Creighton Students Continue Tradition of Service to Others in Jesuit Spirit

Creighton’s community-based dental initiatives have students providing valuable dental services to underserved populations locally, regionally and internationally, continuing the School’s long-standing tradition of serving those in need.

Creighton has been intimately involved in OneWorld Community Health Center in Omaha since its inception in the 1960s as the American Indian Center and later the Indian-Chicano Health Center.

The Creighton Dental Clinic has long served OneWorld patients during evening-hour visits. During the 2006-2007 academic year, those services were expanded to include a volunteer daytime rotation at OneWorld.

Now, it’s basically a required rotation for Creighton’s senior dental students. Students see patients at the clinic all day Monday and Tuesday and half a day on Thursday. Three to four students rotate through the clinic at a time, putting in 20 hours a week for two weeks. The result: The clinic is staffed 44 weeks out of the year by Creighton dental students.

The students are guided by three part-time Creighton faculty members and alumni: Julie Wees, BS’03, DDS’07; Regan Mackintosh, BSMth’02, DDS’06; and Ben Hardy, BS’00, DDS’04.

The students provide preventive and restorative services, oral surgery, and examination and treatment planning services. The students work with dental assistants who serve as interpreters.

The clinic has 11 dental operatories. Creighton students completed 1,196 dental procedures at the clinic during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Students also actively pursue community-based externships during the summer months. For instance, this past summer Chelsey Roberts spent two weeks in Mission, S.D., on the Rosebud Indian Reservation with Delta Dental of South Dakota’s Ronald McDonald Care Mobile. The Care Mobile provides dental services to children, from infants to age 21, working mainly with underserved and Medicaid patients. The
Dean’s Message

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is a natural step for the School. We have nearly 40 years of involvement with the ILAC program and the Indian Clinic/Indian-Chicano Clinic, predecessors to the OneWorld Community Health Center. Reaching out into the community offers us the opportunity to increase the service we provide while at the same time expanding our educational opportunities.

Extramural affiliations and programs allow us to expand the service we provide to underserved populations. The OneWorld Dental Clinic Rotation, Project Homeless, Mission of Mercy, student involvement in the South Dakota Ronald McDonald Care Mobile and in “Give Kids a Smile” all demonstrate the principles of caring concern for others that is a hallmark of Creighton’s foundation of service and justice.

Students become a valuable asset for the “safety net” clinics in meeting their mission. Those clinics improve access to care for people who often have no other route to receive care. Students also gain firsthand experience working with clinical operations that are not primarily directed toward education, but focused on delivery of services. Community-based education can also provide additional educational benefits.

Nationwide experience from other dental schools has demonstrated improved student efficiency, self-assessment skills and confidence when they complete substantial extramural experiences. Schools can use the opportunity to provide students with access to patient populations that may not be available on-site.

The School of Dentistry is also engaged in our own transition from a brief stroll to a healthy hike as we take the initial steps toward increasing our education and service opportunities outside of the School.

Steven W. Friedrichsen, D.D.S.
Dean, School of Dentistry

School Remembers

Dr. Stormberg

Gene Stormberg, DDS’53, Professor Emeritus of Operative Dentistry at Creighton, died Jan. 6 at the age of 81. Dr. Stormberg was a faculty member in the School of Dentistry from 1957-93. During that time, he was the Chair of the Department of Operative Dentistry and Director of Clinics from 1962-74. Dr. Stormberg was granted Professor Emeritus in 1999.

Creighton Participates in Mission of Mercy

Creighton faculty and students participated in the 2008 Nebraska Mission of Mercy event at the Scotts Bluff County Event Center in October, helping to serve nearly 2,100 patients and to provide more than $570,000 worth of dental care.

Faculty participants were Drs. Kenneth Hermsen, Stuart McNally, Scott Shaddy, Carolyn Taggart-Burns and Gary Westerman. Student participants were Jamie Smith and David Wagner.

Dental School Reaches Out to Homeless

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Creighton University School of Dentistry and the Charles Drew Health Center, more than 50 homeless people are receiving much-needed dental treatment and dentures as part of Dollars for Dentures.

Dollars for Dentures grew out of Project Homeless Connect Omaha – an effort hosted by Creighton and organized by a Creighton alumnus to assist the local homeless community.

More than 300 homeless individuals attended the April event, receiving services ranging from housing assistance to legal aid to dental care.

Creighton dental faculty and students provided dental checkups to more than 132 individuals during the one-day event. Nearly 70 required urgent dental care and two were sent to the Creighton dental clinic for emergency work.

The Dollars for Dentures program has raised nearly $60,000 through donations and grants. Staff at Charles Drew and students and faculty at Creighton have volunteered their time and professional services.

“It’s part of our mission as a school to show our students they have a responsibility as a professional to help those in need,” Dr. James Howard, Associate Dean for Clinical Services, told the Omaha World-Herald. “We do it because everyone is made in God’s image. They are getting treatment they normally wouldn’t be getting.”

Website Assists Dental Implant Patients

Creighton School of Dentistry offers a unique, online resource for individuals seeking more information on dental implants. The website, established and maintained by Dr. Charles Wilcox, Associate Professor of Prosthodontics, has been available for the last two years. Its purpose is to provide patients the foundation for informed consent. Some of the topics addressed include: alternatives to implant treatment, how implants work, bone grafting, and am I a good candidate? The site had 4,500 visits in 2007-2008. The website can be found at http://www2.creighton.edu/dental/implants.
Students Continue to Serve Others

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majority of Roberts’ patients were 3 to 6 years old.

Roberts said her “extraordinary clinic experience” at Creighton allowed her to confidently step right in and serve her patients.

Kelly Gould, RDH, MA, Assistant Professor of Community and Preventive Dentistry and Director of Extramural Programs, said those programs and clinics that host Creighton students are often impressed with the students’ level of clinical expertise.

“Our students are very well prepared to take part in extramural programs because of our School’s strong clinical education program,” Gould said.

Two other students, Pam Lerfald and David Zaluski, spent several weeks during the summer volunteering at the Soo Sans Indian Health Services Hospital in Rapid City, S.D., seeing from about six or seven patients a day. “I went into the experience a little guarded about my ability to make the appropriate clinical decisions,” Lerfald said, “but within a few days, I was confident with applying what I’ve learned into practice.”

Then there was Christopher Meehan, who worked at a rural dental office in Dakota Dunes, S.D., for two weeks during his summer break, and the dozen or so students who annually travel to the Dominican Republic over six weeks during the summer to provide care as part of Creighton’s longstanding Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) program.
The Creighton School of Dentistry is seeking to update its file on practice opportunities that may be available now or in the near future for our present seniors and recent graduates. Practice opportunities for Creighton graduates continue to be plentiful and first-year income opportunities remain good, which is fortunate as student graduation indebtedness continues to increase.

If you are seeking an associate, are contemplating termination of your practice for any reason or know of someone else who may be doing so in the near future, please contact Patti Churchill in the

Creighton School of Dentistry, pchurch@creighton.edu, with information about your opportunity. The School will, in turn, attempt to match your response with the requests of senior Creighton students and establish contact between the interested parties.

Creighton graduated 83 dental students last May – 44 of whom went into private practice (43 as associates), 12 to specialty programs, 17 to GPR/AEGD programs (including military programs), seven to community health centers and two directly into military assignments.

Sophomore student Kyle Smith presented his research at the American Association of Clinical Anatomists (AACA) meeting, held July 15-18, 2008, in Toronto, Canada. The meeting was the 25th Annual Session of the AACA and had an all-time record number of presentations. Smith presented his research titled “Using cone beam computer tomography (CBCT) imaging technology to demonstrate the clinical anatomy of the nasal cavity.” Since CBCT provides three-dimensional imaging at sub-millimeter resolution, Smith’s study sought to use CBCT to three-dimensionally reconstruct the nasal cavity to explain the clinical anatomy of this important region. His project was a finalist for the Dr. Sandy Marks Poster Award and was sponsored by Dr. Neil S. Norton, President of the University Faculty and Associate Professor of Oral Biology at Creighton University. Dr. Norton serves as the Treasurer of the AACA, an international organization of anatomists that advances the science and art of clinical anatomy. It encourages research and publication in the field and maintaining high standards in the teaching of anatomy. Additional faculty involved in the project include Drs. Tarnjit Saini, Terry Lanphier and Margaret Jergenson.

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