

Periodontics on the Move

Periodontal Alumni Give Back

In 2012 **Dr. Ronald Monica**, long-serving part-time faculty member in the Department of Periodontics, began an effort to raise funds to support resident activities. After some planning, the Periodontics Resident Research and Education Support Fund was established. The fund supports resident research, classroom or clinic enhancements, and learning opportunities outside of the classroom.



From left, Drs. Gerald Evans, Kristi Soileau, Ronald Monica, Dean Henry Gremillion

To help with the initiative, Dr. Monica enlisted the support of Dr. Kristi Soileau, LSUSD alumna and president of the LSUSD Alumni Association at that time. In addition to contributing a generous gift to the fund, she agreed to serve on the fundraising committee with several other alumni of the periodontics program.

Due to Dr. Monica's tireless efforts, and the support of his committee, over 40 contributors have donated to the campaign. "I have always thought that there should be a stronger culture of philanthropy at the school," said Dr. Monica. "Giving generously is one small way that graduates can show their appreciation for the education they received."

Some contributions are used annually to support residents and others are being directed to an educational endowment for periodontics. Over time, Dr. Monica's goal is to raise enough to establish a permanent endowment to support residents in perpetuity. The endowed funds are reinvested each year and five percent of the earnings are available for expenditures. Also, for every \$60,000 raised for the endowment, the LSUHSC School of Dentistry is eligible to apply for a \$40,000 match from the Louisiana Board of Regents.

"Although we sometimes hear of mega one-time or large gifts given to a university, most gifts come in smaller sums and are made by people on an annual basis," said Dean Henry Gremillion. "That makes a huge difference in what we can accomplish for our students and residents."

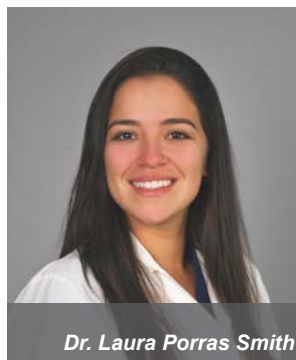
Research Accolades

Dr. Jyoti Puri, a 2014 graduate of the LSUSD periodontics advanced education program, was a finalist in the basic science category of the 2015 John F. Prichard Prize for Graduate Research Competition at the Southwest Society of Periodontology annual meeting. She was recognized for her research project "Differential Monocyte Gene Expression in Chronic Periodontitis."



Dr. Jyoti Puri

Dr. Laura Porras Smith, a third-year periodontics resident, won third place in the clinical research category of the 2015 Southern Academy of Periodontology Billy Pannel

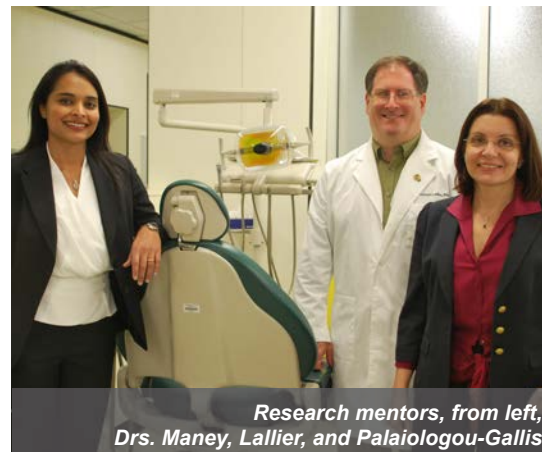


Dr. Laura Porras Smith

Competition. She received the recognition for her master's research protocol, "Analysis of Periodontal Bacteria and FPR1 Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms Associated with Aggressive Periodontitis." This study examines the relationship between certain genetic changes and periodontal bacterial profiles of young patients with aggressive periodontitis.

According to Dr. Gerald Evans, LSUSD Department of Periodontics chairman, "Research projects such as Dr. Smith's enable our department to help children and young adults with aggressive periodontitis to obtain periodontal therapy and to maintain their natural teeth."

He credits research mentors Angela Palaiologou-Gallis, DDS, MS, director of the periodontics advanced education program; Pooja Maney, BDS, MPH, PhD; and Thomas Lallier, PhD, for guiding residents in their successful research efforts.



Research mentors, from left, Drs. Maney, Lallier, and Palaiologou-Gallis