Dean’s Message

Making a Difference

We say good-bye to an outstanding faculty member and administrator with the retirement of Frank Ayers, DDS ’69, at the end of June, after 38 years of service. As Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Director of Admissions, Dr. Ayers has had a great impact on the lives of past and current students in the School.

In this newsletter, we share the news of one alumnus, Adam Diasti, DDS ’90, and his wife, Chrischelle, establishing an endowed scholarship in Dr. Ayers’ name, and the Society of American Indian Dentists honoring Dr. Ayers during its national meeting at Creighton. These are both very fitting ways to remember the legacy of Dr. Ayers, who has always been a champion for all students and made special efforts to bring students from disadvantaged backgrounds into the dental profession.

Dr. Ayers helped organize the Jesuit Dental School Recruitment Collaborative for Native American Students. With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, this collaborative is creating a pipeline into the dental profession for Native American students. Participating schools include Creighton, Gonzaga and Marquette Universities. Creighton is a leader among U.S. dental schools for enrolling Native American students.

With Dr. Ayers’ departure, Dr. Neil Norton, an award-winning educator on our faculty since 1996, will assume the position of Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Director of Admissions. He is currently an Associate Professor of Oral Biology.

We welcome Dr. Norton’s expertise and leadership to the position, and wish Dr. Ayers all the best in his retirement. It is through the efforts of such committed faculty that our students continue to receive such an outstanding education.

Dr. Cavel Earns Alumni Merit Award

W. Thomas Cavel, DDS ’70, received the School’s 2010 Alumni Merit Award on April 23. The award was presented during the School’s 2010 Reunion Weekend, held April 22-24 in conjunction with the Spring Dental Assembly.

After earning his DDS from Creighton in 1970, Dr. Cavel served in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the Washington, D.C., area. He returned to Omaha and began his teaching career at Creighton in 1972, advancing to full professor in 1986.

Dr. Cavel has served as Chair of the Department of Operative Dentistry (1986-1994), Assistant Director of Clinics (1985-1995) and Chair of the Department of General Dentistry (1999-2007). He is the inaugural holder of the Dr. Raymond W. Shaddy Endowed Chair in Operative Dentistry, a position he has held since 1994. In 1999, the American Association of Dental Examiners presented Dr. Cavel with the prestigious “Citizen of the Year” certificate. Dr. Cavel was also inducted into the Nebraska Dental Hall of Fame in 2007.

Dr. Cavel’s greatest contribution to student education is his dedication to excellence, reflected in Creighton dental students routinely scoring in the highest quintile in both the Dental Anatomy and Operative Dentistry sections of the National Dental Boards.

In addition, Dr. Cavel has been actively engaged in numerous clinical research studies, which have led to the School being nationally and internationally recognized in the area of dental materials research. Beyond his stellar academic and professional record and his indisputable skills as a dentist and as an educator, Dr. Cavel serves as a model of Jesuit, Catholic compassion and service, giving generously to family, church and community, but especially to the less fortunate. His record of service extends beyond Creighton and beyond Omaha, and includes multiple trips to the Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) in the Dominican Republic.

Reunion Moving to Fall for 2011

The School of Dentistry Alumni Advisory Board unanimously endorsed moving the dates for the Dental Assembly/Reunion Weekend from the spring to the fall, in an effort to better accommodate scheduling the event. The 2011 reunion is set for Sept. 29 through Oct. 1. Mark your calendars, and look for more information to follow.

Calendar

June 22 – Farewell reception for Dr. Frank Ayers
June 30 – Dr. Ben Kutler Memorial Golf Classic at Iron Horse Golf Club
Aug 20-21 – CE & Golf Outing, Pueblo, Colo.
Sept. 8 – Mass of the Holy Spirit at St. John’s Church
Oct. 7 – Alumni Advisory Board Meeting, School of Dentistry, room 131
Oct. 9 – American Dental Association Meeting, Orlando, Fla., Creighton University reception, 5:30-7:30 p.m., The Peabody Orlando Hotel, Rock Springs I and II rooms.
Advancements in dental radiology, and in the computer software and systems that automate the reading of these scans, is offering dental professionals new methods for diagnosing tooth decay, periodontal disease and other dental health issues.

And Creighton University is leading the way in educating students (and dental professionals) in the use of these new technologies. This past year, the School completed construction of a radiology reading room for dental students, with 19 dual monitor workstations. Patient electronic charts with digital radiographs may be accessed so that students can perform structured radiographic reporting.

The room has initially been open to students six half days per week, with radiology faculty available on a one-on-one basis for consultation and review of reports. In addition, interactive programs are available for students to learn CT radiographic anatomy of the head. The initial version has about 100 anatomical objects, including the paranasal sinuses and nasal complex. A version for medical students may be developed in collaboration with the Creighton School of Medicine.

Dr. Douglas Benn, Professor of General Dentistry, has been an innovator in the development of software programs that automate the reading of dental patients’ CT scans.

“By the time I came to Creighton (in January 2009), I had a working demonstration of how this software could take 512 slices through a patient’s head and automatically label some of the major anatomical structures,” Dr. Benn said.

Dr. Benn and a colleague are now in the process of collecting 300 existing patient data sets and labeling them to create a training library to test the accuracy of the software. “This software will reduce the amount of time it takes to train radiologists to read images,” he said.

With more dental offices purchasing these sophisticated scanning machines, needed training is not limited to dental students. Benn estimates that 3,000 Cone Beam CT (CBCT) scanners have been installed in dental offices in the United States – producing an urgent need for continuing education (CE) courses on their use.

Beginning in October, Creighton will use the new radiology reading room for the first in a series of courses. (Dr. Benn will present “Cone Beam CT” on Oct. 1 and “Digital Radiography for Dental Assistants” Oct. 22-23; call Marletta McKercher with questions or to register, 402.280.5054.)

These courses will support Creighton’s new CBCT service, which is scheduled to begin this summer and will involve two CBCT machines and a radiographic technician. The new service will also provide sialograms (imaging of the salivary glands).

Dr. Benn has developed software to automate the reading of CT scans.

Dr. Douglas Benn and Dr. Wayne Barkmeier, Dean of the School of Dentistry, dedicate a digital radiology station in the name of alumnus James Theisen, DDS’59. Diane Theisen Kohout, BA’91, MBA’93, and Jim Theisen, BSBA’85, MBA’88, JD’88, honored the memory of their late father with a gift to the School from his estate. “Creighton was important to him for so many reasons, but mostly because it literally brought together the most important things in his life: faith, family and friends,” said Diane Kohout. “Dentistry was important to him because of the family legacy he fulfilled, following the paths of his father and older brother as dentists. He truly considered his patients his friends.”

Sharpe Earns Scholarship

Congratulations to student Luke Sharpe, who was awarded a Predoctoral Dental Student Scholarship from the American Dental Association Foundation.

Creighton Faculty, Students Volunteer at KidzExplore

Creighton faculty and students helped staff the Omaha District Dental Society booth at Omaha’s KidzExplore 2010 – a family festival held in April at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Visitors had a chance to meet the Tooth Fairy and pick up dental health care products, pamphlets and a nutritious snack. Staffers handed out about 1,800 toothbrushes over the two-day event. Faculty participants were Drs. Nick Levering, David Mohs, Larry Parrish, Mark Taylor and Gary Westerman. Creighton dental students and dental assistant students from Metropolitan Community College also staffed the booth.
Adam Diasti, DDS’90, President of Coast Dental Services, Inc., the leading provider of dental services in the Southeast, and his wife, Chrischelle, recently honored Dr. Frank Ayers, by establishing an endowed scholarship in Ayers’ name.

The first recipient of the Dr. Frank J. Ayers, Jr. Endowed Scholarship was senior dental student Katarzyna Piekarska.

(Read more about the scholarship, the donor, the recipient, and Dr. Ayers in the June issue of the Creighton University Magazine, online at www.creightonmagazine.org.)

Society of American Indian Dentists

Dr. Frank Ayers, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Director of Admissions, was honored at the 20th annual national meeting of the Society of American Indian Dentists (SAID) on Creighton’s campus May 21-22.

Ayers has been a passionate advocate in recruiting Native American dentists and served as the principal investigator for a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Dental Pipeline Program for that purpose.

Creighton has the highest number of Native Americans in the nation in its dental program – 11 first- and second-year students are enrolled in academic year 2010-2011.

Dr. Ayers Honored by Alumnus, Native American Dentists

Frank Ayers, DDS’69, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Director of Admissions and Associate Professor of Pediatric Dentistry, is retiring June 30, after 38 years of service to Creighton University.

Dr. McNally Named to Board of Health

Dr. Stuart McNally, Assistant Professor of General Dentistry, was named Secretary of the Douglas County Board of Health for the second year.

Periodontics Award Grant

The Department of Periodontics was awarded the 2010 American Academy of Periodontology Foundation Charles W. Finley Visiting Scholar Education Grant. Funds from the grant helped support the “Clinical Application of Tissue Engineering Materials” symposium held at Creighton in April.

Water Fluoridation

Creighton alumnus Michael Moriarty, BA’86, DDS’90, and his wife, Maya, community health advocates, were instrumental in getting Seward, Alaska, to initiate water fluoridation. They were featured in the Nov. 2, 2009, issue of the ADA News.

Continuing Education

If you are interested in getting more information or you have questions about any of the following courses, please contact Marletta McKercher at 402.280.5054.

- Aug. 13-14; Radiology for Dental Assistants; John Shaner, DMD, MS
- Sept. 9-10; Coronal Polishing for Dental Assistants; Dennis Higginbotham, DDS
- Sept. 10; Pain Management; Frank Dowd DDS, PhD
- Oct. 1; Cone Beam CT; Douglas Benn, BDS, PhD, DDR, DDS
- Oct. 8; Urban Memorial Lecture: The Treatment of Maxillofacial Battle Injuries: The Past, Present & the Future; Robert Hale, DDS
- Oct. 22; Pedodontics Update; Anne Aiello, DMD, Nicholas Levering, DDS, MS, Mark Taylor, DDS
- Oct. 22-23; Digital Radiography for Dental Assistants; Douglas Benn, BDS, PhD, DDR, DDS
- Nov. 5; Managing the Dental Patient in Pain and Pharmacologic Management of Orofacial Infections; Harold Crossley, DDS, PhD
- Nov. 6; Magic Saturday Morning; Mr. Jeff Teate, Harold Crossley, DDS, PhD
- Nov. 12-13; Radiology for Dental Assistants; John Shaner, DMD, MS
- Nov. 19 (with optional clinic Nov. 20); Head and Neck Cancer Detection and Prevention; John Shaner, DMD, MS
- Dec. 3; Infection Control and OSHA Annual Review; James Howard, DDS, MS
- Feb 13-20; Dental Topics in the Tropics – CE in Costa Rica
- Sept 29-Oct. 1, 2011; Fall Dental Assembly / Reunion Weekend

Dr. Ayers receives a traditional Native American blanket as a symbol of honor from the SAID. He is pictured with George Blue Spruce Jr., DDS’56, the first Native American dentist and a Creighton graduate.
Alumni Return for Reunion Weekend


The festivities began April 22 with continuing education classes; a lecture and book signing by George Blue Spruce Jr., DDS’56, author of the new book Searching for My Destiny; a welcome reception; a special recognition to the late Eugene Stormberg, DDS’53, Professor Emeritus of Operative Dentistry, with a plaque on the Faculty Wall of Honor; followed by the Creighton Society and Dean’s Club Recognition Dinner.

The following day, the School of Dentistry Alumni Reception and Dinner welcomed more than 378 guests to the Harper Center. Dean Wayne Barkmeier welcomed alumni and friends back to Omaha.

W. Thomas Cavel, DDS’70, received the 2010 Alumni Merit Award at the dinner, and members of the class of 1960 were honored as this year’s Golden Jays. Other events included a golf outing for alumni, faculty and students and the second annual Cavities and Clay Sport shooting outing, which drew over 50 participants.

Class Gifts Exceed Goal

This year’s Reunion Giving Classes of 1960, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995 and 2000 donated a total of $56,145 in unrestricted gifts in support of the School of Dentistry – surpassing their goal by $6,000. Collectively, these gifts of unrestricted, operating support allow the School to address its most pressing needs. This support will help provide scholarships for students who otherwise could not attend Creighton; fund innovative academic initiatives; update research laboratories; attract and retain respected faculty; and help Creighton create an environment for faith in action.
School Offers New Master’s Degree

The Department of Oral Biology in the School of Dentistry has created a program of study culminating in a Master of Science degree.

The proposed program is flexible and will foster an interdisciplinary approach using School of Dentistry research, courses and facilities to cater to the needs of individual students. A thesis will be required.

The program will be geared toward providing a sound didactic basis for students interested in pursuing dentistry as a profession. It will also provide research opportunities and teaching experience in an effort to model graduate students for an academic career as clinician educators and academic dentists.

The program will provide a choice of two tracks of study. The first will be in dental materials and include didactic and research emphasis in modern materials science. The second will be in oral biology and emphasize didactic and research in anatomical sciences and histology.

Both tracks will equip students to analyze research and clinical literature and will provide an opportunity in the second year to teach in first-year predoctoral dental laboratory courses.

Some of the specific objectives for the M.S. in Oral Biology program are:
1) To provide an educational program of study for students interested in Dental Science.
2) Increase the pool of candidates to address the faculty shortage in dental education.
3) Increase national and international recognition for the School of Dentistry.
4) Increase the level of scholarly activity in the School of Dentistry.

Get Your Foursome Ready

The Creighton School of Dentistry and Creighton’s Epsilon Chapter of Omicron Kappa Upsilon, the national dental honor society, will host the annual Dr. Ben Kutler Memorial Golf Classic on Wednesday, June 30, at Iron Horse Golf Club in Ashland, Neb.

Dr. Kutler was a 1945 graduate of the Creighton School of Dentistry and received the School’s Alumni Merit Award in 1997 for lifelong devotion to his profession and to his community.

For a registration form or for more information, call Dr. Tom Meng at 402.280.5083.

A Brighter Smile

Gary Westerman, DDS’69, explains the proper way to brush teeth as Billy Bluejay looks on. The School provided free dental exams, X-rays, cleaning, fluoride and dental education to more than 100 metro-area children in February as part of the annual “Give Kids a Smile Day,” held in conjunction with National Children’s Dental Health Month. This is the ninth year for the Creighton event. More than 120 dentists, dental students and other volunteers provided service.

Faculty Earn Tenure, Promotions

The following full-time faculty members will receive tenure and/or the following promotions, effective July 1: Dr. Kenneth Hermsen, tenure; Dr. Nicole Kimmes, tenure and promotion to Associate Professor; Dr. Terry Lanphier, promotion to Associate Professor; Dr. Charles Wilcox, promotion to Professor; Dr. David Williams, tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. At the President’s Convocation in February, Dr. John Mattson and Dr. Paul Tamisea were both promoted to Professor Emeritus.

Promotions among part-time faculty members, effective this past January and February, include: Dr. William Patrick Kelsey to Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Periodontics; Dr. Michael Kreekos to Adjunct Associate Professor of Prosthodontics; Dr. Alfred Longo, Jr. to Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatric Dentistry; Dr. Cynthia Russell to Adjunct Associate Professor of General Dentistry; Dr. Greg Samuelson to Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatric Dentistry; Dr. John Sullivan to Adjunct Professor of General Dentistry; Dr. Sharlene Hsiao Lin Yuan to Adjunct Associate Professor of Endodontics.

Delta Dental Supports Clinic Service

A $10,000 gift from Delta Dental of Nebraska will help support the School’s OneWorld evening clinics. Twice monthly, the School provides dental care to adult patients identified through the OneWorld Community Health Center as those being in most need of dental care. Delta Dental also has established an endowed scholarship fund, which awards a $1,000 scholarship to a junior student based on academic merit and financial need, and provides an annual $5,000 gift for the Dr. Ben Kutler Memorial Golf Classic.


Essential dental treatment (EDT) in pregnant women during the second trimester is not associated with an increased risk of serious adverse pregnancy outcomes or medical events, Nunn ME, Journal of Evidence Based Dental Practice, 2009/9/91-2.


The association of occlusal contacts with the presence of increased periodontal probing depth, Harrel SK, Nunn ME, Journal of Clinical Periodontology, 2009/36/1035-42.


Norton, NS (2009) wrote “Decompression Sickness and Pneumothorax” chapter in Medical Evidence, eds. Quinn, TH and Morris, JS

Books


Norton, NS (2009) wrote “Decompression Sickness and Pneumothorax” chapter in Medical Evidence, eds. Quinn, TH and Morris, JS

Abstracts presented at the 39th annual meeting of the American Association of Dental Research, Washington, D.C., March 3-6, 2010


Kaye-Krali E, Nunn M, Dietrich T, Garcia R. Dietary Carbohydrates and Root Caries Incidence over 15 Years; Abstract 105.

Lui B, Nunn M, Offner G, Jones J. Impact of Partial Denture Wearing on Quality of Life; Abstract 860.

Naughton W, Latta M. Shear Bond Strength of Self-adhesive Resin Cements to Dentin; Abstract 201.

Latta M, Boss T. Dentin Bond Strength of Fiber Posts Using Different Cements; Abstract 1223.

Redlinger T, Falamarzi B, Salama F. Bond Strength of Restorative Materials Following Surface Conditioning for Repair; Abstract 783.

Sheets J, Wilcox C, Barkmeier W. Effect of Pre-etching and Thermocycling on Self-etching Adhesive Enamel Bonding; Abstract 231.


Latta M, Barkmeier W, McNally S. Bond Strengths to Enamel Using Hydrophilic and Hydrophobic Adhesives; Abstract 16.

Latta M, Barkmeier W. Fatigue Limits of Enamel Bonds Using Single and Multi-step Adhesives; Abstract 17.


Abstracts presented at the annual meeting of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)
Anaheim, Calif., April 24-28, 2010

- Barratt L, Jergenson M, Norton N, Ayers F. Using histology as a predictor of academic success in a post-baccalaureate program FASEB J. 2010 24:825.2

Other Faculty Abstracts

- Rocha-Sanchez SM, Scheetz L, Weston MD, McGee J, Walsh E. Little siblings with a big attitude: Rbl1 (P107) and Rbl2 (P130) in the developing mouse inner ear and maturing hair cells. 7th Molecular Biology of Hearing and Deafness Meeting, Boston, MA, 2009.
- Rocha-Sanchez SM, Scheetz L, Weston MD, McGee J, Walsh E. Little siblings with a big attitude: Rbl1 (P107) and Rbl2 (P130) in the developing mouse inner ear and maturing hair cells. 7th Molecular Biology of Hearing and Deafness Meeting, Boston, MA, 2009.

Graduation a Family Affair

The Creighton School of Dentistry welcomed 87 graduates into its alumni ranks during commencement ceremonies in May. Among the graduates was Dr. Daniel Becker, DDS’10, center, a fourth-generation Creighton dentist. His great-grandfather, Paul Becker, graduated from Creighton’s School of Dentistry in 1914, his grandfather, Clement Becker, right, in 1954, and his father, Stephen Becker, left, in 1978.

Graduates Honor Faculty and Staff at Banquet

The Department of Prosthodontics, chaired by Dr. Dennis Nilsson, was named the “Department of the Year” during the 2010 Senior Awards Banquet in April.

The seniors selected Dr. Randy Stout (clinical) and Dr. Stephen Hess (lecture) as instructors of the year.

Dr. Stout and Dr. Terry Lanphier were selected to place the doctorate hoods on each senior during the Hooding Ceremony, with Dr. Jared Smith being selected to serve as Master of Ceremonies.

Other awards and honorees from the banquet are listed below.
- Rev. James J. Quinn, S.J. Award – Dr. Terry Wilwerding
- Dr. Theodore J. Urban Memorial Award – Dr. Neil Norton
- Outstanding Part-Time Clinical Instructor – Dr. Terry Sullivan
- Sara K. Susman Memorial Award – Tom Mendoza
- Dr. Raymond W. Shaddy Memorial Award – Dr. Dennis Higginbotham
- Dr. Ann M. Garred Award – Dr. Thomas Cavel
- Dr. Frank J. Ayers Spirit of Compassion Award – Dr. Scott DiLorenzo
- Instructors of the Year – junior, Dr. Stout (clinical) and Dr. Frank Dowd (lecture); sophomore, Dr. Hess; freshman, Dr. Norton.

Alumna Named OneWorld Director

Regan Young Mackintosh, BSMth’02, DDS’06, has been named dental director at OneWorld Community Health Centers in Omaha. Dr. Mackintosh is one of the faculty supervising senior dental students during their OneWorld rotation. She also teaches in the operative preclinical laboratory. She is joined at OneWorld by fellow Creighton graduates Paul Beutler, DDS’08, and Manny Martinez, DDS’09, who serve as staff dentists.

Other Faculty Abstracts

OKU Honors Smith, Elects New Members

The Creighton chapter of Omicron Kappa Upsilon (OKU), the national dental honor society, presented junior dental student Kyle Smith with the Dr. William S. Kramer Award of Excellence during its annual banquet in May.

Smith was chosen for the Kramer Award based on his demonstrated scholarship, character and his potential promise for the advancement of dentistry and service to humanity.

In addition to Smith’s award, several recent graduates and four faculty members were inducted into OKU.

Alumni memberships were presented to Drs. David Bailey, Lesley Holloway, Bethany Jensen, Devin Matsumori, Joseph Nierzwicki, Andrea Radabaugh, Jamie Smith, Adam Stanley, Aaron Taff and Austin VanDusen. Faculty memberships were presented to Drs. William Carney, Stuart McNally, David Mohs and Afolabi Ogunleye. An honorary membership was presented to Dr. Laura Barritt.

Creighton Remembers Dean Vining

Dr. Robert Vining, former Dean of the School and Associate Vice President for Health Sciences, died Feb. 21 at the age of 90. Vining came to Creighton in 1952 as a member of the dental faculty and served as Chair of the Department of Operative Dentistry from 1956 to 1958.

After 14 years of conducting industry-related dental research, he came back to Creighton in 1972 as Dean of the School until 1983 when he was promoted to Associate Vice President for Health Sciences. He held that post until 1985, when he returned to full-time teaching in the Department of Removable Prosthodontics.

During his 11-year tenure as Dean, he was credited with designing and restructuring the School’s Senior Clinical Practice Program under a new Department of Comprehensive Dental Care. He was promoted to Dean Emeritus in 1986 and was named an Honorary Alumnus of the School in 1995.

“Bob was a tireless and competent clinician who was beloved as a teacher and a dean. He was always focused on bringing the best education experience to students and making sure they received the most comprehensive clinical experience possible,” said Dean Wayne Barkmeier.

Creighton University School of Dentistry

Dr. Hermsen Honored as Volunteer of Year

Dr. Kenneth Hermsen, Associate Professor of General Dentistry, received the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Linda Horning Volunteer of the Year Award on April 22 at United Way of the Midlands’ 55th annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.

Dr. Hermsen is a dedicated MRC volunteer who has used his professional experience to help identify victims of the 9/11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina.

Dr. Lang Joins Full-Time Faculty

Dr. Melissa Lang joined the full-time faculty on March 1. She had been a part-time faculty member in the Department of Periodontics since July 2009. She is also course director of sophomore periodontology, teaches in the periodontics clinic and conducts research.

Dr. Lang graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Dentistry in 2004 with a Doctorate of Dental Surgery. In 2007, she received a Certificate in Periodontics and a Master of Science in Oral Biology from UNMC. While there, she conducted research in periodontal regeneration using simvastatin, a cholesterol-lowering drug that stimulates bone growth.

She is a diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology, and taught part-time in the pre-doctoral and graduate periodontics programs at UNMC College of Dentistry before joining Creighton.

Perio Fellowship Established

The new Creighton University School of Dentistry Perio Fellowship Program has been established with the goal of providing excellent dental education programs and science-based continuing dental education to professionals in the region, as well as dental research training. The first resident of the program is Dr. Takahiro Kato.