PHILANTHROPY CHANGES LIVES

Your generosity in action.

2015

McGill DENT
Thank you for your generosity.

The Faculty of Dentistry is in excellent form. We have recently moved the majority of our staff, space and activities into a fantastic new site opposite the Roddick Gates. Our teaching clinic, classrooms, preclinical simulation laboratory, Dean’s Office staff, clinical professors and a large proportion of our research professors and their graduate students are now on this site. Much of this is due to our fantastic alumni support; over the years, graduates have contributed the greater part of the more than $7 million that we have raised for this $18 million project.

Private support also played a role in the Faculties of Dentistry and Medicine, and our researchers in the field of pain, being awarded a Canada Excellence Research Chair. This amounts to approximately $30 million over a seven-year period, and has resulted in our attracting Dr. Luda Diatchenko, one of the world’s leading researchers in the field of pain genetics. This latest award, led by members of the Alan Edwards Centre for Research on Pain, is a testament to the extraordinary gift of Alan Edwards and the ongoing support of the Louise and Alan Edwards Foundation for pain-related research at McGill.

Another element of the Faculty’s work that would not be possible without philanthropy is our community service activities. The Faculty is recognized throughout the University and among dental schools across Canada for having one of the strongest and most innovative community service programs. It all started over 20 years ago with the summer clinic, serving people with handicaps, and was supplemented in the late 1990s by our now-famous mobile clinic. More recently, we added a permanent, three-dental-chair clinic serving people in poverty at the Welcome Hall Mission in St. Henri, and a clinic for refugee and immigrant children at the Montreal Children’s Hospital. And let us not forget the Faculty’s main teaching clinic, a full-service dental clinic available to Montrealers at a reduced cost.

All of these community services involve dental students and residents providing care, while learning how to work with different groups in varied settings, and all are funded almost exclusively through philanthropy. Most recently, the Faculty received an extraordinary gift from the Fondation Marcelle et Jean Coutu, which has enabled us to add research to the service and teaching we do in these settings. We aim to develop and test new models of care for those who have difficulty accessing traditional dental services.

In recent years, the Faculty has also been fundraising to support our professors. Many medical and dental schools are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit excellent clinical professors because the discrepancy in pay between the professional and university sectors is becoming larger. The Faculty has worked with a number of donors to create the Harry Rosen Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching. This award supplements a starting professor’s salary over a period of two to three years and has helped in the recruitment of Drs. Faleh Tamimi and Ying Sia.

Finally, your support has enabled us to increase our scholarships and bursaries for dental and graduate students. Wonderful examples include separate gifts from the David and the Moghadam families, which have enabled the Faculty to significantly increase needs-based bursaries. This is particularly important as the Faculty of Dentistry aims to recruit and select a more socio-economically diverse group of students, including those who are first-time university attendees in their families. This broadens the diversity of the dental profession and so better serves the whole population.

These are just some of the numerous examples of impacts directly related to the amazing philanthropic backing you and others have provided to the Faculty over the years. This report includes some of these stories, and more about the beneficial effects philanthropy continues to have.

I thank you for your generous, inspirational support.

Paul Allison, BDS, FDSRCS(Eng), MSc, PhD, FCAHS
Dean, Faculty of Dentistry
McGill University
In the spacious classrooms, innovative audio-visual equipment makes learning that much more vivid. When a teacher leans over her patient simulator, delicate instruments hovering above model teeth, students watch the procedure magnified on the many overhead screens instead of jostling in a tight circle for a close look. Web conferencing software in lecture halls allows for conference calls with any expert in the world. And in many classrooms, collaborative learning is smooth with ample numbers of microphones and screens for students' use.

The daylight-filled Undergraduate Teaching Clinic, where supervised students treat their patients, is garnering rave reviews. The broad windows overlook McGill's historic buildings and Mount Royal. "The view is incredible," says Clinical Supervisor Dr. Sandra Eskenazi. "It's such a pleasure to work in this environment."

There are now significantly more operatory chairs than there were in the Montreal General Hospital: 56, including those in the surgical suites. Most sport a recognition plaque with a donor's name, such as that of the Class of '86, whose members came together to generously fund one, while a few "orphan chairs" still await a donor! Also, more space is allotted to each chair than in the previous clinic. Dr. Alaa Zaini, DMD'13, who was a student at the old clinic and is now a Clinical Supervisor, notices how the increased elbow room makes for a less hectic environment. "I really like the set up," she says. "The surface area is big, it's more organized and clean."

Her patients from her student days have told her, too, how they appreciate the calm atmosphere, as well as how much easier it is to get to the clinic.

Fourth-year student Chloë Fung, DMD'15, exemplifies students' enthusiasm about the new facilities. Chloë is proud to attend the same Faculty as her mother, Dr. Joanna Pham, BSc'80, DDS'84. Both women trod the halls of the old Strathcona Building, and Chloë is delighted with the new facility's improvements, saying, "It really seems to have removed obstacles for learning."

Chloë believes that being "in close physical proximity to the entire staff and faculty also makes it easier for us to talk to them in person whenever we need to. All of this adds enormously to our education."

Myers closely oversaw the clinic's ergonomics. "Everything the student needs is within arm's reach," he says. There are computers at each workstation, information is quick to find, and electronic records are easy to access and read. Overhead dental lamps have yellow filters built right in (easier for seeing fillings). As well, there are minimal surfaces and no drawers, making the space simple to keep clean. And the operatory chairs themselves are thinner so the dentists are able work comfortably on the patients.

Myers is also excited about the new Laszlo Dispensary in the Clinic. The dispensary was funded generously by Dr. Doreen, BED'62, DDS'69, and Dr. Charles Laszlo, BEng'61, MEng,'66, PhD'68. Arguably the hub of the clinical activities, the dispensary receives sterilized instruments from the Sterilization Unit and supplies from the Faculty Store. Its full- and part-time staff distribute sterile cassettes and procedure kits to students for their patients' treatment.

And the revolution isn't over. While many of the new facility's equipment and spaces carry the names of their generous donors, the Faculty is still seeking funding for audiovisual equipment, laboratories, classrooms and conference rooms.

The start of the 2014-15 academic year saw a major turning point in the Faculty of Dentistry’s history: the opening of the Faculty’s new facilities. For the first time, training, research and administration are housed together in a building readily accessible from Downtown Campus. The new setting – an existing modern building, renovated to meet Dentistry’s needs – is the ideal match for the Faculty’s hands-on, patient-intensive approach.

Private support has been critical to the installation of the Faculty in the new premises: To date, alumni, friends and supporters have raised approximately $7.5 million.

One year of planning and an added year of construction went into the 48,000 square-foot location, which is spread over four floors and boasts a hospital-level sterilization system. Associate Dean Clinical Affairs Dr. Jeffrey Myers, BSc'77, DDS'82, states that, “We now have the most advanced dental teaching clinic in North America.”

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The recently created fund was established in memory of Dr. Tim Head DDS'76, MSc'80, former director of the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery program, who was a lively, collaborative colleague and dedicated teacher. Head fostered ties throughout the local and international dental communities, so it is fitting that the fund allows for practitioners from disparate areas to meet and exchange ideas.

The Dr. Marvin and Mandy Werbitt Award in Dentistry: Dr. Marvin Werbitt, BSc'67, DDS'71, is the kind of dentist who would phone his patients the evening after a difficult procedure just to check up on them. Werbitt and his wife have established the Dr. Marvin and Mandy Werbitt Award in Dentistry, given to a graduating student who shows initiative and excels in periodontology.

The dentist dad also inspired his sons to follow in his footsteps: Dr. Jeremy Werbitt, BSc'03, DMD'07, works at his father’s previous clinic and teaches at McGill, and Dr. Jonathan Werbitt, BSc'09, DMD'13, is currently studying orthodontics in Boston. Both are committed to contributing to and ensuring the long-term success of this fund.

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The recently established awards

Other recently established awards

The Tim Head Travel Fund: The Dentistry community transcends borders, and graduate students benefit enormously from the opportunity to practice at clinics other than at McGill. The Tim Head Travel Fund allows for a surgery trainee in the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery program to travel outside Montreal to observe and practice in a clinic with varied specialties.

Students Playing Their Part

The Faculty’s alumni and friends are not the only ones who have graced Dentistry with their generosity. Dentistry students have themselves been champions for the Faculty.

The students know how lucky they are. A tight-knit group, each year numbering fewer than 40, they work together to give back to the Faculty that is fostering their professional dreams.

The students apply their initiative and enthusiasm to ongoing fundraising events such as the Run for Outreach and the annual Dentistry Gala, as well as organizing one-off events like soccer tournaments.

Volunteers also raise funds to promote dental health among the disabled community on Oral Health Total Health days, hosted by Miriam Home and Services, a centre for people with intellectual disabilities or pervasive developmental disorders. The students believe strongly in social responsibility, and that building relationships with members of the less-abled community will promote better long-term dental care among a population for whom dental health might be secondary.
**FACULTY OF DENTISTRY FACTS**

**ADMISSIONS**
- 493 applicants
- 114 interviewed
- 38 registered
- 7 non-Quebec residents
- 31 Quebec residents
- lowest cGPA admitted: 3.6
- highest cGPA admitted: 4.0

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**
- In 2014, over 2,000 patients received more than 12,000 procedures.
- $988,432: total worth of free dental care provided by the Outreach Program in 2014
- The Outreach Program partners with about 25 community organizations in Montreal.

**STUDENTS AND ALUMNI**
- 256 students
- 55% undergraduate
- 61 students graduated in 2014
- 90% of Dentistry alumni go on to do a General Practice Residency
- 30% of them continue in a specialty program
- 100% OMFS graduation rate for the last five years

**STUDENT LIFE**
- $17,200 fundraised by student-organized events in 2015
- 100% student participation rate in community activities

**STUDENT AID**
- $150K of need-based McGill aid was provided to dentistry students, in the form of bursaries and/or loans last academic year
- 70% of all dentistry students receive government funding

**FACULTY/SCHOLARSHIP**
- 23 full-time tenure-stream professors and 187 part-time professors
- With only 5% of Canadian dentistry professors, McGill carries out nearly one-third of all funded research in dental facilities and trains more dental research graduate students than any other Canadian university.
- 8.5% Number of patient visits, 16% more than at the MGH
- 48,000 Number of patient simulators square feet of space
- 18,316 Number of procedures
- $968,667 Monetary value of the treatments

**IMPORTANT DATES**
- 1904: McGill’s Department of Dentistry opens its doors; initially as part of the Faculty of Medicine
- 1908: Clinical training moves to the Montreal General Hospital
- 1926: Florence Johnston becomes the Faculty’s first female graduate
- 1958: The Faculty hires Dr. Lyman Francis, its first full-time researcher
- 1992: The Faculty raises $1.9 million in private funds to avert closure
- 2011: The Jim Lund Dental Clinic at the Welcome Hall Mission opens in St. Henri
- 2014: A new era of clinical care, research and community service begins at the Faculty’s new home on McGill College Avenue

**FEATURES OF THE NEW FACILITY**
- 43 Dental Operatory Chairs
- 30 Surgical Chairs
- 16 Brand new, state-of-the art clinical and teaching facilities
- 10 20-year-old facilities
- 20-year-old facilities

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**GRADUATE STUDENTS**
- Many students already have degrees in fields such as Engineering, Science, Philosophy and Business Administration. They come from countries as diverse as:
  - Belarus
  - China
  - Costa Rica
  - Egypt
  - India
  - Saudi Arabia
  - Taiwan

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**MAKING DENTISTRY EDUCATION HAPPEN**
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- 48,000 Number of patient visits square feet of space
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As students we have the opportunity to work in a private practice type setting treating multiple patients each day, gaining the speed and confidence we need to become great dentists,” she emphasizes. They also learn to adapt to patients’ needs. “Not everyone has the means to afford the ideal treatment option, thus it is important to be capable of treating the patients’ dental needs with alternatives that are more affordable.”

Over 2,000 patient visits took place in 2013 and, thanks to increased support, the clinic was able to expand its hours from three days to five days a week, so wait times have shortened.

Dr. Paul Sweet, DMD’09, one of the Clinic’s supervising professors, says “We provide basic dental care, such as cleanings, restorations (fillings) and extractions. Just as importantly, we try to educate the patients and increase their awareness of proper oral health and hygiene.”

Sweet has seen how proper dental care can help patients get back their self-esteem. “I remember one patient in particular who came to our clinic a couple years back,” he says. “He had many cavities, broken teeth and infections. It was affecting his self-confidence, his mood and his ability to get a job. He rarely smiled because he was ashamed of the state of his teeth. We treated him over a period of several months, and by the end of it he regained his smile and a measure of self-confidence and was able to get a job.”

Service to the community is crucial to the Faculty. Dr. Jim Lund, Dean from 1995 until 2008, was a passionate advocate of dental care for all. During his tenure, Lund oversaw the initiation of the Faculty’s free, mobile dental clinic. He vowed to promote dental care provision at a reasonable cost with community clinics staffed by graduating dentists.

In his honour, the Jim Lund Dental Clinic at the Welcome Hall Mission in St. Henri was created with funds from alumni and other private donors in 2011, becoming Montreal’s first permanent, free dental clinic.

Students and General Practice Residents from McGill’s Faculty of Dentistry, as well as nursing students from McGill and dental hygiene students from John Abbott College, provide treatment to low-income families, homeless men and women and new immigrants.

Fourth-year student Dhanshri Kakade says students enjoy giving back to the Montreal community, but also realize they are beneficiaries of the experience.

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Dr. Paul Sweet, DMD’09
Many of the best centres for pain research evolved in dental schools," says Associate Dean Research Dr. Marc McKee, BSc’82, MSc’84, PhD’87, “and McGill dentistry is no exception.”

The Alan Edwards Centre for Research on Pain opened in 2003 and Dr. Jim Lund, former Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, was a driving force behind its founding. The Centre brought together the University’s pain experts – approximately 150 researchers, assistants, technicians and support staff from the fields of Medicine, Science and Dentistry.

Nowadays the Centre is home to world-renowned investigators like Dr. Luda Diatchenko, recently appointed a Canada Excellence Research Chair in Human Pain Genetics at the Alan Edwards Centre. “McGill has the most world-renowned pain researchers in the field,” Diatchenko says. “When McGill offered me the position I was ecstatic for the opportunity to work with them.”

The University has a long history of expertise on pain research. Psychologist Dr. Ron Melzack advanced the field with the groundbreaking “gate control” theory of pain in the ’60s, and published the McGill Pain Questionnaire in 1975, still the global standard for pain verification.

Dental research and pain research go hand in hand, argues McKee. “We forget that clinical practice and research in dentistry often involves the entire oral cavity and even cranial-facial health," he says. "Chewing and other oral cavity functions go far beyond the teeth.”

Dentists need to know about muscles, nerves, joints, ligaments and bones, as well as conditions ranging from head and neck cancers to infections to head and mouth trauma. Scientists recognize more and more that there are systemic links between what goes on in the mouth and the rest of the body, such as how periodontal disease is linked to cardiovascular disease, and even preterm births.

For example, fully 85 percent of those who suffer from temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJD), a facial muscle pain, have chronic pain elsewhere in the body. TMJD is strongly connected to fibromyalgia, a disorder characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain accompanied by fatigue, sleep, memory and mood issues.

Diatchenko, who used to research TMJD at the University of North Carolina, examines chronic pain syndromes at the molecular genetic level. “All chronic pain conditions have an overlay of genetic factors,” she says, “It’s important to identify a new target for treatment.”

“We’re in huge need for understanding pain,” says Diatchenko. “Healthcare costs for chronic pain treatment are greater than for cancer, heart disease and diabetes combined,” she says.

McKee points to a recent discovery by a team led by Dr. Laura Stone, a professor in Dentistry, and Dr. Moshe Szyf from the Faculty of Medicine, as typical of the impact Dentistry-based investigators have been having in pain research. The team discovered a mechanism that embeds the memory of an injury in the marking of DNA in the brain, with a subsequent impact on the amount of pain a patient feels.

Stone says, “We think that the fundamental mechanisms of how the body reacts to pain are relevant all across the health sciences.”

McGill is one of the strongest international hubs for pain research,” Stone says. She was drawn to McGill for the network of award-winning pain researchers and the chance to work with them. “Another unique and special thing here is that many basic scientists collaborate with clinicians.”

“There’s a critical mass of really amazing pain research, and the close interaction between the scientists and the clinical faculty helps take the work into the world of patients.”

“If you want to do pain research, then this is the place to be,” Stone says. She credits this in great part to the generous funding from the Louise and Alan Edwards Foundation. “A lot of exciting work has been made possible because of this foundation,” she says. “Many of our students and post-docs are supported by the foundation, which really makes a big difference.”

Montreal businessman Alan Edwards devoted his life to fundraising for the Centre. Louise Edwards suffered from devastating headaches for which no treatment could be found, which spurred her husband Alan to work with the founders of the institution.
Rewarding Teachers

Talented students require talented teachers, and donors have helped McGill keep their top researchers and most dynamic instructors in the community. Professor emeritus Dr. Harry Rosen, DDS’53, also a noted sculptor, first established scholarships for students, then set his sights on creating an award for those who train our future dentists. A firm believer in the inspiring role of teachers, Rosen said in an interview with the Journal of the Canadian Dental Association, “If you can help motivate people to achieve their full potential, it’s amazing the directions people choose and the heights they can achieve.”

Fundraising for the Dr. Harry Rosen Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching started in 2006 and in 2013 the first recipient was named. Dr. Faleh Tamimi, a specialist in geriatrics and implant-prosthetics with a PhD in biomaterials, trained in Spain and Italy before coming to McGill in 2009. Tamimi’s early-career impact on the field is evident with his widely covered research on the links between antidepressants and dental implant rejection. He has also discovered a promising connection between reversing osteoporosis and melatonin supplements.

Last year’s recipient, Dr. Ying Sia, calls being chosen for the award “a privilege,” adding that it has “enhanced my appreciation for teaching and the role of academics in the dental profession.”

Sia was a clinician for seven years before joining McGill’s faculty in 2012 as a supervisor, lecturer and course director. A specialist in Oral Medicine, she introduces first-year students to the links between oral and general health.

Sia fervently believes that being in the enriching and dynamic academic environment at McGill has clarified for her the importance of evidence-based medicine and dentistry. “My passion for teaching has grown tremendously,” she says.

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Dr. Harry Rosen, DDS’53

Flossing in Fiji

Faculty of Dentistry graduate Dr. Russell Taylor, DMD’09, exemplifies McGill’s community spirit. When he’s not working at his practice in downtown San Francisco, Taylor devotes his time to public service.

Locally, he serves on the board of directors of the San Francisco Dental Society and is a member of its Community Dental Health Committee. Taylor also volunteers for Project Homeless Connect, through which services are provided to homeless and low-income San Franciscans. Twice a year he participates in California Dental Association Cares, in which teams of dentists provide free dental care to upwards of 2,000 patients during a weekend clinic set up in a stadium. “I really enjoy the clinic,” Taylor says, “It makes me feel really proud to be a part of dentistry.”

The organizational skills he learns from these local events carry over to his other public service passion: international dental missions. Every year, he donates his time and resources to several weeks abroad treating patients in countries such as Fiji and Vietnam.

These missions can be challenging. At home, Taylor has access to the latest technology; in Vietnam his patients had “a plastic chair and a bucket to spit into.” For the trip he carried all of his supplies with him and paid extra to get his equipment into the country. Local travel is far from luxurious, often done on boats or rickety buses. More than once all passengers would disembark so as to nudge water buffalo off the road, or to not overload a rundown bridge.

Treatment occurred in places so remote that the locals had never seen a white person before, let alone knew of local anesthetic. “You numb them up and they think you’re a magician,” he says. “There were people who had been in pain for years and years, and I could fix that. It’s very rewarding.”

Taylor credits McGill’s unique program with fostering his passion for service. A self-described “late bloomer, academically,” he was only admitted to Dentistry after his second application and worked hard once he got in. But from his first hands-on experience with polishing someone’s teeth, which, as with all students, was at one of McGill’s outreach clinics, he was hooked. I thought, “This is awesome, I can’t wait until I have my own practice!” he says. Taylor also benefited from the Faculty of Dentistry system whereby younger students are paired with more senior ones, then take the role of mentor the next year. “The enthusiasm just spreads down the line,” he says.