

THE



# COMPASS

Charting  
New Directions  
for the  
University of  
Connecticut  
School of  
Dental  
Medicine

VOL. II, ISSUE II

SUMMER, 2001

**G**rey skies and occasional showers did nothing to dampen spirits and optimism as students in the Class of 2001 participated in graduation exercises “under the big tent” on Thursday, May 25. This year, senior students, staff and faculty of the School of Dental Medicine had much to celebrate. As most of you already know, this year’s graduating class is viewed by many to be one



## *Commencement 2001*

of our strongest UConn dental classes, a recognition gained in part by outstanding performance on national board examinations. Speakers at the commencement exercise reminded our students of their special achievements on several occasions. Our graduates also move on to some of the most highly-coveted residency and graduate programs in the country - 35 of our 38 students will carry the UConn banner to advanced training programs spanning from Seattle to San Francisco to Miami.

However, one of our greatest accomplishments on May 25 might have gone unnoticed by many! Thirty-seven of our 38 graduates received their DMD diplomas on that day, a phenomenal 97% of the class! Why phenomenal? In previous years, a much smaller number of graduates (typically around 25%) received diplomas with many “graduates” returning to the school to complete the dental program through the month of June. Over the past few years, strong efforts have been made to help students complete their degree requirements by commencement. In fact, the school’s new Strategic Plan includes the goal “To have 90% of the students achieve their diplomas on the day of graduation as a five-year target.” It is a credit to students, staff and faculty that we achieved this goal less than four months after the plan was approved! Congratulations not only to our students on this major accomplishment but also to our staff and faculty (with a special thanks to our Team Leaders)!



**Message  
from the  
Dean**

Peter Robinson, DDS, PhD

This year ADEA published a report, "Best Practices in Dental Education," that contains the fifty best practices from the United States and Canadian dental schools. I am very pleased to report that all three of the School of Dental Medicine's submissions were selected. It is an honor to have three outcomes of our School be recognized as best practices for other schools to model. These three best practices include: our community out-reach program [the School is the major provider of dental treatment to the Medicaid eligible children (29% of the care) and mentally and otherwise handicapped adults (62% of the care) in the State at fifteen sites], the School's ability to produce dental scholars (a major provider of dental scholars who continue in their careers as distinguished faculty throughout the country), and having excellent relationships within the academic health center and parent university.

However, despite these noticeable, best practices the School has, up to this year, not had great success in having the students graduate in a timely fashion. In contrast, this May 97% of the graduates received their diplomas at graduation through a great deal of hard work on everyone's part. Hopefully the School's methods for assuring timely graduation will become a new "Best Practice."

## Senior Awards Night

On Thursday, May 17, the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine held its annual senior awards night banquet at the Radisson Inn in Bristol. Faculty members presented honors to the following graduates, SDM Class of 2001:

**Adrian Acosta:** American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Radiology Award. **Patricia Berube:** Quintessence Award for Clinical Achievement in Periodontics; Friends of the School of Dental Medicine-Fox Award. **Martha Brown:** Dr. Robert G. Levine Award; Allan B. Reiskin Award; Alpha Omega Fraternity Award.

**Keith Byron:** Academy of Operative Dentistry Award. **Andre Cardoso:** American Academy of Dental Practice Administration Award. **Todd Carter:** American Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons Award; South Park Inn Dental Clinic Award. Paul Ciuci: Horace Wells Award.

**Douglas Elliott:** Quintessence Award for Clinical Achievement in Restorative Dentistry; Allan B. Reiskin Award.

**Amy Ferson:** American Association of Orthodontists Award; Academy of Dental Materials Award; Quintessence Award for Research Achievement. **Steven Goodwin:** American Society for Geriatric Dentistry.

**Rachelle Hecht:** Int'l Congress of Oral Implantologists Predoctoral Achievement Award; Northeastern Society of Periodontists Award; American Association of Endodontists

Award; American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology Award; Oral Biology Award. **Arielle Liberman:** WaterPik Rudolph Hanau Award; American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Radiology Award.

**Killian MacCarthy:** American Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons/Dental Implant Student Award; American Academy of Oral Medicine Award; International College of Dentists Award. **Tuyen Nguyen:** The Neurosciences Award; **Audrey Pepin:** Kohrman Award; Organization of Teachers of Oral Diagnosis Annual Award. **Kierstin Savastano:** American Society of Dentistry for Children Award.

**Gary Schulman:** Dr. Richard G. Topazian Award; Academy of Dentistry for Persons with Disabilities Award; American Association of Public Health Dentistry Award; The Pierre Fauchard Academy Award. **Jamison Scott:** American Academy of Periodontology Award; **Michael Stern:** Connecticut Society of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons Award. **Jeff Theis:** Marion Mattioli award. **Joseph Walz:** American Academy of Esthetic Dentistry; Academy of General Dentistry Award; Olmsted Prize in Geriatrics. **Gerald Yang:** American College of Prosthodontists Award.

## Third Year Dental Students Mission to Peru



Photos courtesy of Jessica Locke and Jessica Russo.

**F**or the fifth year in a row, dental students traveled to Peru on a mission to provide care to Peruvian children and adults. This year's group left in two sections during late February and early March, with eight faculty preceptors and 25 students (including the children of four of the faculty. The students agreed that "although we worked hard every day, we bonded so well, had so much fun and helped



so many people." "Since there was no competition and we helped each other, the trip facilitated our confidence." Seeing as many as 1,200 patients and removing as many as 40 teeth a day in this remote area, the students came to "appreciate the oral care, level of hygiene, supplies and instruments" normally taken for granted.

### *In Memoriam*

It was with profound sadness that the Health Center community learned that one of the School of Dental Medicine's faculty members, Dr. James Altieri (46), died suddenly on July 2, 2001 following cardiac arrest.

Jim had been on the faculty in the Department of Prosthodontics and Operative Dentistry since 1986. He had played an integral role in the predoctoral educational

programs in the School as well as being involved in a number of applied materials research projects. In addition, he had a private practice in West Hartford. Both Jim and his wife, Jeanne, have been active leaders in the Connecticut State Dental Association for several years.

Jim will be greatly missed by our students and fellow faculty members.



# NIDCR Awards Grant to School of Dental Medicine

by Alan Lurie, DDS, PhD

The University of Connecticut has received an Institutional Training Grant from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. The grant, "Skeletal, Craniofacial and Oral Biology Training Grant," encompasses the following research training programs: DMD/PhD; PhD with or without a clinical residency; postdoctoral fellows; predoctoral dental students; and faculty clinical research fellows. This grant, one of only seven awarded to US dental schools, is for \$550,000 in year one and approximately \$4.3 million for the five-year duration of the grant. Dr. Alan Lurie, Head of OMF Radiology in the Department of Oral Diagnosis, is the Program Director and head of the DMD-PhD Program. Dr. William Upholt, Interim Head of the Department of Biostructure and Function, is the Co-Program Director

and Head of the PhD and Post-doctoral programs. Dr. Art Hand, Professor of Pediatric Dentistry, is the Director of Dental Student Research programs, and Dr. Susan Reisine, Head of Behavioral Sciences and Community Health, is the Director of the Faculty Clinical Research program. Our research training programs have long provided outstanding dental scholars for institutions throughout the world, and have been recognized as one of the leading research-training programs in the US. We recently received an award from the American Dental Education Association's Center for Educational Policy and Research as a "Best Practice for Developing Dental Scholars." We look forward to a growing and even finer training program as we enter into this period of NIDCR-support.

## Academic Tenure and Promotion for School of Dental Medicine Faculty

At its May 8, 2001 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the following recommendations for academic tenure: **Dr. Carolyn Dealy**, Biostructure and Function; **Dr. Michael Goupil**, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery; and **Dr. Arthur Hand**, Pediatric Dentistry. **Dr. Steven Lepowsky**, Behavioral Sciences & Community Health, was promoted to Associate Professor (in residence).



UConn  
SCHOOL OF  
DENTAL  
MEDICINE

Editor: Susan Reisine, Ph.D.  
Co-Editor: Monty MacNeil, D.D.S., M.Dent.Sc.  
Editorial Staff: Christine Moulis

The Compass is written for the dental school. We strongly encourage everyone to participate by submitting articles, events, milestones, etc. If you have any suggestions, please drop us a line.

Telephone: (860) 679-3218  
Fax: (860) 679-1342  
Mail Code: 3910  
E-mail: [reisine@nso1.uhc.edu](mailto:reisine@nso1.uhc.edu)  
[moulis@nso1.uhc.edu](mailto:moulis@nso1.uhc.edu)