WELCOME
GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

We have a new name.
We may have a department home!

A proposal has been made to change the Constitution and Bylaws to create a new SOD department, Oral and Craniofacial Health Sciences. Fingers crossed that the SOD faculty will approve this change!

The SOD has always been wonderfully supportive of our program and our students. This change would be additional acknowledgement of how important basic and translational research are to the life of the school and university and to the patients that we ultimately aim to serve.

The best way to predict your future is to create it. — Abraham Lincoln
Welcome, New Students!

2017

[Image of Ali Altitinchi, BDS, MS]

Ali Altitinchi, BDS, MS, received his Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of Mosul, College of Dentistry in 2006. He completed his general practice residency in 2008 and worked as a clinical instructor at the University of Mosul’s dental teaching hospital. He received his Master of Science in operative dentistry and endodontics degree in 2012. He was a research fellow in the UNC School of Dentistry’s department of operative dentistry and endodontics in 2016. Dr. Altitinchi enjoys spending time with family and friends, travelling, and watching soccer games.

[Xiangxiang (Allen) Hu, MS]

Xiangxiang (Allen) Hu, MS, received his Bachelor of Science in dentistry from West China School of Dentistry, Sichuan University in 2014 and his Master of Dentistry degree from State Key Laboratory of Military Stomatology, Fourth Military Medical University in 2017. Dr. Hu enjoys music and traveling.

[Deepika Jayaprakash, BDS, MS]

Deepika Jayaprakash, BDS, MS, received her Bachelor of Dental Surgery from J.S.S. Dental College and Hospital in 2005 and her Master of Dental Surgery in periodontology in 2011 from D.A.P.M Rashtriya Vidyalaya Dental College and Hospital. She later received her Master of Arts in English literature from Karnataka State Open University in 2015. She has worked as a lecturer, periodontist, and dental surgeon. Her hobbies include free style dance, yoga, and reading.

PhD Student Accomplishments

[Ali Altitinchi, BDS, MS]

Ali Altitinchi, BDS, MS, received a Doctoral Merit award from the UNC Graduate School in 2017.

[Kevin Byrd, DDS]

Kevin Byrd, DDS, received the 2017 AAPF Educator Scholarship. AAP Educator Scholarships were created to stimulate the development of periodontal educators intending to pursue a career as full-time teachers at U.S. periodontal programs upon graduation from U.S. periodontal postdoctoral training programs. He also received the 2017 ADA Foundation Crest and Oral-B Promising Research Award. Dr. Byrd successfully defended his dissertation in October 2017. He will join the UNC School of Dentistry’s graduate periodontology program in 2018. Dr. Byrd is mentored by Dr. Scott Williams, an assistant professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.
Ning Cheng, PhD, received the NCI Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Fellow Transition (F99/K00) Award for 2017-2023. She was the only student nominated for this award from UNC-CH. This award supports outstanding Ph.D. and other Research Doctoral candidates complete their dissertation research training (F99 phase) and transition in a timely manner to mentored, cancer-focused postdoctoral career development research positions (K00 phase). Dr. Cheng is mentored by Dr. Jenny Ting, a professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Genetics.

Meng Deng, MS, received the AAI Trainee Abstract Award in 2017. This award provides travel support to AAI Trainee members, both graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, whose first-author abstracts submitted to the AAI annual meeting are selected for oral presentation in Block Symposia. Dr. Deng is mentored by Dr. Jenny Ting, a distinguished professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Genetics.

Xiangxiang (Allen) Hu, MS, received a Royster Fellowship from the UNC Graduate School in 2017. The Royster Society of Fellows offers membership to selected graduate students entering graduate programs across the UNC-Chapel Hill campus and provides five years of financial support, while encouraging interdisciplinary exchange, intellectual enrichment, leadership, and professional development.

Sehrish Javaid, BDS, MS, passed her qualifying written and oral exam in the summer of 2017. She is mentored by Dr. Channing Der, Kenan Distinguished Professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Pharmacology, and Dr. Adrienne Cox, associate professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Radiation Oncology.

Deepika Jayaprakash, BDS, MS, received a Doctoral Merit award from the UNC Graduate School in 2017.

Zhe Miao, BDS, MS, received the Derek T. Turner Award at the 2017 Dental Research in Review Day for his poster presentation. He joined the lab of Dr. Richard Loeser, director of UNC Thurston Arthritis Research Center and Herman and Louise Smith Distinguished Professor in the Division of Rheumatology, Allergy and Immunology, in May 2017.

Aatish Thennavan, BDS, MDS, passed his qualifying written and oral exam in the summer of 2017. He is mentored by Dr. Charles Perou, the May Goldman Shaw Distinguished Professor of Molecular Oncology and professor in Genetics and Pathology & Laboratory Medicine in the School of Medicine’s Department of Genetics.
Sing Wai Wong, BDS, MS, received the 2017 Patrick M. Flood award for his outstanding leadership, mentorship, community service, and academic achievements within the OCBM program and beyond. He received the Freedland Advanced Dental Education Fellowship and the Graduate Student Transportation Grant in 2017. Dr. Wong was chosen to present his research, “The Role of Autophagy Machinery in Osteoclastogenesis”, at the 15th Annual National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) sciences days. He is co-mentored by Dr. Ching-Chang Ko, Hale Distinguished Professor in the School of Dentistry’s Department of Orthodontics, and Dr. Jennifer Martinez, tenure-track investigator at NIH/NIEHS.

Lu Sun, BDS, MDS, received the Freedland Advanced Dental Education Fellowship in 2017. He is mentored by Dr. Steven Offenbacher, Kenan Distinguished Professor in the School of Dentistry’s Department of Periodontology.

Congratulations to Oral & Craniofacial Biomedicine Graduates!

Steven Kim, DDS, DMD, MSc, PhD, (2017) is currently a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Steven Offenbacher, Kenan Distinguished Professor, in the UNC School of Dentistry’s Department of Periodontology. He also teaches pre-doctoral classes and works in the General and Oral Health Center (GO Health), a clinical research center.

Eman Hefni, BDS, MS, (2017) is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Maryland, Baltimore in the Biomedical Sciences PhD program.
Recent Student Publications

2017 Journal Articles


2017 Abstracts – Published


2017 Abstracts – Unpublished


**Wong SW**, HC. Tseng, W Pan, J Martinez, CC Ko. Optineurin deficiency causes Paget’s disease of the bone by increasing osteoclastogenesis. Poster session presented at: Annual NIH Graduate Student Research Symposium. 2017 Feb 13; Bethesda, MD.
Alumni News

**Sompson Bencharit**, DDS, MS, PhD, FACP, (2003) had his lab featured in the Virginia Commonwealth University News. He was also inducted as a Fellow of the Pierre Fauchard Academy, an international honorary dental organization.

**Shijia Hu**, BDS, MS, PhD, (2016) and his wife, Dr. Bien Lai, a UNC School of Dentistry pediatric dentistry alumna, are proud parents of Madison Hu, born on September 19, 2017. Congratulations, Shijia and Bien!

**Emad Khan**, BDS, MS, PhD, (2007) was elected to serve as Middle East Regional Director for the International Association of DentoMaxillofacial Radiology for 2017-2019.

**Christine Kim’s**, PhD, (2016) middle author paper, *Evaluation of a SPLUNC1-Derived Peptide for the Treatment of Cystic Fibrosis Lung Disease*, was published in the American Physiological Society. Dr. Kim is a postdoctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing in Wickström lab and is working on the regulation of hair follicle stem cell fate.

**Yu Leo Lei**, DDS, PhD, (2011) won first-place for the 2017 IADR Joseph Lister Award for New Investigators. The award recognizes young investigators within 10 years of their first academic appointment whose research is original with potential for public health impact in oral disease prevention or oral health promotion. Dr. Lei is an assistant professor of dentistry and otolaryngology at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor.

**Chaitanya Puranik**, BDS, MS, PhD, (2013) completed his Pediatric Dentistry Certificate in 2017 and passed his American Board of Pediatric Dentistry (ABPD) written boards. His current fellowship includes research work in Dr. Mina Mina’s craniofacial biology lab at the University of Connecticut Health Center, School of Dentistry. He will complete his fellowship in June 2018.
**Shannon Wallet, PhD, (2005)** was featured in the 2017 October press release of AADR Strides in Science.

**Sarah Council Windsor, PhD, (2013)** and her husband, David, are expecting their first child in May 2018. Congratulations, Sarah and David!

**Shaoping Zhang, DDS, MS, PhD, (2011)** received a K99/R00 Dentist Scientist Pathway to Independence Award from National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) for his project titled *Investigating the Role of Tumor Necrosis Factor-Receptor Associated Factor 3 Interacting Protein (TRAF3IP2), A Critical Adaptor in IL-17 Pathway*. This award provides funding for 5-years of basic scientific study aiming to understand how dysfunction of interleukin (IL)-17 pathway is involved in the pathogenesis of periodontal disease. Dr. Zhang was promoted to Research Assistant Professor in the UNC School of Dentistry’s Department of Periodontology in August 2017. He is also the attending faculty member at the General & Oral (GO) Health Clinic, a clinical research center.

**Faculty News**

**Antonio Amelio, PhD,** is the recipient of a 2018 grant from the Scripps Research Institute for his work “Development and Validation of a Genetically Engineered Model of Neurofibromatosis Type 2 to Facilitate Discovery of Neurotherapeutics”.

**Silvana Barros, DDS, MS, PhD,** is the recipient of a 2018 grant from Colgate-Palmolive for her work “Effects of Epigenetics and DNA Methylation Inhibitors on Epithelial Barrier Function”.

**Ching-Chang Ko, DDS, MS, PhD,** is the recipient of two grants for 2017 from NIH National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) for his work “Engineering novel bio-inspired materials for stem-cell mediated bone regeneration” and “Engineering novel bio-inspired materials for stem-cell mediated bone regeneration”.
Jennifer Webster-Cyriaque, DDS, PhD, is the 2017 recipient of the Hortense K. McClinton Outstanding Faculty Staff Award. The award is sponsored by BAR: Black Alumni Reunion, of UNC General Alumni Association, and honors a faculty or staff member, past or present, who has made outstanding contributions to the Carolina community. She was honored at the Light on the Hill Society Scholarship Awards Gala on Friday, Oct. 27, 2017 at the Sheraton Chapel Hill.

Patricia Miguez, DDS, MS, PhD, has been appointed an American Academy of Periodontology leader and will serve on the Research Submissions Committee for the AAP.

Steven Offenbacher, DDS, MS, PhD, is the recipient of three grants in 2017 for his work “Investigation of the Role of a Novel Periodontally Important Bacterium, Fretibacterium Fastidiosum, on Pathogenicity of the Biofilm: Host Response and Implications for Management and Control” from the Phillips Cooperation; “Periodontal Treatment to Eliminate Minority Inequality and Rural Disparities in Stroke” from the University of South Carolina; and “Role of IL-37 genetic variants in Modulating Innate Immune Response to Periodontal Pathogens” from NIH National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR).

Ceib Phillips, MS, PhD, is the recipient of a 2018 grant from Tufts University for her work “Targeting Surgeons Decisions for Lip Surgery”.

Rishma Shah, DDS, MS, PhD, won the British Orthodontic Society Special Service Award for service to the specialty of orthodontics.

Mitsuo Yamauchi, DDS, PhD, is the recipient of a 2017 grant from the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center for his work “Regulation of Lung Cancer Metastasis by a Pro-collagen Lysine Hydroxylase”.

Rishma Shah, DDS, MS, PhD, won the British Orthodontic Society Special Service Award for service to the specialty of orthodontics.
Message from Paul Gardner
Executive Director
Dental Foundation of North Carolina

We certainly have some of the best physical facilities for oral and craniofacial research, and now we need to make sure we can support our Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine PhD students at the UNC School of Dentistry in acquiring new research skills, preparing for future careers, and occasionally celebrating accomplishments. To do that we need more than the generous funding provided each year by the School of Dentistry. We need your support for the Dental Foundation of North Carolina (DFNC).

Contributions to the Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine fund will be most helpful because such gifts provide the most flexibility for the program director and the executive committee to support individual students and the program as a whole. “We’re grateful for the funding from the School of Dentistry and the State of North Carolina,” Dr. Ceib Phillips, program director of Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine, says. “But private dollars will help us send our students to special research workshops and career and professional conferences, and, eventually, to provide a Dental Foundation Scholarship. Frankly, it’s almost impossible to do those things now as state and grant funding becomes more limited and constrained. We encourage alumni and friends to contribute to the Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine Fund or any of the other DFNC funds that assist student researchers within the School of Dentistry.”

It’s very easy to make your tax-deductible contribution to the Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine Fund. You can send a check to:

Dental Foundation of North Carolina
Campus Box 7450
1090 First Dental Building
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7451

Or you can go to the school’s website and make a secure credit card gift:

https://secure.dev.unc.edu/gift/

We’ll also be happy to help you set up monthly or quarterly credit card charges or automatic bank drafts.

Private dollars are critical to ensure Carolina Dentistry remains one of the top dental schools in the United States. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me or Dr. Ceib Phillips:

Dr. Paul Gardner
paul_gardner@dentistry.unc.edu
919-537-3258

Dr. Ceib Phillips
ceib_phillips@unc.edu
919-537-3373

Thank you in advance for your support of Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine PhD program in 2018-19!