

September 4, 2008

I am pleased to share some great news as follow-up to the Future Search conference last year which was themed “*Creating an Integrated, Comprehensive, Contemporary Clinical Dental Education Model and Practice for the Future.*” Together we envisioned the future and made it happen. This fall semester, our planning came to fruition with full implementation of a new clinical dental education model in the college. Throughout the summer, detailed preparations were made and carried out as we prepared to launch. We promoted the change through a campaign geared to engage all constituents known as “Catch the Wave.” If you are interested in reading more about our journey or seeing some photos of the hard work and fun we had along the way, please check our web pages at: <http://www.dental.ufl.edu/Offices/News/catchthewave/> and <http://www.dental.ufl.edu/news/default.asp?newsid=158>.

In addition to the new clinical education model, a number of other important recommendations from the Future Search conference have been completed or are in progress. These include:

- Dr. Sam Low has been appointed as the Associate Dean for Strategic Partnerships. In this role, Dr. Low is developing a corporate advisory group, working on industry relations and related policy issues and identifying opportunities for enhanced corporate collaborations.
- Addition of customer service month, enhanced communication efforts and work towards improved internal patient referrals.
- The number of patients seen at the college through the CHOICES program is increasing, providing access to dental care for Alachua County’s working poor.
- Pediatric dental services and training of pediatric dental residents will begin at our new Naples clinic in December, 2008, helping the youngest Florida residents gain access to quality oral health services.
- On October 2, 2008 the college, in collaboration with the American Dental Education Association, will present an Advocacy Day on Oral Health Care in Florida. The day is intended to educate participants about the nature of oral health disparities, motivate them to address these issues in their future activities and activate them to use the federal and state legislative processes to develop and implement solutions. This is a collaborative effort which is supported in part by the generous donations of 3M ESPE and the State of Florida Head Start Collaboration Office. If you are interested in attending this important event, please check out our web site at <http://www.dental.ufl.edu/Offices/News/AdvocacyDay/>.


- The integration of research and clinical science continues to be a strategic priority for the college. As an example, focused efforts are underway to streamline the undergraduate curriculum so that research can be further integrated during the entire four years.
- The college continues to diversify its revenue streams to ensure the current and future financial health of the organization. Despite the economic uncertainty in the state of Florida, this diversification has buffered the college throughout the state budget cuts.

These are only a few of the many exciting things going on in the college. The creativity, energy and enthusiasm for implementing many of these new initiatives flowed directly from our Future Search Conference.

Although we still have remaining goals to achieve such as a new clinic management system we are excited about the progress made this past year. We could not have done it without your engagement and input. Thank you again for your time and contributions. Your support has brought us to where we are today and the future of dental education is bright.

We hope you enjoy this button and wristband which are a symbol of our transition to the new clinical education model. Thank you for "Catching the Wave" with us!

Sincerely,



Teresa A. Dolan, DDS, MPH  
Professor and Dean

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Enclosures