

# Pediatric Dentistry News

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

## NEW FACULTY MEMBER MILTON A. NTRAGATAKIS PICKED FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH TRAINING AWARD



Gerald Ferretti, D.D.S., M.S., M.P.H.

Greetings! This is now my third year at CWRU. We have progressed beyond my expectations.

At Rainbow, the Tapper Dental Center is now equipped with digital radiography and Kavo electric handpieces. The operating room has equipped us with digital radiography and two new Adec units including Kavo high-speed and low-speed handpieces. Our OR time has been increased by nearly 100%, but we still continue to be booked out by about 150 cases.

Our Head Start and WIC Outreach programs continue to grow. This past year we screened nearly 3,000 children at more than 140 sites. Not surprisingly, four out of 10 children had Early Childhood Caries. One out of 10 children had severe Early Childhood Caries with multiple dental abscesses and facial swelling. We are embarking on several funded translational clinical trials that will help us employ more effective preventive strategies for these children.

Finally, with the successful recruitment of two full-time faculty, I will be making an effort to recruit an additional full-time faculty member during this next academic year.

Please contact me with any advice or suggestions that you may have for our program. I look forward to seeing you at the Alumni Reception this May.

All the best,  
Gerry Ferretti

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Milton A. Ntragatakis knew the odds were stacked against him.

Yes, Dr. Ntragatakis, a 2006 graduate from Case Western Reserve University's School of Dental Medicine who is finishing the school's Pediatric Dentistry Program this spring, applied for the prestigious Multidisciplinary Clinical Research Training Program, a joint project of CWRU, The Cleveland Clinic and The Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University.

But he figured his chances of getting chosen were not good.

"They'd never accepted a dentist before, and never anybody as young as me," Dr. Ntragatakis says.

So when he got the news that he'd been picked, "It took me an entire week to realize what that meant. I will be able to do what I want to professionally, and my research will be funded." Dr. Ntragatakis, who on July 1 will join the full-time faculty at the CWRU School of Dental Medicine, will be at the university four days a week and spend about 75 percent of his time on research.

The innovative MCRTTP, which is part of the National Institute of Health Roadmap and is funded by NIH, selects outstanding candidates with M.D., Ph.D., or equivalent degrees for five Clinical Research Scholar positions. MCRTTP is designed to produce future leaders for the nation's clinical research workforce.

Dr. Ntragatakis is the first CWRU School of Dental Medicine faculty member to get the honor. "The School of Dental Medicine is very proud of the accomplishments of Milton," says Dr. Gerald Ferretti, Professor and Chairman of the Pediatric Dentistry Program. "This establishes his academic career and establishes his career in the field of pediatric research."

Dr. Ntragatakis was a teen growing up in Greece when he first set his sights on being a dentist. It wasn't until his second year of dental school at CWRU—he had received his undergraduate degree from Youngstown State University in 2002—that he focused on pediatric dentistry. "I realized pediatrics fit my style, my personality. I want to have fun at work, maybe act like a clown every once in a while," he says with a chuckle.

He says Dr. Ferretti instilled confidence in him, and his work with Dr. Suchitra Nelson, an Associate Professor of dental medicine at CWRU, inspired him to pursue pediatric research. Under the MCRTTP, Milton, who has been Chief Resident for the Pediatric Dental Residency Program at CWRU since 2007, will be able to work at a private practice one day a week. He will also get the opportunity to get his Ph.D. in epidemiology and biostatistics.

Dr. Ntragatakis met his New York-born wife, Jenny, when they were both in high school in Greece. He says that while cultural differences at times made it a challenge for him to succeed—"There were so many times I could have quit," he says—the bond with his wife has been a constant. They now have two children, daughter, Marina, 4, and son, Alex, 1, and try to visit Greece every other year.

Dr. Ntragatakis says much of his free time is spent with his family, either at home or doing church activities.

"I want to live a life that reflects God's love," he says. "I want to have a direct impact on the lives of others."

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Milton A. Ntragatakis, D.D.S. '06

## ANNUAL MEETING

### BE THERE!

Alumni Reception at the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Annual Session

**Saturday, May 24, 2008**

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Marriott Wardman Park Hotel  
Cleveland 1 Room  
2660 Woodley Road, NW  
Washington, D.C.

RSVP by May 14

T: 877.468.1436 (toll free)

E-MAIL: dentalalumni@case.edu

## CLASS NOTES

### 2002



**Leonor Hernandez** recently became Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry. She along with her husband and daughter enjoy traveling, skiing, playing tennis and getting ready to run a 10K in the Cleveland Marathon held in May.

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### 2005



**Safuratu Aranmolate** currently serves as a Dental Officer in the United States Army Reserve. In addition to her private practice, she offers her services as a part-time staff dentist with MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland. Dr. Aranmolate has been honored with numerous awards and distinctions. In 2006, she was named one of the top dentists in Northeast Ohio by *Northern Ohio Live Magazine*.



CASE WESTERN RESERVE  
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SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE

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SPRING 2008

## FOLLOWING OUR NEW GRADUATES

**Milton Ntragatakis** will be accepting a full-time faculty position at Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine as well as working in a private practice one day a week, while **Phillip Liu** plans on returning to southern California and joining a private practice.

**Christy Maciolek** will be working part time in a private practice in Menomonee Falls, WI. She will also be a part-time attending dentist at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

**Kathryn L. Stewart** and her husband will be moving home to Cincinnati, Ohio. Dr. Stewart will be working in a private practice (with Dr. John Gennantonio), in Anderson, Ohio, an eastern suburb of Cincinnati. Dr. Gennantonio is building a new office, which is expected to be open this fall.

2007 graduate **Rebecca Robbins** was recently appointed Associate Clinical Professor of CWRU's Department of Pediatric Dentistry. She is currently working full-time between two practices on the East Side of Cleveland and has hospital privileges at the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals. Dr. Robbins is also preparing for her next road race, a half-marathon.

## STUDY LOOKS AT WHETHER XYLITOL GUMMY BEARS HELP REDUCE CAVITIES IN YOUNG, AT-RISK CHILDREN

Specially made gummy bears are the centerpiece in an important study aimed at reducing cavities in young children who are at risk for dental health problems.



*Suchitra Nelson, Ph.D. '92*

Dr. Suchitra Nelson, an associate professor of dental medicine and researcher at Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine, is directing a four-year study in which community outreach workers are passing out gummy bears three times a day. In the CWRU-sponsored Healthy Bears for Healthy Teeth program, researchers are testing special gummy bears containing the anti-microbial sugar substitute xylitol to see if it reduces cavities in the first emerging permanent teeth.

Dr. Nelson says she wants to determine whether the additional measure will decrease the number of cavities in small children and help others who are at risk for dental problems. Even with sealants, fluoride varnishes and oral health education, the number of cavities in children from low-income homes has not decreased significantly and remains one of the leading health problems for these youngsters.

"We are trying to intervene with an anti-bacterial sweetener to see if we can reduce the incidence of decay," Dr. Nelson says. "We're also giving (the children) maximum prevention. We want to prevent decay in their permanent teeth—the ones they will have for the rest of their lives."

Three hundred children—12 classrooms at five East Cleveland elementary schools—have been recruited for the program this year and another 300 will be involved next year. Half will receive the xylitol gummy bears while the other half will have the sugar-free bears without xylitol.

Dr. Peter Milgrom, a researcher from the University of Washington, studies xylitol and is collaborating on the project with Nelson. Other CWRU co-investigators on this project are Dr. Gerald Ferretti, Chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry; James Lalumandier, Chair of Community Dentistry; and Kiet Ly and Charles Spiekerman from the University of Washington. Terrance Richardson is the Study Coordinator.

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## MEET THE INCOMING CLASS



**Ashley E. Anderson** was born in Boulder, CO and moved to Bloomfield Hills, MI before settling in Columbus, OH just before high school. She received her degree in zoology

from Miami University in 2002 and graduated from The Ohio State University College of Dentistry in 2006. She now lives in Columbus with her husband, Craig. She currently works at Ocean Dental, treating mostly children and young adults.

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**Jason G. Mandelaris** is a native of Bakersfield, CA who did his undergraduate work at Brigham Young University in Utah. He is coming straight out of CWRU dental school and says he is choosing pediatric dentistry "mostly because of the great experiences and mentors I have had in the specialty." In his spare time, he enjoys golf and "pretty much all sports," as well as going to the movies with his wife.

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**Brian K. Hatch** is originally from Sacramento, CA and did his undergraduate work at Southern Utah University, where he studied biology. He went to Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine and graduated in May 2008. When he's not studying or working, he enjoys playing with his two sons, reading, going to movies and playing video games.

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**Ashley L. Paulus** grew up in Toledo, OH and graduated from The Ohio State University with a degree in biology. She is a member of the OSU College of Dentistry's class of 2008. The former Ashley Beroske was recently married to Brent Paulus, who has been accepted into the CWRU School of Dental Medicine's orthodontics program. "We are looking forward to exploring Cleveland together," she says. Her hobbies include snow skiing, swimming, gardening and "sporting my Buckeye pride."

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