

Successful Pre-Dental Conference

The second annual pre-dental conference at the LSUHSC School of Dentistry attracted 193 students from 15 universities, including two from out-of-state, several who were exploring dentistry as a second profession and two students who are still in high school. Fifty-seven attendees were pre-hygiene students. All were eager to learn what it takes to become a dentist or dental hygienist and how to be accepted into the LSUHSC School of Dentistry.

The day-long event, entitled “Pre-Dental 101: A Brush Up on Dentistry,” was held on Saturday, February 4, 2012. “When we first planned this event, we expected 25 students to attend,” said Dean Henry Gremillion in his opening remarks. “Looking at your curious faces validates the tremendous respect that dentistry enjoys in our society.”

The conference was comprised of 17 hours of instruction, including a special three-hour track for pre-hygiene students. A major emphasis was placed on interaction between current dental students and the pre-dental students. First-year dental student Brent Benoit gave a detailed account of the admissions application, right down to what kind of recommendation letters are important. He told his own dramatic story of his acceptance, including mistakes he made and how he was the last student to be accepted into his class. His advice to the students was to “apply early, apply early, apply early.”

A panel of four dental students, Jeff Schott, Russ Noles, Katie Evans and Stuart Huntsman, gave a synopsis of the trials, tribulations and rewards of each year. The dental students emphasized the importance of staying focused, working hard and not giving up. Additional dental students helped with the hands-on demonstrations of chalk-carving and waxing. Tours of the school were also provided by dental students.

Second-year dental student Colten Ducote gave an overview of freshman operative dentistry. “I talked to several students from smaller schools such as Louisiana Tech, University of Louisiana at Monroe and Nicholls State who were very appreciative of a conference of this nature



Pre-Dental 101 Organizers: (From left) Luke Riley, Leigh Griffin, Randy Roth, Paige Muse, Dr. John Ritchie, admissions director, Quyen Nguyen, Evan Riley, Elise Wyatt, Colby Gray. Not pictured: Erika Montz, Elise Mouras and Blake Legendre

because their schools do not have large pre-dental societies. I think this conference will continue to be a great asset to pre-dental students for years to come. It’s a great career education program.”

Nineteen members of the LSUSD faculty presented overviews of dental hygiene, prosthodontics, periodontics, forensics, pediatric dentistry, orthodontics, morphology, anatomy, endodontics, and oral and maxillofacial surgery.

A spokesman from the financial aid office described ways to pay for dental school.

The program was organized by Dr. John Ritchie, admissions director and director of the summer enrichment program. He led a discussion about how to be admitted and how to make the most of the interview process. Dr. Jessica Perkins, a 2007 LSUSD graduate who practices general dentistry in Mandeville, talked about the transition from dental student to dental practitioner.

Registration for the event was handled by the LSU Pre-Dental Society, under the leadership of Evan Riley. Members of the society also provided the manpower to stage the event.

Echoing the feelings of numerous other students, one pre-dental student commented that she learned more about dentistry at the one-day conference than she had learned in three years of college instruction.

For information on admissions, click on Future Students on the LSUSD homepage.



Deborah Ho, first-year dental student, discusses the placement of an amalgam restoration