Creating Level Playing Fields in the Classroom

Jean Wu, a senior lecturer in American studies in the School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts, talked about how students experience learning during the fourth session of the Adapting to Diversity in Dentistry Series on February 20.

“Studies of all levels of classrooms show that formal learning environments are not level playing fields for all of our students,” Wu says, “despite demonstrated excellent preparation and prior performance. Our best intentions as teachers can be thwarted by this kind of unevenness of students’ experiences.”

In discussing the culture of students and best practices, Wu asked the audience to think about these questions: What do we need to be aware of in how students experience their learning? What are some strategies for creating learning environments that have the best potential for leveling the playing fields of our teaching spaces?”

A Primer on Externships

Students in the Class of 2014 learned about externship opportunities during the annual Community Service Learning Externship (CSLE) Forum on January 30. Coordinated by CSLE director Cynthia Yered and Patricia DiAngelis, the event featured presentations by preceptors about 16 of the program’s 24 externship sites. The afternoon session included a presentation on Commission on Dental Accreditation competencies by Mark Nehring; an overview of the MPH degree program by Wanda Wright and Jennifer Au and a calibration exercise on TUSK, the Tufts University Sciences Knowledgebase.

Alum Elected Vice President of ICD

Joseph Kenneally, D81, who practices in Biddeford, Maine, has been elected vice president of the International College of Dentists. He will become president of the organization in 2015. Kenneally has
received numerous leadership awards from the American Dental Association, the Maine Dental Association, the Yankee Dental Congress and the University of New England. His ICD activities have been numerous at the New England District, the USA Section and the international levels. He chaired the Information Technology Committee for many years and helped guide the organization’s electronic communications and web media efforts.

**Outreach to Honduras**

A Tufts Dental team provided care to patients at the Andrew Health Clinic in El Castaño, Honduras, during the first 10 days of February. The nonprofit Luke World Missions operates the clinic.

**Hitesh Tolani**, a general practice resident; **Temi Maiyegun**, D13; **Christine Cao**, D13; **Roz Najafabadi**, D13; and **Amy Nguyen** D12, joined Honduran dentists and dental students and dental graduates from Penn, Columbia and NYU in treating more than 600 patients, 400 of whom were children living in slums or orphanages. The Tufts team worked side-by-side with the Honduran dental students, who also served as translators.

Tufts’ Department of Public Health and Community Service donated toothbrushes, toothpaste and fluoride. The Tufts team also brought with them donated clothes, toys and other items for the clinic patients.

**Thanks to Our Volunteer Faculty**

Dean **Huw Thomas** hosted the school’s first reception to recognize the contributions of volunteer faculty on January 31. The event, coordinated by **Eileen Mahoney**, was held at the Westin Waterfront during Yankee Dental Congress. Fifty faculty members and their department chairs attended.

**Notable People**

**Michael Chin** is the dental school’s new web content specialist. Prior to coming to Tufts in January, Chin was a founding member and editor of Color Magazine, where he oversaw the editorial operations and managed the website. He previously worked as a freelance media analyst, journalist and web developer. He holds a B.A. in journalism and communications from Northeastern University. He is the primary contact for making updates to the school website and can be reached at Michael.chin@tufts.edu.

**Harish Gulati** (diagnosis and health promotion) gave a talk titled “To Post or Not to Post” at Yankee Dental Congress on Feb 2.

**Aidee Herman** (periodontology) gave a lecture on “Multicultural Crisis in Oral Health in America: The Role and Need of More Mentors and Leaders in the Dental Field” during the 88th annual Greater New York Dental meeting last fall. At the December meeting of the Better Oral Health for Massachusetts
Coalition, Herman received the Excellence in Community Oral Health Award, which recognizes individuals and/or community organizations working to improve oral health for residents of the Commonwealth. In January Herman gave a motivational lecture celebrating National Mentoring Month at the Madison Park Technical Vocational High School in Roxbury to an audience that included 27 dental assistant students, 17 nursing students and 17 medical assistant students. In February she organized a Children’s Oral Health Month outreach at the Neighborhood Involvement for Children’s Education (NICE) in Roxbury, where 32 preschool children received oral hygiene instruction, oral hygiene kits and dental screenings. Yusuf Bhatti and Christian Benitez, both D14, volunteered at the event.

David Leader (diagnosis and health promotion) presented a Minuteman lecture on “Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease and Oral Health” on February 2 to a sold-out crowd of more than 200. The previous day he was inducted into the Pierre Fauchard Academy.


Morton Rosenberg, D’74 (oral and maxillofacial surgery) has been elected to the Society for Pediatric Sedation (SPS) Board of Directors for a three year term. The Society for Pediatric Sedation® (SPS) (http://www.pedsedation.org) is the international multidisciplinary leader in the advancement of pediatric sedation by promoting safe, high quality care, innovative research, and quality professional education.