

USC DENTISTRY



SUMMER 1991

some of our best faculty have been educated elsewhere.”

No one at the School of Dentistry, however, is ready to rest on the laurels of the program's reputation, especially Dean Landesman. A reputation for excellence and quality needs to be supplemented by instruction that is on the cutting edge of new technique, and the understanding of new materials available for restorative dentistry practice.

This includes the integration of research into course curriculum at the undergraduate level, and a continuing assessment of the clinical education students receive.

“USC is at the forefront of schools in bonded restoration and cosmetic dentistry—such as the teaching of bonded inlays and veneers,” notes Kahn. “And we expect to place an even greater emphasis on cosmetic dentistry in the future.”

Several areas of promising research, such as that with CAD/CAM and dental imaging, will find their way into future classroom instruction and undergraduate practice. USC faculty and graduates are at the forefront of the emerging technology of dental implants and this, too, will be introduced into the undergraduate curriculum in the future.

While the reputation of the clinical programs is sound, improvements are planned, according to Ronald Johnson, D.D.S., newly appointed associate dean for Clinical Affairs. Formerly chairman of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and director of the school's Pediatric Clinic, Johnson says he plans to bring the expertise that created a very modern pediatric clinic to bear on his new position. “Our Pediatric Clinic is an upbeat, modern facility with good infection control and other measures. Students appreciate what we have done,” Johnson says. “Now I want to bring the best of what we have learned in our Pediatric Clinic and apply this knowledge to a re-evaluation of our other clinical settings.”

Johnson said he will look at new equipment and instructional techniques, as well as teaching even more practical methods of infection control in the clinical setting. This will probably lead to even more improvement in



At the USC School of Dentistry, exploring innovative frontiers in restorative dentistry is a tradition—most recently including computer-assisted design/computer-assisted machining (CAD/CAM) for the design and manufacture of precision-fitting dental restorations. Here co-director of the school's Dental Imaging Section Francois Duret, D.C.D., Ph.D., research professor of dental imaging (right), shows the assortment of specialized cutting tools used by the CAD/CAM's computer-assisted micro-milling machine to USC advanced prosthodontics student Stephane Neyret, D.D.S. (left), and continuing education student Katy Flama, D.D.S. (center).

the way students are taught, he says.

While the curriculum and the clinics undergo a thorough review, Landesman says he will push to spread the reputation of USC's restorative programs even farther afield. “I want to see us marketing ourselves better on the East Coast,” he says, noting that only ten percent of the current student body comes from the eastern United States.

Landesman also wants to place greater emphasis on the services the USC clinics provide to USC faculty and staff. “We have one of the best facilities in the country, so why shouldn't the people here take advantage of that?” he asks. “We need to let people know we can take better care of patients here than anywhere else.”

As the School of Dentistry reaches out to new constituencies, it is also considering a broadening of its con-

tinuing education work. “Our continuing educational focus is usually didactic,” Kahn notes. “But I hope we can offer more clinical continuing education courses in the future. With our excellent faculty and facilities, we are in a unique position to help dentists improve their clinical skills. I'd like to see our facilities used more for this purpose.”

And so the tradition continues. Excellent coursework with quality instruction and an attention to providing the best possible dental care to patients. For nearly 6,500 graduates of the USC School of Dentistry, and for the thousands of future dentists graduated from USC, there is no other way.

BY KEN WATERS

PREPARING TO HELP PATIENTS

RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY CONTINUES USC TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Words like 'quality,' 'excellence,' and 'tradition' usually call to mind stately, ivy-covered halls of academe. It's an image quite different from that prevailing on the second-floor clinic of the USC School of Dentistry, with the hustle and bustle of consulting dental students, faculty, and milling patients illuminated by the broad expanse of sunlight filtering in from 34th Street.

Yet here in the clinic some of the nation's finest dentists-to-be polish their skills in restorative dentistry, fulfilling a nearly 100-year-old tradition of quality and excellence that is the hallmark of the USC School of Dentistry.

"For the past 94 years, restorative dentistry has been the guts of the USC dentistry program," says William H. Crawford, D.D.S., who has recently stepped down from the school's deanship. "What students are taught—the attention to detail, the mindset of excellence, doing the best job possible—this is the USC ideal personified."

According to newly appointed Dean Howard M. Landesman, D.D.S., M.Ed., holder of the G. Donald and Marian James Montgomery Dean's Chair in Dentistry, USC's commitment to restorative dentistry remains paramount. "We need to make clear to our alumni and to future students that we intend to maintain and even improve our clinical reputation," he says.

The USC tradition is built upon a strong educational foundation and modeled by one of the best dental faculties in the nation. This is the main reason USC maintains one of the nation's largest applicant pools for new students—many more than can be admitted, Landesman notes. This has been true even during the times when dental school applications nationwide were in decline. Entering USC dental students score in the top 25 percent in national admissions tests.

A major strength of USC's educational foundation is its extensive preclinical program. "By the time our students enter the clinical phase of their education, they have had two years of intensive coursework and they are familiar with most aspects of restorative dentistry," says Richard L. Kahn, D.D.S., associate professor and chairman of the Department of Restorative Dentistry, and holder of the Phillip Maurer Tennis Professorship in Clinical Dentistry. "Most other dental schools don't require such extensive coursework before students enter the clinic."

USC's preclinical education includes several trimesters of dental morphology, dental materials, and extensive work with amalgam restorations, cast restorations, porcelain restorations, bonded restorations, and removable



A member of the USC School of Dentistry's outstanding faculty in the field of restorative dentistry, Terence E. Donovan, D.D.S., associate professor of restorative dentistry.