

A look into the modern flossify of the VCU School of dentistry

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Sprucing Up the Pediatric Dentistry Clinic

By now, you may have had a chance to see the bright, cheerful new murals in the Pediatric Dentistry clinic. Created last November, these murals were a collaboration between volunteers from the School of Dentistry and the community with local nonprofit Arts in the Alley (AiTA). Arts in the Alley is a Richmond-based organization that takes a creative approach to uniting and supporting communities.



Kelly Campbell, VCU Pediatric Dentistry

A collaboration of coordinators and artists, Arts in the Alley is headed by Mike and Jeanine Guidry. They work with local communities and organizers to beautify and brighten spaces, working in alleyways, boarded-up businesses, and more – including the new murals in the Pediatric Dentistry clinic! Once a site is chosen, AiTA will take the time to clean their space, with the team of volunteers working on things like trash removal, weeding, and removing any broken glass or safety hazards, preparing the artists' workspace.

When the space is ready, they bring together local residents of all ages to join their volunteer artists in creating beautiful murals. The philosophy behind their approach is unique and productive. In bringing residents together, not only does AiTA offer a constructive, positive

pastime – they create a portable space and a pleasant atmosphere in which community members meet and discuss ways to connect and make a difference. “We use the act of cleaning and decorating spaces to bring local residents and businesses together,” writes Jeanine. “Each mural-painting event itself is used to lay the groundwork for developing partnerships in the community.”

Julie Soung, BSDH, RDH, our Dental Hygienist and Predoctoral Coordinator in the Pediatric Dentistry department, reached out to Arts in the Alley and worked to coordinate and recruit volunteers for this wonderful event. Our patients enjoy the murals as much as we enjoyed making them! We extend our thanks once again to Arts in the Alley, to Julie Soung, and to all the volunteers who participated.



Jennifer Shim, D2018

ASDA National Leadership Conference

I was really grateful to have had the opportunity to attend the National Leadership Conference this year. I learned a lot about what ASDA is doing on a more national level to help us students. Sometimes, I think it's difficult for us to see what ASDA can do for us on a more local level or at our school, but it is important to know that our opinions matter and are impacting our futures as we continue with our profession.

Some of the important topics discussed include licensure exams and post-graduate options. These topics were especially helpful for me as a second year student, since we haven't had much exposure to these subjects. As many of us might know, the current licensure exam system (clinical portion) has been very controversial. Each state only accepts certain exams, and not all schools offer each type of exam. There is also a discrepancy in the validity and reliability of these exams. Lastly, the ethical concerns are apparent as there are students that fail, meaning we are leaving patients with restorations or periodontal conditions below the standard of care.

ASDA has come up with an interim policy that addresses these concerns and has the following qualities:

- Does not use human subjects in a live clinical testing scenario
- Is psychometrically valid and reliable in its assessment
- Is reflective of the scope of current dental practice
- Is universally accepted

ASDA's idea of an ideal exam would include the following:

- Manikin-based kinesthetic assessment
- A non-patient based Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) and
- Submission of a portfolio of comprehensive patient care

Another topic presented at the conference was finding your ideal residency program. The speaker emphasized doing a lot of research on the different programs you're interested in. This includes looking at the school's webpage, discussing with faculty and alumni from your school, dentists, the current residents in the program, and possibly doing an on-site visit. It's important to think about what that program focuses on, how diverse the faculty are, patient volume, use of new technology at the program, and anything else that you think will effect you once you leave the program.

There were a lot of other great topics covered during the conference that can be accessed on ASDA's website, along with a lot of other helpful resources.



Kayla Roe presenting at NLC 2015



VCU ASDA at NLC 2015



Dado Kim, Soheil Rostami, Jennifer Shim, and Madison Wallace at NLC 2015



Dado Kim, D2018

“You doctor yet?” “No, Dad. not yet!” Having been raised by Asian parents, I know all about the pressure of getting good grades. It followed me until the very day I got into the dental school. It was a lot of pressure, but now I am free from this burden. My dad moved on to my younger brothers, demanding the very best from them to get those As in classes and ace that SAT. Oh, freedom tastes so sweet! Yet, I still strive for excellence in all my classes in dental school. I may have been conditioned just like Pavlov’s dog to yearn for that “A”. Maybe it’s because all these classes are very important in making me a skillful dentist. Either way, I can’t easily forget about the bad grades. It fuels me to do better. But, one important thing that I learned is that the dental school is not all about getting good grades. Volunteering at Mission of Mercy, ReStore Habitat, James River Cleanup, and Special Olympics is a good example of dental like outside of school. I was reminded of why I am going through this vigorous workload: to learn skills to be able to serve the community. The feeling that you get providing these services cannot be measured on a GPA scale, but will impact many lives.

There are even yet other aspect of dental school that I wouldn’t want to miss out on. I had many fortunate opportunities being able to go to various ASDA meetings. The District 4 meeting in January, 2015 was the first conference that I attended. During that time, I realized there is so much to learn in the field of dentistry. I was exposed to valuable information in different subjects: learning about residency programs, making a CV, being a leader, and other dental issues such as midlevel providers, and dental student debt. The second meeting I attended was Annual Session in Boston. I had the chance to meet the past ADA president Dr. Maxine Feinberg to discuss the student debt crisis. At the end of our talk, I was pleased to hear that ADA is concerned with the dental student’s worries. But, she also reminded me that it is our voice that powers organized dentistry to protect our future. Not only were these meetings informative, but I also had an immense amount of fun making new friends.

I am really grateful for all these moments in dental school. Sometimes, I do complain about being 0.1% away from a better grade (one quiz question), but again, it’s not all about the grade. I am glad to be in this community surrounded by people full of passion and motivation to do well and to serve others. In my eyes, the future is bright.



Dental Hygiene in Jamaica



Kristin Greene, DH2016

Being a part of the VCU dental hygiene program is an experience beyond words. You have to be in it to believe it. I knew being accepted into the program I would have multiple opportunities to practice my skills. One of the ways we practice our clinical skills is by giving back to the community. However, one of the greatest honors as a senior was being chosen to attend the Jamaica Project. Out of the local opportunities in Virginia, I was able to spread my passion of giving back traveling to another country providing the same services. The VCU School of Dentistry has been providing free dental care to the Long Pond Clinic in Trelawny, Jamaica for 20 years. The project consists of providing dental care to the local community for 3 weeks. Each week a group of dental students, faculty and a dental hygiene student work in the clinic. We provided fillings, extractions and cleanings. The population served were mainly sugar cane factory workers. The sugar cane industry is lucrative for the area. We saw the workers, their families and children.

Overall, the experience was incredible. This project has a major impact on a community who is hardworking, yet have no access to dental services. As a clinician, the opportunity was gratifying. I attended this trip with great mentors and colleges. Alongside working with the dental students I could sense the bond that we encounter, which we will talk about for years to come. Providing dental services to my local community or even internationally is not another event just to put another notch in my belt. It is a constant reminder why I love my profession. I personally receive so much satisfaction. I highly encourage this experience. Take a chance, make a change in your life and others as well.



Delegating: A How-To

“You can do anything, but NOT everything.” In short, you need help. This is where delegating comes in. So as future dentists, how can we learn to empower others to act for us? Here is the major prerequisite: TRUST. You have to believe in others in order to delegate to them, otherwise it won't work.

So how does one delegate?

- Delegate to develop. Build leaders within your team to get the job done.
- Delegate to strengths. Individualize tasks for those who can best accomplish them.
- Clear direction and communication. Clarify expectations: results, deadlines, etc.
- Support and monitor. No micromanaging - don't undermine team confidence and autonomy.



Brittany Field, D2017

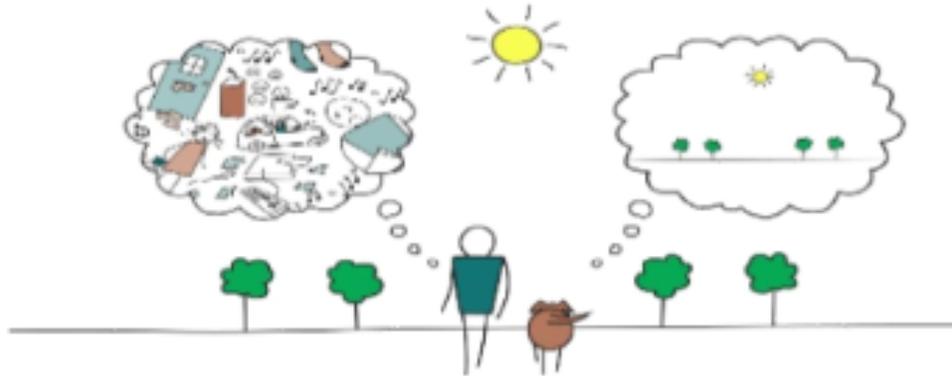
Now that we have a road map, here are two speed bumps we're bound to run into. First, we think that no one else can do things as well as we can. This is false. Others may do things in a different way, but the end result is going to be the same. We're not the only ones who know how to do things and it will be our job to find the right people we can *trust* to get the job done. Second, mistakes will happen. While this is a big risk with delegating, it's worth it. As hard as it may be not to intervene, it's important to let people make mistakes so they will learn. Step in after the fact to identify the errors and help fix them so they won't happen again.

Get out there and start practicing your new delegating skills!



Mind Full or Mindful?

By Urvashi Lal



Mindfulness is the intentional focusing of one's attention on awareness of the present moment. This awareness encompasses physical sensations of external sensory inputs and interception (awareness of internal bodily sensations). Furthermore, attention is specifically focused on the internal workings of the mind, including cognitions and emotions. During mindfulness one becomes an observer of one's own stream of consciousness. (Marchand)

The hustle and bustle in our daily lives can often be overwhelming. The stress resulting from the discrepancy between the individual's ideals or expectations and the reality of occupational life is a source of burnout. Burnout is a "syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment", and mindfulness-based stress reduction has been demonstrated to help individuals more effectively manage stress, pain, and other health conditions. (Majumdar)

To perform the mindfulness exercise, sit in a comfortable position. Just concentrate on your breathing. In the beginning, the observance of one's own mind can be chaotic. The mind wanders easily and quickly. An attempt is needed to bring the attention back to breathing. With the daily practice of this exercise, the mind seems to quiet down and the realm of mindfulness is slowly unraveled.

Dr. Kabat-Zinn was the founder of the mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1979. Researches showed that mindfulness can be cultivated by such practices. Improved mindfulness has been shown to reduce suffering and improve general health and wellness among patients with chronic pain and various stress-related disorders. (Lovas)

If you are willing to start practicing mindfulness but are still unclear about how to do so, download apps on mindfulness on your smartphone. Take a one month "Mindfulness challenge". By practicing mindfulness every day for one month, it will become a habit. Decide for yourself if it is better to be "Mind Full or Mindful"!

"Refuge to man in the mind, refuge to the mind is mindfulness"- Buddha

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- Picture Credit: Google Images (Mindfulness)



Lab Technician Appreciation Day: January 15th, 2016

Meet our lab team and join us in celebrating all they do!

By Lyubov Slashcheva, D2016

A note of appreciation from Dr. Unger, Chair of the Department of Prosthodontics:

It is a pleasure to be able to provide some kind words of support for our Service Laboratory Technicians. These men and women are some of the hardest working and most caring individuals in the School of Dentistry. It has been an honor to have worked with them for over the last many years. They work tirelessly to help students by assisting them with laboratory work for their patients. They also will answer student questions and as such provide the students with very helpful information. I watch them go out of their way to assist students with solving problems. Our students truly owe them a lot for their hard work and dedication to their jobs. They have saved many a student from a "Laboratory Disaster". We are indeed fortunate to have these talented, dedicated, and helpful people in our Dental School!



Check out their answers to the following interview questions:

1. What is your favorite part about working as a lab technician and/or working at the SoD?
2. If you could do anything else for a day, what would it be?
3. What is your favorite holiday food/food in general?
4. Is there anything else that you want to share with us?

AND Join us outside of Crockett Lounge after morning clinic on Friday, January 15th, for warm drinks, sweet treats, and giving our service lab team a real lunch break so we can show and tell them how much we appreciate their exceptional work!

Eric Stoupa (27 years of service at SOD, in removable prosthodontics)

1. Student interaction! Seeing the “light bulb” come on and students gaining knowledge
2. Drag Racer
3. Chinese food
4. I am semi-retired from my movie career, plus I renovate homes part time

George Sharits, Jr

(24 years of service at SOD, 44 years of experience in fixed prosthodontics)

1. The fun part of being at the school is the daily interaction with so many people
2. I would be on a music tour through Europe with a Christian band
3. I love my mom’s fruit cake (a light cake with dried fruit)
4. I have 3 grandchildren (3 months, 11 years, and 15 years old) who are a constant amusement

Susan Wright (26 years of service at SOD in fixed and removable prosthodontics, 49 years overall)

1. Here at school, I get to work on a case from start to finish, being able to improve and maintain the quality of work I produce
2. I would be a Jet Pilot
3. Carved turkey
4. I enjoy reading mysteries; a favorite series of mine is Case Histories by Kate Atkinson

Paul Honaker

(8 years of service at SOD, 50 years as dental tech in fixed prosthodontics)

1. I’m always waiting for the next crown to make!
2. I would reserve a whole mini-golf course to enjoy with my friends and family
3. I love oysters (prepared any way) and fondly recall Dr. Wiley’s oysters when he treated the lab
4. My favorite artist is Dr. Turner a sculptor who is a dentist; he works on the eastern shore of Virginia and created the sculpture that stands in the Crockett Lounge garden

John Cziglan (over 20 years as a Certified Dental Technician, in removable prosthodontics)

1. My favorite part is anytime an understanding is achieved between providers and technicians; seeing our perspective allows us to work as a team to achieve a better outcome for the patient
2. I would run a British classic car restoration/refurbishing shop
3. International foods
4. Being outdoors and around my 4 grandchildren

Cindy Moore

(Lab Manager, 32 years of service with SOD in fixed prosthodontics)

1. I enjoy customizing teeth to make patients happy and working with a great lab team
2. I would be a wildlife animal rehabilitator
3. Take-out from Mekong
4. I enjoy my furry cat kids, reading, and am an avid computer gamer currently playing Witcher 3



A photograph by Tracie Howe, daughter of Jackie Wallace, of a man in Morocco selling teeth.

“We’ve come a long way baby!”

Spring Semester Calendar

Martin Luther King Holiday	January 18 th
VDA Day on the Hill	January 22 nd
ASDA District 4 Meeting	January 29 th -31 st
VCU Give Kids a Smile Day	February 5 th
White Coat Ceremony	February 26 th
ASDA Annual Meeting	March 2 nd -6 th
Spring Break	March 7 th -11 th
National Student Lobby Day	April 10 th -12 th
Clinic and Research Day	April 14 th
Virginia Beach MOM Project	April 30 th
Final Exam Week	May 4 th -10 th
Commencement Ceremony	May 14 th

Endodontic Department Updates

Dr. Clara Spatafore



As always there is a lot going on in the Endodontics Department here at the school. We have a new part time faculty member. His name is Dr. James Heffernan. Dr. Heffernan received his D.D.S. degree from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska in 1980. After a year as an associate in a private practice in Northern Wisconsin, he served as a dental officer in the United States Navy for ten years. He resigned from the Navy in 1991; received a Certificate in Endodontics from the Medical College of Virginia in 1993; and operated a private practice limited to endodontics in Geneva, Illinois until he retired in 2014. Dr. Heffernan came full circle in September 2015 when he returned to VCU School of Dentistry to join the faculty in the Department of Endodontics. Dr. Heffernan and his wife, Joanne, are empty nesters and have a daughter and son-in-law, Colleen and Brian, and a son, TJ. In his free time, Dr. Heffernan enjoys quality time with family and friends, sports, and exercise.

We have just finished renovating the resident’s office. Please stop by the office, Lyons room 322 and take a look at the new facility. We have had series of guest speakers presenting on various topics, remember all students and faculty are welcome to attend. We also selected our four new residents who will be entering in July 2016. Dr.s Laura Green and Richard Sedwick are VCU grads, Dr. Mei Tang who is currently serving as the intern in the Department of Endodontics and Megan Green who is from Georgia.



Dr. Heffernan and family



Making a Difference Around the Globe

By Anjum Shah

In 2008, Ms. Anjum Shah compiled an evidence-based dental hygiene program proposal for Pakistan. A summary of her work is published in the *International Journal of Dental Hygiene*. In 2012, the University of Alberta's faculty approached Ms. Shah for her assistance in the proposal and respectively for curriculum development for the Diploma of Dental Hygiene Program at Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan (AKU). After the approval of the proposal, she assisted in the development of the first competency-based dental hygiene program in Pakistan.

The dental hygiene program started in January 2015 and currently has 10 students enrolled. Ms. Shah has worked extensively with the University of Alberta's dental hygiene faculty in the development of dental hygiene curricula, syllabi, schedules, program objectives, learning objectives, and instrument kits. Ms. Shah received support from Virginia Commonwealth University's Global Education Office (through

Quest Global Impact Seed Funds) and the School of Dentistry for travel to teach in the dental hygiene program during the month of July 2015.

Her title at AKU was lecturer for the Diploma of Dental Hygiene Program, Department of Surgery. She participated in meetings, taught in the dental hygiene clinic and courses, worked on curriculum development, advised students and participated in the class of 2018 interviews. After witnessing that dentistry at AKU was problem focused and pain management only, she provided a continuing education course to dental students, residents and faculty on Caries Management by Risk Assessment.

Ms. Shah continually provides assistance to the dental hygiene program and students. She hopes to have another opportunity in the future to visit and teach in the dental hygiene program.





Karoline Seekford, D2018

Medfest is a one day event that provides free medical exams for more than 100 Richmond students with intellectual disabilities. This event gives the students the potential to be cleared for sports participation, while also diagnosing these students with previously undiagnosed disorders, educating them about their health, and teaching those professionals volunteering their time how to treat people with disabilities.

This year I had the pleasure of working with the great people of Special Olympics, and VCU Medical College of Virginia, to provide free oral screenings for these students. There were more than 10 students, residents, and faculty of VCU dental at the event volunteering their time. We welcomed these students to the event providing them with oral screenings, educating them on their brushing and flossing, and with the help from Special Olympics, we were able to give each kid a Shrek electric toothbrush (which you can imagine they were extremely happy about). This has been by far my favorite event while attending dental school. I have always been very passionate about volunteering my time with Special Olympics since attending Virginia Tech. I spent every Thursday night bowling with the athletes of the Blacksburg/Christiansburg area. While I know I was volunteering to help them, I have always felt that I have gained more from the experience than anything else. No matter how my week was going, I left every Thursday night with a smile on my face. I am extremely happy that we have been able to expand this very special and exciting event to include oral health.

This event would not have been possible without the support of the VCU Dental Pediatric Department, Special Care Interest Group, the VCU Marketing Department, Psi Omega Fraternity, the SO Urban Director Floyd Miller, and the Medfest Coordinator Priya Chandan.

Introducing: Kid's Korner

Looking for a convenient and bellyaching fun way to get volunteer hours in between your busy class schedule? A collaboration between the Tooth Wigglers and VCU's Pediatric Dentistry department are launching "Kid's Korner" inspired by the D2's pumpkin decorating community service event. The Pediatric Dentistry department will organize an activity (arts and crafts, story time, etc) for the children in their waiting room. The Tooth Wigglers will provide 1-2 pre-doctoral volunteers to preside over the activity table. Kid's Korner will take place every other Friday. If you're thinking, "Sign me up!", look out for an email with more details from the Tooth Wigglers!



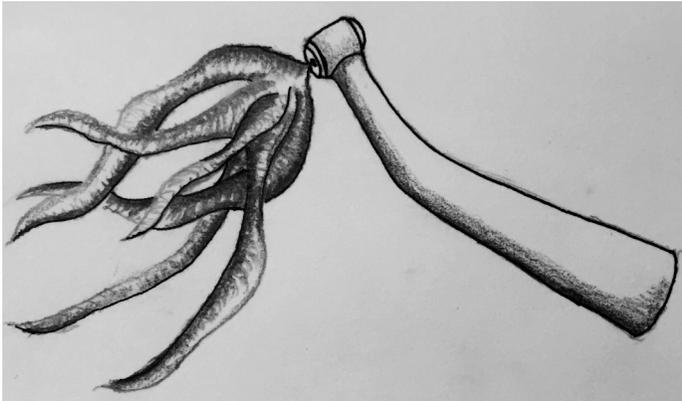
Claire Krueger, D2018



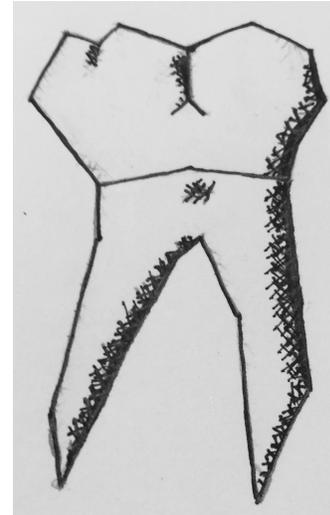
Georgi Talmazov, D2019

Quick Sketches

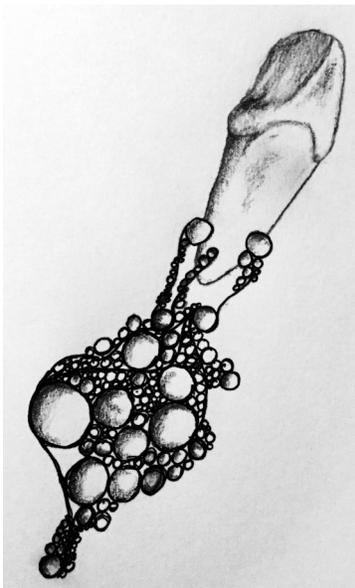
Inspired by Day to Day Life as a Dental Student



"Perspective" is a sketch that brings together two rather opposing views between the dentist and a patient. The dentist sees the handpiece as a means of removing disease while returning form and function to the dentition. The patient, on the contrary, perceives the instruments with fear and although knowing that the handpiece is used as a means to bring ailment, the association with pain often gives an illusion akin to torture.



"Basic" portrays simplicity in a cartoon fashion. Dental anatomy can be quite complex; however, any such topic when broken down to its core tenets exhibits simplicity. Teeth have numerous pits, cusps, and ridges which come together to form the complex and continuous anatomy of function. Nevertheless, as we step back the anatomy can be reduced to manageable geometry that serves as a scaffold for learning and understanding.



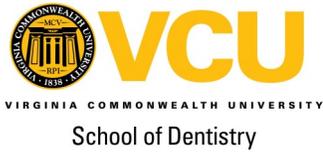
"The Disease" is an abstract depiction of a maxillary central incisor that is slowly enveloped by an acute infection. Although purulent exudate is not often granular, each "bubble" is meant to represent the plethora of diseases that can affect the dentition. Here, the infection is immense; however, the minute interaction with the tooth that is depicted goes to show that superficially things are not always as they seem to be.



"Dental Insignia" depicts a central mandibular incisor superimposed over a dental mirror and explorer, surrounded by a vine. The sketch portrays a mirror and explorer instruments as part of this symbolic insignia because of their fundamental use in diagnosing disease as well as a conduit for the dentist's senses in assessment and instrumentation. The vine depicts historical Celtic symbolism for continuation, connection, and consciousness. Clinicians, such as ourselves, need to be conscious of moral values all the while continuously connecting and sympathizing with people in order to make a difference.



Virginia Commonwealth University
American Student Dental Association



Please submit and stories, questions, comments, or concerns to Claire Krueger at kruegercl2@vcu.edu