (All day)  
The Joseph B. Martin Conference Center | 77 Avenue Louis Pasteur  
Third Floor Rotunda

**2023 Donald B. Giddon, Lecture in Behavioral  
Medicine and Dentistry**



The Secret Lives of Ancient Teeth:  
Development, Climate Change, and Human Evolution.

Tanya Smith, PhD  
Griffith University, Australia

Tuesday, April 11 | 12:00-1:30 PM  
REB Auditorium, 190 Longwood




For both in-person and livestream options, RSVP above.