Welcome, New Students

Greetings from the Director

We have a new name and a departmental home! Oral and Craniofacial Health Sciences department has been created within the School of Dentistry and Dr. Eric Everett is the chair. The department will house our program and biomedical faculty. 2018 was an exciting year with new students, graduations, and student awards. The OCBM students (and our alumni!) are amazing people – spending very long hours doing exceptional research while never losing sight of the importance and value of colleagues, friends and community and work-life integration.

Stay in touch and come visit!

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TOP LEFT: Kaixin Liang’s poster presentation; Lu Sun, winner of Patrick M. Flood award, with Dr. Ceib Phillips; Sehrish Javaid, leading volunteers at SECU Family House; graduates Kevin Byrd, Ning Cheng, and Lu Sun; Sehrish Javaid, AADR student abstract award; orientation lunch with OCBM students.
Welcome, New Students!

2018

**Kaixin Liang, BDS**, received her Bachelor of Dental Science from Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2018. She served as a teaching assistant in 2016-2018. She enjoys singing and watching movies.

**PhD Student Accomplishments**

**Ali Altitinch**, **BDS, MS**, joined the lab of Alexander Kabanov, PhD, DSc, Mescal Swain Ferguson Distinguished Professor and Director Center for Nanotechnology in Drug Delivery, and co-director of the Carolina Institute for Nanomedicine, in the Eschelman School of Pharmacy, in July 2018.

**Meng Deng, BDS, MS**, is the recipient of the Derek T. Turner Award from the UNC-CH School of Dentistry, the Freedland Advance Dental Education Fellowship from the Dental Foundation of North Carolina, the Graduate Fellow Award from Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, an AAI Trainee Abstract Award, and the Keystone Symposia Scholarship from Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology. Dr. Meng is mentored by Dr. Jenny Ting, a professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Genetics.

**Xiangxiang Hu (Allen) Hu, MS**, joined the lab of Ching-Chang Ko, DDS, MS, PhD, G. Fred Hale Distinguished Professor and Chair and Program Director of the Department of Orthodontics in the UNC-CH School of Dentistry, in May 2018.

**Sehrish Javaid, BDS, MS**, is the recipient of the Freedland Advance Dental Education Fellowship from the Dental Foundation of North Carolina and the Student Abstract Award from the AADR National Student Research Group. She is mentored by Dr. Channing Der, Kenan Distinguished Professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Pharmacology, and Dr. Adrienne Cox, professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Radiation Oncology and the Department of Pharmacology.
Deepika Jayaprakash, BDS, MS, joined the lab of Cyrus Vaziri, PhD, Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine in the School of Medicine in the department of Biochemistry and Biophysics, in August 2018.

Lauren Katz, DDS, passed her qualifying written and oral exam in the summer of 2018. She is the recipient of the Osseointegration Foundation Travel Grant from the Academy of Osseointegration. She is an implant fellow in the Department of Prosthodontics. Dr. Katz is mentored by Rishma Shah, PhD, MSc, BDS, assistant professor in the department of orthodontics.

Zhe (Michael) Miao, BDS, MS, passed his qualifying written and oral exam in the summer of 2018. He is mentored by Richard Loeser, Jr., MD, director of UNC Thurston Arthritis Research Center and Herman and Louise Smith Distinguished Professor in the Division of Rheumatology, Allergy and Immunology.

Lufei Wang, BDS, MS, is the recipient of the M. Ross Johnson Family Memorial Research Fellowship from UNC-CH Graduate School. He joined the lab of Ching-Chang Ko, DDS, MS, PhD, G. Fred Hale Distinguished Professor and Chair and Program Director of the Department of Orthodontics in the UNC-CH School of Dentistry, in March 2018.

Sing Wai Wong, BDS, MS, is the recipient of the Derek T. Turner Award from the NC-AADR Dental Research in Review Day, the Anna and G. Randolph Babcock Fellowship from UNC-CH School of Dentistry, the Dissertation Completion Fellowship from UNC-CH Graduate School, the Education Grant for the Osteology Research Academy from the Osteology Foundation, and the Fellows Award for Research Excellence from NIH. 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.
Congratulations to Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine Graduates!

Kevin Byrd, DDS, PhD (2017) began his periodontology residency at UNC-CH School of Dentistry in July 2018. He is a postdoctoral research associate at UNC-CH School of Medicine with Dr. Scott Williams. His project is on oral epithelial stem/progenitor cell heterogeneity during homeostasis and wound healing. He is the recipient of the first place 2018 AADR Hatton Competition in the postdoc category, second place in the 2018 IADR Unilever Hatton Award in the senior basic science category, Derek T. Turner award finalist in the North Carolina AADR postdoc category, and UNC-CH Supervisor Special Recognition award winner.

Ning Cheng, BDS, PhD (2018) joined the lab of Calvin Kuo, MD, PhD, and is a postdoctorate fellow in the Stanford Cancer Center. She will study immunotherapeutics in patient derived organoid models. Her research will be funded by her NIH/NCI F99/K00 award.

Lu Sun, BDS, MDS, PhD (2018) received the 2018 Patrick M. Flood award for his outstanding leadership, mentorship, community service, and academic achievements within the OCBM program and beyond. He successfully defended his dissertation in the summer of 2018. He was part of Dr. Steven Offenbacher’s laboratory. He is a postdoctorate fellow at Harvard University.
Recent Student Publications

2018 Journal Articles


2018 Abstracts – Published


2018 Abstracts – Unpublished


Alumni News

**Eman Hefni, BDS, MS (2017)** is in her second year of the biomedical science PhD program at the University of Maryland Baltimore. She is preparing for her qualifying exams in April 2019.

**Sompop Bencharit, DDS, MS, PhD, FACP (2003)** was recently appointed as an Assistant Editor of the Journal of Prosthodontics, the official journal of the ACP. Dr. Bencharit is an Associate Professor and the Director of Digital Dentistry Technologies at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry and College of Engineering. His current research interests are guided implant surgery, 3D printing, and salivary proteomics.

**Brittney Ciszek, PhD (2016)** received the 2018 AAWD Colgate Award for research in recognition of her work conducted with the prenatal oral health program. She is in her third year of dental school at UNC-CH School of Dentistry.

**Christine Kim, PhD (2016)** is a postdoctoral researcher in the Wickstroem lab at the Max Planck Institute for Biology at Ageing. This year, she received the CECAD travel grant to attend the 6th Cambridge International Stem Cell Symposium where she presented her work. She is enjoying her time in Europe and traveling to different countries.

**Ning Yu, DDS, PhD (2015)** is in her final year of periodontics residency at the University of Michigan. She received the Balint Orban Memorial research competition award in the basic research category at the 2018 American Academy of Periodontology meeting in Vancouver, Canada. She would like to continue her path as a clinician-scientist upon graduation.

**Sarah (Council) Windsor, PhD (2013)** and her husband David welcomed their daughter Norah Rose Windsor into the world on May 11, 2018. Sarah is the Director of the STEM in the Park Mentoring Program at RTP, which is a program aimed to increase access to and understanding of the STEM fields to underserved populations, specifically girls, students from low-income backgrounds, and underrepresented minorities.
Alumni News, continued

Y. Leo Lei, DDS, PhD (2011) is an Assistant Professor of Dentistry and of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor. He is a core member of the Rogel Cancer Center. In 2018, his group received a new NIH R01 grant to develop a nanoparticle cancer vaccine and sensitize cold oral cancer to checkpoint blockade immunotherapy. His team also received a new NIH R03 grant to advance bioinformatics pipelines for cold cancer identification. He started to serve on NIH study sections and the UK Medical Research Council grant review panel. His graduate student from the Immunology PhD program received the prestigious Autumn Immunology Conference John Wallace Scholarship. Leo is also staying busy at home with the addition of baby Allison Lei to the family! He hopes Allison will develop the grit and enthusiasm that all Tar Heels share.

Waleerat Jeab Sukarawan, DDS, GradDip Sci (Pedo), PhD (2009) is an assistant professor in the department of pediatric dentistry at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. Her research focuses on the development of dental stem cells for therapeutics. Her recent work, "Basic fibroblast growth factor regulates phosphate/pyrophosphate regulatory genes in stem cells isolated from human exfoliated deciduous teeth," was accepted for publication in Stem Cell Research and Therapy. She is married to Dr. Preeda Pungpapong, 2005 prosthodontics alumus and former UNC-CH School of Dentistry prosthodontics faculty. They have an eight-year old son, Totti, and three-year old daughter, Tutta.
Recent Alumni Publications and Invited Lectures


**Faculty News**

**Antonio Amelio, PhD**, announced his graduate research assistant, Adele Musicant, was awarded an NRSA F31 fellowship from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. Adele’s project is titled, “The Role of CRTC1/MAML2-Mediated Interactions with CREB and MYC in Defining the Cellular Heterogeneity of Salivary Tumors.”

**Silvana Barros, DDS, MS, PhD**, is part of the winning project team, “Heterogenity in Obesity,” that received one of UNC-CH Creativity Hubs award. The winning teams will receive up to $500,000 in funding from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research to execute their proposal over the next two years.

**Eric Everett, MS, PhD**, was named the chair of the Department of Oral and Craniofacial Health Sciences.

**Sylvia Frazier-Bowers, DDS, PhD**, was appointed Assistant Dean for Inclusive Excellence and Equity Initiatives. In this role, Frazier-Bowers will spearhead diversity efforts related to the school's strategic priority to retain and recruit the very best people in a collaborative environment. Her work will focus on the identification and creation of initiatives and programs that enhance the school's culture and environment. The North Carolina Area Health Education Centers (NC AHEC) selected a proposal from Frazier-Bowers, to receive a Campus Innovation Grant. Her proposal, “Dental and Oral Health Community Scholars Program,” (DOCS) will receive funding to support administrative assistants and guest speakers at interactive forums.

**Ching-Chang Ko, DDS, MS, PhD**, is the recipient of a 2019 grant from the American Association of Orthodontists Foundation for his work “Identifying factors that impact orthodontist decision making, job satisfaction and earning potential.”
Faculty News, continued

Asma Khan, BDS, PhD, is the recipient of a 2018 grant from the American Association of Endodontics Foundation (AAEF) for her work “Efficacy of Tetracaine/Oxymetazoline Nasal Spray for Endodontic Treatment,” a 2018 grant from the NIH National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) for her work “Engineering novel bio-inspired materials for stem-cell mediated bone regeneration,” and a 2019 grant from Kitware, Inc. for her work “Automated Dental Fracture Detection Using High Resolution CBCT and Advanced Image Analysis.” She has been recognized by the Journal of Endodontics with the best article award in the category of “Basic Research – Biology” for her work, “Viral MicroRNAs Identified in Human Dental Pulp.” We wish her all the best as she returns to her alma mater, the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas in 2019.

Patricia Miguez, DDS, MS, PhD, is the recipient of a 2018 grant from the Osteology Foundation for her work “The Effect of a Dietary Phytochemical on the Healing of the Aging Bone.” Miguez also received the 2018 Junior Faculty Development Award from UNC and has been elected secretary/treasurer of the IADR Women in Science Network.

Steven Offenbacher, DDS, PhD, MMSc, W.R. Kenan Distinguished Professor and former chair of the Department of Periodontology, passed away unexpectedly on August 9, 2018. He was 67 years old. Offenbacher enjoyed an incredibly noteworthy career, and he was perhaps most well-known for introducing and popularizing the term “periodontal medicine.” He is credited with pioneering the work that illustrated the relationship between periodontal disease and cardiovascular disease, and also that between periodontal disease and adverse pregnancy outcomes. Offenbacher joined the UNC-CH School of Dentistry faculty in 1991. He was appointed the chair of the Department of Periodontology in 2010, after serving four months as interim chair, and stepped down from that position on July 30, 2018 with plans to remain on the school’s faculty and refocus his efforts on scholarship and mentorship. In 2003, he was appointed the OraPharma Distinguished Professor of Periodontal Medicine. During his time at UNC-CH, he also served as director of the Center for Oral and Systemic Diseases, and of the General and Oral Health Center – often called GO Health.

Rishma Shah, BDS, MSc, PhD, was selected by the UNC-CH Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) as one of the recipients of the 2018-2019 CFE/Lenovo Instructional Innovations Grants Program for her proposal titled, “Learning Through Digital Technologies How to Identify Need for Dental Treatment.” Shah is a part of the first round of proposals for the four-year CFE/Lenovo Instructional Innovation Grant Program.

Inna Tchivileva, MD, MS, is the recipient of a 2018 grant from the NIH National Institution of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) for her work “Effect of COMT genetic polymorphisms on response to propranolol therapy in Temporomandibular Disorder.”
**Faculty News, continued**

**Jennifer Webster-Cyriaque, DDS, PhD**, is the recipient of a 2018 grant from the NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) for her work “NC TraCS Institute - Home of the CTSA award at UNC- TL1” and a 2018 grant from Meharry Medical College for her work “Influence of Dental Care Intervention on HIV-related Inflammatory Biomarkers.” She received a Linked Training Award from the Department of Health and Human Services at the National Institute of Health for her post-doctoral program, "North Carolina Translational and Clinical Science Institute (NC TraCS) TL1." Webster-Cyriaque was also elected chair of the National American Association for Dental Research’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

**Tim Wright, DDS, MS**, was named the president-elect of the American Association for Dental Research (AADR).
Message from Paul Gardner
Executive Director of the 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-CH School of Dentistry in acquiring new research skills, preparing for future careers, and 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/](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:

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**Thank you in advance for your support of Oral and Craniofacial Biomedicine PhD program in 2019!**