

Power of Penn Dental Medicine Campaign Spotlight

The University of Pennsylvania officially launched a new capital campaign — the *Power of Penn: Advancing Knowledge for Good* — this past spring, focused on raising resources to grow inclusion, spark innovation, and accelerate impact throughout Penn. All Penn schools and centers are part of the campaign. At Penn Dental Medicine, the *Power of Penn Dental Medicine* campaign is raising an additional \$20 million of a \$55 million goal (\$35 million raised in quiet phase) over the next three years to advance research; produce leaders of tomorrow through facilities improvements, digital innovation, and scholarships; address unmet oral health needs through expanded community programs; and build unrestricted funds. Here we spotlight four key gifts to the campaign made over the past five months.



Delta Dental Awards \$1M Scholarships Grant

Penn Dental Medicine students with a passion for serving vulnerable patients will now have a new resource to support their interests and goals thanks to a \$1 million scholarship grant from the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation. The Oral Health Education grant will endow in perpetuity the awarding of two \$25,000 scholarships each year to fourth-year DMD students who desire to work in an underserved area after graduation and who have demonstrated a commitment to community outreach during their studies. The grant award was announced in August and the first application cycle opened this fall for interested candidates in the current third-year class.

“While all of our students gain experience serving the underserved through our community-based service learning courses, we see a significant number of students with a great interest go above and beyond what’s required and develop extensive experience in the community,” says Dr. Joan Gluch, Division Chief of Community Oral Health, and co-director of the grant with Dr. Olivia Sheridan, Assistant Dean for Admissions. “What’s exciting about this scholarship is that it will provide the support that some students need to ultimately pursue this path after graduation.”



The scholarships, which will not reduce a student’s scholarship package from other Penn Dental Medicine resources, are intended to lighten overall expenses and debt during the recipient’s fourth-year of study with the goal of clearing a path for a student to pursue a career in community-based dentistry.

In addition to completing a minimum of 250 hours of community-based service and finishing all their DMD requirements on time in their fourth year, recipients must demonstrate employment in a medically underserved or health professions shortage area by October of their graduating year and commit to two years in that role after graduation.

Over time, Penn Dental Medicine foresees the fund also contributing valuable data to community health needs assessment. “These new dentists will be a valuable cohort to track to assess the impact scholarships can make in drawing more dental graduates into community-based service,” explains Dr. Gluch. “We will create a mechanism to remain connected to the Delta Dental scholars and to collect data on practice patterns to help inform our understanding of oral health of vulnerable patients and communities.”



Dr. Thomas P. Sollecito One Health Fellowship to Support Study across Disciplines

A new fellowship has been established that will support and encourage study across disciplines. The Dr. Thomas P. Sollecito One Health Fellowship in Oral Medicine will provide financial support for educational programming within Penn Dental Medicine's Department of Oral Medicine for veterinary dentists or oral medicine fellows with an interest in veterinary oral medicine. The fellowship was established through a gift from Dr. Jamie G. Anderson, a practicing veterinarian from California.

The fellowship is named in honor of Dr. Thomas Sollecito, Professor and Chair of Oral Medicine, who will administer the programming. Dr. Sollecito has shown a long-term interest in oral conditions of veterinary patients and has mentored Dr. Jamie G. Anderson, a diplomate in Veterinary Dentistry and Internal Medicine since 2004.

After earning her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from UC Davis in 1989, Dr. Anderson completed an internship in small animal medicine and surgery at Penn Vet and continued on at Penn to complete a residency in veterinary dentistry in 1991, and a residency in small animal internal medicine in 1993. She is board certified in veterinary dentistry and internal medicine and focuses her clinical and research efforts in Oral Medicine. Dr. Anderson

appreciates the important role of oral mucosal disease in animals and envisions subspecialty development in veterinary dentistry.

"I am excited to offer this fellowship as a means toward understanding the frequent chronic and painful oral mucosal diseases in our household cats and dogs," says Dr. Anderson. "Painful diseases in cats and dogs occur commonly, yet we know very little about them. With the help of the Oral Medicine Department, we hope to make inroads into answers."

Drs. Anderson and Sollecito developed the fellowship program and hope to recruit an interested clinician within this academic year. They anticipate that the two-week fellowship will support the One Health concept between Oral Medicine specialists at University of Pennsylvania and veterinary dentists interested in veterinary oral medicine and who are committed to lifelong learning. The successful applicant will be engaged in a two-week immersion program in clinical oral medicine. The program will include observation in patient care and active participation in rounds, while having an opportunity to discuss and design a research topic.

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 ABOVE: Dr. Thomas Sollecito (D'89, GD'91), Professor and Chair of Oral Medicine, with the fellowship donor Dr. Jamie G. Anderson.

Gift to Expand Nutrition Education

Dentists have a unique opportunity to observe and provide guidance to their patients about the critical impact nutrition plays in attaining good oral and general health. A new \$250,000 gift from Penn Dental Medicine Board of



Dr. Joanne Chouinard-Luth

Overseer Dr. Joanne Chouinard-Luth (D'79) and her husband, John Luth (WG '76), will provide valuable resources to enhance nutrition programming and clinical support for

faculty, students, and patients at Penn Dental Medicine.

The Penn Dental Medicine Nutrition Education Program will expand existing dental education in nutrition using a patient-centered approach. Housed jointly within the Department of Biochemistry and the Division of Community Oral Health, the program will fund recruitment of a Registered Dietician to join the teaching staff at the dental school, and create education "teams" that include designated student fellows, who will help assess, develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based clinical nutrition teaching materials for students and patients.

Dr. Chouinard-Luth has had a lifelong interest in the topic of nutrition. After obtaining her DMD from Penn Dental Medicine in 1979, she went on to complete a Master's in Public Health from the University of Chicago, a Master's in Nutrition Science from Columbia, and a chef's certification from the Institute of Culinary Education in New York City. Dr. Chouinard-Luth is passionate about breaking down professional silos and stimulating a dialogue about nutrition that will result in the mitigation and prevention of chronic disease and better health for all.

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Visit www.dental.upenn.edu/powerofpenn to learn more about campaign initiatives.



Advancing Digital Innovation

Technology is revolutionizing the practice of dentistry, and Penn Dental Medicine is committed to not only integrating the latest digital tools into its education, research, and clinical programs, but to continue its tradition of innovation and become a global leader in digital dentistry. Advancing these efforts is a major educational grant from Dentsply Sirona. This past June, the company committed more than \$1 million in equipment that will be used by all levels of Penn Dental Medicine students to provide hands-on experience with the application of dental scanners, CAD-CAM design tools, and milling equipment.

Dr. Markus Blatz, Chair of Penn Dental Medicine's Department of Preventive and Restorative Sciences and Assistant Dean for Digital Innovation and Professional Development, has led a yearlong Digital Innovation Initiative, involving faculty from every clinical department at the School. He explains that the objectives of the initiative are to establish a plan to educate a "digitally competent" student/dentist from early in their career; engage in state-of-the-art laboratory and clinical research on new technologies and materials; develop more efficient workflows; and create a digital "footprint" for every patient that is accessible across departments and specialties.

"Over the years, we've been able to gain international recognition for our work on laboratory-based CAD/CAM technologies and novel materials in restorative dentistry and prosthodontics. Our recent focus has been on chair-side CAD/CAM systems and integration of digital technologies across all departments and specialties," says Dr. Blatz. "After a coordinated school-wide effort to establish the type of equipment and resources we would need to achieve our goals, we sought to partner with industry leaders, most notably Dentsply Sirona, given their full suite of equipment for scanning, imaging, and milling."

The Dentsply Sirona gift will outfit a new CAD-CAM design and milling center to be located in the Lower Concourse of the School's Evans Building. In addition, multiple, intraoral scanning systems are being placed in the School's pre- and postdoctoral teaching laboratories and clinics.

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