

History of the University of California, San Diego Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project & Pre-Dental Society

The UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic Project (SRFCP) began in 1996 and saw its first patient circa December of 1996. The UCSD Free Dental Clinics began as an offshoot of the UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic Project in 1999. Coincidentally, the first patient of the SRFCP was seen by Eric Goldlust, who was later to become the founding Director / Coordinator of the Free Dental Clinics, along with Dr. Ellen Beck, Founder and Faculty Advisor for the SRFCP.

It became clear in the early days of the Free Clinic Project that there was a desperate need for dental care among its patrons. This need was highly acute in two senses: first, many of the SRFCP's patients were in severe dental pain, precluding adequate nutrition as well as productive activity; and second, poor dentition was keeping these people from securing gainful employment, especially in the service industries. It was therefore decided circa September of 1997 that the SRFCP would take on the task of starting a dental clinic, with the chief purposes of managing acute dental pain, and restoring dentition in an aesthetic manner through denture work.

Unfortunately, this task was rather daunting. As there is no dental school in San Diego County, there was no readily available pool of clinicians-in-training in need of experience on a pro bono basis. Additionally, there was no other free dental clinic in the county area, and therefore no obvious repository of expertise in starting such a clinic. The County Dental Society was a useful resource, and a number of young clinicians came to the fore and offered their time and expertise in designing Free Dental Clinic services. The most instrumental in the prehistory of the Clinic was Dr. Kent Howard. Dr. Howard's efforts in conjunction with Dr. Beck and Keith McKlenden, then a second-year medical student at UCSD, aided generously by Lee Palmer of Burkhardt Dental Supply, yielded a list of needed equipment in order to support a single, minimal, dental operator, with just one chair. The cost of this equipment, including donated, used and refurbished items whenever possible, came to almost \$12,000 - and so, the Dental Clinics remained only an idea for many months.

In July of 1998, Eric Goldlust, an MD-PhD student completing his second year of medical school and beginning his first year of graduate studies in epidemiology, took over for Keith McKlenden and began the search for funding sources. In October, 1998, the Eugene J. Mindlin Foundation, headed by Dr. Katherine Day, graciously donated funds

sufficient to cover all of the aforementioned equipment, and with additional funding from the SRFCP, the Dental Clinics began to take shape. By this time, Dr. Howard was no longer available to provide leadership for the Clinics, so this role was shared by four able young dentists based in various locations across San Diego: Dr. Dan Kershner, Dr. Melanie Parker, Dr. Sam Halabo, and Dr. Margaret Alai. These generous souls not only determined what services we would offer during the Clinic's rollout, and what supplies were necessary to ably perform them, but agreed to staff the Clinic until additional dental professionals could be enlisted to share these duties. Dental assisting would be taken up by Mr. Goldlust, as well as a fellow medical student, Katie McKenzie, and a pre-dental student, Michael Magnani. These three were instrumental in sorting out many of the mundane and bureaucratic details inherent in an enterprise such as this, over many long months.

In January, 1999, the first of the Free Dental Clinics opened its doors, so to speak, at the Pacific Beach site. That first night, we saw only one patient, in part owing to a series of power outages coincident with use of the steam sterilizer. After a night or two of this, some creative redistribution of the electrical load (read: abundant use of extension cords and wiring diagrams from the church) resolved this problem, and soon we were seeing 4 to 6 patients on an efficient night. Clinic hours were from approximately 6pm to 9pm, subject to the SRFCP's own hours and the availability of dentists, who commonly worked until (or after) 5pm in their own offices before coming to clinic for several more hours.

In order to increase efficiency, more and more volunteers came to work - dentists, including Dr. Gaby Cosgrove, Dr. Andy Zakarian, and Dr. Anne Zimmerman; dental assistants, including Linda Graham, Judy Parks, Stacie Savage, Krista Seamans, and Nancy Smith; and pre-dental students, including Arash Saemi and Malek Rabadi. (Ironically, although the Dental Clinic was a project of the UCSD School of Medicine, no medical student other than Eric Goldlust provided a lasting influence in the early development of the Dental Clinic.) Additional services were offered, including not only X-rays and extractions, but fillings, root canal therapy, and dentures - this last through a generous, ongoing, weekly donation from E & S Laboratories. Additional supplies and equipment were donated and purchased, and eventually, a second chair was acquired and installed, in September of 1999. This allowed us to offer simultaneously the services of both a dentist and one of several dental hygienists, including Phuong Ngo, Natalie Lepelley, and Karen Brunsch. This

expanded our services to include basic cleanings as well as ultrasonic scaling and root planing.

In April, 2000, it became clear that the limiting factor for the number of patients we could see was not the expertise of dental staff, nor even the equipment and supplies available, but the sheer lack of manpower, both during and between Dental Clinic sessions. Since there was evidently little interest on the part of medical students, it was decided to cast a broader net in terms of undergraduate participation. Academic internships were offered to undergraduates at UCSD and SDSU, and soon other students began to offer their assistance without remuneration in the form of credit or otherwise. Soon over a dozen more students had arrived from UCSD (e.g., Tuan Le, Eleanor Chen, Annie Chow, Chad Hicks-Beach, Ann Nguyen, Jerry Liu, Mohammed Erakat, Mary Cheng, Tiffany Ma, Michael Carley, and Jaime Kuo), SDSU (e.g., Andrew Rivamonte, Chamonix Kinimaka, and Behrooz "Bruce" Alikhani), and even USD (Alicia Sifuentes). The dental staff continued to increase in number, including Drs. Preston Kaenel, Tonya Macknick, Keith Henderson, Tom Kerrian, Lee Fitzgerald, and Tom Keller, among others. New dental assistants included Denise Hanley, Misty Thompson, Eva Bonilla, Giselle Alberti, and Brandy Hellman. Debi Rowland, a dental office manager, graciously offered to share and improve some of the administrative duties, and occasionally serve chairside as a dental assistant when necessary. Meanwhile, our services were expanding, and we were able to offer occasional crown and bridge work, through the donated services of Burton Labs and Conley Crowns.

Soon we were actually turning away undergraduate volunteers, simply because we lacked the ability to manage them all effectively. As it became apparent that a number of them clearly possessed the skills to direct themselves, the reins slowly turned over to them. This new batch of volunteers included Daisy Kim, Cindy Ly, Joy Huang, Megan O'Neill, Yo Imai, Ervin Calvo, Erica Barba, Wilson Leung, Terry Tang, Carmen Ha, Han Vu, Tony Yoon, Mindy Misawa (all from UCSD), Pat Andres, Michael Dionne, and Roberto Lozado (from SDSU). The pre-dental volunteers were all given specific leadership roles, and they quickly rose to the occasion.

In March 2001, Eric Goldlust, still serving as Director, presented data on the Free Dental Clinic at the American Medical Student Association (AMSDA) National Conference. This presentation was given an award by the National Health Service Corps and singled out as the Best Community Service Project at that conference. The clinic continued to

increase its numbers of dental staff, including Drs. Abe Romanowski, Marie Alejandrino, Stephen Lee, and David Milder - this last a board-certified oral surgeon, well known in San Diego for his generosity in treating patients with nowhere else to turn. By now we were seeing 6-8 patients a night, and over 50 patients a month. It was estimated that over \$102,000 worth of care (according to Medicare reimbursement) had been provided by March of 2001, all under an operating budget of less than \$50,000 since inception. It is of note that Medicare reimbursement typically accounts for approximately 20% of usual and customary costs for dental services.

It was around time that the Dental Clinic began to establish itself as both a legitimate source and a viable destination for referral care. Calls came in from private patients and offices from Encinitas to El Cajon asking for help with denture work, and walk-in patients even reported hearing about us as far away as Tijuana. In turn, we were able to secure regular referral spots with three oral surgeons (including Dr. Milder) and an implantologist - although this last was only utilized once, for a particularly reliable and deserving patient.

Meanwhile, the Clinic was being piloted as a research site. In August, 1999, a patient requested - and received - acupuncture analgesia in place of anesthetic during a simple extraction (without any pain!), and so Mr. Goldlust chose for his dissertation project a series of clinical investigations into the use of acupuncture analgesia for pain control during invasive dental procedures. Patients were initially seen during regular Clinic hours, and later, during off-clinic hours, staffed by paid dentists and undergraduate research assistants, most of whom also volunteered during Clinic hours as well.

Additionally, plans had been drawn up by Lee Palmer (of Burkhart Dental Supply) for the addition of a Mobile Clinic. This Clinic was to have one medical area and two dental operatories, with a single X-ray machine, and a shared area for disinfection and storage. This was commissioned by Callen Campers in late 2000, and in August, 2001, the Mobile Clinic opened its doors. It began by serving the SRFCP's Baker Clinic population in Southeast San Diego, and by providing free orthodontic services to children, through the auspices of Dr. Parker and Dr. Missy Dempsey. Additionally, students of the newly opened Dental Hygiene program at Southwestern College underwent training to use the Mobile Clinic as a training site two days a week. Unfortunately, this partnership was short-lived, owing to acts of vandalism in the Mobile Clinic's first month of existence. This was rectified and new security measures were put into place, but

Southwestern College had already secured facilities elsewhere. The Mobile Clinic reopened in February, 2002, and has been open continuously ever since. Eventually, services were expanded to include general dentistry.

A third site was opened in Downtown San Diego in April, 2002, under the able management of Wilson Leung. This Clinic, also with two operatory chairs, as well as a Panorex X-ray machine, flourished rapidly. In December, 2002, a third chair was added to the Pacific Beach site, and the Clinics reached their present functional capacity.

In summer of 2002, Eric Goldlust slowly stepped down as the Coordinator of the Free Dental Clinics in order to continue and finish medical school. Upon Mr. Goldlust's departure, he distributed his responsibilities and duties to the three clinic managers: Philippe Sebrechts (Baker Clinic), Jerry Liu (Pacific Beach Clinic), and Wilson Leung (Downtown Clinic). Unfortunately, Mr. Liu moved back home to Los Angeles after his graduation in June 2002. In turn, Mr. Liu passed on his role of Pacific Beach Clinic Manager to Jeremy Horst.

Without the direction of Eric Goldlust, the three clinic managers Mr. Sebrechts, Mr. Horst, and Mr. Leung were able to coordinate the volunteers as well as maintain the organization of the three dental clinics. In the winter quarter of 2002, Dr. Beck saw a need for someone who could find additional dental laboratories for the clinics to work with, order necessary dental supplies when the stock became low, and oversee the maintenance of the three dental clinics altogether. At the time, Dr. Beck received funding through a grant that allowed this job to be a part-time paid position. During the winter quarter of 2002, Dr. Beck offered the position to Jeremy Horst, the Pacific Beach Clinic Manager at the time. Eventually, this position became the Student Director position that would oversee all the student volunteers of the Free Dental Clinics.

In the 2002-2003 school year, the Free Dental Clinics was able to establish a student organization at UCSD. That organization became the Pre-Dental Society at UCSD. The forming of the Pre-Dental Society at UCSD was important to reach out to the pre-dental students of UCSD as well as other pre-dental students all over San Diego. Weekly and quarterly meetings were set up for organization of the dental clinics as well as for speakers presenting information on applying to dental schools and current topics within the field of dentistry. One of the speakers was Dr. Irvin Silverstein, a practicing periodontist in La

Mesa, who spoke on periodontics and who would later become the Dental Advisor and Director of the Free Dental Clinics.

In the spring of 2003, Jeremy Horst organized a meeting of several people interested in expanding and improving the services at the UCSD Free Dental Clinics. Dr. Silverstein personally visited all three sites and compiled data on their operations. He met with student leaders such as Jeremy Horst, Wilson Leung, Philippe Sebrechts, and Charmaine Ng. From these meetings, Dr. Silverstein developed a plan to try to improve patient flow, volunteer dentists' experiences, and the amount of supplies and equipment for all three sites. To accomplish these goals, money would need to be raised and both the number of volunteer dentists and students would need to be increased.

Unfortunately, the primary clinic site in Pacific Beach needed to undergo extensive renovation. Dr. Silverstein met with Dr. Beck, Susan Lovelace the Executive Director of the San Diego County Dental Society, and Peggy Yamagata, RDH, MEd, the Dental Health Specialist for the County of San Diego, at a Wendy's in Pacific Beach, to discuss the future of the Dental Clinics. It became clear that someone would need to direct and advise the UCSD Free Dental Clinic Project. Dr. Silverstein took on that role.

In the summer of 2003, Jeremy Horst pursued a research project at UCSF and passed his position of Student Director to Wilson Leung, the Downtown Clinic Manager. During that time, Dr. Irvin Silverstein became heavily involved with the Free Dental Clinics and the Pre-Dental Society at UCSD. Dr. Silverstein formed a steering committee who would help advise him with the Free Dental Clinic Project. The initial committee consisted of Dr. Ellen Beck, Wilson Leung, Dr. Melanie Parker, Lee Palmer, Dr. Jack Curren, Susan Lovelace and Peggy Yamagata. Dr. Silverstein tried to organize both the UCSD Pre-dental Society and the UCSD Student Run Free Dental Clinic Project. Wilson Leung and Dr. Silverstein worked hard to improve the Free Clinics as well as the organization of the students running the Free Clinics. Dr. Silverstein was able to organize a superb weekly special speaker program, which served to increase student involvement and pre-dental education. By tapping students at an early age to understand the concepts of dentistry and access to care, he hoped it would improve student volunteerism at the Free Dental Clinic. He realized that since San Diego did not have a dental school, this was a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to learn about and become involved with dentistry. In turn, he also tried to get more volunteers from the dental profession to help teach students while providing care for the underserved. Each year, many of the

experienced student volunteers get accepted into dental school and new ones come on board. Thus, because of the success of this program, there is a constant need for training new volunteers.

Mr. Leung helped organize the student volunteers to run the clinics and the weekly Special Speaker Series. The growth was tremendous. Dr. Silverstein met with Dr. Beck and decided that they would have to close the Pacific Beach clinic until they could obtain proper funding to totally renovate it into a safe and effective dental clinic. The Pacific Beach Clinic was closed in November 2003. However, operations at the two other sites increased; general dentistry could now be provided at the Baker site because of the joining of Dr. Lukacs and Dr. Refkin, and operation of the Downtown clinic increased to two evenings per week.

Dr. Silverstein helped bring in a large volume of funding for the Free Dental Clinics through writing grants and obtaining a large number of donations from various dental supply companies. He was able to provide the Free Dental Clinics with enough resources to make the clinics run smoothly throughout the year. Brock Lorenz, a new student volunteer, started to help writing grants with Dr. Silverstein. They worked countless hours and obtained a level of funding that the clinics never had before. With the additional funding, the renovation of the Pacific Beach Clinic began to be conceptualized in February, 2004. Actual construction did not begin until June 2004. Dr. Silverstein was volunteering so much of his time (while maintaining a full-time practice) in helping the Free Dental Clinics flourish that Dr. Beck appointed Dr. Silverstein as the Dental Advisor and Director of the Free Dental Clinics.

Under the guidance and direction of Dr. Silverstein, more and more practicing dentists wanted to volunteer their time and services to the Free Dental Clinics. At the same time, more and more students also wanted to volunteer at the Free Dental Clinics and join the Pre-Dental Society at UCSD. World-renowned speakers in dentistry from all over the United States came to UCSD to present at the weekly meetings of the Pre-Dental Society. This became known as the UCSD Special Speaker Series. The speakers included Dean Dr. Jack Dillenberg from Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health, Dr. Harold Slafkin from USC Dental School, and other deans from dental schools all over the nation, ADA President Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi, dental forensics specialist Dr. Gerald Vale, and other dental specialists. These speakers inspired and educated pre-dental students to become leaders in their own right and emphasized the importance of giving back to one's community.

During the keynote speaker presentation of President of the ADA Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi in April 2004, the ADA Access to Care Award was presented to Dr. Beck. The award recognized her vision and success in founding the free dental clinics as an offshoot of the free medical clinics. A few months later, the ADA Access to Care Award was also presented to Dr. Silverstein and Dr. Melanie Parker for their efforts in making the Free Dental Clinics such a success.

In the spring of 2004, Wilson Leung was heading off to Dental School and passed his directorship to Brock Lorenz. Brock had a business degree from Tulane University and had been in the business world for three years prior to finding the UCSD program. His enthusiasm and organizational skills impressed Dr. Silverstein who strongly supported Brock as the next student director. Before becoming Student Director of the Free Clinics and Pre-Dental Society, Mr. Lorenz had spent hundreds of hours writing over twelve grants with Dr. Silverstein requesting the assistance of various corporations and foundations in order to finance the future growth of the organizations. In all, Mr. Lorenz showed his commitment to the organization by contributing over 50 hours per week in organizational and clinical work.

Upon becoming Student Director, Mr. Lorenz held an organizational meeting that was to unveil a new structure and protocol for both the Pre-Dental Society and the Free Clinics. Over 80 undergraduate students attended this meeting in April of 2004. The goals of increasing the number of clinic sessions, the number of patients treated and improving the educational experience of the undergraduate students required the participation of as many students as possible. The new organizational structure enhanced the enthusiasm and direction of the students, and created a very high level of professionalism and unity amongst active student volunteers.

With more active students, the implementation of various projects began. More students received their x-ray and CPR certifications. Many Pre-Dental Society students became Dental Health Ambassadors, teaching elementary students the importance of oral hygiene. Improved organization systems were implemented in the areas of clinic management, storage, clinic supplies, donations, patient files and data, public relations, website presentation, treasury, and much more – all of which were coordinated by student leaders, under the direction of Mr. Lorenz and Dr. Silverstein.

More involvement and greater organizational unity was reflected in the swelling attendance levels at Pre-Dental society special speaker

meetings. Between 50-90 undergraduate students attended every weekly meeting, which featured deans from dental schools, local and national dental-related professionals and organized dentistry professionals. Please see our special speaker history for a complete list of this very impressive guest list.

Within a few months, the number of patients treated in our clinics tripled. This also equated to many more students receiving the incredible educational experience of hands-on assisting, taking x-rays, taking impressions, pouring stone and more.

In April of 2005, the Pacific Beach clinic grand re-opening took place. Many students, community leaders and special guests were in attendance. Speakers included immediate past president of the ADA Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi, current President of the CDA Dr. Russell Webb, former Mayor of Coronado Mary Heron, Dr. Silverstein, Dr. Beck and Mr. Lorenz as Master of Ceremonies. A proclamation from the office of San Diego County Supervisor Cox was presented to the organization as well.

In April of 2005 Dr. Arthur Dugoni, Dean of University of the Pacific visited UCSD. Dr. Dugoni spoke of his life experiences, the University of the Pacific, and the future of dentistry. He was impressed (as were many other eminent dental leaders), that our program has three dental clinics which are run and managed by undergraduate students under the supervision of dental professionals. He felt these pre-dental students were becoming well-trained for dental school. He observed the commitment to helping others in our students.

In May of 2005, our organization broke another attendance record by having more than 70 students attend the CDA Convention in Anaheim, CA. Our students manned a table during all three days of the convention, welcoming others to learn more about our organization. The Free Dental Clinics relies heavily on the generosity of dental corporations for donations, and the students requested and received supplies and materials from many exhibitors with much success. The students also learned much about organized dentistry as a special lecture was given by the Associate Dean of UOP, Dr. Craig Yarborough. They attended continuing education classes and learned about the technical aspects of dentistry from the exhibitors.

Foreseeing the importance of local and national awareness and attention, Dr. Silverstein and Mr. Lorenz facilitated the featuring of our organization in many articles. These articles appeared in publications

including ADA Access, CDA Update, Facets, the San Diego Union Tribune, San Diego Aztec, The Guardian, and the UCSD alumni magazine. Two television appearances on San Diego channels 51 and 10 news programs provided more awareness of our organization as well.

In October of 2005, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project was awarded the 2005 American Dental Association Golden Apple Award for Achievement in Dental School/Student Involvement in Organized Dentistry. This award, the most prestigious given by the ADA, represented an enormous accomplishment for the organization. This was the first time an undergraduate organization had ever received a Golden Apple Award. This award represents a national recognition of the enormous success our organization has had in providing comprehensive oral health care for the underserved while providing a hands-on education for undergraduate pre-dental students. In addition, Dr. Irvin Silverstein was presented with the Academy of General Dentistry James P. Verneti Award for Advancing the Profession of Dentistry in San Diego County. His work in the Free Clinics, specifically mentoring students and volunteer dental professionals gained him the honor of receiving this award. Our unique model has proven to be successful and will hopefully be replicated in other cities across the country soon.

During the summer of 2005, clinic managers Randy Taylor and Andrew Pakchoian led an effort to renovate the downtown San Diego clinic. The extensive renovation involved many student volunteers and community members. This collaborative effort resulted in new flooring, walls, storage shelving, and electric wiring. A more professional, sanitary, and efficient clinic resulted.

The next clinic to receive a substantial renovation was the Baker Elementary clinic site. Student volunteer Kennie Kwok organized many students to improve the cabinetry and storage of the dental trailer. With the help of many students and Baker Elementary, the Baker Clinic site was able to improve its efficiency while improving outdated cabinetry.

In February of 2006, several of our students volunteered in New Orleans to assist in emergency dental services for Hurricane Katrina victims. Travelling with the Mission of Mercy (MOM) organization, these students provided much needed care to an area that was struggling for basic health care needs.

March 2006 saw the first ever UCSD Pre-Dental Digest Newsletter. Coordinated by Heather Hearon and Jeffrey Tsai, this multi-page newsletter featured articles written by several student volunteers and an organizational update column written by Dr. Silverstein. This newsletter was not only distributed to all undergraduate pre-dental students, but to all professional volunteers and friends of the organization as well.

During the spring of 2006, the UCSD Pre-Dental Society received some of the most prestigious awards that UCSD offers student organizations. For the second consecutive year, our organization won the UCSD SOLO Organization of the Year Award. The Dental Health Ambassadors program won the Special Program of the Year. In addition, in spring of 2007, Dr. Silverstein was awarded the mentor of year award for the third consecutive year.

In May of 2006, student director Brock Lorenz stepped down after leading the organization for two years. His departure to dental school led to a transition of leadership to three new student directors: Ricky Lugo, Malieka Johnson, and Marc Toso.

We opened a Pediatric dental clinic in June of 2006 for the first time in our clinic's history. Led by clinic managers Andrew Pakchoian and Maryam Meschi, supplies and materials were coordinated to help our new pediatric professional volunteer dentist, Richard Grabowsky. Our Baker Elementary clinic was now about to treat even more underserved children of the school where the clinic was located.

The summer of 2006 featured the greatest volunteer field trip experience the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project has ever been a part of. Dr. Silverstein, with the help of Admiral Edward T. Reidy secured volunteer opportunities for himself and 9 students: Philippe Sebrechts, Brock Lorenz, Nicole Chung, Kristen Whetsell, Eric Sato, Andrew Weeks, Nicholas Marongiu, Ujval Gummi, Sheila Nguyen and himself upon the USNS Mercy Navy hospital ship. Students volunteered on the ship and on land while travelling to the Philippines, Singapore, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. Learning from and working alongside dentists from all branches of the US Armed Forces and from other countries around the world, our undergraduate pre-dental students were assisting, injecting anesthesia, and extracting teeth from the indigenous underserved populations of these third world counties. Articles detailing the volunteer experience of Dr. Silverstein and the student volunteers in southeast Asia have been featured in

both San Diego County Dental Society, CDA Update Newspaper, and ADA News.

Near the end of this summer, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project began to see its philosophy come into play. The UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project's philosophy involved commitments to community and education. In September 2006, Dr. Sussi Yamaguchi became the first UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project Fellow. Dr. Yamaguchi volunteered in the UCSD Free Dental Clinics as a pre-dental student at UCSD. Upon graduating UCSD, she pursued her dental degree at the University of the Pacific, Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry. Graduating in June of 2006, Dr. Yamaguchi returned to San Diego to continue serving the underserved. Her experiences as a pre-dental student instilled in her a desire to use her services to help the underserved. Dr. Yamaguchi became an integral part of this organization and her commitment has allowed the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project to operate at a higher efficiency and treat more patients.

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 academic school year, students from the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project travelled to Las Vegas for the American Dental Association Annual Session. Over 70 students attended the convention over the course of a weekend. All students attended continuing education courses and educational seminars related to the field of dentistry. In addition, students worked to acquire donations for the Free Clinics. In October 2006, the American Academy of Periodontology also held their Annual Session in San Diego. Many students attended this convention, mainly for its educational seminars, which proved very beneficial to the students.

Another great educational experience for the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project occurred in November 2006 when the American Dental Education Association held the Dean's Conference in San Diego. During this first weekend in November, deans from all the dental schools in the country spoke on the future of dental education. Many students were able to attend these presentations put on by deans. In addition, the students put together a variety of poster boards with information about the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project. These poster boards were set up for the deans to read and learn more about the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project. Many deans also chose to take a tour of the three Free Clinics and were very impressed with the quality of care being provided. During the meeting, Dr. Silverstein gave a well-received presentation about the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project describing all

of its achievements in terms of patient care, student involvement, education, and volunteer opportunities for practitioners.

With the demand for dental care in San Diego continuing to increase, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project opened another clinic night at all three clinic sites. These extra nights helped with the large overflow at all of the clinics. As a result, many more patients could be provided with dental care. Opening these clinic nights also allowed our organization to expand the ability to provide specialty services as the Pacific Beach clinic now offers Endodontic nights and Periodontic nights providing only specialty care during that clinic session.

The long-term idea of upgrading all three UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project sites to digital x-rays, electronic scheduling, and record keeping came to fruition in the spring of 2007. Long-term Baker Elementary clinic manager Phillippe Sebrechts had previously secured the necessary donations of computers, hardware, and software to make the endeavor possible. Thanks to Kathy Overman of the Kodak Corporation, all managers and x-ray technicians of the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project were properly trained on all the different aspects of digital x-rays. This new digital system not only improves the quality of care and decreases the normal x-ray radiation exposure for our patients, but the undergraduate student volunteers and professional volunteers are able to learn how to use cutting-edge technologies. All three clinic sites are now computerized and use digital x-rays.

The 2006-2007 academic school year proved to be another stellar year for the Special Speaker Series. With attendance hitting record numbers, the organization was seeing exponential growth with an increased role in the UCSD and San Diego community. Special Speakers for the 2006-2007 school year included Keynote Speaker Donald C. Arthur, Surgeon General of the United States Navy as well as other key administrators in the field of dentistry. The Special Speaker Series continues to be an integral part of the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project and has become very well known in the dental community. Previous student co-directors, Marc Toso and Malieka Johnson left for dental school in spring of 2007. At this time, Ricky Lugo assumed leadership as student director for his second year.

In May of 2007, the pre-dental students took another trip to Anaheim for the CDA Annual Convention. Students asked various companies for donations, toured the different exhibit booths, and attended the

educational courses. This convention has become a great opportunity to receive donations for the Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project. Pre-dental students got another opportunity to experience organized dentistry during the Academy of General Dentistry Annual Convention in San Diego during June of 2007. This convention allowed students to visit different vendors and attend classes on general dentistry. In addition, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project had a table at the convention to educate the dentists attending the convention about the work being done by San Diego pre-dental students.

Following in the successful path of the joint Navy trip in summer of 2006, Dr. Silverstein secured the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project another trip aboard another Navy ship, the USS Peliliu. During Summer 2007, 8 pre-dental students: Kennie Kwok, Kjeld Aamodt, Diana Lin, Ben Pham, Sheetal Ray, Stephanie Canton, Alex Nguyen, and Joanne Nguyen helped provide basic healthcare needs and build infrastructure for the underserved communities in the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, the Phillipines, and Vietnam. This joint project with the United States Navy gave pre-dental students an in-depth view of Navy dentistry while helping the underserved communities of these third-world countries.

Continuing in the tradition of previous years, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project students travelled to San Francisco for the ADA Annual Session. The convention in September 2007 had over 120 pre-dental students in attendance going to the educational courses and helping to acquire donations for the Free Dental Clinics. In addition, they toured local dental schools and attended many dean's receptions interacting with dental professionals. The San Francisco ADA Annual Session was a unique convention for the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project as it was one of three ADA Featured Volunteer Organizations. As a featured volunteer organization, the ADA produced a video about volunteerism on the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project which was presented in front of thousands of dental professionals prior to Lance Armstrong's speech at ADA Annual Session. The ADA honored the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project due to its outstanding commitment to helping the underserved, educating future dental professionals, and involving dental professionals in the community.

In September of 2007, several students traveled to Ensenada, Mexico with the Thousand Smiles Foundation. Our organization has been involved with this group for many years helping them fulfill their mission of providing much needed care to the residents of Ensenada,

Mexico. Specifically, the Thousand Smiles Foundation is focused on care of the less fortunate children in Mexico who suffer from lack of dental care and from maxillo-facial deformities such as cleft palate. Volunteer students are able to assist in dental procedures in addition to observing cleft palate surgeries. Over the years, this trip to Mexico with the Thousand Smiles Foundation has changed the lives of many pre-dental students. Similar to this trip, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project joined the Norcal Project, traveling to Ensenada, Mexico and providing free dental care using the Thousand Smiles Foundation facilities. Unlike the Thousand Smiles Foundation, the Norcal Project provides solely dental care to the underserved residents. This partnership with the Norcal Project began in May 2006 and continues to provide students with a great volunteer opportunity across the border.

The 2007-2008 school year began shortly after the ADA Annual Session with a record breaking attendance at the New Members Meeting. With over 160 students, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project has gained the respect of the UCSD students as positive role model for students and professionals. Also at this time, Brian Lu and Kristen Whetsell became Assistant Student Directors of the organization.

In January of 2008, the immediate past president of the ADA, Dr. Kathleen Roth, spoke at UCSD about her experiences in dentistry, the future of dentistry, and the access to care issue facing our country. Her presentation was attended by undergraduate students, dentists, hygienists, and other esteemed guests. Dr. Roth's presentation served as a great inspiration to many of the future dental professionals at UCSD. The same evening, Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi, also a Past President of the American Dental Association gave an inspiring presentation to the pre-dental students.

The UCSD FDCPDS, along with Dr. Ellen Beck were recognized by San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency in April of 2008. Dr. Ellen Beck was awarded the Public Health Champion Award. The UCSD FDCPDS was similarly awarded an Outstanding Community Service Program serving the County of San Diego.

Following in previous years' traditions, over 100 pre-dental students traveled to Anaheim, California for the California Dental Association Convention in May of 2008. Using this convention as an educational experience, students attended seminars and visited company booths to gain more information about the field of dentistry. In addition,

students visited various dental companies asking for donations for the Free Dental Clinics. Dr. Irvin Silverstein and many students were invited as guests to a special Access to Care Forum during the CDA Convention. Panel members included Deans from California Dental Schools, Heads from the California Licensure Board, President Elect of the California Dental Association, and Dr. Irvin Silverstein.

In May 2008, our organization offered its first dental student externship. Charmaine Ng, a UCSD FDCPDS alumni and fourth year dental student at Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health, did a one month externship working at our clinics under the supervision of Dr. Sussi Yamaguchi.

During the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) Annual Awards Banquet in June 2008, the UCSD Pre-Dental Society/Free Dental Clinics earned two distinguished awards. For the third time in four years, the PDSFDC won the Student Organization of the Year Award out of over 425 student organizations. In addition, Dr. Irvin Silverstein won the Community Advisor of the Year for the third consecutive year.

On June 26-28, 2008, Dr. Irvin Silverstein, Director and Advisor of the FDCPDS was awarded the ADA Golden Apple: Outstanding Achievement in Leadership and Mentorship at the New Dentists' Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. Students, new dentists Wilson Leung and Erick Sato, and former PDS members attended the award ceremony to witness Dr. Silverstein's second time winning the ADA Golden Apple Award.

In June 2008, the 2007-2008 Special Speaker Series concluded with Congress Bob Filner of 51st Congressional District. His presentation varied in topics from his involvement in government, education, and veterans' affairs to other factors that will influence healthcare in the United States. Throughout his talk though, Congressman Filner emphasized the importance of getting involved to initiate change.

Also in June 2008, Student Director, Ricky Lugo, stepped down after two years to attend dental school; New Student Director and Co-directors were appointed: Abel Monzon, Diana Lin, Mykel Anderson, Sheetal Ray, and Joanne Nguyen.

Following in the footsteps of the successful USNS Mercy Trip of 2006 and USS Peleliu 2007, the UCSD FDCPDS was selected by the US Navy as one of the main Non-Governmental Organizations to partner with

the USNS Mercy humanitarian mission 2008. The US Navy chose UCSD for its outstanding achievements in community service and education. The ADA News published an article regarding this mission to help recruit dentists, physicians, specialists, and students in those areas for this mission. 37 pre-dental, 2 pre-pharmacy, 3 pre-medical, 1 dental, 2 pharmacy, and 9 medical students along with 6 dentists, 2 pharmacists, and 5 physicians volunteer on the USNS Mercy in Southeast Asia providing healthcare and humanitarian care to largely underserved populations.

In August of 2008, Students travel to Ensenada, Mexico with the Thousand Smiles Foundation to provide dental care to children suffering from cleft lip/palate deformities. Activities include assisting in dental procedures, observation in emergency room surgeries, and miscellaneous volunteering tasks.

In early September 2008, The International Academy of Periodontology awards Dr. Irvin Silverstein with the Humanitarian of the Year for 2008 at its annual meeting held in Seattle, Washington. His award was directly related to his work done at the UCSD FDCPDS.

Following in previous years' traditions, over 100 pre-dental students traveled to San Francisco, California for the California Dental Association Convention in September of 2008. Using this convention as an educational experience, students attended seminars and visited company booths to gain more information about the field of dentistry. Students also manned a booth and were able to get materials and supplies donated for the free clinics.

In October of 2008, Congresswoman Susan Davis of 53rd Congressional District came to speak as part of the Special Speaker Series. She presented Special Certificates of Congressional Recognition to students who volunteered on the USNS Mercy 2008.

Continuing in the tradition of previous years, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project students traveled to San Antonio for the ADA Annual Session. In October 2008, approximately 30 pre-dental students attended the convention and had the opportunity to go to educational courses and attend dean's receptions. Students were also able to meet and speak with Tom Brokaw and Bob & Lee Woodruff of ABC News who were the special speakers at this convention.

In November of 2008, Students attended the Continuing Education Adventures (CEA) Dental San Diego Convention. Educational courses were attended by students who also volunteered to help run the convention.

For the first time, several students volunteered with Project Homeless Connect to assist with dental screenings for the homeless community in December 2008. Project Homeless Connect is a joint effort of different organizations to help the homeless community get back on their feet and off the streets.

In April 2009, the UCSD Free Clinic Project held its annual awards banquet and fundraiser. Dr. Chang and Diana Lin received Dan Kerschener Awards. Rachel Paik received the Scott Perry Award.

Also during the month of April 2009, the Dental Health Ambassadors program expands and is very active in putting on academic lectures about dentistry to over 10 local elementary schools, shelters, health fairs, and other community groups.

During the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) Annual Awards Banquet in June 2009, the UCSD Pre-Dental Society/Free Dental Clinics earned four distinguished awards. Out of over 450 registered student organizations at UCSD, our organization was awarded the Outstanding Student Organization Program Award for Dental Health Ambassadors, Outstanding Community Service Program, and Outstanding Team Effort in partnership with Health and Medical Professions Preparation Program. In addition, Dr. Irvin Silverstein won the Outstanding Community Advisor of the Year for the fourth consecutive year.

The UCSD PDS was heavily involved in the pre-planning of two US Navy missions. In Summer 2009, 108 civilian volunteers were placed on the USNS Comfort Continuing Promise mission through the UCSD Pre-Dental Society Non-Governmental Organization to go to South America to provide healthcare and humanitarian care to largely underserved populations. Volunteers included: 25 dentists, 5 dental hygienists, 11 dental students, 23 pre-dental students, 14 medical students, 13 pre-medical students, 1 pharmacist, 4 pharmacy students, 2 acupuncturists, 8 political science students, and 2 other professional volunteers. Also, in this group we had one dentist from Canada and one student from Colombia. There were 73 students representing 24 universities. The universities that students came from were: Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bogota University

(Columbia), California State University Los Angeles, Central Florida College, Columbia University, Harvard University, Howard Payne University, Jefferson Medical College, Long Beach State University, Loyola Marymount University, Maryland University, Nova Southeastern University, San Diego State University, Southeast Missouri State University, UC San Diego, University of Buffalo, University of Florida, University of Illinois, University of Iowa, University of Michigan, University of Nebraska, University of Tampa, University of Texas, Webster University.

An additional seven civilians were involved with Pacific Partnership 2009 for an educational humanitarian mission going to the Oceania Islands. They included two pre-dental students, three dentists, and two engineering students from the University of Virginia. The UCSD PDS is still the non-governmental organization that brings the most civilians on Navy humanitarian missions.

Statistics calculated in June 2009 show that over the last five years, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project has provided an amazing amount of service to the community. The Free Clinics have provided volunteer pre-dental students with over 39,000 hours of hands-on experience and 4,000 volunteer hours for dental professionals. With these volunteer hours, the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project has produced over 2.1 million dollars of free dental services to the underserved. The Free Clinics have changed the lives of patients, students, and professionals.

The UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project is constantly evolving and continues to provide quality dental care to the underserved community in San Diego and it continues to grow in the number of student members. All projects assumed by the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project in the past are still operational due to the help of many dedicated volunteers. There are also many projects which are still in the early planning stages. One goal of the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project is to develop a pipeline for underserved and underrepresented minority youths to enter higher education. The commitment to education and the community are always the driving forces behind the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic Project's goals.

Updated July 2009.

Information provided by Eric Goldlust, Wilson Leung, Brock Lorenz, Ricky Lugo, Diana Lin, and Drs. Irvin and Donna Silverstein