



DS2's Receive White Coats
Preparing to enter the pre-doctoral clinic providing for the first time some patient care, 75 second-year dental students received their white coats in a ceremony in the Old Library July 16. Dental students were coated by the group leader to which they've been assigned. Twelve dental students were coated by dental relatives or mentors, including four whose fathers attended the OHSU School of Dentistry.

Pre-doctoral Clinic Goes Paperless

The School of Dentistry's long-awaited move to electronic patient dental records came to fruition in July. The new paperless system is the next phase of the School's utilization of technology in patient care and dental education.

"The switch to electronic dental records in the pre-doctoral clinic has gone really well," said **Peter Morita**, D.M.D. '86, associate dean for patient services, of the July 12 change. "The workgroup still needs to work out a few kinks, but the change has gone smoother than anticipated."

Computers were installed at each pre-doctoral clinic chair earlier in the year. All new patient dental information is now input via computer into axiUm.

The workgroup of clinic administration and dental informatics faculty and staff and departmental liaisons will continue to enhance the School's use of the electronic record. **Denice Stewart**, D.D.S., associate dean for clinical affairs noted that the electronic record has many facets, including patient care and student training, which are essential, but it also opens *(continued, right column)*

many opportunities to better measure outcomes of care and conduct clinical research.

"This success is a result of a group effort -- not only those on the workgroup -- but students, several of whom volunteered to test the system, and many faculty and staff who offered their support and ideas," said Dr. Stewart, who leads the electronic record workgroup. "The continued development will tap the expertise of many at the school as we move forward. The faculty, staff and students have been great in adapting to and adopting this new technology."

The graduate residency clinics of periodontology, endodontology, orthodontics, and the Faculty Dental Practice will complete the total School conversion over the coming months. Pediatric dentistry provided the pilot training over the last couple of years for this conversion.

In addition to Drs. Stewart and Morita, the electronic health record workgroup includes: **Melissa** *(continued on page four)*

School Welcomes New Faculty

Several new faculty have been hired, with an emphasis on the department of endodontology. **Brian Whitten**, D.D.S., recently joined the School as an assistant professor and full-time director of the endodontology undergraduate program. Prior to joining the School, Dr. Whitten was in private practice in Portland — most recently at the Portland Medical Center — as well as Louisiana and California. Dr. Whitten received his certificate of endodontics from Louisiana State University Medical Center in New Orleans, and attended UCLA School of Dentistry on scholarship, graduating in 1989. This spring, Dr. Whitten was an invited lecturer for the School's Sophomore *(continued on page six)*

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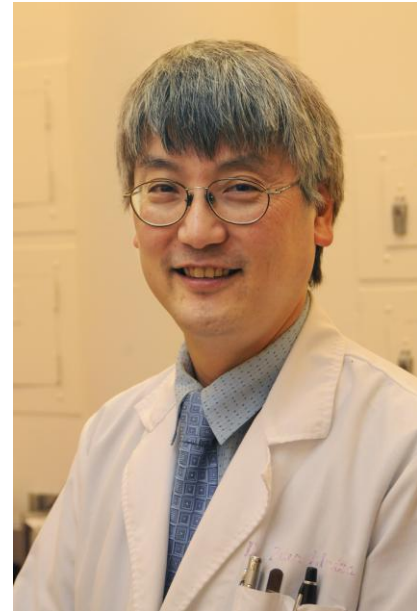
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Group Leader Profile: Peter Morita, D.M.D. '86

A telling story about **Peter Morita**, D.M.D. '86, is his search for the School of Dentistry on a rainy night prior to his dental aptitude test in 1981. "I hadn't been in Portland much and I couldn't find the school to save my life," said Dr. Morita, who was raised in Corvallis, Ore. "The next morning, I was so paranoid about getting lost and being late for the test that I left very early in the morning to drive up to the Hill. Of course, I found the school on my first try and ended up being two hours early."

That dogged preparedness laced with humor and self-deprecation is one of the hallmarks of Dr. Morita as a dentist and Steel group leader.

Dr. Morita, 50, grew up in a family of educators. His Japanese-American parents were both placed in internment camps and then went on to earn three doctoral degrees between them, teaching at Oregon State University. "Their advice was to *not* go into academia so when I decided my junior year of college that I was going into dentistry, they thought that was a great idea. And look where I ended up!"



Peter Morita, D.M.D. '86

Dr. Morita selected OHSU for dental school, he said, because "it had a great reputation--all the dentists in Corvallis pointed me this way," even his mentor, **Cyrus Austin**, D.D.S., who was not an alumnus.

After dental school, Dr. Morita planned to associate with Dr. Austin. But during the middle of his senior year of dental school, Dr. Austin's daughter, **Sara** (D.M.D. '93) suddenly decided to pursue dentistry. "**John Peterson** [D.M.D. '55] kept saying, 'I think we can find a place for you' and he and [now] Dean [**Jack**] **Clinton** [D.M.D. '64] ended up hiring me."

Dr. Morita began his academic career in practice management as a staff dentist providing treatment for patients for which dental students needed special help or found difficult to manage. "The best advice I ever got was from Dean Clinton who said that if I wanted to make changes, it was better through evolution, rather than revolution," said Dr. Morita, with a smile.

In 1994, Dr. Morita began teaching operative dentistry, and then three years later began directing the pre-doctoral clinics. He was interim chair for operative dentistry during the summer of 2001, and then became associate dean for patient services in 2004, a position he holds today amongst his other responsibilities. "I like the collegiality here," he said. "I like the fact that we are not resting on our laurels, but that we are continually seeking improvement. I like that we generally want what's best for dental students."

Dr. Morita raves about the group practice structure that the School transitioned to in 2007. "The group practices are a great way to go," he said. "When I was a dental student, things were so compartmentalized. On certain days, you could only work in certain departments and that really limited our ability to provide comprehensive patient care."

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Ethics Certificate for Monner

Pre-doctoral clinic coordinator **Melissa Monner** is the School's first graduate of the Ethics Fellowship Program through OHSU's Center for Ethics in Healthcare (CEH). On June 24, Melissa was one of seven OHSU recipients of a certificate in Inter-professional Ethics from the CEH, representing successful completion of the two-year program, said **Barbara Glidewell**, R.N., M.B.S., who directs the fellowship program and is an affiliate assistant professor of community dentistry. Melissa's capstone project encompassed the creation of ethics cases for training new clinicians.



Predoctoral clinic coordinator Melissa Monner with her new ethics certificate. (Photo Phyllis Beemsterboer, M.S., Ed.D.)

"I have known Melissa for many years in her role at the School of Dentistry, as we interacted in matters of patient concerns," said Barbara. "One of the goals [of the fellowship program] has been to foster training for future ethicists as resources for OHSU.

"Over the past several years at OHSU, an Ethics Fellowship Program has evolved to a more formalized program and curriculum. OHSU professionals interested in bioethics and its practical application for clinical care, clinical research, health policy and organizational ethics may apply for this limited admission, two year certification program." *(continued, right column)*

School Calendar

Aug. 13	End of six-week summer session
Aug. 16	Start of six-week pre-term (DS1)
Aug. 26-27	DS1 Cannon Beach retreat
Sept. 6	Labor Day (holiday)
Sept. 24	End of six week pre-term (DS1)
Sept. 27	Start of 12-week fall term
Nov. 25-26	Thanksgiving holiday

Welcome new residents

Seventeen individuals recently joined the School of Dentistry's advanced specialty education programs. Joining are (endodontology) **Tyson Curtis**, D.D.S., **Jim Ruckman**, D.M.D., **Erick Sato**, D.D.S., and **Katie Burley**, D.M.D. '08; (oral and maxillofacial surgery) **Savannah Gelesko**, D.D.S. and **Andrew Weeks**, D.D.S.; (orthodontics) **Ana Espinoza**, D.D.S., **Scott Cardall**, D.M.D., **Seth Senestraro**, D.D.S., and **Desy Wilson**, D.D.S.; (pediatrics) **Michael Cito**, D.D.S., **Michael Melanson**, D.M.D. '09, **Patricia Peirano**, D.D.S., and **David Richman-Raphael**, D.D.S.; and (periodontology) **Khalid Rasheed**, D.D.S. and **Marcy Watson**, D.D.S., and **Joseph Haynes**, D.D.S.

Monner *(continued from left)*

Barbara said SOD, SOM, and SON program leaders develop a list of applicants to support multi-disciplinary and professional diversity. "Melissa was keenly interested in the program as she also participates in the Dental Ethics Seminars provided to the senior dental students each year," said Barbara. "We congratulate Melissa in her willingness to bring ethical considerations to the chair side for the dental students."

Submit Your Ideas to Dental Bites
If you have a story idea or photo for Dental Bites, please contact Sydney Clevenger,
clevenger@ohsu.edu.

DS4 Relieving Stress Through Marathons

If you ask fourth-year dental student **Amanda Rice** for one way to relieve the stress of dental school, she might say running. The Portland, Ore., native recently ran a 2:50 marathon in Eugene and is aiming to qualify for the 2012 Olympic trials.

"My dental training and patients come first, but I have been able to manage a 65-mile-a-week running schedule while keeping on track with school," said Amanda, 26, a member of the Hawthorne group practice. "Running is my stress reliever. I go to class, see patients during the day, and head out for an hour run. I come back to do lab work and charting in the evening when I'm refreshed and had a break from the stresses of the day."



Amanda Rice

Amanda trained as a ballet dancer in high school, but stopped dancing upon entering Willamette University in Salem (she graduated magna cum laude in biochemistry in 2006). Her mother, also a marathoner who qualified for the Boston Marathon in 2007, suggested that she take up running her senior year in college as a way to regain stamina, and Amanda was hooked.

"There is great satisfaction with finishing a long distance run," she said. "There is also something called the runner's high and anyone who runs such distances knows the feeling. It's what makes running addictive.

"Like anything in life, the last mile of the home stretch is usually the hardest, but also the best part of the run," said Amanda. "There is the physical challenge, but overcoming *(continued, at right)*

New Grants for Balkowiec

Agnieszka Balkowiec, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor of integrative biosciences, has received two new grants totaling nearly \$90,000. The grants will be used to further explore the role of a new molecule, Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF) that appears to be an important and previously unrecognized player in the part of the nervous system that controls blood pressure.

Dr. Balkowiec received in July a \$49,924, one-year grant from the OHSU Presidential Bridge Fund for experiments to selectively knock down BDNF in the nerve pathways that control blood pressure. Research Associate **Anke Vermehren-Schmaedick**, Ph.D., an expert *(continued on page five)*

DS4 Marathoner *(continued from left column)*

the mental barriers, to tone out the voice that just wants to stop, are the hardest and most rewarding to overcome."

In the past few years, Amanda said her running has become more of a career than a hobby. Her times are slowly dropping – from 3:20 at the 2006 Portland Marathon to 2:58 in the 2009 Portland Marathon.

"I now have a trainer [Rick Lovett] and we are shaving the minutes down," she said. "There are some days I don't get my daily run in, but I try to keep my running schedule flexible.

"It's amazing the time you have in the spare moments of the day to get work done," said Amanda. "Plus, you make time for the things that are most important to you."

Electronic Dental Records

(continued from page one)

Monner, Rose Russell, Kate Boyle, Mary Monaco, Susan Clinton, Devin Bryant, Kim Howard, and David Feucht.

Dr. Balkowiec *(continued from page four)*

in molecular biology, has developed the protocols for BDNF knock down and successfully tested them in nerve cells grown in a dish, said Dr. Balkowiec.

"This is a very challenging approach that nobody has ever attempted for any molecule in the blood pressure control system," she said. "It has tremendous potential and, if successful, will open new research avenues beyond studies of BDNF."

Dr. Balkowiec also received in July a \$40,000, one-year grant from the Medical Research Foundation to support studies of BDNF in hypertensive animals. Preliminary data, obtained in collaboration with **Virginia Brooks**, Ph.D., professor of physiology and pharmacology, School of Medicine, show that BDNF is dramatically increased in the blood pressure control pathways during hypertension.

"These are very exciting and completely unexpected findings with potential implications for treatment of high blood pressure," said Dr. Balkowiec.

She said the new grant will test whether increased BDNF levels result in functional changes in nerve cells in the brainstem that control blood pressure. "Our future studies will combine the experience gained from both these projects and use the BDNF knock down method in hypertensive animals to answer the big question: Does decreasing BDNF levels decrease blood pressure?"

Dr. Morita *(continued from page two)*

The group practice structure is a great learning environment for dental students learning to address patient needs." Dr. Morita usually arrives at the dental school by 6:30 a.m. A typical day is spent in meetings — he serves on a number of School committees -- and in the pre-doctoral clinic.

"My dental students like to tease me that I never eat lunch," he said. "Of course, a lot of that is their fault because they like to find me during lunch!" One day a week, he cares for patients in the Faculty Dental Practice.

"The advice I give to dental students is that what makes a difference is attitude and how you approach dentistry," he said. "If you want to learn, I'm here to help."

Dr. Morita lives in Sherwood, Ore., commuting daily with Faculty Dental Practice Dental Assistant **Larry Rhyme**. He enjoys spending time with wife, **Kandis**, and daughters **Kimberly** (whose mother-in-law is **Linda Kennedy**, R.D.H. '81), **Haylee**, and **Janessa**. Kimberly gave Dr. Morita his first grandchild this year, five-month-old **Aiden**.

"The people at the dental school are like a second family," said Dr. Morita, who celebrates 25 years with the School next year and in April received the 2010 Faculty Recognition Award. "I've been fortunate to have good mentors here. There are rewards in dentistry and rewards in teaching. I got a great combination."

MedStars at School of Dentistry

The School of Dentistry participated once again in the MedStars Honors Program, an OHSU event that provides high school students with hands-on activities in various health professions. This year's MedStars event at the dental school was held July 13 in the Kenneth Cantwell Continuing Education Dental Clinic, with about 40 high school students from around Oregon. The MedStars students put on protective gear and looked into one another's mouths to identify landmarks and oral tissues. Outreach coordinator **Mary Ann Haisch**, R.D.H., answered questions about dental anatomy and the School.

New Faculty *(continued from page one)*

Lecture Series (ENDO 723) and an observer in the Sophomore Endodontic Laboratory (ENDO 724).

Becoming graduate residency program director for the department of endodontology is **Timothy Svec**, D.D.S., M.S., who joined the School in 2008 as an adjunct associate professor. Prior to joining OHSU, he was director of the advanced education program in endodontics at the University of Texas Dental Branch in Houston. Dr. Svec received his master of science in education from Kansas State University, a master of science in special studies of oral biology from the George Washington University, and a certificate of endodontology from Madigan Army Medical Center. He received his doctor of dental surgery from Loyola University of Chicago in 1968.

The search for the chair of the department of community dentistry is proceeding very well, said Dean **Jack Clinton**, D.M.D. '64, and "I am hopeful we will be welcoming the successful candidate before the end of the year.

"We are attracting outstanding candidates for the open position of graduate residency director for oral and maxillofacial surgery, and will be making an offer soon," said Dr. Clinton. "Through all of these searches we have seen serious national and world-renowned candidates, all seeking to become part of our tradition of collegiality, energy, and excellence."

In other faculty news, **Steven Gold**, D.D.S., is a new assistant professor in the department of restorative dentistry, having joined the School in March as an adjunct associate professor. Dr. Gold was in private practice general dentistry in Santa Monica, Calif., for 16 years, the majority of those in his own office. He was a frequent guest lecturer at the University of Southern California School of Dentistry *(continued, right column)*

Dive Into Dentistry



*For the third year, OHSU's American Student Dental Association (ASDA) hosted pre-dental students for a hands-on event, Dive Into Dentistry. Seventeen undergraduate students from Oregon universities attended the July 17 event, said third-year dental student **Patrick Corning**, a member of the pre-dental committee that organized the event. Pre-dental students listened to lectures on dental anatomy and learned how to do amalgam and composite restorations. "The students were then able to try it for themselves on natural extracted teeth on typodonts," said Patrick. "They had a great time learning how a high-speed hand piece feels." Pre-dental students were given a tour of the School and lunch was provided by Shiksha Dental Labs. During the afternoon portion of the event, there was a demonstration on how to wax and cast a crown. The pre-dental students were shown how to take impressions and then were allowed to take impressions on one another, pour them up in dental stone, and take home models of their own teeth. Thirteen dental students volunteered for the event along with **Thomas Galbraith**, D.D.S., assistant professor of prosthodontics (above with pre-dental students) and **Steven Gold**, assistant professor in restorative dentistry. (Photo courtesy ASDA)*

New Faculty *(continued from left)*

School of Dentistry, and taught in the USC pre-doctoral clinic for several years in the early 1990's. He received his doctor of dental surgery from University of Southern California in 1993. He is currently conducting research into lithium disilicate crowns with **John Mitchell**, Ph.D., assistant professor of biomaterials and biomechanics.