Endodontics News
SPRING 2011

Gladys McDowell: The Oil in the Smooth-running Machine continued

In 1986, McDowell joined the Department of Endodontics under chairmanship of Dr. Jefferson Jones. Among the students she saw come through the department over the years was a sharply dressed young doctor named André Michel.

“I remember Dr. Michel was always very stylish and he always walked very fast. He would zip past you on the way to the dispensary to get something for his patient, and then he would zip back. But he has always been very nice, and he has this smile that makes his eyes crinkle in the corners. You can always tell if a person is genuine if you look in their eyes when they’re smiling at you, and Dr. Michel is definitely genuine.”

Today McDowell not only keeps the department running smoothly, she also works closely with the residents to help ensure they are keeping pace to earn the proper number of credits and seeing enough cases to graduate. If there is one change at the dental school that stands out to her over the years, it’s how serious the residents have become.

“It’s a very demanding program and the residents work very hard;” she says. “They have to see 300 cases over the course of a two-year program. Two years isn’t a lot of time to see 300 people.

“It can be a little sad,“ McDowell adds, “you get to meet so many outstanding people from all different cultures, and they’re here for two years and then gone. But I want them to know that during those two years, I’m here for them.”

McDowell says she likes to learn things from everyone she encounters, and Drs. Jones and Michel are no exceptions.

“I think the main things I learned from Dr. Jones was perseverance,” she says. “He knew times could be tough, but Dr. Jones always said you just live your life and don’t worry about the ups and downs. Worry won’t change anything. If you can’t change it, forget it.”

Dr. Michel, meanwhile, has impressed McDowell with his ability to help people think things through on their own. “He doesn’t lock you into things,” she says. “If you ask him something, he’ll find out first what you would do about it. He might end up telling you ‘That’s not the answer I was seeking,’ but he makes you think and gives you the opportunity to come up with a solution for yourself.”

McDowell is excited about working with Dr. Michel as department chairman. “I’ve been with him as an undergrad, then I had him as a resident for two years. Then I watched him become a diplomate, then director, and now chairman. I won’t be here for another 32 years, but I hope I’ve got another five or six to enjoy working with Dr. Michel.”

While visiting the dental school, McDowell got a look around and liked what she saw. “I found out there was an opening working with students. I had never done that before, but it sounded like fun, so I filled out an application,” she says. “I went home, they called me that same afternoon, and here I am telling that story 32 years later.”

During her first seven years at the school, McDowell “worked the floor” with the undergraduate students, practicing four-handed dentistry. “It was my job to find the student doctor what I knew he was going to need next, in order that he needed it,” she says. “I had my own roll-around with a crown and bridge drawer, an operative drawer, and a periapical drawer, and I really enjoyed doing that because it was always something different.”

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The Department of Endodontics consistently conducts and presents more research — and wins more awards for that research — than any endodontics program in the country. The research that will be presented by the department this year at the annual session of the American Association of Endodontists includes:

A comparison of the antimicrobial effectiveness of Moshio’s paste with and without barium sulfate, against an Enterococcus faecalis biofilm using scanning electron microscopy (SEM)

Johnson M, Mickel A, Jureviciene R, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

Antibacterial effectiveness of triple antibiotic paste, 2% chlorhexidine gel and calcium hydroxide against E. faecalis in the presence of dentin powder using the radial diffusion assay technique

Wilde J, Ahmad T, Mickel A, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

Study of spatial relationships between the root apices of maxillary anterior teeth and the floor of the nasal cavity using cone beam computed tomography

Reese R, Duval R, Mickel A, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

Scanning electron microscopic (SEM) examination of the antimicrobial efficacy of various endodontic irrigants and their associated pH changes due to the presence or absence of dentin

Morris D, Mickel A, Montagnese T, Aminoshariae A

Effect of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), an omega-3 fatty acid, on the expression of IL-1β, IL-6, IL-8, and TNFα in normal and LPS treated MG-63 human osteoblasts using reverse transcriptase-PCR

Solanki P, Mickel A, Jin G, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

A comparison of the cytotoxicity and pro-inflammatory cytokine production of EndoSequence Root Repair Material® and ProRoot® MTA in human osteoblast cell culture using reverse transcriptase-PCR

Cascais M, Mickel A, Jin G, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

An in vitro biocompatibility comparison of commonly used retrofill materials and two new materials: a MTA/IRM® mixture and EndoSequence Root Repair Material®

Galsterer M, Mickel A, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

A comparison of cone-beam computed tomography scans and direct digital radiography in detecting experimental lesions on radicular tooth structure

Webb B, Ferrari J, Mickel A, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

Intraoral Antimicrobial Efficacy of EndoSequence Root Repair Material® and ProRoot® MTA in a Rat Model

Safadi P, Mickel A, Jin G, Aminoshariae A, Montagnese T

EndoSequence Root Repair Material® and ProRoot® MTA in human osteoblast cell culture using reverse transcriptase-PCR

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Thomas R. Bigelow grew up in Stanwood, WA. He attended Everett Community College, then transferred to Idaho State University after a two-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Bigelow and his wife then moved to Pittsburgh, and he earned his D.M.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine in 2008. “The CWRU School of Dental Medicine was always a top choice for my endodontics training because the school has a great reputation for upholding high scholastic and moral standards,” he says. Bigelow is interested in regenerative endodontics, and plans to enter private practice after completing his residency.

Sheetal Kalokhe was born and raised in Pune, India. After completing five years of dental school at Dr. D.Y. Patil Dental College and Hospital in Pune, she worked both at private and hospital-based dental practices for nearly two years. Kalokhe became interested in endodontics during her third year of dental school. “I decided to pursue my master’s in endodontics at the CWRU School of Dental Medicine not only because of the school’s reputation, but also because the program is evidence-based and provides extensive clinical knowledge,” Kalokhe says. “I believe that I will be able to fulfill my goal of becoming an excellent endodontist here at CWRU School of Dental Medicine with my hard work and guidance from the faculty.” Kalokhe was scheduled to enter the endodontics program last spring, but put the plans on hold for a year as she and her husband welcomed a daughter, Vedika.

Samer Safadi earned his D.D.S. from the CWRU School of Dental Medicine in 2003, then moved to Phoenix, AZ, where he has owned a successful general dentistry practice for eight years. The native of Damascus, Syria, also holds a master’s degree in oral sciences from the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine. Safadi is interested in researching the differential diagnosis between endodontic pain and other orofacial pain conditions, and improving the role of 3-D beam imaging in endodontics. “As a CWRU dental student, I gained a wealth of knowledge that allowed me to start a very successful dental practice immediately after graduation,” Safadi says. “The education we received as CWRU dental students, especially from Dr. Mickel and the endodontics department, was top notch. When it came time for me to further my postgraduate education in endodontics, my alma mater, CWRU, was my number one choice.”

Madhavi Sethy graduated from dental school in Karnataka, India, then obtained a California dental license and began practicing in the Golden State. “Endodontics has always been my passion, and studying endodontics at the CWRU School of Dental Medicine was one of my top priorities because it offers the most diverse and inclusive program,” she says. “Also, after reading the bullet points by Dr. Mickel in his chairman’s message of the department’s spring 2010 newsletter, I was thrilled by his positivity. I am very happy to join this program under his guidance.” Sethy would like to conduct research about intracanal medicaments in endodontics and their antimicrobial effects on endodontic pathogens.