When Merlyn W. Vogt, D.D.S., attended a meeting for incoming American Dental Association state presidents in Chicago earlier this year, he noticed a bit of a Nebraska vibe. Including Dr. Vogt, who will serve as the Nebraska Dental Association (NDA) president for 2015-16, five of the 50 state presidents – fully 10 percent of the total statewide dental association leaders for the coming year – were graduates of the UNMC College of Dentistry.

“At the College of Dentistry at UNMC, we’ve always had a very passionate American Student Dental Association (ASDA) group,” Dr. Vogt said. “Currently, our ASDA group has 100 percent participation for all four dental classes. Our students are very active, and hopefully we’ll continue that.”

As evidenced by the turnout in Chicago, the passion for serving in organized dentistry is not a new one. Although Dr. Vogt said that ASDA today is a much stronger organization than when he attended the UNMC College of Dentistry, there were many mentors among the faculty when he was a student who inspired him to remain involved in the ADA and organized dentistry.

“There was Dr. Myron Pudwill, a former NDA president and a faculty member here for many years,” said Dr. Vogt. “We continue to talk on topics related to organized dentistry. The late Dr. Bob Hinrichs was a mentor of mine, as was Dr. Ed Vigna, Dr. Wayne Wessel – people we looked up to and respected, who saw these organizations as important.

“And of course Drs. Leeper, Reinhardt and now Guthmiller, as deans of the dental college, have been very supportive of faculty being active in organized dentistry.”

Apparently, Dr. Vogt wasn’t the only UNMC student inspired by Dr. Pudwill and the rest of the faculty. Incoming state dental association presidents who are graduates from the UNMC College of Dentistry are leaders of several state dental organizations. From left, Dr. Jody Vance, Missouri; Dr. Carol Gomez Summerhays, president-elect of the American Dental Association, Dr. Brad Wilbur, Nevada; Dr. Gary Field, Colorado; Dr. Grant Titze, South Dakota; and Dr. Merlyn Vogt, Nebraska.
From the Dean

The first few months of my tenure have resulted in a true immersion into the climate, the culture and the programs of the UNMC College of Dentistry, as well as the entire medical center.

Thank you for your kind and warm reception to the College. I have met so many wonderful and loyal alumni and friends of the College of Dentistry and yet I know there are so many more of you to meet. Stop by, give me a call, or send a note – I’d love to hear from you!

I continue to be amazed with all that the College of Dentistry does for the local community, but I also am inspired by our representation and service to the state and the nation. Take a few moments to read this issue of Impressions, and you will experience the leaders among us!

We are leaders in organized dentistry and so proud of Dr. Merlyn Vogt, our assistant dean for admissions and student affairs, as he prepares to take the helm as president of the Nebraska Dental Association. He shares this honor of state leadership with four other alumni, whom we are equally proud of: Dr. Gary Field, class of 1988, president-elect of the Colorado Dental Association; Dr. Jody Vance, class of 1991, president-elect of the Missouri Dental Association; Dr. Brad Wilbur, class of 1980, president-elect of the Nevada Dental Association; and Dr. Grant Titze, class of 1981, president-elect of the South Dakota Dental Association.

We are proud of our outstanding student and faculty researchers. Matt Freyer, a fourth-year student, brought home third place in the ADA / DENTSPLY Student Clinician Research Program, marking the second consecutive year that UNMC students have placed in the top three! Among our talented faculty, Dr. Jim Wahls continues funded research into how cells move in hopes of limiting metastasis of tumors that originate in epithelial tissues.

As leaders in the community, our faculty and students volunteer their time and talents each year for the Mission of Mercy event, which, most recently, provided free dental care to nearly 330 people in need, and Children's Dental Day, which provided care for nearly 200 Nebraska children. Kudos to our faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends of the College for their commitment to these outreach events and a special thanks to James Jenkins, D.D.S., and Gary Field, class of 1988, president-elect of the Colorado Dental Association; Dr. Brad Wilbur, class of 1980, president-elect of the Nevada Dental Association; and Dr. Grant Titze, class of 1981, president-elect of the South Dakota Dental Association.

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Although we will always focus on providing outstanding education, research and patient care, it also is our role to empower our faculty, staff and students to become not only leaders in their respective professions, but also leaders in their communities. This issue exemplifies some of these outstanding individuals.

Janet M. Guthmiller, D.D.S., Ph.D.
Professor and Dean, College of Dentistry
University of Nebraska Medical Center

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please send address updates (both business and residential) to the UNMC College of Dentistry. This is in addition to the UNL Alumni Association notification. Please indicate if the update is residential or business.

Residential Information Update
Name ________________________________
Address ______________________________________
City, St, Zip ___________________________________
Ph ______________________________________
Spouse Name ________________________________
Email_____________________________________

Mail this form to:
UNMC College of Dentistry, c/o Deb Rodaway, 4000 East Campus Loop South, P.O. Box 830740, Lincoln, NE 68583-0740
Call Deb Rodaway at 402-472-5135 or email the information to drodaway@unmc.edu.

2015 Calendar

Professionals’ Day
March 27 | 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Richard E. Bradley Memorial Lecture
East Campus Union
9:11:30 a.m.
Wentz Student Scientific Program
1:30-4 p.m.
SHARING CLINIC
April 2
UNMC College of Dentistry, Lincoln
Omicron Kappa Upsilon Banquet
May 7
UNMC Commencement
May 8 | 2 p.m.
Lied Center for Performing Arts, Lincoln, Neb.
UNMC Commencement
May 9 | 9 a.m.
Ralston Arena, Ralston, Neb.
May 9 | 3 p.m.
Gering, Neb.

Dental Continuing Education Caravan
May 11-14
Speakers:
Janet Guthmiller, D.D.S., Ph.D.,
Jillian Wallen, B.D.S., M.S.,
Merlyn Vogt, D.D.S.

Dental Day
June 5-6
Nebraska Panhandle
Dean’s Club Dinner
Sept. 24
Dental Homecoming
Sept. 25-26
Opportunity Fair
Oct. 23

New Faculty

David Zalewski, D.D.S.
Title: Assistant professor, Adult Restorative Dentistry
Education: Bachelor of Science, UNL, 1972; D.D.S., UNMC College of Dentistry, 1978
Experience: Private practice in North Platte, Neb., from 1978 until 2010
Responsibilities: Assistant professor and clinical instructor in the Department of Adult Restorative Dentistry at UNMC College of Dentistry.

First impressions: The college has made many positive changes since I was a student. There is much more emphasis on research, both in biomedicine and dental materials. There also is more focus on the relationship between our school and our community via outreach programs.

Family / free time: We have two grown children. Our sister, Jan, is a RDH at a successful dental practice in Denver. Our son, Mike, is a project manager at Zoetis Laboratory in Lincoln. My wife, Anne, is a registered X-ray tech and orthopedic assistant at the UNL University Health Center. We enjoy travel, both domestic and abroad, and being with family and friends. My personal interests include anything dealing with the outdoor lifestyle, antiques, and sports memorabilia.
The College of Dentistry is organizationally part of UNMC, but is physically located on the East Campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 55 miles away from the main UNMC campus in Omaha.

As a result, it uniquely enjoys the benefits of both campuses. Faculty and students access buildings using their UNL credentials and attend Husker sporting events, but students graduate from, and faculty report to, UNMC, the state’s only public academic health science center. “We’re fortunate to have strong working relationships with both campuses,” said UNMC College of Dentistry Dean Janet Guthmiller, D.D.S., Ph.D.

So, on Oct. 13, 2014, the College of Dentistry lauded the news that UNMC and its primary clinical partner, Nebraska Medicine, would share a visual identifier—a shield featuring a subtle red “N” in the upper-right corner. It was also on that day that Nebraska Medicine launched its new identity. Nebraska Medicine continued to serve as the primary clinical teaching partner for many UNMC students in the health science programs. UNMC, with about 4,700 employees, remains a separate entity from Nebraska Medicine.

UNMC retained its theme, “Breakthroughs for Life” and its brand personality, while Nebraska Medicine retained its brand promise of “Serious Medicine. Extraordinary Care.” “This is an investment in the future of our organization that must be made considering our role as a leading academic medical center and the evolving health care market that exists in the region,” Dr. Gold said.

Decoding the emblem

The logo, or “emblem”—a shield featuring a subtle red “N” in the upper right corner—provides a visual representation of both organizations’ deep Nebraska roots and their shared mission to improve the human condition. Those white parallelograms around the N represent the education, research and patient care missions that were reflected previously in UNMC Physicians’ “ring” logo. The shield is a symbol that The Nebraska Medical Center, Bellevue Medical Center and UNMC each used in their previous brands. It symbolizes leadership, courage and protection. Increased national recognition as we transform lives to create a healthy future through extraordinary care, remarkable discovery and relevant learning,” said Jeffrey F. Gold, M.D., UNMC chancellor and chairman of the Nebraska Medicine Advisory Board. “We’re proud to be part of UNMC and excited by the united clinical entity and common brand,” Dr. Guthmiller said.

“We are building even stronger relationships with UNMC colleagues and UNMC educational and research programs and we look forward to connecting with Nebraska Medicine as we seek expanded clinical educational opportunities both in Omaha and across the state.” Nebraska Medicine continues to serve as the primary clinical teaching partner for many UNMC students in the health science programs. UNMC, with about 4,700 employees, remains a separate entity from Nebraska Medicine.

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Matt Freyer, a fourth-year dental student, placed third in the national American Dental Association/DENTSPLY Student Clinician Research Program competition at the 2014 American Dental Association Annual Session this past fall.

It is the second consecutive “podium finish” for the College of Dentistry – last year, Paul Johnson won the competition with his project on “Alveolar Bone Loss in Subjects with Rheumatoid Arthritis and Osteoarthritis.”

In October, Freyer competed against students from approximately 70 U.S. dental schools at the American Dental Association annual session in San Antonio. His project focused on clinical procedures concerning porcelain veneers on teeth for cosmetic/aesthetic treatment.

Freyer examined different types of materials and different types of bonding cement, coming to the conclusion that light-activated cements were superior to a version known as “dual cure.” Freyer said he was impressed by the level of student research he saw at the meeting, “and frankly, at the local College of Dentistry competition also. Last year’s UNMC representative, Paul Johnson, was the national winner and set a high standard to follow, but I am very happy I was able to represent the College of Dentistry well.”

“Sometimes it’s hard for a dentist to sift through product advertisements – this research can help guide clinicians in terms of what type of cement to use.”

Jeffrey Payne, D.D.S., associate dean for research of the college, said Freyer’s accomplishment puts him in an elite group. The consecutive awards of Johnson and Freyer “speaks volumes of our student research program, the quality of our students and the quality of mentorship our faculty provides,” Dr. Payne said. “We’ve invested in this program over the years in terms of supporting student research, supporting student travel to scientific meetings, and that strategic investment has paid off. “It also speaks to the quality of faculty research at the college.” The faculty is doing research that is considered cutting edge and being nationally recognized, and the students are receiving that mentorship and taking it to a very high level.” Freyer thanked Drs. St. Germain and Payne, and the research organization at the College of Dentistry, which supported him with the Summer Research Fellowship.

UNMC’s ADA/DENTSPLY Student Clinician Research Program Honorees

1959 Dan Moss, third place
1969 Clark Jones, third place
1976 William Hull, honorable mention
1981 Lee Shaikelford, second place
1989 Eric Johnson, second place
1997 Brian Callahan, first place
1999 Heidi J. Stark, third place
2013 Paul Johnson, first place
2014 Matt Freyer, third place

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UNMC dental student honored at ADA national event

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Children’s Dental Day in Lincoln is one of the most highly anticipated events of the year. Held on the first Friday in February, the event provides access to dental care for nearly 200 needy children from central and eastern Nebraska each year.

Children from 11 communities across Nebraska attended the Feb. 6 event. Dental faculty, staff and students whisked them through a day of care that included cleanings, extractions, fillings and root canals, as well as educational games and activities.

Since 2001, more than 5,000 children have received more than $2 million in care. This year children from Lexington and surrounding communities, Norfolk, Columbus, Madison, Stanton, Wayne, Crete, Hastings, York, West Point and Lincoln attended. Some of these children saw a dentist for the first time.

“We are so pleased to be helping the children in Nebraska with their dental needs and I am extremely grateful to the faculty, staff and students for their roles in making this a positive experience for the kids. The care that is provided will likely infuse many more smiles into their communities,” said Janet Guthmiller, D.D.S., Ph.D., dean, UNMC College of Dentistry.

All of the participating children were identified and pre-screened in their communities by volunteers, including school nurses, members of faith-based organizations, Head Start, dentists and dental hygienists.

These volunteers donated their time to identify needy children, provide oral health screenings that indicate the type of care the children need when they come to the college, and in many cases, come with the children for emotional support and translation services.

While upper level dental and dental hygiene students worked in the clinics, many of the first-year students facilitate games and activities with the children, including those that teach good snack choices, how soda pop affects their teeth, what decay looks like and how to brush and floss.

Lunch and healthy snacks were provided and each child received a goody bag of items, including a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, activity book and stickers to take home with them.

The dental and dental hygiene students were joined by nursing students from the UNMC College of Nursing Lincoln division, who provided well child checks, as well as learned how dental health affects a person’s overall health. Dental hygiene students from Central Community College in Hastings also participated. Physician assistant students from Union College assisted with patient registration and clinic check in, as well as interacted with the nursing and dental college students.

“This event not only provides badly needed care for underserved children, but also strengthens the spirit of volunteerism and interprofessional education among our students, faculty, and staff,” said David Brown, Ph.D., executive associate dean, UNMC College of Dentistry and the coordinator of the event.

“We give a lot on Children’s Dental Day but we receive even more.”

David Brown, Ph.D.
Conner Christensen was volunteering at the Nebraska Mini-Mission of Mercy before he was even in dental school.

After receiving his acceptance, but before officially enrolling in the College of Dentistry, the Raymond, Neb., native accompanied his older brother, Cole, to the annual event in Lincoln.

“I was always looking for ways to get experience in dentistry.” he said.

The Mission of Mercy is an annual, nationwide event held to provide free dental care to people in need. In November, at The Center For People In Need, 50 dental operatories were set up to care for the needy, serving 327 patients during the two-day event in Lincoln, with more than $280,000 worth of dental care provided at no cost to the patients. Funds are raised to pay for supplies and equipment for the event.

Now in his fourth year of dental school, Christensen continues to give back to the community through the event.

“I think ‘giving back’ is going to be a big part of my career when I’m done with dental school, so why not start as soon as possible?” he said.

“Also, you get great experience,” he said. “You see more patients, and you can do more procedures. But putting that aside, I think the most important part of the picture is helping others, which is what dentistry’s all about.”

Patients are very appreciative, he added.

“You build that community aspect of your dental practice, and work on ways to give back to the community, and being part of something that’s bigger than yourself, which is important to remember when going out and becoming a professional in any area.”

After receiving dental care, each patient was given information and counseled on where to find an affordable “dental home” to prevent dental problems in the future. Restorations, extractions, root canals, dentures, cleanings, and oral health education were provided.

James Jenkins, D.D.S., assistant dean for Advanced Clinical Practice at the UNMC College of Dentistry, was chair of the event. UNMC College of Dentistry dental students and hygiene students, along with UNMC College of Dentistry full and part-time faculty, volunteered their time and talents for the event.

“This type of outreach is the type of activity the College of Dentistry engages in across the state,” Dr. Jenkins said.

“We also will do Children’s Dental Days in western Nebraska and the Lincoln area,” he said. “We participate in the SHARING Clinic. But the Mission of Mercy is a separate charity, and the College of Dentistry really steps up with volunteers and people to help run it.”

A year ago, Dr. Jenkins daughter, Bailey Jenkins, first helped with computer documentation and escorting patients. She returned this time to treat patients as a student dental hygienist.

“I absolutely loved it,” she said. “People in Lincoln are in great need of dental care, and it is important to give back to the community. It was a great learning experience for us students as well. Although we were very tired at the end of the weekend, we all could agree that we took away from it a satisfying feeling that we were able to help the neediest of this area. It only affirmed my love for this profession and for helping people.”

Jenkins said she was struck by the sheer number of underserved people in the area, as well as the distances people from surrounding areas were willing to travel for dental care.

“The dental hygiene students saw a great number of people who had periodontal problems, calculi everywhere, endodontic problems, and lots of dental caries,” she said. “It took many of us by surprise and challenged us, because we don’t see that every day in school!”

“Sometimes people don’t seem to realize the need that’s out there,” Dr. Jenkins said.

“We’re seeing patients that haven’t been seen for years with all sorts of dental problems ranging from infections to broken teeth to constant pain, constant chronic pain,” he said. “The kids who go out and see that and actually do something about it, not only is it invaluable, the experience they get in helping people, but they have loved it.”

“My hope is that they will remember that when they graduate and go out into their communities, wherever that might be, and help people there as well.”

James Wahl, Ph.D., is interested in how cells move.

Specifically, he is interested in epithelial cell adhesion – epithelial tissues include the skin as well as the inside of the mouth. “Wahl like to know how these cells migrate in order to close cuts on the skin or in our mouths.”

In exploring how cells move, Dr. Wahl, an associate professor of oral biology and cell biologist at the UNMC College of Dentistry, may discover a way to limit metastasis of tumors of the mouth and tongue, as well as other tumors that originate in other epithelial tissues.

His project is funded by a three-year, $280,000 National Institutes of Health R15 grant.

“We’re interested in how their adhesive strength changes during processes like wound healing, or how they’re altered during tumor cell metastasis.”

Early stage tumors that form an adherent mass are often easy to treat by surgical removal, Dr. Wahl said.

“The problem is when the tumor grows to the point where the cancer cells begin to migrate away from the primary tumor and start relocating to the rest of the body,” he said. “Then you get metastasis, which if we can limit, then hopefully we can slow things down and give chemotherapies more time to work.”

Dr. Wahl works with third-year dental student Elizabeth Sand and may draw more research help from University of Nebraska-Lincoln students (R15 grants are designed to bring students into the research process).

Healthy epithelial cells are tightly associated with one another, Dr. Wahl said.

“Under a microscope, these junctions made of protein complexes or cell sheets, that hold the cells together and look static.

“But while we know a lot about the static snapshot of what these complexes look like, we don’t know how these adhesive junctions are remodeled – when cells have to detach from their neighbor and clamber into a wound, for example.”

“We’re trying to figure out what are the control mechanisms that cause one cell to say, ‘Hey, I have to move over there.’ And then when it gets over there, how does it readjust that junction to reform that cell sheet.”

“So we’re looking closely at the signaling pathways that control adhesiveness.”

James Wahl, Ph.D., and dental student Elizabeth Sand.
College of Dentistry Remembers

Dr. Kenneth Holland Sr., D.D.S., ‘43, d.r Sept. 1, 2014. He graduated from the College of Dentistry in 1943 and enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he served as a captain in the Dental Corps of the 138th Station Hospital in England, France, and Germany. He started his private orthodontic practice in 1947 and along with several partners, built a thriving practice in Lincoln and Columbus, until his retirement in 1989. He was a part-time faculty member of the College of Dentistry and served for a number of years as the chair of the orthodontic program. He continued to teach classes after his retirement.

Dr. Stephen Hwang, D.D.S., ‘65, d.r Sept. 30, 2014. He practiced dentistry in Jacksonville, Fla., during a career spanning 43 years before retiring. He was an active member of numerous dental organizations including the American Dental Association and the Academy of General Dentistry. Dr. Hwang was also an accomplished musician, singing tenor in the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus for many years.


Kenneth Morrison, D.D.S., ‘69, Hastings, Neb., d.r Jan. 6, 2015. Morrison was an agribusiness entrepreneur and philanthropist. He and his wife, Marjorie, were longtime close friends (and former patients) of Dr. John R. Sieberg, a D.D.S. 1944 graduate who lives in Hastings. Morrison came to understand the important role the UNMC College of Dentistry plays in the oral health of our state and region; he gave generously in 2004 to anchor renovations of the North Clinic and also supported renovation of the Study & Computer Room in the college’s student lounge.

Alumni Kudos

Dr. Tara (Colson) Schaack, D.D.S., ’01, was appointed to the South Dakota State Board of Dentistry. She also has accepted an appointment to the Central Regional Dental Testing Service, Inc. Steering Committee. The board is revisiting the state dental practice act. Tara practices with her husband, Jon, D.D.S., in Rapid City, S.D.

Dr. Benjamin Lashley, D.M.D., received recognition for the State Children’s Champion award at the Nebraska Head Start Association’s annual conference award ceremony in November 2014. The award recognizes individuals who make valuable contributions to the lives of children and families across the four Region VIII states of Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas. Dr. Lashley has provided services for Community Action Partnership of Mid-Neb’s Head Start program since 2000. He also provides dental screenings at Head Start centers in North Platte and Ogallala.

Dr. Edward Kuske, D.M.D., of Sioux Falls, S.D., was elected president of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry’s Central District at the organization’s 63rd Annual Meeting. Dr. Kuske has practiced general and implant dentistry for 30 years. In 1993, he became an Associate Fellow of the Academy. He achieved the status of Fellow within the AAD in 1995 and Diplomate with the American Board of Oral Implantologyn in 1989. He has served on AAD’s Admissions and Credentials Board and has been an officer of AAD’s Central District for 3 years.

Dean’s Club Annual Recognition Dinner

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2014 Homecoming Reunion Highlights

Homecoming continuing education speakers

Left to right: Sreenivas Koka, Monte Zysset, and David Rallis

Class of 1989—25 year anniversary

Left to right: Cristin Wilson, Rick Brunmeier, Sharon Fix, Ron Dolezal, Myhanh Phan Rinne, Todd Pedersen, Lori Wulf Roseman, Mark Frank, and Tim Calhoun

Alumni Award Recipients

Left to right: Myron Pudwill, Henry St. Germain, Wayne Barkmeier, and Richard Schilling

Class of 1964—50 year anniversary

Left to right: Jim Killinger, Myron Pudwill, Bill Wyatt, Don Fricke, Dan Hansen, Don Bucy, Larry Lytle, Bryce Bonness, Doug Hoy, Larry Smith, Roger Jurgens, Ed Fankhauser, Kent Powers

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Dean’s Club Annual Recognition Dinner

Class of 2015 Dental Student

Lindsey Arkham, Omaha, Neb.

Class of 2015 Dental Hygiene Student

Emily Nall, Lincoln, Neb.

Class of 2015 Dental Student

Jake Zitterkopf, Scottsbluff, Neb.

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In this issue

1 Alumni fill leadership roles at state level
10 percent of the statewide dental association leaders for the coming year are College of Dentistry graduates.

5 UNMC dental student honored at ADA national event
Matt Freyer places third with his research project.

6 College reaches out at Children’s Dental Day
Nearly 200 Nebraska children received free dental care.

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