

First to Receive Scholarship

First-year dental student Mary Webster has been awarded the Louisiana Health Professional Development Scholarship. The first-ever dental student to receive this award, she will receive \$49,901.

The scholarship, essentially a tuition waiver, is designed to address the severe shortage of primary care providers in what are called Health Professional Shortage Areas. Currently, 54 of Louisiana's 64 parishes are in this category, according to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. Upon graduation, Mary will serve for five years in one of the 54 shortage areas. She can choose to serve in a public health clinic or in a private practice that accepts patients with Medicare, Medicaid and also the uninsured.



First-year dental student Mary Webster

Webster is a native of Monroe, Louisiana. In 2011, she graduated summa cum laude from the University of Louisiana. Four years earlier, she was valedictorian of her class at Neville High School in Monroe. Her parents are Lee Webster and Jean and Randy Carr.

Although she's only 22 years old, she has a history of giving to others. As a teenager, she served on a mission in the Dominican Republic, where she read to children in an orphanage. The mission team included dentists and she saw first-hand how the lives of children were transformed through dentistry. She also did a dental study-abroad program in England.

There are 65 first-year students at LSUSD. Last year, students graduated with student loans that averaged \$144,000.

Heart to Heart

An enthusiastic team of 30 students, faculty and staff from LSUSD joined 5,000 walkers from throughout the New Orleans area on November 19 for the annual Heart Walk sponsored by the American Heart Association. The purpose of the event, a non-competitive walk around Audubon Park, is to raise awareness and funding for heart disease education and research.

Heart disease is the number one killer of men and women in the United States, responsible for one out of every four deaths. Numerous research studies have shown a connection between heart disease and key bacteria in periodontal disease. Dentists and dental hygienists are instrumental in identifying the presence and extent of the periodontal infection, and work with patients to treat existing periodontal problems and prevent future complications.

"The Heart Walk provided a wonderful opportunity for the LSUSD family to come together in support of an important program," said Dean Henry Gremillion. "The spirit and generosity of our group brightened up an already beautiful day. It is readily apparent that we, the School of Dentistry, are an important part of the fabric of New Orleans."



LSU School of Dentistry American Heart Association Heart Walk team

This year's walk generated \$451,450, which is then matched dollar-for-dollar by the national American Heart Association. All of the money is dedicated to local research and education projects. Participants at LSUSD raised \$1,369, surpassing the goal of \$1,000.

"Heart disease impacts everyone," said Dr. Gremillion. "It's satisfying to know that our dental school team played a role in generating more than \$900,000 for research and education that will benefit our community."