

## The Graduating Class



**Naheed Mohamed** has been studying an autologous material called platelet-rich fibrin, which is harvested and produced from a patient's blood, and the effects this biomaterial has on soft tissue wound healing. Dr. Mohamed says his studies at CWRU have given him a strong foundation in clinical experience and new surgical techniques. "I have also learned how to research potential advances in clinical science and apply them to my practice, and have gained an insight into teaching, research and surgery," he says. His goals are to own a specialty practice and advance clinical periodontology through research in new clinical procedures.



**Cecilia Perera** studied the effects of statins (medicines to reduce cholesterol) in nonsurgical periodontal therapy. "The things I will take with me from CWRU will be the great experience that I had for the past three years, the knowledge I received in periodontology, and the teaching experience, which made me grow not only as a professional but also personally," she says. Dr. Perera's goals include having her own private practice, and sharing with other students the things she learned about periodontics at CWRU. She would also like to resume classes in flamenco dancing, which she took in Venezuela for five years. Dr. Perera says she is looking for a job as a periodontist.

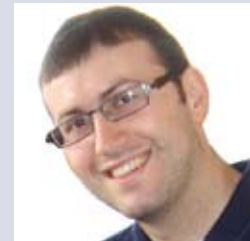


**Luis Pires** conducted research titled, "Evaluation of Bone Morphology and Heat Generated After Repeated Use of Two Types of Burs." The objective was to evaluate in vitro the durability of stainless steel and zirconia burs in relation to osteotomy and their effects on bone. Dr. Pires says his education at CWRU enabled him to improve his surgical skills and to develop the interest in periodontal research. He would like to have an academic career together with a private practice. A rock and roll fan, Dr. Pires loves the Beatles and says, "I'm always playing my guitar."

## Meet The Class Of 2012



**Nawwaf Al-Hamoudi** was born in East Lansing, MI, then moved with his parents to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and finished dental school at King Saud University. He chose the CWRU School of Dental Medicine for his post-graduate work because, "The reputation of the school is great, the periodontics program is one of the most prestigious in the nation, the staff's accomplishments are outstanding, and the residency program is very inviting and stimulating," he says. Dr. Al-Hamoudi's main areas of interest are clinical periodontics, and studying oral health in relation to different systemic diseases. It sounds as though he is not going to be fond of Cleveland's winters, however: he loves camping in the desert, and says he wishes CWRU was in Florida.



**Martin Leybovich** grew up in Brooklyn, NY, and graduated in May 2010 from the University of Maryland dental school. "I chose to attend the CWRU periodontics program primarily for two reasons: to learn from Dr. Bissada and to be able to perform all the diverse surgical procedures the program has to offer," Dr. Leybovich says. His goal is to become a comprehensive periodontist and learn how periodontics is related to other specialties and sub-specialties of dentistry.



**Cynthia Trajtenberg** received her D.D.S. from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1993. She obtained her M.S. degree in oral biomaterials science from the University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2001. Since 2001, she has held a position as assistant professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry and Biomaterials at the University of Texas Dental Branch at Houston, where she taught restorative dentistry, while maintaining a part-time intramural practice. "I have been involved in salivary proteomics and cancer, and received two funding grants from MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston," Dr. Trajtenberg says. "I'm interested in proteomics of biofluids and their potential for early disease detection."



**Sima Zitouni** earned her D.D.S. degree from Aleppo University School of Dentistry, Aleppo, Syria. She then worked as a private dentist in Syria before moving to the United States. In 2009, Dr. Zitouni completed a six-month advanced education in general dentistry fellowship at the CWRU School of Dental Medicine, followed by another six-month periodontics fellowship under the supervision of Dr. Bissada. The periodontics fellowship inspired a passion to enter the periodontics residency program. "I chose CWRU for my residency training because of its excellent reputation and teaching quality," she says.

## PUBLICATIONS

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## Join Us!

You are invited as Dr. Nabil Bissada's guest at a celebration dinner to honor his achievement as the

2010 Outstanding Periodontal Educator

during the American Academy of Periodontology Annual Meeting at the Hilton Hawaiian Village

November 1, 2010  
5:30 p.m.

## SEND US YOUR News

If you have news to share, send it to us. Please include the following: name, class year, full address, phone number and email address. Send it by email to [dentalalumni@case.edu](mailto:dentalalumni@case.edu) or mail to Class Notes Editor; CWRU School of Dental Medicine; Office of Development and Alumni Relations; 10900 Euclid Avenue; Cleveland OH 44106-4905. Photographs are always welcome.

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Nabil F. Bissada, D.D.S., M.S.D.

It has been an interesting and exciting year since our last newsletter.

First and foremost, I'm very happy to say that the site visit by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation went extremely well, and the school and the Periodontics Department passed with flying colors. In fact, the accreditation team had no recommendations for the program. Such recommendations are given when a school is not achieving one of the ADA's standards. So we are very proud and happy to have received such a favorable accreditation, and it will only make us work harder to ensure we maintain our high standards in the future.

On a personal note, I'm very touched by all the calls and e-mails from alumni and other friends regarding my selection as the American Academy of Periodontology's 2010 "Outstanding Periodontal Educator." The award itself is a tremendous honor, but the real joy came from hearing from so many of you.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to Stuart Sears, D.D.S., M.S.D., '68, a clinical associate professor here in the department. Dr. Sears received recognition from the Academy for outstanding teaching and mentoring at CWRU. We're very fortunate to have him here to share his knowledge with us. Congratulations also go to Yiping Han for her promotion to professor in the Department of Periodontics (see the story in this issue).

I'd also like to mention how proud I am of the research being done by our graduate students. They are choosing very interesting areas of research to pursue, and much of their work is being published in very prestigious dental, periodontal and medical journals.

Congratulations to our graduates who recently took their exams and became diplomates of the American Board of Periodontology. All of the recent graduates who took the board exam passed it on their first attempt, which is another indication of the quality of the education and training they received here.

I'd like to close by extending my heartfelt appreciation to all of our clinical instructors and staff. Everything I have talked about in this message — the accreditation, the awards, the research, and the outstanding quality of the periodontists this school produces — stems from the efforts of our clinical and administrative staff. To them, thank you for all that you do every day to ensure that our periodontics program continues to rank among the finest in the world.

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## Stuart Sears honored for outstanding teaching and mentoring



Stuart Sears, D.D.S. '68, M.Sc.D.,

Stuart Sears, D.D.S. '68, M.Sc.D., has been honored by the American Academy of Periodontology with its Award for Outstanding Teaching and Mentoring in Periodontics, which is presented to one periodontal educator at each school who has demonstrated a commitment to excellence in teaching and an ability to communicate enthusiasm to students. Dr. Sears, an associate clinical professor, has been one of the School of Dental Medicine's volunteer faculty since 1972.

"The award is a tremendous honor, but the best part of what I do is having the opportunity to work with the students," Dr. Sears says. "They really carry on a high level of academics, and I think the future of dentistry looks bright."



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## Periodontics News

FALL 2010

### Life's unexpected turns... *continued*

One area of Dr. Han's research that has received a great deal of attention is her investigation into pre-term birth/adverse pregnancy outcomes. "We are investigating how oral bacteria can translocate from the mouth of the mother into the otherwise sterile womb, and cause infection and inflammation in the uterus that can lead to pre-term birth or stillbirth," Dr. Han said. "I have received a lot of interest in that from the media, and also from my students."

Dr. Han received her undergraduate degree in biochemistry in China. She came to the United States to pursue her graduate studies, and earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in microbiology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She then went to UCLA for post-doctoral work, which is where she first started working in the dental field, and from there on to the State University of New York at Buffalo to study oral microbiology. She was recruited in 2000 to join CWRU, with appointments in both the School of Medicine and the School of Dental Medicine.

"I came to interview at CWRU just as the school was beginning to rebuild its research program," Dr. Han recalls. "I was impressed with two things. The first was the integration of the basic scientists and the clinicians within the dental school. At many other dental schools there's a clear division between researchers and clinicians because they usually have opposing interests.

"Secondly, I was very impressed with the interaction with the medical school here on campus. Unlike at some universities where you see a medical school and a dental school divided, here they are very well integrated and I had a lot of interaction with colleagues in the

medical school soon after I arrived on campus. It has been a very good experience. I have established many collaborations in the medical school as well as the engineering school. It's very productive to work that way and really broadens the scope of one's research."

Dr. Han says the collaborative environment at the School of Dental Medicine between basic research and real-world applications of that research is something she passes along to her students. "It's very exciting as a dental researcher and educator to see the impact of what I do on students," she says. "The experiences they gain from my lab can impact their future practice and influence the way they look at clinical problems."

Away from CWRU, Dr. Han is a "busy mom," she says, spending much of her time shuttling her two children, Jackie and Richard, to various activities. That type of running around will be halved for Dr. Han, however, as daughter Jackie this summer enrolled at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "When we came to Cleveland 10 years ago, she was just a little girl," Dr. Han says. "It feels like the blink of an eye."

That means more time for Dr. Han and her husband, Yan Ming, to enjoy the Cleveland Orchestra and the Cleveland Opera — once she has completed a six-month sabbatical that has already taken her to King's College Dental Institute in London, and on to Boston from there. She will be returning to Cleveland in January 2011. Until then, the CWRU School of Dental Medicine and Severance Hall will both be missing a familiar face.

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# Periodontics News

FALL 2010

## Life's unexpected turns bring Yiping Han, Ph.D., to the forefront of dental research

Yiping Han, Ph.D, a professor in the Department of Periodontics at the Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine and one of the leading dental research scientists in the nation, entered dentistry through the side door.

Call it serendipity.

"I'm not a dentist, and I never would have anticipated myself working in the dental field," says Dr. Han, who is trained as a molecular microbiologist. "But, life will take unexpected turns sometimes."

In the case of Dr. Han, those unexpected turns have enriched her life, the lives of the students and faculty in the School of Dental Medicine's periodontics program, and the school's overall research enterprise. Her research has a far-reaching impact on the fields of dentistry and microbiology, and ultimately may affect the lives of millions of expectant mothers — and their unborn children — around the world.

Dr. Han, who joined the School of Dental Medicine as an assistant professor in 2000, became a full professor in July after five years each as an assistant professor and an associate professor. She also holds two adjunct professorships in the medical school: one in pathology, and one in reproductive biology.

As a molecular microbiologist, Dr. Han's primary interest is microbial pathogenesis, or how bacteria interact with the host in causing disease. The work in this area includes genetic manipulation of the bacteria, protein structure function analysis, host-pathogen interactions, and immune response to bacterial infection. It also includes the link between oral health and systemic health, and how oral bacteria can translocate to distal sites in the body and cause disease.

*continued on back*



Yiping Han, Ph.D.