Welcome!
In order to get to know our new incoming dental students and to explore their interests, experiences, and backgrounds we surveyed them and here is what we found.

**Family**

Twenty of our new D1s are married or have a partner, two students have one child and two students have two children. Thirty five D1s have a family member with a health related career and some of these students have parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles or cousins and even siblings who are already dentists. In the case of two students, the family member is an upper class student in our own dental school. Others have relatives who are pharmacists, nurses, optometrists, orthopedic surgeons or physicians.

*Choosing the Field*

Almost two thirds of the D1s had decided on dentistry by age eighteen, indicating that they had decided on it by the end of high school. By the end of their undergraduate studies, over ninety percent of the D1s had decided on being dentists. However, we have one student who already decided at age five in kindergarten to become a dentist while another student did not decide until age thirty.

When we asked the students what attracted them to the field of dentistry, 29 D1s said they wanted to help people, 26 mentioned they liked interacting with people, 23 said they wanted to be in the healthcare field, twenty-two discussed the scientific component of dentistry, and 19 were inspired by their experiences as dental patients. Seventeen students liked the manual work required in dentistry, 13 liked the art involved in practicing dentistry, and twelve thought it would be a personally rewarding/fulfilling profession. Nine students wanted to help underserved patients and five appreciated the role dentists have as contributors to and leaders of communities. Three appreciated the opportunity to own and operate a business.

Many students found the combination of science, art, healthcare, and creativity appealing. For example, one person said, “It's a combination of everything I've wanted to do: healthcare, business, science.” Another person was interested in medicine and psychology and found a bit of both in dentistry. One individual said he wanted, “To use my hands, build relationships, and help people.” Somebody else wanted to spread awareness about the impact of oral health on overall health and hopes his example will inspire others to pursue dentistry.

Some of the D1s were inspired by their own experiences as dental patients, including one student who had jaw surgery which he said “enabled me to finally chew food.” Another person found a passion for preventative care after she had, “root canals, dental implants, surgery, extractions (5), braces and the list continues”. One person shared this experience: “I got my braces on when I was in 7th grade and at this same time my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. This was a really uncertain and difficult time in my life but going to the dentist office during this time provided me with a comfortable environment and I enjoyed going there for my ortho appointments.” Several students also mentioned that observing their dentists made them interested in dentistry.

A few of our students realized the importance of dentistry after witnessing the lack of dental care in some communities. One person said “I grew up in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Both are places where dental care is a complete afterthought. My inspiration and passion for dentistry came from that experience.” Another person developed her passion for dentistry after working with migrant children for four years. Another D1 wrote: “To do outreach programs and expand the healthcare field to increase the importance of overall health in ALL (sic) people, not just those who can afford it.”
Many students wanted to fix smiles or improve health. Others appreciate the flexibility, lifestyle, and variety in the workday that dentistry provides. On particularly enthusiastic respondent said, “I want to change the world one smile at a time! Truly I want to change people's lives by educating them on how to improve their oral health, actually improving their health, and increasing their quality of life! It's the greatest profession ever!” Another student decided on dentistry at age five for this reason: “My pediatric dentist had a coin-operated toy machine with Power Ranger toys in his office. I really wanted more of those toys so I figured I should just become a dentist so I could own my own Power Ranger-filled coin-operated toy machine.” We hope that at the end of his training he remembers to fulfill his dream and will buy a Power Ranger toy machine for his practice.

Free Time

When our students have free time, 67 mentioned some sort of physical activities or exercise, 30 mentioned music or arts, 29 mentioned outdoor activities, and 25 mentioned spending time with family or friends. Students also love to read, cook, watch television or sports, eat at different restaurants, and take trips. We had several students say they liked going up north.

With regards to sports, many D1s play tennis, basketball, football, lacrosse, soccer, volleyball, golf or swim, run, box, or bicycle. Students also exercise by doing yoga and lifting weights. Many students simply mentioned that they exercise and did not specify exactly how they exercised.

Several students engage in artistic behavior such as drawing, painting or photography. We have one student who makes jewelry and knives, another who does carpentry, and one who crochets. Our musicians include an oboist, a few guitarists, a piccolo player who played in the Michigan Marching Band, a couple of singers, and a pianist.

Many students report enjoying outdoor activities, with a few saying simply that they like to be outdoors, while others specified specific activities. The most popular are hiking, boating, and going to the beach. Many students like to rock climb, both indoors and outdoors.

Travel

We also asked our D1s about their most memorable trips. Twenty-six had the best trip of their lives right here in the U.S, another 26 had their best trip in Europe, 14 enjoyed Asia, 17 loved South America which for the purposes of this survey is defined as any nation south of Texas, six went to Africa, three went to Australia, and two went to New Zealand which is not its own continent but stands by itself in the middle Pacific Ocean. For 11 students their best trip was a road trip, for four it was a cruise, for seven it was a mission trip, for four it was a study abroad experience, for 15 it was a family vacation, and for ten it was a vacation with friends.

Our students have done service missions in the U.S, Africa, and Asia. One student was a bit surprised to find that in Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia Americans are living in third world conditions. He was shocked that this situation is not more widely reported.

Several people went on road trips through the U. S.. One person drove from Alaska to Florida. Others had good trips while traveling to dental school. One saw 10 national parks on his way here while another passed through nine states. One person had a bicycling trip from Virginia to Oregon and found it very interesting.

Interesting

We received a wide variety of responses when we asked the dental students to provide an interesting piece of information about themselves. Many students mentioned unique abilities. One student claims to be able to clap one-handed. We have quite a number of students who are fluent in foreign languages including Aramaic and Swahili. One student can speak four languages. As far as agriculture is concerned, we have a student who made wine at an organic vineyard and one who has shorn a sheep. We have a student who knows how to tie his own flies for fly-fishing and a student who has captured swarms of bees. Another student
Submitted the statement, “I give great hugs,” in response to our question.

Those with talent include a piccolo player who is a former member of the Michigan Marching Band, one D1 who can play four instruments, and one student who has performed at Carnegie Hall in New York City. We expect to hear from all these students at the annual Dental School Talent Show.

-Written by Pre-Dental Student
Evan D'Silva

**Significant Holidays**

**September**
- National Cholesterol Education Month
- National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month
- National Honey Month
- National School Success Month
- Whole Grains Month
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
- Leukemia & Lymphoma Awareness
- 1 Labor Day
- 7 National Grandparent’s Day
- 11 Patriot Day
- 17 Constitution Day
- 21 International Day of Peace
- 21 St. Mathew’s Day
- 23 Fall Begins
- 24 Rosh Hashanah

**October**
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness
- National Apple Month
- National Physical Therapy Month
- Eye Safety & Injury Prevention Month

**October Cont’d**
- 2 Hajj (Muslim Holiday)
- 3 Day of Arafat (Muslim Holiday)
- 4 St. Francis of Assisi Day
- 4 Eid ul Adha (Muslim Holiday)
- 4 Yom Kippur (Jewish Holiday)
- 9 Leif Erikson Day
- 9 Sukkot (Jewish Holiday)
- 13 Columbus Day
- 16 Shemini Atzeret (Jewish Holiday)
- 17 Simchat Torah (Jewish Holiday)
- 18 St. Luke’s Day
- 22 National Nut Day
- 23 Diwali
- 24 United Nations Day
- 25 Islamic New Year
- 31 Halloween

**November**
- American Diabetes Month
- Lung Cancer Awareness Month
- Native American Indian Heritage Month
- National Family Caregivers Month
- 1 All Saint’s Day
- 2 All Soul’s Day
- 2 Daylight Saving’s Time Ends
- 3 Ashura (Muslim Holiday)
- 4 Election Day
- 11 Veteran’s Day
- 27 Thanksgiving Day
- 30 First Sunday of Advent

**December**
- Universal Human Rights Month
- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- 1 World AIDS day
- 6 St. Nicholas Day
- 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- 10 Human Right’s Day
- 12 Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- 16 Hannukah Begins
- 17 Wright Brothers Day/Pan-American Aviation Day
- 21 Winter Solstice
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas Day
- 27 St. John’s Day

Written by Pre-Dental Student
Evan D'Silva
On August 7th, our new 26 dental hygiene students came for their orientation session. In order to get to know them a little bit better, we administered a one page survey to learn more about their families, interests, and experiences. We found out that eight of our new hygiene students have a spouse or partner and that two have one child each. Eight students have a parent or sister, an aunt or uncle or cousin who is either a dentist or a dental hygienist.

Almost all students had decided to make dental hygiene their career by age 21. But one student decided by the young age of five and another not until age 28. When asked what attracted them to pursue a career in dental hygiene, four students said that they wanted a profession that allows them to interact with patients, six mentioned the wish to help others, 3 indicated the hands-on aspect, 12 were inspired by personal experiences, six have an interest in health care, and four specified personal fulfillment. In addition, four students stated their desire to educate others, three cited family tradition, one liked the flexibility of being a dental hygienist, and one appreciated the lifestyle.

Many students had been inspired by experiences working in a dental office, whether it was job shadowing of their dentists and hygienists, or working in the office as a dental assistant. One individual stated that he or she “really liked working for [dentist] but I decided to go back to school.” Another described themselves as being “obsessed with teeth and hygiene.”

A reoccurring response from our dental hygiene students was the desire to help and educate others about oral health. One student wrote “a smile is the closest distance between two people—I want to learn about and educate others in the field I am most passionate about, enabling people to care for their smiles and ensure they are healthy.”

The combination of health care and science drew in another student’s interest—“I like the dental field and sciences. I have a lot of interest and experience in health care, so overall dental hygiene is a great combination of all my interests.”

Aside from the dental hygiene career at large, our specific program offered at U of M was reason enough for a student to commit: “Going to U of M has always been a dream and going into the dental field has also been a dream of mine.” We hope that wherever our dental hygienists go, they will go blue!

During their free time, 15 students mentioned their involvement in athletics of any kind and love to hike, bike, run, row, dance, practice yoga, ski, play volleyball, play soccer, and just stay active in general. Fourteen students love spending time with friends and family for example by attending Tigers games. Other students enjoy reading, music and/or arts and crafts, watching movies and television, watching sports, cooking, and traveling.

In response to a question concerning their most memorable travel experiences, 16 students reported that they had their best trips right here in North America, three in Europe, four in Asia, one in South America, and one in New Zealand! One student mentioned their trip being a road trip, while another student talked about a mission trip. For five students their trips were a family vacation and for another five their trips were with friends. Students described their experiences as being eye-opening to new cultures, memorable, and educational. Many did sight-seeing, partook in fun activities and were exposed to beautiful natural scenery while away from home.

Traveling outside one’s normal environment can be extremely impactful, as one student wrote: “Going to Jamaica on a mission trip with my church was a life changing experience and really showed me how much I have to be thankful for.” Another mentioned “I met the most hardworking individuals in India and was able to witness the growth of good dental hygiene habits in India compared to years past.”

Spending time with family in new surroundings is also a great reason to travel! One student traveled to Yemen, another hopped aboard a cruise, and one flew to Mexico—all stating spending time with family and enjoying the scenery were highlights of their trips.
Interesting travel experiences included that one student got married in New Zealand, one was born in Macedonia, and another has traveled to Disney 44 times!

Our students shared a wide array of interesting facts about themselves. Two students are twins, one student has 4 dogs, and another has 75 first cousins! Those with multilingual talents include one student who is bilingual and another who can speak 5 languages—Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Spanish and English!

Food is often considered a universal language. We are therefore very happy to report that several of our students love to bake and cook in their free time and one student states “I’m a big foodie” and another that she “makes a mean grilled cheese sandwich.”

---

We look very much forward to getting to know you all in the upcoming years! Welcome to the University of Michigan!

Contributed by Anjali Reddy, pre-dental student

---

Dr. Eugene Ko

Dr. Eugene Ko graduated from Columbia University’s dental school and then completed a 3-year residency training in Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Columbia University. Following his residency training, he pursued a year-long clinical research fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital in New York City. Currently, he is a fellow of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and is a board-certified diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology. At the University of Michigan, Dr. Ko will be teaching both in the didactic and clinical settings, signing out oral pathology biopsies, seeing oral medicine patients in the DFA, and pursuing research interests.

His research interests include dental education: How to incorporate active learning into traditional didactic lectures. Another interest of Dr. Ko is to explore the potential to de-escalate treatment for cases of Ewing sarcoma primaries localized to the gnathic bones with no metastases.

On a personal note: After three years of trying to like kale, he has come to the conclusion that he’s just not a fan.
Patrick Lagua

Patrick Lagua is the new Contracts and Grants specialist in the Contracts and Grants Service Center. He currently support the research endeavors of faculty in the POMs department. He primarily assist faculty with research proposals and managing their existing research portfolio. Patrick have worked as a Contracts and Grants Specialist for the School of Social Work and the Department of Mechanical Engineering before assuming his current position at the School of Dentistry. When not working, he enjoy reading comic books, attending live music performances and spending time with my partner and our two hairless Sphinx cats, Jonesie and Annabelle.

Dr. Todd Ester

Dr. Todd V. Ester has re-joined the dental school family as Director of Diversity and Inclusion beginning June 1, 2014. He served previously as Director of Multicultural Affairs (1999-2006). Dr. Ester is also an adjunct clinical associate professor in the department of CRSE. Dr. Ester is a graduate of both the University of Michigan DDS program (1994) and graduate endodontic program (1999). Dr. Ester is a partner with Renaissance Endodontics, PLLC and states, “I am excited about my return to the school of dentistry and I look forward to working with the entire dental school community.”

Noriaki Ono

Dr. Noriaki Ono is originally from Tokyo, Japan and born in a family with a lineage of dentists and orthodontists. He graduated summa cum laude from Tokyo Medical and Dental University in 2003 and earned his DDS degree. He received his orthodontic certificate and PhD degree from Tokyo Medical and Dental University in 2007, and continued clinical fellowship in orthodontics for two years at the same institute. He became a diplomate of the Japanese Board of Orthodontics in 2008. Dr. Ono came to the United States in 2009 to participate in the Endocrine Unit of Massachusetts General Hospital to focus on more advanced research activities on bone biology. He served three years as a research fellow and two years as an instructor under the mentorship of Dr. Henry Kronenberg, while teaching as a part-time clinical instructor in the orthodontics program of Harvard School of Dental Medicine. Dr. Ono’s research focuses on the fundamental biology of stem and progenitor cells of the chondrocyte and osteoblast lineage, with a further scope on understanding pathophysiology of dental, craniofacial and skeletal deformities and diseases that affect millions of children and adults. His research has been supported by the National Institute of Health since 2012. That picture was taken at the Hokkaido island in Japan last summer. Well, I’m planning to develop things to do in my leisure time here in Michigan, as I’ve scarcely had one during five years in Boston... but I do like to watch the baseball game (I was not a big fan of Red Sox, though!).
Wanida Ono

Dr. Wanida Ono is a native of Thailand. She received her DDS degree from Chulalongkorn University in 2002, and spent two years working for the Royal Thai Navy as a dentist and a lieutenant junior grade. She received her PhD degree from Tokyo Medical and Dental University in 2008. She came to the United States and worked as a research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital before enrolling into the orthodontic residency and the Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) program at Harvard School of Dental Medicine, which she completed in 2014. Dr. Ono is a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics. Dr. Ono’s research focus includes dental development, especially dental root and periodontal ligament formation and signaling involved in these processes. Her research led to several prestigious awards, including 2013 American Association for Dental Research (AADR) and International Association for Dental Research (IADR) Hatton Awards and 2014 American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) Harry Sicher Award.

Michael Fox has joined the school as the Director of Finance, Budget, and Planning. Professionally, he was the CFO of a bank holding company in Northern Virginia. Additionally, he was the CFO of two small private colleges in Pennsylvania and Illinois. Lastly, he was the Executive Director of Financial Analysis and Budget at Eastern Michigan. Personally, he enjoys walking, gardening, watching sports, and most importantly, playing with his grandchild.

Milad’s long journey began when he was born in Baghdad, less than a year prior to the first gulf war. After 8 painful years of living in poverty under heavy sanctions and constant prosecution, his family was able to flee and seek political asylum in Denmark. Milad grew up adapting to the unique culture and customs for the following 8 years. Life at that point was great, certainly much better than before, but still not ideal. Prejudice against foreigners was common and would become a roadblock and limit career goals for him. That’s when an opportunity presented itself, to come to the only place where everyone was treated equally. At that point of life he was a senior in high school, but learned to quickly get accustomed to the new culture and language. He resumed his education by attending Wayne State University and majoring in Biochemistry. He continued studying and received a Masters of Science from the School of Medicine at Wayne State University. After his first unsuccessful attempt at gaining admissions to Dental School, he joined the UMSOD patient services department working as a dental dispensary assistant where he enjoys helping the students with their instrument and material needs on a daily basis. He hopes to attend dental school at the university soon. On his time off, he enjoys running, fixing broken electronics and spending time with family and friends.

Additional New Faculty to Welcome:
Gustavo Mendonca
Daniella Mendonca
Lisa Kane
Elizabeth VanTubergen
Karam Al-Rousan