

# U<sub>OF</sub>T DENTISTRY



# GREAT ALUMNI



Twelve UofT Dentistry grads who have made an indelible impact on the profession in Canada – and the world ▶ [PAGE 9](#)



# U<sup>OF</sup>T DENTISTRY

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

# BONDS THAT LAST A LIFETIME

**W**e have great alumni. I don't think we celebrate enough just how distinguished all of our alumni are and how meaningful it is to have studied at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Dentistry. Our reputation is such that our grads have little problem getting into specialty programs and residencies around the world. I travel a lot for the school and everywhere I go, the school's reputation precedes me. We are known worldwide for our excellence.

I graduated from UofT Dentistry with my DDS in 1979. We had a great class; we truly bonded. We went to class together, we studied together, we socialized together. My best friends today are my dental school classmates. It's so valuable to go to a school that prepares you well for the future and produces talented cohorts year after year. Your classmates become a part of your professional life. You turn to them when you have questions and want to explore new ideas in your career.

When you have a program that focuses on excellence, you graduate people who make significant contributions to the

profession, and beyond. We're the first dental school in Canada, and the largest, so we have a long list of alumni, and many of them have had an impact in so many different ways. In this issue, we share some of their stories. I would argue that all of our alumni have made great contributions in their communities and to society. Every year, UofT Dentistry graduates exceptional individuals who make a difference by being stellar clinicians and innovators in research, serving in key organizational dentistry roles and generously giving back.

### My best friends today are my dental school classmates

We hope that the 12 people featured in this issue represent an interesting cross-section of how our alumni contribute. And we hope that you find, reflected in their stories, elements of your own experience. Perhaps you'll learn something about your alma mater and this profession that you didn't know before. More importantly, we hope you discover a newfound pride for your school and the ever-growing community of graduates who make the dental profession and society better every day because of their fine skills and hard work. ■

DEAN DANIEL HAAS 7T9, 8T8 PHD

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# UP FRONT

## WORKING WITH STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS

**S**amantha Freeman-Attwood does not fear change. Since she became the Faculty's registrar — a role in which she serves as a key point-of-contact for students — she's been set on finding ways to improve the student experience.

### As the new registrar, what are your over-arching goals?

The Faculty wants to enrich our educational programs through innovation and scholarship. I want to ensure that we're delivering the best possible learning experience for our students.

### What's your philosophy?

I like to take a cohesive, inclusive and personalized approach to improving the student experience. It's important to me to hear from students directly. One of my first meetings at the Faculty was with the student executive. I asked them what they thought was working well and what needed to be improved. What could I do to help them be successful at the Faculty? Another priority for me is student accessibility. I want to ensure that students who need support have the necessary resources in place to succeed at the University — whether they experience disability-related barriers, or struggle with mental health issues. I am committed to helping break down barriers faced by people with visible and invisible disabilities.

### What changes have you made so far?

One of the first things I did was to get to know my team, to take stock of their skills as a group and individually. I implemented training in the Student Services Office with the goal of setting a standard of customer-service excellence across the Faculty. On a larger scale, we have implemented two new kinds of software: the first gives students the ability to provide feedback in class via their phones and the second will help improve student testing. We are also doing an audit of how we handle



Samantha Freeman-Attwood

Photo: Jeff Comber

student communications at the Faculty to create a more streamlined and strategic approach.

### Are you looking at student admissions?

We've received feedback that our process is not as fun and friendly as students would like. How can we make our interview weekend more humanistic, more approachable? We are recruiting current students to act as ambassadors for that weekend. Dean Haas will attend our interview weekend in order to address applicants and be available to answer questions. This is all in an effort to move toward a more holistic admissions process, one that considers the whole applicant, rather than simply empirical data sets.

### You seem comfortable with change.

I'm a change maker — I don't shy away from it. I always strive to make things better, and typically that comes with some form of change. This place is incredible, and the foundation is already here in terms of a well-honed strategic direction, a collaborative senior leadership and an engaged student body. It's an exciting time at the Faculty of Dentistry and I am thrilled to be a part of it.

## FIBROSIS RESEARCH EARNS \$11 MILLION IN GRANTS

Faculty scientists have received three separate grants to further their groundbreaking research on fibrosis. Fibrosis, which is excess connective tissue that develops mainly in organs, plays a role in cancer, heart disease, diabetes and other illnesses, including periodontal disease, and contributes to about 45 per cent of all deaths.

Last fall, the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and the Ontario Research Fund awarded Professor Chris McCulloch 7T6, 8T2 PhD and eight other UofT investigators — including Boris Hinz from Dentistry and Craig Simmons, who holds a cross-appointment with the Faculty — \$6.5 million for equipment and \$900,000 over five years to fund staff. The newly created Fibrosis Network will investigate the mechanisms behind fibrosis in the mouth, heart, kidney and other parts of the body.

“By virtue of using this equipment we’re able to conduct experiments we’d otherwise never be able to do,” says McCulloch, who holds a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Matrix Dynamics. For instance, new tools will help researchers measure fibrosis in patients without having to take a biopsy.

The equipment will include imaging machines, instruments to sort cells and confocal and atomic force microscopes. They’ll be housed at the four university-affiliated network sites.

New tools will help researchers measure fibrosis in patients without having to take a biopsy

McCulloch and co-investigator Craig Simmons of the Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering (IBBME) also earned a \$550,000 grant from the Con-

naught Fund to help promote UofT as a fibrosis research hub.

Meanwhile, Hinz, a distinguished professor of tissue repair and regeneration who’s cross appointed to the IBBME and the Faculty of Medicine, landed \$3.17 million over seven years from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Hinz will continue his research on myofibroblasts, which are cells involved in tissue repair. “The issue with these cells is that they keep on repairing the tissue. They don’t know when to stop,” says Hinz. When they go overboard, they leave disease-causing fibrosis behind.

“There is no cure,” says Hinz of fibrosis, which can cause deterioration in the function of the gums, heart and organs, and other systems across the body. These new funds will help researchers better understand fibrosis, develop early diagnosis approaches and discover new treatment options.

## TEAMING UP WITH SCHOOLS IN CHINA



Photo: Zhijian Xie

Last fall, a visit to China by a group of faculty members laid the groundwork for some exciting new collaborations. Dean Daniel Haas (second from right), vice-dean research Bernhard Ganss (right) and Robert Carroll, assistant dean of Continuing Dental Education (left), pictured with Wang Huiming, the dean of the dental school from Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, also visited top-tier dental schools in Chengdu, Beijing and Shanghai. “We’re a global university, so we’re seeking partners around the world,” says Haas. These meetings helped advance plans to create student exchanges, offer continuing education and set up joint research projects.

### ORGANIZING YOUR CLASS REUNION?

Don’t forget that the Great Alumni Event for all UofT Dentistry alumni is happening on April 27. Also, if you graduated in a year ending in a 3 or 8, it is your honoured year! For information, or if you are interested in organizing your reunion, please contact Warrena Wilkinson at [warrena.wilkinson@dentistry.utoronto.ca](mailto:warrena.wilkinson@dentistry.utoronto.ca). For more information about the Great Alumni Event visit [www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/the-great-alumni-event](http://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/the-great-alumni-event)



## DR. JAMES LEAKE RECEIVES 2018 AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Dr. James Leake

**D**r. James Leake 6T6, 6T9 Dip DPH, 7T8 MSc D returned to UofT in 1980 to teach public health. He had a passion for community-based research, and over the next 28 years, authored and co-authored more than 70 peer-reviewed journal articles. While it was more prestigious at the time to publish internationally, Leake focused on domestic issues and journals. He spearheaded public health research in Canada on a number of topics, including fluoride, Indigenous peoples and access to care. “I owe so much to the contributions others have made to my work and my teaching,” he says, humbly. “It’s not mine alone by any means.”

As he helped expand the literature on dental public health, he also advocated for change based on his findings. “He really led by example,” says former student Dr. Robert Hawkins 9T3. “Evidence-based dentistry is now standard, but in the ’80s and ’90s that was not the case. He was at the vanguard.”

Leake’s early work provided a rationale for an Ontario-wide dental program for low-income children that was later folded into the province’s Healthy Smiles Ontario initiative. He co-authored a submission to the

Romanow Commission on the Future of Health Care in 2001, was part of the group that advocated for the successful introduction of a chief dental officer for Canada in 2004, and helped design, analyze and write up the dental component of the first Canadian Health Measures Survey, which delivered

“I owe so much to the contributions others have made to my work and my teaching,” he says, humbly. “It’s not mine alone by any means”

results in 2007. He consulted internationally for the Pan American Health Organization and served for years on the Council of the Royal College of Dentists of Canada, including a term as president.

Even now, in retirement, he stays connected to public health projects in Canada. He advocates for better access to care and promotes Indigenous reconciliation through improved understanding of the health impact of the residential school system. And he still believes firmly in a central role for dental care as part of a truly successful approach to public health in Canada.

For tickets to celebrate Dr. Leake go to [www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/awards-of-distinction](http://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/awards-of-distinction).

## AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION



Before



After

Photos: Tina Harvey-Kane

**T**he newly completed fourth- and fifth-floor renovation at 124 Edward Street has brought the Faculty of Dentistry’s labs “from the stone age to the modern age,” says Tina Harvey-Kane, manager of building operations and services. This \$20-million upgrade, which began in 2016, has created a series of collaborative labs and workspaces. These bright, well-ventilated and accessible areas will enable high-quality research, particularly collaborative projects, she says. Staff, faculty and students are invited to an open house for the new space in March. A more formal ribbon-cutting ceremony with the project’s top donors, government officials, UofT President Meric Gertler and other UofT leaders will occur in May.

### STAY CONNECTED

Keep up with the latest alumni news and events by ensuring we have your current mailing and email address on file. Please send your updates to: [address.update@utoronto.ca](mailto:address.update@utoronto.ca).

# PAST WINNERS OF THE AWARD OF DISTINCTION

## 1990

Gordon Blondahl  
John B. Macdonald  
William Martin  
William O'Driscoll  
Donald Thompson  
Douglas Yeo  
Leesha G. Zed  
Mary M. Graham  
Kenneth F. Pownall  
A. Murray Hunt  
Gordon Nikiforuk  
Marjorie Jackson  
Jacob Kreutzer  
Charles Williams  
Douglas Stoneman  
Peter T. Smylski  
H. Guy Poyton  
Frank Popovich  
John A. Pedler  
Stewart MacGregor  
William D. Mackay  
Ernest M. Madlener

## 1991

R. Oliver Brett  
Lorne K. Brooks  
George Creasy  
Donald Cunningham  
Wesley Dunn  
Arthur Wood  
Robert Locke  
John Speck  
Doris M. Mould

## 1992

Douglas A. Eisner

Harry Jolley  
Kevin L. Roach  
Alva E. Swanson  
Stephen Yaholnitsky  
Donald L. Anderson

## 1993

Melvin Charendoff  
Rowland D. Haryett  
Bruno P. Martinello  
Roderick L. Moran  
Dennis B. Smith  
Donald Woodside

## 1994

Israel Kleinberg  
Norman Levine  
William Spence  
Redvers C. Warren

## 1995

Ralph C. Burgess  
Jack G. Dale  
John Durran  
Sidney Golden  
Marvin Klotz  
Gordon Perlmutter

## 1996

James Brookfield  
Emmanuel Rajczak  
Irving Siegel  
Sigmund Socransky  
Douglas Stoneman  
Marta Vogl

## 1997

Roger L. Ellis  
Noble Hori  
Eric Kings

Stanley Kings  
David Mock  
Helene Shingles  
Beverley J. Timgren  
Edward Sonley

## 1998

Robert Clappison  
Anne C. Dale  
George Stirling  
Philip A. Watson  
William Wing-Bill  
Wong

## 1999

Artin Demirsian  
Samuel M. Green  
Calvin Torneck  
Maret Truvert  
Malcolm Yasny

## 2000

John Chalmers  
Donald A. Cheetham  
Henry Gelfant  
Michael Lucyk  
George K. Scott  
Lloyd Chapman  
Adel Sedra

## 2001

Ronald Anco  
A. Barry Chapnick  
Dennis Nimchuk  
Wayne H. Pulver  
Frances Richardson  
Gordon Thompson

## 2002

Donald Coburn

Stanley Kogon  
Eric Luks  
Patricia Main  
Eleanor J. McIntyre  
Elgin Thompson

## 2003/2004

M. Gerrard McKenna  
Aidan O'Reilly  
Simon Weinberg  
Arthur R.  
Zwingenberger

## 2005

Bryan E. Walls  
William Ben Johnson  
Lynn Johnston  
David Cowan  
Rod Johnston

## 2006

Jay Bacher  
Heliane Canepa  
Christena Chruszez  
William G. McIntosh

## 2007

Ian Gainsford  
Gerald Halbert  
Nicky L. Leung  
Guylaine McCallum

## 2008

Bruce Graham  
Salme E. Lavigne  
Robert M. Pilliar  
Edwin H. Yen  
Royal College of  
Dental Surgeons  
of Ontario

## 2009

F. Cy Elborne  
Randy Lang  
H. Guy Poyton  
George A. Zarb

## 2010

Aldo Domenic Boccia  
Howard C. Tenenbaum  
Toronto Alpha Omega  
Dental Society

## 2011

Christopher McCulloch  
Jack Cottrell  
Oral Health Journal

## 2012

Charles Filippo Cappa  
Ken Croney  
Dorothy McComb

## 2013

Rita Bauer

Barry Sessle  
Bryan Tompson

## 2014

Timothy Milligan  
James W. Brown  
Shimon Friedman

## 2015

Jack Gerrow  
Lynn Tomkins  
Royal Canadian  
Dental Corps

## 2016

Tom Harle  
Carolyn PoonWoo  
Michael Pharoah

## 2017

Grace Bradley  
Larry Levin  
Elizabeth MacSween

## FAMILY FUN

Come to UofT's Alumni Reunion weekend and visit the Faculty of Dentistry's Kids' Passport area on the St. George campus on June 2. Kids' Passport encourages alumni to bring their families to campus and experience fun, hands-on activities. Dentistry is participating for the first time this year. More details at [www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/alumni/events](http://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/alumni/events) and [www.springreunion.utoronto.ca](http://www.springreunion.utoronto.ca).



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RCDSO core approved courses

# GREAT ALUMNI 2018

All UofT Dentistry alumni are invited to celebrate the friendships and memories they made at dental school at the Faculty's first-ever Great Alumni Event.

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Friday, April 27, 2018

Join us at Steam Whistle Brewing on Friday, April 27, from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., for a great opportunity to reconnect with colleagues and classmates from all eras, relax and have some fun.

The evening will feature a slideshow highlighting people and events throughout the years, brewery tours, music, great food and drink, a lounge for conversation and more.

Please register early at  
[www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/the-great-alumni-event](http://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/the-great-alumni-event).  
Space is limited.

For more information, contact Miriam Stephan at  
416-864-8202 or [miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca](mailto:miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca)

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**We hope you will join us!**



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF DENTISTRY



# GREAT ALUMNI

Their careers span more than a century, and their influence stretches across Canada and around the world. Meet 12 graduates of UofT Dentistry who have had an incredible impact on everything from teaching and research, to patients and practitioners. With more than 8,000 graduates since the Faculty was founded in 1875, we could have filled a book with tales of the amazing men and women who once studied here. Consider this a small but representative sample. We hope their stories inspire you.



PHOTOS BY JEFF COMBER  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOEL KIMMEL

# The Community Clinician

## DR. CAROLYN POONWOO

Her people skills have made her popular with patients at her west-end Toronto practice — and an effective leader in the dental profession

BY SHARON ASCHAIK

**I**t can be difficult to tell the difference between Toronto dentist Carolyn PoonWoo's patients and her friends. That's because so many of the people she treats become a bigger part of her life. Warm and quick with a smile, Dr. PoonWoo sometimes meets patients for dinner, and has received invitations to their weddings, birthday parties and bar mitzvahs. The social calls seem to be a natural outcome of the effort she makes to genuinely get to know the people she treats.

"The best part of my job is being with people all day and building great relationships," says PoonWoo, a 2016 Award of Distinction recipient. "I work at a high level, but do it in a way where it's welcoming and people feel cared for."

In 1988, PoonWoo joined a Bloor Street West practice in Toronto, and instantly liked its emphasis on families. She also appreciated the neighbourhood's eclectic charm. Two years later, she bought the practice and, in 2013, moved it to its current location just steps from Runnymede Station.

Expanding services while maintaining an inviting environment for patients was PoonWoo's vision for the new Bloor West Dental Group. In 2011, she chose an architect and interior design team to create a larger, more modern dental office, and hired more staff, including prosthodontists, a periodontist, an oral surgeon and a pediatric dentist.

"This practice has been around for a long time and has a great reputation, but we didn't stay in the past. We've moved forward and tried to be innovative in everything we do," PoonWoo says.

PoonWoo's people skills also make her an effective leader in the broader dental community. As a former Toronto Crown and Bridge Study Club president, she initiated discussions that led to a significant donation to Uoft's Faculty of Dentistry



**"The best part of my job is being with people all day and building great relationships," says Carolyn PoonWoo, pictured at her Bloor Street West practice in Toronto**

for the purchase of much-needed radiology equipment. Through the West Toronto Dental Society, she spearheaded efforts to develop a free dental-care program for low-income community members. As a UofT Dental Alumni Association board member since 2000, and its president from 2006 to 2009, she helped launch the Faculty's annual fundraising gala. Since its inception, the event has raised more than \$1.4 million for the Faculty's Access to Care program and for clinic renewal.

Perhaps those who have benefited most from PoonWoo's dental volunteering, and who have made a big impact on her life, are the hundreds of children who have received free dental care through the charity missions she has undertaken. She says participating in week-long mobile dental clinics, particularly in Colombia and Guatemala, were her most rewarding experiences as a dentist.

"Most of our patients had never seen a dentist, and the degree of dental disease was alarming. However, the children seemed happy and well cared for," she recalls. "Being able to support these children's health was extremely gratifying." ■

- > **Preferred location for next charity mission:**  
Trinidad – because it's my home country and there are many underserved communities there
- > **Little-known advice for patients regarding their oral health:**  
Learn more about snoring and sleep apnea in both adults and children
- > **Favourite local restaurant:**  
Bloom, which serves Latin American fare. It's a hidden gem with great food!

# The Evaluator

## DR. JACK GERROW

Dental students across Canada must all adhere to the same rigorous standards, thanks to his work

BY JOHN LORINC

**W**hen Dr. Jack Gerrow '79 was a dental student at UofT, he and some of his peers benefited from informal mentoring by a few faculty members. The counseling was inspirational, but it inadvertently highlighted a shortcoming of dental education at the time.

The formal evaluation process, recalls Gerrow — who recently retired after a 24-year stretch as executive director and registrar of the National Dental Examining Board — had little to do with what he'd learned, either in lectures or from those mentors. "It wasn't reliable," he says. "It was obvious that as dentists we didn't know a lot about teaching and less about evaluation."

While most members of the dental profession spend their careers attending to patients, Gerrow, a 2015 Award of Distinction recipient, devoted his time to teaching the teachers. His goal? To ensure that all dental graduates emerge from their training with the skills to care for their patients successfully — and safely.

His extensive work on these professional building blocks now extends not just across Canada but internationally. Under his stewardship, the examining board developed examinations that have been recognized in the U.S. and New Zealand. He has also assisted Australia, South Korea and Hong Kong with the development of examinations and certification processes. "Getting across the idea both nationally and internationally that evaluation is a science and that it involves making exams reliable and valid is what I'm most proud of," says Gerrow.

Since retiring from the examining board, he has been appointed as an adjunct professor at UofT's Faculty of Dentistry, working with faculty members on designing



curriculum in the fields of restorative dentistry and prosthodontics.

Gerrow comes by his passion for teaching honestly: his mother was a high-school math teacher. After short stints teaching and practising in Ontario, and then specializing in prosthodontics, he taught at Dalhousie University's Faculty of Dentistry for 24 years. There, as he recalls, he especially liked large-group teaching and engaging his students. "Those were the days I couldn't wait to get to work."

But even in a professional Faculty, Gerrow learned that it was crucial for teachers to make the instruction both meaningful and measurable. He began organizing summer boot camps for newly appointed dental faculty members, teaching them how to first establish the skills that dental students would need by the time they graduate, and then work backward to ensure the students were actually learning those skills.

Gerrow saw from his work that while every dental Faculty must figure out how best to teach and evaluate students, some did it better than others. That variability posed a quality-control problem: How could Canada ensure that all dentists were trained to the same high standards? When the previous registrar of the examining board retired in 1994, a colleague encouraged Gerrow to apply. "I was told it was time for me to put up or shut up," he chuckles.

Through the examining board and the Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry, Gerrow and his team began developing the foundations of a certification process that formalized the importance of fostering a culture of excellence in evaluation. The idea is that all accredited Faculties will adhere to a set of clearly defined standards for teaching and evaluating students. The long game, as Gerrow notes, is to ensure that all dental school graduates can safely treat their patients. "It's critical for the protection of the public," he says. ■

> **Dental role model:**

Dr. John Houston, a prosthodontist and former director of clinics at UofT's Faculty of Dentistry

> **Favourite hobby:**

Downhill skiing. It's the best activity for family and for relieving work stresses

> **Best advice for dentistry students:**

Don't worry about career and life choices too soon. When they do come up, listen to yourself

# The Historian

## DR. ANNE DALE

She believes in knowing the past. For decades, she's cared for the unique artifacts that tell the history of dentistry in Canada

BY DIANE PETERS

**T**he Faculty of Dentistry Museum on the second floor of the Edward St. building overflows with artifacts. Vintage portraits, old dental instruments, war medals and more fill every inch of wall, surface and floor space.

Dr. Anne Dale 5T8, the museum's longtime curator, has devoted countless hours to this ever-growing collection that dates back nearly 150 years. She's restored paintings, refinished cabinets and cleaned up artifacts. On a monthly basis, she changes the display in the window that faces the second-floor hallway. She frequently writes descriptions of items in the collection. Although she retired as a faculty member nearly two decades ago, she still comes in once a week and does work for the museum at home. "I've spent my life doing this, and I'd do it again because I love my profession," says Dale.

This lifelong teacher and storyteller also believes passionately in the value of history. "The museum is the conscience of the whole profession," she says.

The museum dates back to 1869, a year after the creation of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario. Early on, it acquired artifacts from James Branston Willmott, the co-founder of the first dentistry school in Canada — the precursor to the Faculty. They include his desk, which he built himself and has a secret drawer, his dental chair, and his walking stick, which has the names of the first graduating class engraved in its gold cap.

The museum moved homes and had various curators until responsibility for it fell to Dale's husband, Dr. Jack Dale 5T8, in the early 1960s. A decade later, when Jack began to travel extensively, Anne took over much of the workload. Her skilled attention to detail perfectly suited the job. Her tenacity also proved pivotal: the museum



lost its space in the early 1980s and was relegated to the basement. When the space became available again, Anne learned that the first person to claim it could have it. “So I went right downstairs with my dolly and I brought a cabinet up and I stuck it in there,” she recalls.

Anne met Jack when the two did their general BAs at UofT; they married in secret in second year. Anne piqued her husband’s interest in dentistry, and when Jack applied for dental school at UofT she sat in on the interview. “And what about you, what are you going to do?” the assistant dean asked her. She said she was considering hygiene — she’d already been told her first love, forestry, would not suit a young woman. “Do you want to give dentistry a try?” he asked. She did, and struggled at first, as her small-town high school hadn’t offered physics. But she quickly caught up, competing with Jack all the way through: he finished first; she was second.

Together, they pursued postgraduate work at Harvard. Anne did an internship, then a fellowship in oral medicine. The couple’s two girls, Anne and Hali, were born in Boston.

Back in Toronto in the early 1960s, Anne began teaching basic science and in the UofT Faculty of Dentistry’s clinic, part-time at first. Eventually, she earned the title associate professor, taught several courses — and through it all continued cataloguing donations to the museum. She partially retired in 1997 and stopped teaching in 2002, but kept taking care of the museum, even after Jack’s death in 2016. She has no plans to stop, as she believes in cherishing her profession’s history. “It’s our memory.”

> **Dentist from history you’d most like to meet:**

James Branson Willmott. He was an exemplar for our profession for more than 40 years

> **Biggest career challenge:**

Having enough hours in the day for everything I wanted to do

> **If you went back to school now, you’d study:**

Dentistry. I love dentistry. It’s my life

# The Leader

## DR. JOHN B. MACDONALD

BY MARCIA KAYE



As good as he was at research, he was even better at recruiting talented young scientists

“**O**n mountain or river, just search the whole world through, You’ll never find a class like the class of 4T2.”

So wrote dentistry student John Barfoot Macdonald for the 1939 Dentantics musical comedy revue. And a spirited class it was: upon graduation, the entire class marched en masse down Toronto’s University Avenue to the armouries to enlist. Macdonald himself — known to friends as “Jack,” a natural leader and accomplished musician who loved playing piano at parties — would distinguish himself in the war effort and beyond.

After serving as a captain in the Canadian Dental Corps, he would go on to pursue groundbreaking research in periodontal disease and advocate for incorporating scientific research into dental education. It’s believed he is the only dentist in Canada to ever have led a university (he was president of the University of British Columbia from 1962 to 1967). “Jack was brilliant, determined, thoughtful and ahead of his time,” remembers Dr. Richard Ellen, a UofT dentistry professor emeritus who knew Macdonald. “He was a very impressive guy with an eye for big issues.” Born 100 years ago, Macdonald died in 2014 at the age of 96.

After his wartime service, Macdonald earned a PhD at New York’s Columbia University. His thesis on certain motile gram-negative oral bacteria helped open an entirely new research direction. “This type of bacteria, still to this day, is considered one of the prime organisms in periodontal disease,” says Ellen.

As good as he was at research, Macdonald was even better at recruiting other talented young scientists. Back at UofT, he helped found the Division of Dental Research. Then, lured in 1956 by a professorship to the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, he proceeded to help turn the unassuming Forsyth Dental Infirmary for Children into one of the top independent dental research institutes in the world, now called the Forsyth Institute. Says Ellen, who later trained there, “I saw the Forsyth as the house that Jack built. He gave the place attitude.”

Believing that leadership does not equal dictatorship, Macdonald gave researchers free rein. It was intoxicating and created independent thinkers, recalls Anne Dale 5T8, who with her husband, Jack Dale 5T8, was recruited by Macdonald. In a time when marriage and motherhood generally ended a woman’s career, Macdonald encouraged Dale, a mother of two, to continue her research. “Anywhere else you’d be asked to leave,” she recalls.

In 1962, with an international reputation for leadership, Macdonald was selected to be UBC’s fourth president, and greatly expanded its graduate programs. Back in Ontario in the 1970s, he led the Council of Ontario Universities.

Active his whole life, the married father of five remained busy after retirement. He wrote a book called *Message from Laura*, a thriller about an expert on designer genes who creates a deadly weapon, raised \$12 million for the preservation of Lake Simcoe, received nine honorary degrees, became an officer of the Order of Canada — and continued to play piano at parties. ■

# The Globalist

## DR. ASHLEY LINDSAY

BY DIANE PETERS



A century ago, he helped found China's first dental school.  
His legacy lives to this day

When Dean Daniel Haas spent three days at the West China School of Stomatology last year, everyone knew who he was — the dean of the same school that Dr. Ashley Lindsay had graduated from. “All the students know about UofT and its connection to Lindsay,” says Haas. Pictures of Lindsay adorn key places in the school, which was the first modern dental school in China. Lindsay’s legacy is similar to Norman Bethune’s, who brought Western medicine to rural China just before the Second World War.

Lindsay ’07, ’28 BSc D showed resourcefulness early on. He applied to be a missionary upon graduating from UofT in 1907, but the Methodist missionary program accepted only ordained men or medical workers and had no idea what to do with a dentist. So Lindsay went back to his native Quebec and had his own minister press for a more sensible interpretation of the rules. The tactic worked, and Lindsay and his new wife Alice headed to China with no language instruction or other training.

Their trip to Chengdu took five months: they journeyed by ship to Shanghai, then navigated over rocky, narrow roads, and finally travelled by small steamer up the Yangtze River. (When asked later by a Canadian newspaper what China needed most, Alice Lindsay said “roads.”) When they arrived at their destination in March 1908, Lindsay discovered patients in dire need, including a member of the welcome delegation. Lindsay himself

described it: “He exhibited an upper denture which was on the point of dividing into two separate and thus two quite useless parts.” Untrained community members were providing dental services, Lindsay wrote. He set up a clinic with an operating room in an old hospital, a waiting room in a missionary’s house and a lab in a shed with a mud floor. It was four years before he got a proper office.

While Lindsay was eventually joined at his clinic by two Canadian dentists — Dr. John Thompson in 1910 and Dr. Harrison Mullett in 1917 — he knew that what China really needed was its own trained dentists. In his most visionary act, Lindsay helped found the Department of Dentistry of the West China Union University in 1917, serving as its first dean. About a decade later, he established a dental hospital affiliated with the university. And in 1946, he started the *Dental Journal of West China Union University* — the first dental journal in China — and served as its inaugural editor.

Lindsay stayed in China for 43 years, returning to Canada periodically to raise money for his mission and to educate himself further. In his 1928 thesis for his BSc in dentistry, he described a more reliable and less painful approach to mandibular block anesthesia that soon became the standard of care.

He died in 1968 at age 84, but his legacy endures. The dental school he founded merged with Sichuan University in 2001. It remains one of the top dental schools in China, with a journal and research program that are respected around the world. ■

# The Advocate

## DR. TINA MEISAMI

Through her foundation, she provides dental care — and hope — to disadvantaged women

BY HANNAH JAMES

Filling cavities, crafting dental implants and repairing jawlines are some of the procedures Dr. Tina Meisami's foundation offers women who have suffered physical abuse, or whose dental health is poor due to poverty or homelessness.

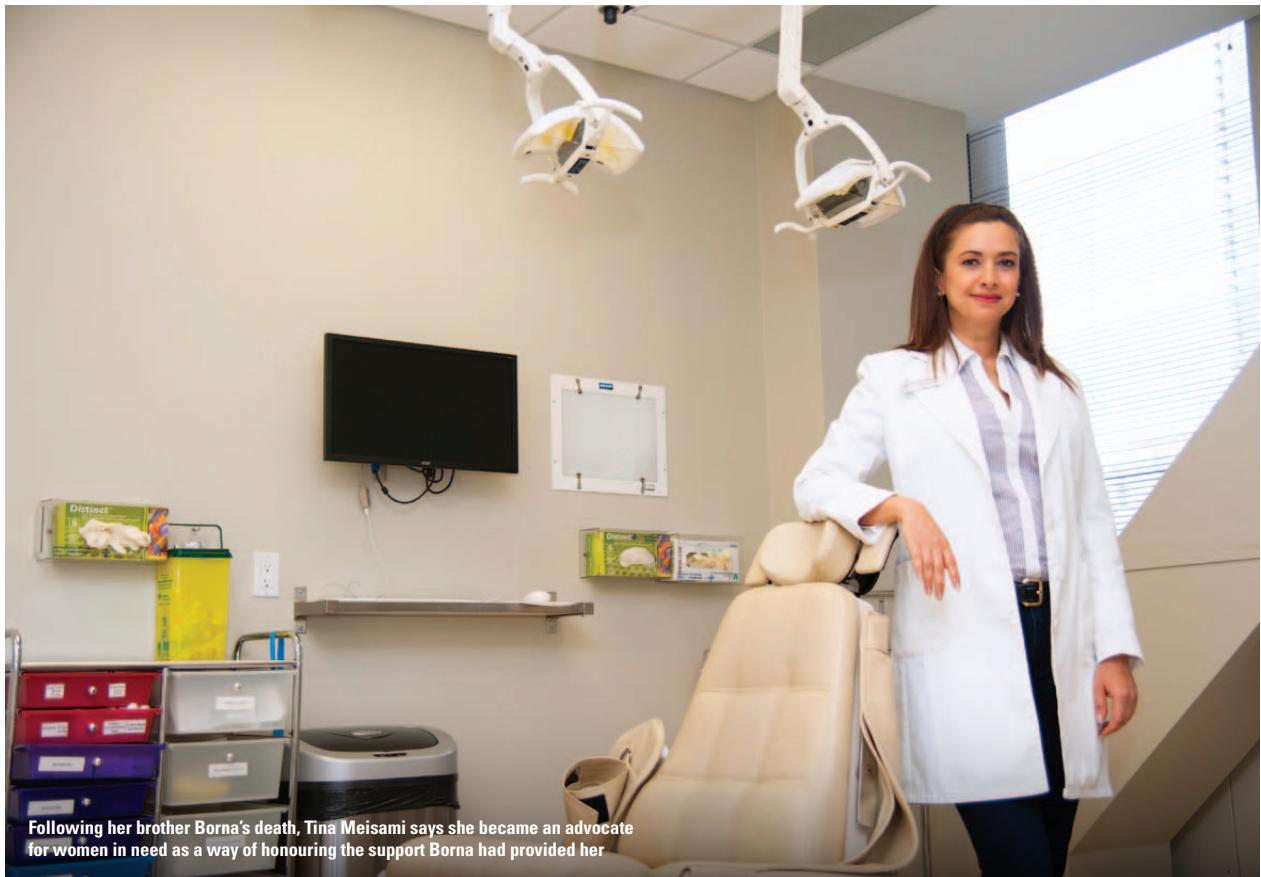
Using her skills as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon is her way of helping women face the world with confidence, says Meisami 9T6, oT1 Dip OMFS. "I think the act of kindness itself has the most transformative power, relaying the sense that we care about you, your life is important to us and you're an important member of the community," she says.

The Dr. Borna Meisami Commemorative Foundation — established on International Women's Day in 2010 and named after her late brother — was initially a partnership among Meisami and four fellow women dentists she'd met at UofT. Together they began offering pro bono dental procedures to women who had been abused. Their slogan: "Empower a woman, restore her smile, reclaim her life."

Meisami recalls knocking on the doors of social service agencies to introduce the foundation's services. Now, social workers in these organizations refer their clients.

Meisami says the aim from the beginning was to give back to a segment of the population that is often forgotten as they cope with abuse or seek refuge in shelters.

"The confidence of these women is shot because of psychological reasons — depression, abuse — but what's doubly affecting them is that they're not just sad, but they feel physically unattractive as well," says Meisami. She hopes to change that by arming women with a winning smile, whether they're hunting for a job or seeking the confidence to build a new social life. "We want to give her what she needs to go out there and fight back," she says.



The foundation now offers services from 22 dentists across the Toronto area, and has provided more than \$500,000 worth of pro bono care to women in need. The next goal, says Meisami, is to recruit more dental professionals from across Canada and reach more women nationally.

Meisami notes that having a support system made all the difference in her own life. In 1984, during the Iran-Iraq war, she left Tehran with her family and came to Toronto. As teenagers starting out in a new country, she and her brother, Borna, stuck together, attending UofT and becoming surgeons in different fields. Eventually, they decided to open a practice together, with Meisami offering oral and maxillofacial surgery and her brother practising orthopedic surgery. It was a childhood dream come true, she says. “Both surgeons, different fields, sharing an office, living in the same city. We made it, you know? Two immigrant kids,” she recalls.

But then one day — July 1, 2007 — Meisami’s brother died suddenly of cardiac arrest. He was only 40. As he had been an advocate for her and for other women, Meisami decided to create an organization that would provide support for women in need. “Borna was the wind beneath my wings — he helped me to fly,” Meisami notes. “I wanted to help others fly as well.”

- > **Most rewarding career moment:**  
Being inducted into the International College of Dentistry
- > **Dream achievement:**  
I have two: to make my foundation international, and to contribute to the field of sleep medicine and the treatment of patients with severe obstructive sleep apnea
- > **Hobbies:**  
Photography, flamenco dance and classical piano

# The Philanthropist

## DR. MARK NUSBAUM

This Holocaust survivor considers himself blessed with success as a dentist and entrepreneur — so he gives back

BY DIANE PETERS

**D**r. Mark Nusbaum 6To was born into a Jewish family in Poland in 1935. During the Second World War, his father was murdered in the notorious Buchenwald concentration camp. Nusbaum and five family members hid in Warsaw for several months, in a secret room, where at night they would quietly cluster around a window for fresh air. Nusbaum himself spent almost two years in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, and in 1945 narrowly escaped execution. “I was one of the few lucky ones to survive,” he says.

It’s not surprising, then, that a sense of gratitude — and a desire to give back — has infused Nusbaum’s life. The dentist and entrepreneur has donated more than \$300,000 to UofT’s Faculty of Dentistry over the past few decades, with much of the funds directed to two student scholarships and a classroom with state-of-the-art audio-visual capabilities. (Many of these donations were made with his wife Edith, who passed away in 2015.)

As a volunteer at the Faculty, he has served on the Alumni Association Executive, the Campaign Advisory Board and the Dean’s Ad Hoc Committee. UofT recognized his contributions with an Arbor Award in 2007.

Nusbaum has also supported numerous other causes, giving to his Toronto synagogue and various health-related charities in Israel and Canada. He currently serves as chairman of United Hatzalah Canada, which provides emergency health services such as ambulances in Israel.

Nusbaum says he has been able to help because of his success in both dentistry and business. After graduating, he got his first full-time position — as an associate at Toronto’s Bloor Dental Clinic — and eventually became its senior partner.



In 1970, upon the sudden passing of his brother-in-law, he took over leadership of the family business, Continent-Wide Enterprises Ltd. (At the time, the company imported brand-name cameras and film for sale to retailers.)

For the next 30 years, Nusbaum put in 70-hour work weeks — two-and-a-half days as a dentist, and the rest of the time running the family business. This meant he would work sometimes until 2 a.m. and then rush into the dental office the next day for an 8 a.m. procedure. He'd often be late, quipping to his patients, "Good things are worth waiting for!" Although both he and Edith ("Ginny") worked at the business, they never missed dinner at home with their four girls. "Family always came first," he says.

Nusbaum is now retired from practising dentistry but continues to work at Continent-Wide. He still travels and looks for ways he can "be of use."

"My daughter Naomi once said to me, 'As long as you do good things in this world, God keeps you here,'" Nusbaum recalls. "I feel the Lord has been good to me and to my family," he says. "It's only appropriate that I return the favour and make this world a somewhat better place for others." ■

- > **Dental role model:**  
Dr. Charlie Williams. He taught me how to give a painless injection, which made dental procedures tolerable to my patients
- > **Bucket list travel destination:**  
Planet Mars. I'd be the first dentist there!
- > **Most rewarding career moment:**  
After sending out my letter of retirement, a patient came in crying, and telling me with all sincerity, "This is the worst moment of my life"

# The Teacher

## DR. PETER BRYMER

After 45 years as a clinical instructor, he's perfected the art of coaching students to become respectful, resourceful dentists

BY SCOTT ANDERSON

In the first-floor clinic at 124 Edward Street, Dr. Peter Brymer GT9 greets dentistry students and their patients, occasionally pulling up a chair to peer inside a patient's mouth and discuss their treatment. As he moves from cubicle to cubicle, a small line of students, dressed in medical gowns that match the clinic's pale blue walls, forms beside him.

He takes their questions and, with barely a pause, decides which he can address on the spot and which will need more time. It's a skill he's perfected over 45 years of teaching at the Faculty, the last 20 of which he has spent as a treatment-plan coordinator in the DDS4 student clinic.

In that role, Brymer says he's there not to provide answers but to exchange ideas with the students. "They've got it all up here," he says, tapping the side of his head. "So I encourage them to give me the answer, because six months from now, they're going to be out on their own. It's about exploring treatment options."

Case in point: DDS4 student Arian Khorshid is working on a patient with an oral infection. One of her front teeth needs to be extracted, but she's concerned about how her smile will look. There's a two-year waiting list for orthodontics to realign her teeth, and her mouth is too crowded for dentures or implants.

Brymer suggests a temporary measure that Khorshid hadn't considered: extracting the tooth and cutting the root off, and then bonding it to the adjacent teeth. "I have the technical knowledge," says Khorshid, "but Dr. Brymer has the experience to know what will happen to patients down the road. We tend to think mostly in terms of what we've been studying. He sees the bigger picture."

Brymer clearly enjoys engaging with students on a personal as well as collegial level, and often comes across more like a reliable and knowledgeable friend than a teacher. (As the clinic was about to open, Brymer asked one student to play tennis,



Peter Brymer says his inspiration comes from helping students — he's taught about 1,000 of them

and later inquired about when he could take a group out for a holiday lunch.) “He tries to strike up a professional and friendly relationship,” says Khorshid. “He’s a great role model.”

Brymer says he tries to instil the importance of seeing the whole patient – not just teeth and gums, but socioeconomic and cultural background, too. He encourages students to interact with their patients much like he interacts with them: “Don’t condescend,” he says. “Treat them like they’re your mother or father.”

He finds it gratifying to meet each new generation of UofT dentists — the Faculty estimates he’s worked with about 1,000 students — and is sometimes reminded of the impact he’s had. “Just last month, I was in the airport and this guy asks me if I’m Peter Brymer. He said, ‘I was your student 30 years ago.’”

Outside of his long-running one-day-a-week commitment to teaching, Brymer maintains a general practice in Toronto, and in 1991 founded a dentistry service for seniors at long-term care residences. That company, Direct Dentistry Services, has now grown to 50 employees and serves more than 200 facilities in Ontario. “It’s a really needed service,” says Brymer, “and we’ve been the pioneers.”

He’s also an investor in Steam Whistle Brewing, and admires the company’s goal, stated in its slogan, to “do one thing really, really well.” The same words could apply to Brymer, though in his case it might be two things: practising dentistry — and teaching it.

“My inspiration comes from helping students. Every time I’m with a student, I end by asking, ‘Does this make sense to you?’ If they say it does, then there’s my satisfaction: seeing the student gain knowledge.” ■

- > **Best advice for dentistry students:**  
Spend from your net, not your gross, income, and never finish one holiday until you have the next one planned
- > **Alternate career:**  
Something physical, such as farming, woodworking or landscape architecture
- > **Favourite three beers:**  
Steam Whistle, Steam Whistle, Steam Whistle

# The Academic

## DR. EDWIN YEN

Many internationally trained dental specialists can now practise here, thanks to a program he helped create

BY MEGAN EASTON

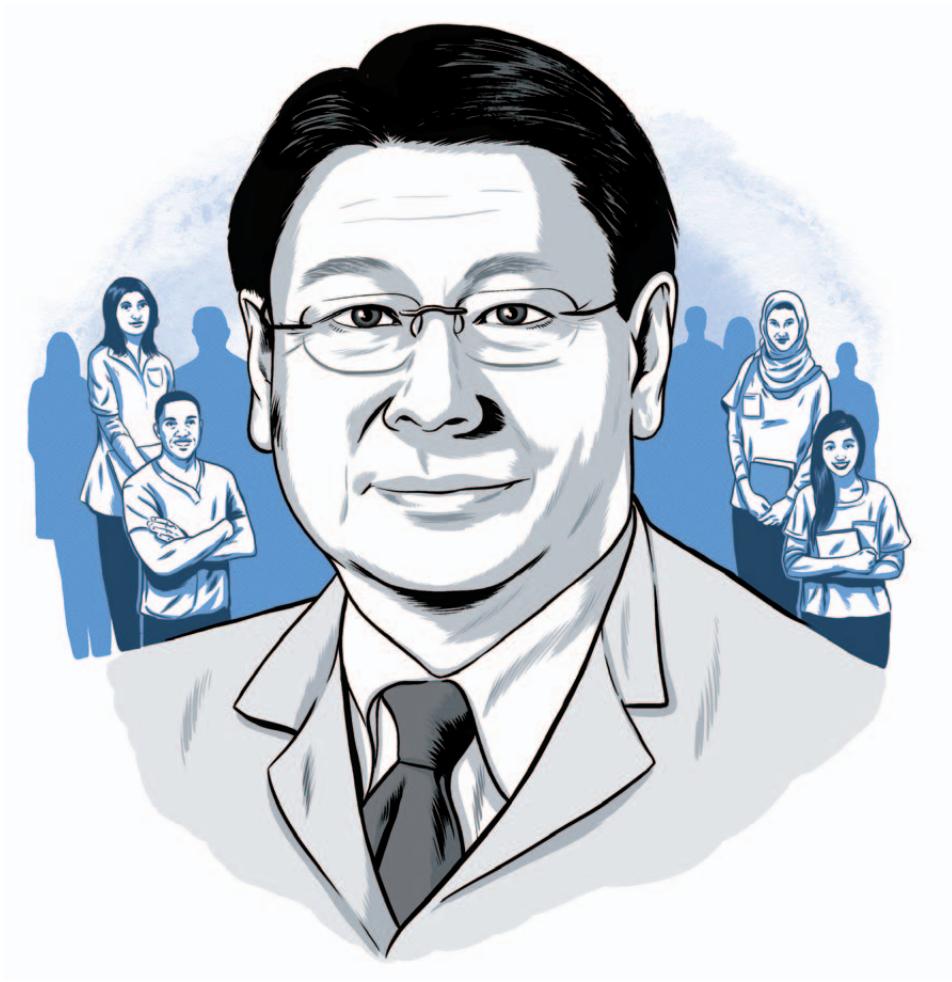
**A**s a self-described internationalist, Dr. Edwin Yen 7T7 Dip Ortho, 7T8 PhD felt right at home living at Massey College during the first year of his combined orthodontic specialty training and PhD at UofT's Faculty of Dentistry. "It was a fabulous introduction to graduate students from around the world," says Yen, whose parents emigrated from China. "I've always loved travel, and meeting people from different countries and learning from them."

Throughout his career as an academic, researcher and practising orthodontist, Yen has maintained a global outlook — despite the inward-looking mindset of dentistry when he started in the 1970s. "There was real suspicion about the techniques and competence of professionals from other countries," he says.

But over the last 40 years, he's seen academic dentistry — including at UofT — become much more international, partly because a shortage of teaching faculty made it a necessity. Yen's decision to pursue a doctoral degree and become a full-time academic was relatively rare among his classmates. The allure of higher compensation in clinical practice attracted most graduates then — as it still does today.

Being the nephew of a Harvard dentistry professor influenced Yen's choice, but so did the rewards of teaching. "I especially love working with small groups of graduate students," he says. "You see their knowledge and skills develop while really getting to know them."

Yen keeps in touch with his own close-knit class from UofT, and plans are in the works for another reunion this summer. "I look back on my Toronto years as a wonderful learning experience enriched by supportive classmates, and clinical and research faculty," he says. "It also gave me great insight into the culture and politics of dental academia."



His first academic position was at the University of Manitoba, where he ultimately became head of the Department of Preventive Dental Science and director of the graduate orthodontic program. He then served two terms as dean of dentistry at UBC. While he was dean, Yen helped develop the concept for a program — now in operation nationwide — that provides a pathway for dental specialists from non-accredited universities (outside of Canada and the United States) to qualify for certified specialist status in any province. “Canada cannot educate and train all of the dental specialists it needs,” he says, “and there’s a wealth of human resources around the world.”

Today, Yen, a 2008 Award of Distinction recipient, is a professor and director of UBC’s graduate orthodontic program, which he started in 2010. In the first few years, he received help from several UofT orthodontic alumni — including his daughter Laurene Dao-Pei rT4 MSc Ortho. He also continues to conduct research into how cells and tissue respond to orthodontic force systems.

Yen’s academic roles have required extensive global travel, including fundraising, recruiting and teaching across the Asia-Pacific region and Middle East (he even helped to establish a new dental school in Oman). He says international travel has been the most meaningful aspect of his long, varied and accomplished career.

“The more you travel, the more you realize we’re all just very small variations of each other. The biggest change I’ve seen over the years has been the shift from a very siloed, protective profession to one big professional family. We may speak different languages and use dentistry techniques slightly differently, but we all have the same goal of helping people, easing suffering and preventing disease.” ■

- > **Best part about being in dental academia:**  
A tremendous variety in my daily activities and the opportunity to meet new people all the time
- > **Preferred place outside of Canada to live:**  
A large global city, such as London, Paris or New York
- > **Alternate career:**  
Food critic

# The Caregiver

## DR. KATHERINE ZETTLER

While at UofT, she discovered an affinity for treating special-needs patients. They've been an important part of her practice ever since

BY PAUL FRAUMENI

It's just before 8 a.m. on a cold Monday morning in December, and patients are already checking in to the dental clinic on the second floor of Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto. Many are in wheelchairs and accompanied by parents or caregivers. It's a busy place.

Dr. Katherine Zettler, 37, of Dip Paedo is here every Monday and Friday, working with a team of specialists and UofT Dentistry students as they care for people with health conditions that require special attention. Some patients have mental challenges, such as a developmental delay or Alzheimer's disease, and might have trouble understanding a dentist's instructions, explains Zettler. Others need a clinic that can accommodate wheelchairs. Or a patient might have a mouth lesion that an oral pathologist should assess. "They need an environment like the dentistry clinic at Mount Sinai, where we offer an integrated medical model," she says.

Zettler discovered her affinity for this kind of dentistry as a UofT student, while participating in a supervised program that allowed her to work with patients with special needs. "Some of the students weren't comfortable working with these patients," she says, "but I found that I had no fear. That's when I began to think this area might be my niche."

Years later, Zettler came to a deeper understanding of the unique care these patients require when her mother was confined to a wheelchair. "It was often difficult even to accommodate her wheelchair in restaurants," says Zettler. "This experience of seeing how my own mother was becoming marginalized helped me to understand the challenges so many people face."

Zettler believes in helping to reverse these hardships for her patients in the Mount Sinai dentistry clinic and the families she serves in Iqaluit, where she works



in a hospital clinic for several weeks a year. Many families in Iqaluit have access-to-care issues, she says.

In 2008, Zettle established the Margaret and Clifford Zettle Award at the Faculty of Dentistry. She named the award for her parents because, she says, they inspired her and her brothers. “My mom worked for me in my own clinic in her later years and always demonstrated real compassion for my patients who had special challenges.” The award enables a student to provide care for people with disabilities as part of a month-long placement at one of the Faculty’s affiliated teaching hospitals. Last year, Zettle added to her giving to allow a second student to benefit from the same opportunity.

“In a month, the student can see patients who have special healthcare conditions and get an idea of this field,” she says. “I believe it is society’s responsibility to provide everyone with the help they need. It would go a long way to making a real impact if every dentist did just a little bit of work with those less fortunate.”

- > **Most rewarding career moment:**  
Receiving a plaque from a group home for people with special needs that says: “Big smiles thanks to Dr. Zettle”
- > **Favourite thing about visiting Iqaluit:**  
Everyone is friendly and it’s very peaceful
- > **Preferred technique for making patients comfortable in the dental chair:**  
Talking about something other than dentistry

# The Trailblazer

## DR. ELIZABETH MACSWEEN

Her skills and interest led her to take leadership roles in dentistry, paving the way for greater equality in the profession

BY MEGAN EASTON

**O**n a recent visit to the Faculty of Dentistry, Dr. Elizabeth MacSween learned that the men's and women's locker rooms had been switched to accommodate the larger number of female students. The significance of this logistical move struck her, underlining just how much the gender balance has shifted since her years at the Faculty some four decades ago.

MacSween, the recipient of a 2017 Award of Distinction, was one of 19 women in a class of 125. "The girls felt very welcome by everyone in the class – though not necessarily by all of the professors," she says. Noting that it was a very different era, she remembers a few male instructors who told the female students they didn't belong and were "taking spots" from their male counterparts. "This just wouldn't happen in today's Faculty," she adds.

When she started practising in Ottawa in the early 1980s, women were still a small minority in dentistry, which, she says, brought an unexpected advantage. "While I had a few patients who didn't think I'd be as capable as the men, many patients specifically requested female dentists," she says. "They thought we'd be gentler, less intimidating and better with children. I honestly think I benefited from some reverse discrimination."

MacSween similarly felt no barriers to her involvement in dentistry associations, though in the beginning she was often the only woman at the table. By 1990, she was president of the Ottawa Dental Society, and in 1996 she broke new ground as the first female president of the Ontario Dental Association. Later, she became the first female vice-president of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario and the first female director of the CDSPI, which provides insurance and financial services to dentists.



While MacSween views these accomplishments as a natural progression of years of intense work, she also recognizes her role in toppling gender barriers in dentistry. “I never wanted to do it just to be the first woman,” she says. “It was always about my interests and capabilities. Still, I’d like to think that my leadership appointments made a difference to young women considering the profession, or already in the profession, to make them feel a little more welcome, wanted and needed.”

While her practice and professional activities thrived, MacSween struggled to balance the demands of dentistry and family life. “Most of the women in my class would say they shouldered the brunt of child care and housework along with their full-time careers,” she says, “but I see that changing now with young female dentists.”

Despite competing responsibilities, MacSween made time to volunteer in Canada and abroad. For the last decade, she has provided free dental care at a clinic in an Ottawa homeless shelter set up by her classmate Dr. Tom Harle 8To, a fellow Award of Distinction recipient. MacSween has also offered her services in Senegal as part of her longtime work with Water Aid Canada, an organization focused on access to clean water and sanitation.

When she was a student feeling overlooked or dismissed by a few male faculty members, MacSween says she sometimes wondered why she bothered to try so hard. “But I always kept going, because I thought they were wrong.” Today, as an inductee in the Pierre Fauchard Academy, the American College of Dentists and the International College of Dentists, she knows she was right. ■

- > **Source of greatest inspiration:**  
My friend Glennys, who taught me you can achieve your dreams with education, hard work and a goal
  
- > **Key to achieving work-life balance:**  
We have to define it for ourselves, but hopefully it includes a supportive partner, good friends and a healthy way to let go of stress
  
- > **Biggest career challenge:**  
A fear of offending people

# The Investigator

## DR. CHRIS MCCULLOCH

He trains his research team to think like entrepreneurs — and that’s helped them break new ground in understanding fibrosis

BY DIANE PETERS

One of the Faculty’s most prolific and high-profile researchers says he stays focused and motivated by thinking of himself as an entrepreneur who has to constantly innovate.

Dr. Chris McCulloch’s leading work on fibrosis — the excessive connective tissue that develops in organs and causes disease, including periodontitis — has earned the Faculty worldwide recognition in this emerging field. But 25 years ago, fibrosis wasn’t an obvious choice for a scientist looking for a specialty on which to build a career. McCulloch ’76, ’82 PhD trained himself — and his lab team — to look for opportunities where others didn’t, just like entrepreneurs do. Even within the field of fibrosis, he’s chosen unique research directions and sought grants from funding sources that others might overlook. Collaboration has become synonymous with survival for McCulloch. “The way you succeed in business is by working with others, in partnership,” he says. “With science it’s the same thing.”

From the start, McCulloch was never going to be a conventional dentist. He studied film at UofT and worked in the field briefly, then applied to dentistry on the advice of his father, a radiologist in Winnipeg. McCulloch was more interested in playing the tenor sax at the time, and followed up his DDS with a master’s in periodontics from Columbia University in New York — mainly so he could hang out in the jazz scene. Soon, he began loving school as much as music. “The staff there introduced me to the idea of research,” he recalls. They also told him about Dr. Tony Melcher’s work on periodontal regeneration at UofT, so McCulloch returned to Toronto to do his PhD in cell biology, which he followed with a postdoc in the Department of Anatomy. In the meantime, he found a periodontist in Hamilton,



Chris McCulloch is delving ever deeper into fibrosis to understand how connective tissues break down

Ontario, who would let him set his own hours, so he worked Wednesdays and Saturdays there — and still does today.

To conduct research, he secured space at the Faculty and landed 10 years of funding via the Ontario Ministry of Health Career Scientist Award for work on high-prevalence periodontal disease, looking at why connective tissues break down. “I think they liked the idea that they had someone who was clinically trained,” he says. Major grant followed major grant.

By 1994, now a full professor, McCulloch could see that the breakdown in connective tissues was the precursor to illness elsewhere in the body. Before the connection between the mouth and the heart was fully understood, and before fibrosis was a hot topic, he got a major grant from the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Now, as head of the Matrix Dynamics Group, which focuses on connective tissues, and with a newly secured round of funding, he’s delving ever deeper into body-wide fibrosis. On the side, he’s developed a high-throughput screening tool for pharmaceutical companies to identify small molecule inhibitors with potential for drug development — it’s almost ready for market.

Over the years, McCulloch has collected numerous distinctions: he’s been named a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair, earned the Faculty of Dentistry Award of Distinction in 2011 and received both the Hatton Award and the Distinguished Scientist Award from the International Association of Dental Research. McCulloch appreciates the honours, but they’re not what motivates this research entrepreneur who still works six days a week: it’s the sense of joy and accomplishment that comes with discovery. ■

- > **Favourite jazz musicians:** Roland Kirk and John Coltrane, for their creative fire and originality
- > **Business role model:** Henry Royce, the engineer and creative entrepreneur behind Rolls-Royce
- > **Career highlight:** Obtaining the Canada Research Chair in Matrix Dynamics

**“HOPEFULLY WE’LL BE  
ABLE TO INCREASE  
THE NUMBER OF  
PATIENTS WE TAKE  
CARE OF”**

– DR. GEORGE CHRISTODOULOU



# BOUNDLESSACCESS

## THE ACCESS TO CARE FUND RECEIVES ITS LARGEST GIFT TO DATE

\$500,000 DONATION WILL SUPPORT STUDENTS AND PATIENTS WITH THE GREATEST NEED

Dr. George Christodoulou 8T5, a longtime supporter of the Faculty, has created a \$500,000 endowed fund for the Access to Care program.

While the UofT Dentistry clinic offers reduced-rate dental care, some clients struggle to afford the cost, particularly if they need complex procedures. The Access to Care fund, which is run by the Faculty, helps subsidize care for those most in need.

Christodoulou, who co-founded Altima Dental, has a long history of Faculty support.

The company, which runs a network of dental clinics across Canada, did a naming-rights sponsorship with the student services office in 2003. It has been a gold sponsor of the Awards of Distinction Gala since 2012, and has supported a golf tournament run by the Faculty.

The new personal donation from Christodoulou came about as he was thinking about the importance of offering dental services to low-income clients. Altima does pro bono dental work, often liaising with local community centres to identify those in need.

But he wanted a way to reach more people who need comprehensive care, such as root canals, implants and even full mouth reconstruction. “The Faculty’s clinic has the process in place,” he says. “It has a system for identifying the people who need even more help.”

As a supporter of dental education, Christodoulou likes how the fund helps students too: when a patient has a complex procedure, a DDS student gains more advanced experience. And when students see the Access to Care fund utilized and they know donations support it, they learn “how to give back to the community themselves,” he says.

With the Access to Care fund currently supporting approximately 60 of the 15,000 patients the Faculty clinics serve each year, Christodoulou hopes his endowed fund will inspire others in the profession to consider giving to the program. “Hopefully we’ll be able to increase the number of patients we take care of.”

# SUPPORTING SMALL-TOWN CARE

A former urbanite, Dr. Shervin Rowshani 1T0 loves rural life. He runs the Muskoka Dental Group, which includes several small dental offices in Ontario's cottage country.

He knows that low-income people in small towns have trouble accessing dental care. At the same time, professionals like him can't always find trained clinicians because many dental students don't look for work outside the Toronto area. "I think a lot of them would find their personality a fit for a smaller town, but they've never been exposed to it," he says.

In an effort to address these two problems, Rowshani has created a \$25,000 endowed fund at the Faculty of Dentistry to support student service-learning in underserved areas. "My fund is to help students get there," he says.

He heard about the need in the service-learning program from his Muskoka Dental colleague Amir Azarpazhooh oT7 MSc DPH, rT1 PhD, who is an associate professor at the Faculty. He told Rowshani about the dentistry students who do service rotations at small-town health units. "Many of them don't have cars," he says.

The Rowshani Student Outreach Fund will provide funds for travel, incidentals and accommodation to students who do rotations in areas such as Haliburton, Kitchener and Peterborough.

Rowshani maintains his own practice while pursuing an executive MBA at UofT's Rotman School of Management. He wants to encourage his equally busy contemporaries to give generously too. "It doesn't take a lot of money to make a difference."

## GOING ABROAD

Service learning has received a further boost from assistant professor Aviv Ouanounou oTo, who has created an expendable fund to support overseas student service rotations for the next five years. As part of the Student Service Learning Outreach Program, UofT Dentistry sends upper-year DDS students to various locations worldwide, including Ethiopia, Uganda and Honduras, to offer much-needed dental care to locals, and to share knowledge with dental students. The class of 8T2 made a \$32,000 gift to the service-learning program last spring.

## ASSISTING STUDENTS

Dental school is a pricey endeavour, but two recent donations will help support DDS students in financial need.

Dr. Bill Kivlichan 7T1 BSc has committed \$75,000 to the Hugh MacKay Dental Emergency Bursary at the University of Toronto. The bursary was established by the Dental Emergency Service, which provides patients with after-hours and other emergency dental care, to honour Dr. Hugh MacKay 5T7, who taught at the Faculty of Dentistry for many years and was one of the service's founders.

With a \$25,000 donation, Dr. Valerie Stavro 8T4 has created the Dr. Valerie Stavro Student Bursary in memory of her father Chris Stavro, who died this past summer. The gift capitalizes on the university's Boundless Promise Program, which provides a match on the payout of the endowment, effectively doubling the impact of the gift.

# YOUR ALUMNI BOARD

The UofT Dentistry Alumni Association has more than 8,000 members. If you are a graduate, you are automatically a member and are welcome at alumni events. Consider attending the annual general meeting held each fall to share your ideas, hear about activities at the Faculty and catch up with old friends at the reception.

The association is guided by the alumni board, which meets three times a year to offer insights on Faculty initiatives, such as the newly created Great Alumni Event. The Faculty would like to thank the alumni board members for their important contributions.

## ALUMNI BOARD EXECUTIVE

President – Natoosha Nargaski oT7, rT5 MSc Ortho

Vice-president – Shawn Monga oT4

Secretary – Sally AbuKlam rT4

Immediate past president –  
Lesley Pollard 8T7

## BOARD MEMBERS

Christena Chruszez 6T1

Sean Chung rT3 MSc Ortho

David Cowan 6T2

Shobhana Hoover rT1

Evie Jesin 7T4 Dip DH

Carolyn Kay 6T6 Dip DH

Huy Nguyen rT1

Carolyn PoonWoo 8T5

Amit Puri oTo

Valerie Stavro 8T4

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Caroline Conway, DSS President

Ahn Chu, GPGDSS President

Jacob Fitzgerald, GPGDSS Vice-president

# WE REMEMBER...

## DR. CHARLES CAPPA 5T5



Better known as Fil, Dr. Charles Cappa was born in St. Marys, Ont., and earned a BA in pre-med at the University of Western Ontario before doing his DDS at UofT, graduating in 1955. He set up a dental practice in the town of Byron, Ont., just outside London, which he ran for 40 years. He also served in many key industry roles. He was the first Canadian to publish a research article in the journal *Dental Clinics of North America* and then served as the editor of the *Journal of the Ontario Dental Association* from 1970 to 1972. He was a founding member of the American Society of Preventative Dentistry and founding president of the Western Ontario Dental Study Group. After his retirement, he served for 13 years as the registrar of the Canadian section of the International College of Dentists. He gave back generously, offering dental care at the Men's Mission in London, Ont.; he also served on that organization's board and as board president. In 2012, he received an Award of

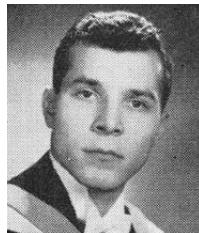
Distinction from the Faculty. He died last October in his 80<sup>th</sup> year.

## DR. GERALD COPELAND 5T0, 5T2 MSC D



Dr. Gerald Copeland, a generous donor to the Faculty, passed away on December 3, 2017, at the age of 92. A native of Sudbury, Ont., he graduated in 1952 and returned home to practise orthodontics. Dr. Copeland served on the board of Laurentian University, and would often fly north to offer treatment to remote patients. The family moved to Toronto in 1989. Awards named for him and his wife include the Eleanor and Gerald Copeland Grants in Dental Research and the Eleanor and Gerald Copeland Bursary.

## DR. ALEXANDER PUSKAS 5T7



Dr. Alexander Puskas, known as Al, died last September in Toronto at age 87.

The Windsor, Ont., native pursued honours science at the University of Western Ontario before enrolling at UofT Dentistry, graduating in 1957. He practised dentistry in New Liskeard, Ont., and then Toronto. He served as president of the Toronto Dental Academy and the Toronto Crown and Bridge Study Club. He was a longtime supporter of the Faculty. Active in sports, he took up sailing in his seventies, winning races at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club.

## DR. INGRID RAMINSH-TANNIS 5T9



Dr. Ingrid Raminsh-Tannis died last October in her 82<sup>nd</sup> year. She was born in Latvia in 1935, but escaped with her family in 1943, after the Soviet invasion. She graduated from high school in Cochrane, Ont., and entered the Faculty of Dentistry in 1954. She practised in Toronto for nearly 50 years, retiring in 2009 to care for her ailing husband. After his death, she returned to school at Glendon College. She was a generous benefactor of several Latvian community organizations, and of the University of Toronto and the Faculty.

## BRIDGET WANG



DDS1 student Bridget Wang died tragically on December 5, 2017. She was a kinesiology graduate from McMaster University. A talented student and athlete, Bridget competed on a provincial level in both gymnastics and swimming and coached for the University of Toronto gymnastics programs. She will be greatly missed by her family and her classmates. A memorial fund at the Faculty has been set up in Bridget's name: [donate.utoronto.ca/give/show/21](https://donate.utoronto.ca/give/show/21).

### WE MOURN THE LOSS

David Bordoff 6T0  
 John Man Chung Ng 8T8  
 Samuel Green 5T9, 6T8 Dip DPH  
 Edward Grodecki 7T9  
 Andrew Ikse 6T2  
 Tiu Johnston 6T3  
 James Kerr 6T6  
 Helen Ledger 4T4 Dip DN  
 Gladys McCaskell 4T6 Dip DN  
 William Purves 6T7  
 Elizabeth Richardson 5T1 Dip DN  
 Carol Tom-Siou 8T5  
 Donaldal Wheeler 4T6 Dip DN  
 Alan Younger 4T6

*Listings are as accurate as possible as of press time.*

Photos: courtesy Faculty of Dentistry archives

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **MARCH 8 VANCOUVER ALUMNI RECEPTION**

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.  
*Pan Pacific Vancouver  
Hotel  
Coal Harbour Suite  
300-999 Canada Place  
Vancouver  
at the Pacific Dental  
Conference*

Dean Daniel Haas cordially invites alumni to a cocktail reception at the Pacific Dental Conference. RSVP by March 2 to miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca. You do not need to be registered for the conference to attend. Please join us!

## **MARCH 15 – 16 DENTANTICS**

7 p.m. *Isabel Bader  
Theatre  
93 Charles St. W.  
Toronto*

Enjoy the 97th annual Dentantics with classmates or your entire practice. Proceeds from the production support the Faculty's Access to Care Fund. Tickets \$20. To purchase tickets go to [my.alumni.utoronto.ca/dentantics2018](http://my.alumni.utoronto.ca/dentantics2018)

## **MARCH 24 ODA PRESIDENT'S HOCKEY CUP GAME**

*Doors open 3:30 p.m.,  
puck drops 4 p.m.  
Western Fair Sports  
Centre  
865 Florence St.  
London, Ont.*

For ticket information contact miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca.

## **MARCH 28 YOUNG ALUMNI MENTORSHIP AND NETWORKING EVENT**

6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
*Faculty of Dentistry,  
Student Commons  
Toronto*

Our DDS year 3 and 4 students connect with UofT young alumni for networking and mentorship opportunities, and to explore career planning and life after graduation. For information contact [miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca](mailto:miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca)

## **APRIL 14 2018 AWARD OF DISTINCTION DINNER**

6 p.m. – 9 p.m.  
*Adelaide Hotel  
325 Bay Street  
Toronto*

Celebrate excellence in the oral healthcare community. This year's winner, Dr. James Leake, will be honoured at an exclusive dinner with the Dean. For more information and to purchase tickets go to [www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/awards-of-distinction](http://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/awards-of-distinction). Space is limited.

## **APRIL 26-28 ODA ANNUAL SPRING MEETING**

Booth #921  
*Metro Toronto  
Convention Centre,  
South Building  
222 Bremner Blvd.,  
Toronto*

## **APRIL 26 – 28 CLASS REUNIONS**

If you graduated in a year ending in an 8 or 3, don't miss your class reunion! And, we hope to see you at The Great Alumni Event on April 27 at Steam Whistle Brewing (see next item). For information, or if you are interested in organizing your reunion, contact [warrena.wilkinson@dentistry.utoronto.ca](mailto:warrena.wilkinson@dentistry.utoronto.ca) or (416) 864-8203



## **APRIL 27 THE GREAT ALUMNI EVENT**

5 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
*Steam Whistle Brewing  
255 Bremner Blvd.  
Toronto*

As UofT Dentistry alumni, you are part of the past, present and future of the Faculty. Come visit with old and new friends, share a laugh over fond memories and create some new ones! Register at [www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/the-great-alumni-event](http://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/the-great-alumni-event)

## **JUNE 2 KIDS PASSPORT – PART OF ALUMNI REUNION EVENT**

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
*Donnelly Centre  
160 College Street*

Drop by the Faculty of Dentistry Kids' Passport area with your kids as part of UofT's Alumni Reunion activities.

### **GOT NEWS?**

Send in professional and personal news, questions and comments, along with photos to: [UofT Dentistry, 124 Edward Street, Toronto, ON M5G 1G6](mailto:UofT.Dentistry, 124 Edward Street, Toronto, ON M5G 1G6), or email [communications@dentistry.utoronto.ca](mailto:communications@dentistry.utoronto.ca).

### **QUESTIONS OR SPONSORSHIP INQUIRES?**

Contact Miriam Stephan at [miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca](mailto:miriam.stephan@dentistry.utoronto.ca) or (416) 864-8202.