Dean’s Message

Moving Our School Forward Together

I would like to thank my colleagues, our Creighton dental students and alumni for making me feel welcome in my return as Dean of the School of Dentistry. I feel very much a part of the Creighton community – having served as Dean from 1994 to 2005 and, before that, as Assistant Dean for Research (1985-1991) and Associate Dean for Research (1991-1994). Most recently, I had been serving as Dean Emeritus and Professor of General Dentistry before returning to the deanship this fall.

I also would like to extend best wishes to Dr. Steven Friedrichsen and thank him for his four years of service as Dean of the School.

The Creighton School of Dentistry remains committed to creating a model educational environment focused on developing students for professional distinction and ethical leadership. (This fall, we reviewed 2,900 high-quality applicants for the 85 available positions in our freshman class.) We are blessed with an outstanding faculty, recognized nationally and internationally for their work. And our research is leading to discoveries and insights that improve dental care.

I hope you and your family enjoy all the blessings of this holy season, and best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year. I look forward to working with our alumni and friends again as Dean to continue to move our School forward. Thank you for your support.

If you would like to receive future issues of this newsletter online, please complete the subscription form at http://alumni.creighton.edu/dentalnews.

Wayne W. Barkmeier, DDS, MS
Dean, School of Dentistry

Dr. Ayers Announces His Retirement

A fter 37 years on the Creighton School of Dentistry faculty, Dr. Frank Ayers has announced his retirement effective the end of June 2010. Dr. Neil Norton will succeed Dr. Ayers as Assistant Dean.

Dr. Frank Ayers will retire from his duties as Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Director of Admissions effective June 30, 2010.

Dr. Ayers joined the faculty as a part-time clinical instructor in the Department of Pediatric and Orthodontic Dentistry in 1972. He was appointed to full-time status as an Assistant Professor in the department in June 1973 and taught in lecture, laboratory and clinical settings until 1986, when he became the Director of Admissions for the School of Dentistry. He has continued in that position and became Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in 1988 and was promoted to Associate Dean for Student Affairs in 1991.

Some of the other positions Dr. Ayers has held at the School include Director of the Dental Auxiliary Utilization Program, Dental Director of the ILAC Program and Interim Chair of Pediatric and Orthodontic Dentistry. He was an active member of the hospital staffs at Children’s Memorial Hospital, Creighton University Medical Center and the Omaha Surgical Center.

Dr. Ayers has been recognized with dental student awards both as a teacher and administrator and in 2005 was the initial recipient of the Dr. Frank J. Ayers Spirit of Compassion Award, which is now presented each year by the graduating class to a faculty member of the School of Dentistry. In 2006, Dr. Ayers received Creighton University’s prestigious St. Ignatian Award.

Dr. Ayers and his wife, Helen, have four grown children and three grandchildren, all residing in Omaha. His plans for retirement include spending more time with family,
Dr. Ayers Retiring

Dr. Mark Taylor will assume the position of Chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry. During the past 30 years, in addition to his faculty duties, Dr. Taylor has held the positions of Chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, Director of Clinics, Assistant/Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Finance, Executive Associate Dean and Director of Informatics.

Dr. Taylor graduated from the University of Nebraska College of Dentistry in 1975 and completed his pediatric dentistry residency in 1977 at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Dr. Taylor has been involved with numerous scholarly articles and presentations. He has owned and operated a pediatric dentistry private practice in Omaha for 31 years. Dr. Taylor and his wife, Kathy, have two children and one granddaughter.

Dr. Norton Named Assistant Dean

Dr. Neil Norton has been named Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Director of Admissions at Creighton University’s School of Dentistry effective July 1, 2010.

Dr. Norton joined the dental faculty in 1996 and currently serves as Associate Professor of Oral Biology with primary responsibilities teaching Gross Anatomy, Head and Neck Anatomy, and Human Neuroscience. He also holds a secondary appointment as Associate Professor of Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacology in the School of Medicine. In addition to his teaching and research, Dr. Norton serves on numerous School of Dentistry and University committees and currently serves as the President of the University Faculty.

An award-winning teacher, he has received numerous teaching awards at Creighton, including the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for Teaching Achievement, the highest teaching award given by the University. He also received the GlaxoSmithKline Sensodyne Teaching Award in 2007, which is the highest national award given by the American Dental Education Association.

An active researcher, Dr. Norton has authored more than 80 abstracts, three book chapters, and has published more than 23 peer-reviewed articles. In 2006, Norton’s book *Netter’s Head & Neck Anatomy for Dentistry* was published by Elsevier and has currently been translated into five languages. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Randolph-Macon College and his doctorate from the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

New Fellows

Dr. Chuck Wilcox, Associate Professor of Prosthodontics, and Dr. Terry Lanphier, Assistant Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, were inducted into the American College of Dentists as new Fellows at the 2009 Convocation meeting on Oct. 1 in Hawaii.

Dr. Westerman Earns Boy Scouts Award

Dr. Gary Westerman was presented the Russell C. Hill Award from the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America and its Learning for Life program on Nov. 7. This prestigious award recognizes individuals who have impacted youth in the community in a positive way. Dr. Westerman has been an active supporter of the Scouts’ Exploring program, introducing youth to the profession of dentistry.

Dr. Dr. Westerman and his wife, Judy.

Dr. Taylor Named Pediatric Chair

Dr. Taylor has taught full-time at the School of Dentistry since 1979 and is currently an Associate Professor of Pediatric Dentistry. During the past 30 years, in addition to his faculty duties, Dr. Taylor has held the positions of Chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, Director of Clinics, Assistant/Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Finance, Executive Associate Dean and Director of Informatics.

Dr. Taylor graduated from the University of Nebraska College of Dentistry in 1975 and completed his pediatric dentistry residency in 1977 at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha.

Dr. Taylor has been involved with numerous scholarly articles and presentations. He has owned and operated a pediatric dentistry private practice in Omaha for 31 years. Dr. Taylor and his wife, Kathy, have two children and one granddaughter.

Senior Holly Bourek assesses a patient during Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week, which was held April 27 through May 3. The Creighton School of Dentistry offered free oral cancer screenings on April 29 at the main clinic. Creighton dental faculty, staff and senior students assisted with the screenings.
Dr. Tsubota

Dr. Keishi Tsubota has been appointed Visiting Professor of General Dentistry. Dr. Tsubota is presently Assistant Professor of Operative Dentistry at Nihon University School of Dentistry in Tokyo, Japan.

Dr. Tsubota is involved in in-vitro research in the dental materials laboratory at Creighton. He is collaborating with Dr. Wayne Barkmeier and Dr. Mark Latta on a number of investigations in dental adhesives and composite material wear. Dr. Tsubota also will participate in faculty in-service lectures and other academic and scholarly opportunities made available to School of Dentistry faculty.

He is a 1996 graduate of Nihon School of Dentistry and earned his Ph.D. from that institution in 2000. He has more than 20 English publications, 16 Japanese publications and has made numerous scientific presentations. He is a member of the International Association for Dental Research.

Dr. Baumert

Dr. Jennifer Baumert joined the School of Dentistry in July as Assistant Professor of General Dentistry.

Dr. Baumert earned her undergraduate degree in biology and math from Creighton in 1987 before earning her DDS from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 1991. She completed courses in bioinformatics and client-server technology before earning a master’s degree in computer information technology from Regis University in Denver in May 2009. Locally, she has been active in St. Patrick’s Parish and School.

Dr. Hardeep Chehal

Dr. Hardeep Chehal joined the School in July as Assistant Professor of General Dentistry.

Dr. Chehal earned her BDS in 1989 from the R. Ahmed Dental College and Hospital at the University of Calcutta in India and a certificate in oral and maxillofacial pathology from the University of Florida College of Dentistry.

For six years, from 1990-96, Dr. Chehal served as a dental officer for Punjab Civil Medical Services in charge of rural dental health. In 2008, she was presented the Robert J. Gorlin Award for best research presentation by a resident.

Dr. Nunn

Dr. Martha Nunn joined the School in August as Associate Professor of Periodontics.

Dr. Nunn most recently served as an Associate Professor in the Goldman School of Dental Medicine, Department of Health Policy and Health Services Research, and in the School of Medicine, Department of Medical Nutrition Sciences, at Boston University. She also was director of the biometry core at the Northeast Center for Research to Reduce Oral Health Disparities.

Dr. Nunn earned her DDS in 1981 and a master’s degree in statistics in 1991 from the University of Tennessee. She earned a master’s degree and a Ph.D. in biostatistics from the University of Washington in 1995 and 1997, respectively.

She received the Arthur H. Wuehrmann Prize from the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology in 2001 and the American Academy of Periodontology Clinical Research Award in 1997. She completed a Fellowship at the National Institute of Dental Research in oral epidemiology and biostatistics.

Dr. Nunn’s research interests include statistical methods applied to dental research problems, oral health disparities, dental prognostic indicators, genetic factors in periodontal disease, occlusal discrepancies and periodontal disease.

She serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Periodontology and the Journal of Clinical Periodontology. Her professional affiliations include the American Academy of Periodontology, the American Dental Education Association, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, the International Association of Dental Research, the American Statistical Association and the Biometric Society.

Dr. Carney

Dr. William Carney accepted a full-time position with the School in July as Assistant Professor of General Dentistry.

Dr. Carney served as a part-time Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of General Dentistry and Periodontics from 2005-2007 and was most recently serving in the General Dentistry Division of Diagnostic Services. He was named the School’s Outstanding Part-Time Instructor of the Year in both 2008 and 2009.

Dr. Carney earned his undergraduate degree from Creighton in 1977 and his DDS from Creighton in 1981. He worked in private practice in Nebraska City from 1981-1987 and was most recently in private practice at Millard Hills Dental Center in Omaha.

He is a member of the American Dental Association, the Nebraska Dental Association and the Omaha District Dental Society.

Kristie Denne

Kristie Denne joined the School in August as Director of Patient Service Operation. She also serves on the School’s newly implemented Clinical Curricular Systems Integration and Management Team, which focuses on a team-based approach to enhancing the educational experience for students and the care environment for patients. She previously served as Associate Director of Operations for Creighton’s Division of University Relations and Billing Manager in the Department of Surgery at Creighton Medical Associates.
Dean Wayne Barkmeier, junior dental student Frank Patterson, senior dental student and class president Jetta Holloway-Jankowski, and Dr. James Howard, Associate Dean for Clinical Services, cut the ribbon dedicating the Max Hirschman, D.D.S. Digital Operatory. Dr. Hirschman was born in Omaha, attended dental school at Northwestern University and practiced dentistry in Long Beach, Calif., for more than 50 years. Dr. Hirschman died in October of 2004; among his final wishes was to establish a trust fund to positively influence the lives of future dentists. A portion of that bequest was a gift to Creighton University School of Dentistry. The School has named a digital operatory suite in Dr. Hirschman’s name. “We honor Dr. Hirschman and thank Heather (Hirschman) Crist, the trustee of the Max Hirschman Trust, for this wonderful gift,” said Dean Barkmeier. “Max’s legacy will be evident in the success of students who are prepared to enter dentistry using the latest technology.”

Creighton University School of Dentistry continues to pursue its vision of being one of the leading dental schools in the United States – committed to educating outstanding dentists who are leaders in their profession and their communities. The School offers a variety of options to support that vision:

**Endowed Chair** – $1.5 million  
**Endowed Professorship** – $1 million  
**Distinguished Professorship** – $1 million  
**Endowed Scholarships** – $25,000

**Naming opportunities:**  
- Digital operatory suite – $25,000  
- Radiology reading room – $10,000  
*(For additional information, contact Dr. James Howard, 402.280.5077)*

**Recognition Clubs:**  
- Ignatian Circle – $10,000 and above  
- Jesuit Circle – $5,000-$9,999  
- Founder’s Circle – $2,500-$4,999  
- Sustaining Circle – $1,000-$2,499  
- Dean’s Club – $500

**Endowments:**  
- Endowment for Ethics in Dentistry  
- ILAC Fluoride Fund *(see story on Page 5)*

**Reunion class gifts** from alumni celebrating 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30-year reunions.

**For more information, contact:**  
Deb Denbeck  
Director of Philanthropy  
402.280.5700  
800.581.1696  
DebraDenbeck@creighton.edu
Creighton Starts ILAC Fluoride Fund

Dr. Stephen Schroeder, Chair of the School of Dentistry Alumni Advisory Board, has been instrumental in establishing a special fund to help support the Creighton University Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) program in the Dominican Republic.

The ILAC program has been an integral part of the health professions schools at Creighton for more than 30 years. The humanitarian and clinical skills that this program instills in Creighton dental students is invaluable. The dental component of ILAC lasts approximately six weeks and services five to six villages, or campos, annually.

The extreme dental needs are seen most graphically in the children. Many have extensively decayed six-year molars before their 10th birthday. The pain and long-term health consequences these children must endure is truly distressing.

“The effectiveness of fluoride in American society has been nearly miraculous,” Dr. Schroeder said. “This tool should now be implemented regularly through the ILAC program. Recent developments with fluoride varnishes have eliminated some of the logistical and clinical problems encountered in the DR. Each ILAC campo has a trained cooperador or health promoter. They could be instructed in the easy biannual application of the fluoride varnish.”

Dr. Schroeder’s interest in improving preventive care in the DR has led to developing gift funds to support this activity.

Interested alumni who wish to help fund this effort can contact Dr. Terry Wilwerding (TERRYWILWERDING@creighton.edu, 402.280.5081) or Dr. Jim O’Meara (JamesOmeara@creighton.edu, 402.280.3420) for more information. Checks made out to the “ILAC Fluoride Fund” can be sent to Creighton University School of Dentistry, c/o Kristi Freese, Senior Director of Operations and Finance.

Creighton Remembers Former Faculty, Dr. Barton

Dr. John Barton, a former faculty member in the Creighton Schools of Medicine and Dentistry, died on July 15. Dr. Barton taught in the Creighton School of Medicine from 1964 to 1969. He joined the School of Dentistry as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Oral Biology in 1969 and was later promoted to Associate Professor in 1971. He was the Acting Chair of the Department of Oral Biology from 1990 to 1992 and Chair of the Department from 1992 to 1995. Dr. Barton retired from his faculty position on Sept. 30, 1996.

Creighton Assists with Mission of Mercy

Creighton faculty and students participated in the 2009 Nebraska Mission of Mercy event at Papillion-LaVista South High School near Omaha, helping to serve more than 1,400 patients and to provide dental care estimated at more than $600,000. Services provided included teeth cleanings, fillings, root canals and X-rays. The program is aimed at assisting low-income people and those without insurance, both adults and children. The free clinic is sponsored by the Nebraska Dental Association and the Nebraska Dental Foundation.

Creighton participants in the event were: full-time faculty, Drs. Anne Aiello, Tom Beeson, Ken Hermosen, Nick Levering, Stuart McNally, Larry Parish, Scott Shaddy, John Shaner, Mark Taylor and Gary Westerman; staff, Mikaela Brown, Julie Davis and Jan Owens; students, Deborah Anderson, Lydia Cam, Rich Davis, Andrew Erickson, Terry Hagen, Naser Halawa, Jetta Holloway-Jankowski, Tim Jankowski, Jeff Kohler, Carl Larson, Kalin Ngo, Robert O’Malley, Vimal Patel, Katie Quinn, Andrea Radabaugh, Jenna Renshaw, S. Aaron Smith, Aaron Taff, Kalina Uzunova-Dimova and Christopher Vanderbeek.

Students Present at International Meeting

Junior students Karen Howard-Swirzinski, Luke McMahon and Kyle Smith presented research at the American Association of Clinical Anatomists (AACA) meeting held July 14-18 in Cleveland, Ohio. The meeting was the 26th Annual Session of the AACA.

Howard-Swirzinski’s poster was titled “Examining the length and geometric patterns of the palatine canal using cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) imaging.” McMahon’s was titled “Examining the path of the facial nerve through the temporal bone using cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) imaging.” Both projects were sponsored by Dr. Neil Norton, President of the University Faculty and Associate Professor of Oral Biology. Additional mentors on these projects included Drs. Tarnjit Saini and Paul Edwards.

Smith’s project won the Dr. Sandy Marks Poster Award for Outstanding Student Research, and he received $600 for the award. His project was titled “Using cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) imaging to study the incidence of concha bullosa in the nasal cavity.” This project was also sponsored by Dr. Norton, and additional faculty involved in the project included Drs. Terry Lanphier, Tarnjit Saini, Paul Edwards and Margaret Jergenson.

Dr. Norton serves as the Treasurer of the AACA, an international organization of anatomists that advances the science and art of clinical anatomy. The AACA encourages research and publication in the field and maintaining high standards in the teaching of anatomy.
Jan. 28-Feb. 1 – Navigating through the Seas (Western Caribbean); cruise beginning in Miami, going to Key West, Cozumel, and back to Miami; Dr. Clark Stanford

Feb. 6-13 – A Treasure Chest of Practical Pearls in Oral Pathology, Medicine and Radiology; San Jose, Costa Rica; Drs. Douglas Benn and Stephen Hess

April 9 – Periodontal Symposium; Harper Center, Creighton Campus; Drs. Michael McGuire, Takanari Miyamoto and Takashi Kumagai

April 22-24 – Spring Dental Assembly; Harper Center, Creighton Campus

May 14 – Senior Awards Ceremony, Joslyn Art Museum; Hooding Ceremony and Reception, Joslyn and Dental School

May 15 – Commencement, Qwest Center Omaha

May 20-23 – National Meeting of the Society of American Indian Dentists, Creighton’s campus

June 17-27 – Erin Go CE: Tour of Ireland; Dublin, Kinsale, Killarney, Cong; Dr. James Drummond

June 30 – Dr. Ben Kutler Memorial Golf Classic, Iron Horse Golf Club

For more information on Continuing Education Courses, call 402.280.5054 or 888.273.6576

Dr. Gurney Wins Best of the Best Award

Recent graduate Michael Gurney, DDS’09, was named the Whip Mix “Best of the Best” Grand Prize Winner, as one of the nation’s outstanding dental students. Dr. Gurney was nominated for the award by Dr. Dennis Nilsson, Professor and Chair of the Department of Prosthodontics. Dental schools nationwide are asked to submit the name of one outstanding senior student for the annual award. Special consideration is given to students interested in prosthodontics.

Creighton Hosts Booth at KidzExplore

Creighton School of Dentistry and the Omaha District Dental Society, for the 16th year, participated in Omaha’s KidzExplore 2009. About 11,200 people attended the event, held April 18 and 19 at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa, which focused on fun and learning for children and families.

Creighton’s dental booth featured dental health care products and pamphlets and a nutritious snack. The Creighton group handed out about 2,000 toothbrushes and answered dental-related questions. The following dentists helped at the Creighton booth: Drs. Gary Westerman, Anne Aiello, Rich Fitzgerald, Dennis Higginbotham, Eric Hodges, Michael Knauss, Nick Levering, David Mohs, Diane Ochuba, Larry Parrish and Brett Thomsen. Dental students from Creighton and dental assistant students from Metropolitan Community College volunteered in staffing the booth.