A Message from Dean Greg Chadwick

What a great feeling it is to include alumni in our newsletter distribution list for the first time. ECU graduated its inaugural class of Doctors of Dental Medicine in May, and now many of our alums are practicing in North Carolina. Several more are in residency programs with intent to practice here in the future. There are so many people to acknowledge and thank for this milestone that I hardly know where to begin. Let it suffice to say that supporters, faculty, staff, students and families contributed monumentally to the graduation of the Class of 2015, and we are grateful for everyone’s hard work.

We celebrated additional milestones in academic year 2014-2015. It was the first year that our student body included all four predoctoral classes. We also opened three more community service learning centers in rural North Carolina communities, giving fourth-year students exceptional hands-on experience treating patients and contributing to a healthier population. New centers opened in Robeson County, Davidson County, and Spruce Pine, joining centers already serving patients in Ahoskie, Elizabeth City, Lillington, and Sylva. Our eighth and final center will open in Brunswick County this winter.

In March, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) granted our school full accreditation with no recommendations, wrapping up a lengthy initial accreditation process in which many faculty and staff members spent long hours. My thanks to all of them.

We are excited now to open another chapter in our short history. The school held an inaugural Celebration of Research and Scholarship in August to highlight faculty and student research, including projects such as the conversion of health records to informative data and a study of oral health literacy in eastern North Carolina. We anticipate that the community service learning centers will create exceptional access to diverse populations for research that will advance clinical care. ECU has begun construction on a 34,000 square foot research facility on the fourth floor of Ross Hall that will provide a state-of-the-art environment for research and discovery. The new facility will be completed by August 2016. My thanks to Dr. Sharon Gordon, associate dean for research, for heading up these efforts.

While mentioning milestones, the school has treated over 26,000 patients across the state, providing care for at least one patient from 95 of North Carolina’s 100 counties.

Thanks to each and every one of our alumni and friends for your financial support and continued dedication to our mission. As part of the ECU School of Dental Medicine family, you are always welcome to visit us across the state.

Sincerely,
Greg Chadwick, Dean
School celebrates inaugural class graduation

May 8, 2015 was a milestone for the school and for the fifty graduates who have seen many firsts over their four years at ECU. The inaugural class celebrated with faculty, friends and families at ECU’s Commencement at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium and again at the school’s Convocation Ceremony (hooding) on May 9 in Wright Auditorium.

“As the inaugural class, you have helped build and shape the school,” said Dean Greg Chadwick, “and we are incredibly proud of every one of you. Always remember who you are, what you stand for and where you’re from.”

Several new traditions were established at the Convocation, including the use of a new ceremonial mace, lilac and black robes, and the reading of the class pledge.

“My voice will comfort, my hands will heal and my heart will be open to all,” the graduates said in unison, led by Dr. Michael Scholtz, assistant dean for extramural clinical practices. Scholtz directs operations of community service learning centers across the state where the students completed rotations during their fourth year. Many of the grads will remain in North Carolina to enter private practice or general dentistry residency programs.

“You're from North Carolina – you represent its wonderful history and spirit,” said Dr. Richard Valachovic, president and CEO of the American Dental Education Association and convocation keynote speaker. “You’re entering an incredibly vibrant and wonderful profession. The possibilities before you are endless.”

The Class of 2015 left an endowed gift to the school’s patient care fund and presented an Outstanding Faculty Award to Dr. Kentaro Ikeda, oral medicine section chief.

Graduation exercises were the culminating events in a week-long celebration that also included North Carolina Dental Society Signing Day, Omicron Kappa Upsilon induction, Class of 2015 Recognition Breakfast, a reception by the Student National Dental Association, and a special reception for donors and early supporters of the school.

Class of 2015 leaves endowment for patient care

While the Class of 2015 prepared for life after graduation, they were also preparing to leave a gift to the school. The students established the Inaugural Class Patient Care Endowment to provide support for patients in need at Ross Hall clinics and to broaden opportunities for dental students.

The endowed gift, which received 100% participation from the 50 graduates and matching funds from the ECU Medical and Health Sciences Foundation, currently stands at $34K.

Dr. Walsh said, “The Class of 2015 takes great pride in the palpable impact that the school is already having on North Carolina, and we are inspired by our faculty’s commitment to service. Our dedication to carrying out the school’s mission and fulfilling our class pledge extends beyond our years here. It is with this in mind that we have established the patient care fund.”

In an earlier letter to the faculty, Dr. Cochran wrote, “We do not take your demonstration of commitment lightly. Our class has decided to emulate your passion for service and leave our mark on the School of Dental Medicine with this fund.”

To contribute to the Inaugural Class Patient Care Endowment, please contact Kristen Ward, director of development, School of Dental Medicine, at wardk@ecu.edu or 252-744-2239.
Mace brings new tradition

A new ceremonial mace was used to lead the academic procession at the School of Dental Medicine’s Convocation Ceremony honoring the Class of 2015 in May, establishing another proud tradition. The mace was crafted from solid walnut, a native wood of North Carolina. A four-sided crown bears medallions with the image of the Seals of the State of North Carolina, ECU, Dentistry, and the School of Dental Medicine. The mace was created by nationally known North Carolina fine woodturners Mr. Frank Penta and Mr. Don Leydens and initial dental school advisory board member Dr. Gordon DeFries. Special thanks to Dr. Defries for bearing the mace during the Inaugural Convocation.

Class of 2015 academic honors and awards

A recognition breakfast on May 6 hosted by SoDM faculty honored the achievements of the inaugural graduating class. Class members received the following honors.

Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Dental Honor Society
Hannibal Alexander Crisp
William Brent Curtis, Jr.
Kyle David Duncan
Matthew Joseph Morrone
Isaac Drake Morton
Adam Brock Whiteley

Academy of Dentistry International Student Servant Leadership Award
Mark Peter Dobransky

Academy of General Dentistry Senior Student Award
William Brent Curtis, Jr.

Academy of Operative Dentistry Student Award
Matthew Joseph Morrone

American Academy of Oral Medicine Award
Lara Ashlyn Holland

American Academy of Periodontology Dental Student Award
Megan Louise Mazzarella

American Association of Endodontists Student Achievement Award in Endodontics
Isaac Drake Morton

American Association of Orthodontists Award
Adam Brock Whiteley

American Association of Women Dentists Eleanor J. Bushee Senior Dental Student Award
Anna Liakh

American College of Dentists Outstanding Student Leadership Award
Adam Brock Whiteley

American College of Prosthodontists Predoctoral Student Prosthodontic Achievement Award
Shannon Elizabeth Holcomb

American Student Dental Association Award of Excellence
Credle Allen Harris

Community Commitment Award Sponsored by Practicon
Christin Ashley Carter

International College of Dentists Student Leadership Award
Kelly Frances Walsh

North Carolina Academy of General Dentistry Award
Philip Elliot Cochran

Servire Society
Jorge Eduardo Arriagada
Christin Ashley Carter
Hannibal Alexander Crisp
Bridgette Miller Jones
Diana Jean Luckhardt
Sheena Kang Neil
Amanda Dawn Greene Stroud
Vivek Nitin Thanawala
Kelly Frances Walsh
Adam Brock Whiteley
CSLCs provide supportive learning environments for students

The Class of 2016 began a new phase of their education this summer by taking up residence in underserved communities across the state and treating patients at community service learning centers (CSLCs). The rotations allow students and residents to hone their clinical skills and thrive in a real-world setting. Fourth-year students complete three rotations of approximately eight weeks at CSLCs.

For Cody Cutler, who grew up in Bath, N.C., his first two rotations have been challenging in many aspects, but easy in other ways. The most challenging part has been learning to manage the care of up to seven patients a day. The easy part has been returning to small town life.

Cody’s first rotation from mid-July to mid-September was at the CSLC-Ahoskie under the direction of faculty director Dr. Ford Grant and assistant director Dr. Robert Bencic. With the supervision of faculty and support of experienced staff, Cody and four of his classmates were expected to quicken their pace and work more independently than they had in Ross Hall clinics.

Now in his second rotation at the CSLC-Davidson County on the campus of Davidson County Community College, Cody and three classmates are supervised by faculty director Dr. Ryan Cook and assistant director Dr. Tom Smith. Following the custom at all CSLCs, the faculty, staff, students, and residents start each day with an 8:00 a.m. huddle to address questions, concerns, and the day’s events. There are no ordinary days for students at CSLCs. Every day is packed with opportunities to learn from the dental team and from patients. Students provide a wide range of patient care services, while learning about how to effectively manage a large group practice. They generally treat three or four patients in the morning session and an equal number in the afternoon.

“The people we get to work with every day are the best part of the rotation,” said Cody. “Dr. Cook and Dr. Smith are excellent teachers as well as colleagues. They assist us with procedures rather than showing us how it’s done themselves.”

Cody’s work day does not end when the last patient leaves around 5:00. After grabbing supper at a spot like Speedy’s Barbecue or Don Juan’s Mexican Restaurant, he often heads back to the CSLC to do lab work, finish patient notes, catch up on email, prepare for the next day, and work on residency applications. It’s often late before he gets to bed at the home he shares with other students and residents in the Winston-Salem area.

“At both CSLCs I’ve felt a sense of warmth that the faculty and staff were there to help me better myself and better the lives of our patients. The environment is not built to be intimidating but to develop dentists of skill and precision who have a good rapport with patients,” said Cody.

CSLC directors from across the state convene

Faculty directors of the school’s community service learning centers (CSLCs) across North Carolina held their annual retreat in Ross Hall in July. The retreat provides time for academic and clinical calibration, continuing education and face-to-face time with administrative, academic, and staff members in Greenville regarding clinical and administrative processes and issues.

This year’s retreat included continuing education in dental implantology, bone grafting, and tissue maintenance. The faculty directors enjoyed sharing success stories, best practices, and clinical tools while renewing acquaintances. The retreat is designed to inspire and reenergize directors as they work alongside students and residents treating patients in underserved areas.

CSLC faculty directors are (front row) Dr. Carol Anderson, Elizabeth City and Dr. Craig Slotke, Robeson County. (Back row) Dr. Meron Andemichael, Lillington; Dr. James Bendixen, Spruce Pine; Dr. Ford Grant, Ahoskie; and Dr. Robert Manga, Sylva. Not pictured is Dr. Ryan Cook, Davidson County.
Taylors give back to eastern NC with planned gifts

Dr. D. H. Taylor and his wife Peggy Cox Taylor are eastern North Carolina success stories. Their successes and their affinity for the people and places of the coastal plain have led the couple to commit significant planned gifts to the ECU School of Dental Medicine and College of Fine Arts and Communication. The endowed bequests will provide financial assistance for dental and art students from Pitt, Lenoir, Beaufort, and Hyde Counties in perpetuity.

D. H. (Delaney Harper) and Peggy had long and fulfilling careers before their marriage in 2002. D. H. grew up in Kinston and graduated from the UNC Chapel Hill School of Dentistry in 1972. Shortly thereafter, he was Pitt County’s public health dentist for a year before opening a general dentistry practice in Greenville, which he operated for 38 years. He now serves as an adjunct faculty member at the School of Dental Medicine and as a member of the school’s Admissions Committee. He also practices locum tenens (“one holding a place”) for other dentists in North Carolina who leave their practices temporarily.

Peggy grew up in Belhaven and earned a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) from ECU in 1970. She launched an interior design career in 1970 that lasted until her retirement in 2014. As a member of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), Peggy pried her eye for design and business sense working for development corporations in Virginia and Maryland. She transformed model homes and planned communities into trendy living spaces.

D. H. and Peggy share a life-long love of music. As children, the plays and concerts they attended at ECU were transformative. “It’s likely that we attended some of the same events at the university, but we didn’t know each other then,” said D. H. “Those events helped shape who we are.”

Both excel at piano. At a young age, D. H. performed piano recitals in Wright Auditorium and aspired to the concert stage. Recently, he got the thrill of a lifetime conducting Leroy Anderson’s “Serenata” as guest conductor of the Symphony of the Mountains at Chetola in Blowing Rock.

As a ninth grader, D. H. became enthralled by the work of his sister’s orthodontist, Dr. Robert Gilbert of Kinston. Though music remained a source of joy for D. H., dentistry became his passion.

D. H. and Peggy view their planned gifts as a way to give back to the people of eastern North Carolina. “I have been dedicated to my patients, and they have been good to me in return. We can’t take it with us, so we want to give back to the source from where it came,” D. H. said.

“We want others to have some of the advantages we have had; we simply want to share the joy of our blessings,” added Peggy.

Study Club gives scholarship

The Tar River Study Club recently created an endowed scholarship to benefit dental students in financial need from the NC Dental Society’s Fifth District.

The club was founded in 1974 with seven members and named Tar River because the original members hailed from counties bordering the Tar River. Today, members are from Pitt, Greene, Nash, Edgecombe, and Wilson counties.

Pictured front row left to right are Dr. Andrew Lee, Dr. Lee Lewis, Dr. Jasper Lewis, and Dr. Dwain Beamon. Back row: Dr. Joseph Gondrez, Dr. Wayne Holland, Dr. Danny Harris, Dr. Jim Woodard, SoDM Director of Development Kristen Ward, Dr. Dan Warren, Dr. Toby Lee, Dr. Rob McArthur, Dr. Howard Weeks, Dr. Brady Saunders, and Dr. Jason Hardee.
Makani Dollinger ’16, from Avon, N.C., has received a 2015 Colgate Research Scholarship Award in the amount of $500 from the American Association of Women Dentists. Makani presented her most recent study, “The Effect of Antiseptic Solutions on Soft Denture Relining Materials” this spring at the International Association for Dental Research General Session in Boston and at the Academy of General Dentistry Annual Session in San Francisco. Her faculty research mentors are Dr. Bobby Collins, division director of oral and maxillofacial pathology and Dr. Waldemar de Rijk, unit chief of biomedical materials sciences.

Keaton Mash ’16, has been named District 4 Delegate of the Year by the American Student Dental Association (ASDA). Originally from Jefferson, N.C., he has served as the ECU ASDA First Delegate and as a student member of the North Carolina Dental Society Board of Trustees. Keaton has focused on helping pre-dental students learn more about the dental profession, providing oral hygiene instruction and screening for older adults, and building ASDA membership nationally.

LaJoi Wiggins ’17, from Raleigh, N.C., has been elected to the 2015-2016 American Student Dental Association (ASDA) National Board of Trustees, representing District 4. LaJoi served as First Delegate (president) of ECU’s ASDA chapter and as a student member of the North Carolina Dental Society Board of Trustees. She is an active member of Smiles for a Lifetime, a student-led initiative that promotes oral hygiene and screening for older adults, and she has worked to build ASDA membership at ECU and nationally.

Terrence Campbell ’17 from Raleigh, N.C., was awarded an American Dental Association (ADA) Foundation Scholarship for the 2014-2015 academic year. Terrence, who served as president of the Class of 2017 from 2013-2015, is community service chair of the Dental Student Government (DSG), co-president of Students for the American Dental Education Association (ADEA), and south Atlantic regional coordinator of the Student National Dental Association (SNDA).

Jennifer Rominger ’17, from Advance, N.C., has been awarded an American Dental Association (ADA) Foundation Scholarship for the 2015-2016 school year. Jennifer is a historian for the Class of 2017 and vice president of the DMD student organization. She is also the founder of Josh’s Jog, a 5K run in memory of her brother who passed away in 2013 from cancer. Josh’s Jog benefits CureSearch for Children’s Cancer.

Colleen Davis ’18, from Sylva, N.C., has received a four-year scholarship from the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) to attend the ECU School of Dental Medicine. The NHSC is a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that provides resources for health care providers who bring their skills to areas of the U.S. with limited access to care. Colleen intends to practice dentistry in Sylva after graduation.

Kristen Eguren ’18, from Greensboro, N.C., has been selected to be the regional representative for the Capital region of the National Student Research Group (NSRC). The NSRC, (an affiliate of the American Association for Dental Research) is a student-led organization that fosters research in dental schools across the country and is composed of self-governing student research group chapters at each dental school. Kristen will serve a one-year term representing the student research group at ECU and at dental schools in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Maryland.
Welcome Faculty
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Loren D. Alves, DMD, DABPD, FAAPD, clinical associate professor, Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, specializing in pediatric behavior management, matriarchal behavior influences, pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic modifications.

Linda May, PhD, MS, assistant professor of anatomy, received funding from the American Heart Association for the ENHANCED by Mom study. (Enhanced Neonatal Health and Neonatal Cardiovascular Efficiency Developmentally)

Gloria Mejia, DDS, PhD, assistant professor of epidemiology, has been selected for the 2015 ECU Engagement and Outreach Scholars Academy. Co-authored “Estimating the Effect of Childhood Socioeconomic Disadvantage on Oral Cancer in India Using Marginal Structural Models.” Epidemiology.

Joseph Parkinson, DDS, FAGD, director of clinics, co-authored “Use of Social Media in Dental Schools: Pluses, Perils, and Pitfalls from a Legal Perspective,” Journal of Dental Education.

Michael Scholtz, DMD, assistant dean for extramural clinical practices, presented “Leadership in Healthcare Management,” a four-part seminar incorporating professional and practice management leadership for residents in the Advanced Education in General Dentistry and General Practice Residency programs.

Stevan Thompson, DDS, division director of oral-maxillofacial surgery, is the dental faculty mentor of an interdisciplinary project with ECU engineering senior students to create a teaching device simulating the force required to remove teeth.

Michael Webb, DDS, MEd, director of Pediatric Residency, presented “Medical Emergencies” at the American Dental Society of Anesthesiology Pediatric Sedation Course in Las Vegas, NV.

Margaret Wilson, DDS, MBA, vice dean and associate dean for Student Affairs, was named Academician of the Year by the Old North State Dental Society in June for dedicated service to dental education and to dental students.

Faculty News
Raymond Dionne, DDS, MS, PhD, research professor in dentistry and medicine, co-authored “Changing Paradigms for Acute Dental Pain: Prevention is Better Than PRN.” California Dental Journal 2015, in press. Dr. Dionne also co-authored “Opioid Prescribing in Dentistry.” CDE World 2015.

Paul Lindauer, DDS, division director of endodontics, has been elected chair of the School of Dental Medicine Faculty Council.

Robert J. Timothy, DDS, MS, clinical assistant professor of oral-maxillofacial radiology, Department of General Dentistry.

Wanda G. Wright, RN, DDS, MS, MSD, clinical assistant professor and division director of dental public health, Department of Foundational Sciences.

Gloria C. Mejia, DDS, MPH, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Foundational Sciences, specializing in population oral health and health disparities.

Joseph W. Parkinson, DDS, FAGD, clinical assistant professor, director of clinics.

Luis H. Schlichting, DDS, MS, PhD, clinical assistant professor, Department of General Dentistry, specializing in ultraconservative approaches based on biomimetic restorative dentistry.

Isabel C. Gay, DDS, MS, associate professor and division director of periodontics, Department of Surgical Sciences, specializing in oral health disparities in Hispanic populations and stem cell therapies.

Gloria C. Mejia, DDS, MPH, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Foundational Sciences, specializing in population oral health and health disparities.

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MAKING A GIFT TO YOUR FAVORITE ECU SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE FUND

- Scholarship Fund
- Student Support Fund (Support student activities, programs, and travel.)
- Patient Care Fund (Help bridge the gap between patients' ability to pay and the cost of educationally beneficial procedures. Support patients in Ledyard E. Ross Hall.)
- Community Service Patient Care Fund (Support patient care at CSLCs across the state.)
- Old North State Dental Society Student Affairs Fund (Enhance efforts to recruit, retain, and support traditionally underrepresented groups.)
- Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics General Fund

Please make gifts payable to “ECU Medical & Health Sciences Foundation.” Write the fund name in the memo line and mail to: Medical & Health Sciences Foundation, 525 Moye Boulevard, Greenville, NC 27834. Donations are also accepted online at giving.ecu.edu. (Select School of Dental Medicine. Enter fund name under “Other Fund.”) For more information, please contact Kristen Ward, director of development, at wardk@ecu.edu or (252) 744-2239. Thank You!