

FACULTY Q&A

SHARING PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL PATHS

WHILE THE PENN DENTAL Medicine community may know the School's faculty by the courses they teach or the research they conduct, this Q&A faculty spotlight aims to get a bit more personal glimpse of them as individuals. For this issue, we talked with Dr. Eric Stoopler (D'99, GD'02), Associate Professor of Oral Medicine. Dr. Stoopler earned both his DMD and certificate in oral medicine at Penn Dental Medicine and has been a member of the standing faculty since 2002. Since 2007, Dr. Stoopler has also served as Director of the Oral Medicine Residency Program.

What have you found most rewarding about being a member of the Penn faculty?

Being a member of the Penn faculty has allowed me to explore all of my professional interests and has afforded me unlimited opportunities for growth. Having the privilege of training future generations of health care providers, including dentists, physicians, and nurses, has certainly been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career.

What do you view as your greatest professional accomplishment?

One of my greatest professional accomplishments is that I have trained oral medicine clinicians who are now located around the globe. Since 2007, I have been Program Director of the Oral Medicine Residency Program and one of my main objectives was to restructure the program to enhance the academic, educational, and clinical experiences for residents. By achieving these goals, I had a major role in shaping the residency into one of the most highly-regarded training programs of its kind. On a more personal note, my greatest professional accomplishments were receiving the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching and being elected to The Academy of Master Clinicians of Penn Medicine (see story, page 20), which validate my core missions of providing education and clinical care at the highest level.



Q&A with Dr. Eric T. Stoopler *Associate Professor of Oral Medicine*

What drew your interest to oral medicine and what do you enjoy most about it?

As a first-year dental student at Penn, I attended an oral medicine lecture given by Dr. Thomas Sollecito and I was fascinated by the variety and complexity of the subject matter, as well as his enthusiasm and passion for oral medicine. As my dental education progressed, I realized that my favorite subjects of medicine, pharmacology, and pathology were the clinical foundations for a career in oral medicine. The ability to provide highly-specialized clinical care coupled with my academic interests and strong desire to be an educator are the main reasons why I chose to pursue oral medicine. The diversity of my professional responsibilities is what I enjoy most — from working on research projects with colleagues throughout the University and teaching students and residents to diagnosing and managing complex clinical cases... it is all tremendously satisfying.

What advice from a mentor have you carried with you in your career?

My mentors, Dr. Martin S. Greenberg, Dr. Thomas Sollecito and Dr. Elliot Hersh advised me to engage thoughtfully, think pragmatically, and be visionary — advice which has served me well.

What excites you most about Penn Dental Medicine today?

Penn Dental has embraced the core philosophies of The Penn Compact 2020: Inclusion, Innovation, and Impact, and under the leadership of Dean Kinane, it continues to be at the forefront of dental research, education, and clinical care. Recruitment of an increasingly diversified faculty and student body to expand academic opportunities, implementation of new learning technologies and curricular revision, and the physical modernization of the entire dental campus all make Penn Dental an exciting place to be.

Schools/degrees?

S.U.N.Y. Binghamton: B.A.; University of Pennsylvania: D.M.D. and Oral Medicine Residency

If you could have dinner with anyone who would it be? And why?

As a music enthusiast, I would have dinner with The Edge [U2], Vernon Reid [Living Colour], and Jimmy Page [Led Zeppelin], so I could "pick" the brains of these musical innovators who altered the sonic landscape in ways never before imagined.

Hobbies?

Travel, live music, sports. I especially enjoy playing and watching football with my sons, Ryan and Ethan. We are all true blue NY Giants fans.

Favorite vacation destination?

So far, my favorite destinations are London, Paris, Sydney, and Hawaii. My family and I look forward to visiting Cape Town, where my wife, Melanie, was born and raised. ■