

The New Face of Prosthodontics

2015 was a challenging year for the LSUSD Department of Prosthodontics. Both the chairman and the director of the advanced education program retired at the end of June and later in the year, two additional faculty members departed. However, under the leadership of **Marco Brindis, DDS**, interim chairman, the department has hired two new faculty members, improved interdepartmental relationships, and energized and expanded its mission.

The prosthodontics department oversees numerous functions at the dental school, including an advanced education program, an implant fellowship, a program in dental laboratory technology, and laboratory services. **Laurie Moeller, DDS**, associate professor, is interim director of the advanced education programs in prosthodontics and maxillofacial prosthetics; **Alika Yu, DDS**, associate professor, directs laboratory services; and **Leonard Aucoin, CDT, MEd**, associate professor, directs the program in dental laboratory technology.

Interdepartmental cooperation and interdisciplinary treatment are key to the department's success in education and patient care. To provide the best possible restorative treatment for patients, members of the departments of prosthodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS), and periodontics work as a team.

Because standards from the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) now require training for all prosthodontists in the surgical placement of implants, many prosthodontists who completed their professional education in earlier years will require training in this area. Therefore, continuing education is a significant service offered by faculty members.

While the Department of Prosthodontics has a strong tradition in dental implant esthetics, the focus has changed to the development of new implant techniques for the treatment of edentulous patients. With 35 million edentulous patients currently in the United States, and the number estimated to rise to 40 million in five years, more dependable and less expensive solutions for edentulous patients are a necessity. With the support of implant companies and the departments of periodontics and OMS, the prosthodontics department is able to help some patients

who would otherwise be unable to afford this type of treatment. Finding affordable materials, designs, and techniques for creating and placing dental implants is a priority of the members of this department.

Dr. Abdallah Awada and Julio Zavala, CDT, have spearheaded the adoption of Dozuki, software for the creation of how-to manuals for training and work instructions. Dozuki, which uses photos, videos and text, facilitates portability so students can view instructions on phones or tablets. Integration of Dozuki into the curriculum began with the complete denture course and

has now been expanded into other prosthodontics courses.

Under the direction of Dr. Moeller, eight residents are currently in the three-year advanced education program. As part of their training, they participate in lectures and in clinic, assisting with the education of dental students. Two residents recently received recognition in the poster session at the 2016 AES (formerly the American Equilibration Society) Scientific Meeting in Chicago. Mentored by part-time faculty member Dr. Michael Shannon, **Dr. Bashar Snober** won second place and **Dr. Liz Panichkul** won third place.



Full-time LSUSD prosthodontists: (front) Drs. Alika Yu; Faye Mascarenhas; Laurie Moeller (back) Drs. Jonathan Esquivel; Luis Infante; Marco Brindis, chairman; Abdallah Awada



Prosthodontics residents: (front) Drs. Maria Chatzinikola, Marcela Alvarez, Luis Alvarado, Liz Panichkul, Jane Tsai (back) Drs. Abdelrahim Eljack, Bashar Snober, Kevin Vu

With technological advances in dental implants and restorative dentistry, prosthodontics faculty members and residents foresee numerous professional and educational opportunities to improve patient care.