Pandemic Pressures
Committee of 100 Members Help Protect the LSUSD Community

COVID is completely changing the world we live in. While some dental schools across the country have struggled under the pressures of the pandemic, the LSU Health School of Dentistry (LSUSD) has found advantages in adversity. "Time does not stand still for COVID," says Dr. Robert Laughlin, interim dean. "During this crisis, LSUSD is implementing the latest technology to make sure our staff is working in the cleanest, most efficient space possible."

New air purifiers, water filtration systems, automated temperature screening systems and N-99 masks are keeping the LSUSD community as safe as possible. Under Dr. Laughlin's direction, the school's leadership has also revamped the screening process for patients to ensure an adequate patient base for students and residents while helping to increase clinic revenue. These new safety features at the dental school are part of a broader effort to stymie any financial impact that the institution could have from the financial fallout from COVID.
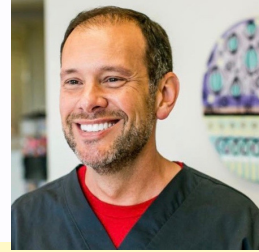
LSUSD leadership is working diligently to improve patient screening processes to ensure that our students and residents have an adequate patient base to fulfill their educational requirements during the pandemic. These improvements have resulted in a much-needed added benefit as well—a 20% increase in clinic income to help address our budget challenges. We extend a special thanks to our alumni and friends who give back to support our mission. A large percentage of the purchases to strengthen our clinics is due to the generous donations of our Committee of 100 members. The Committee of 100, established in 1995, is comprised of a group of individuals and organizations who contributed $10,000 each to help fund critical needs of the dental school. Their commitment has allowed the school to enhance clinics, classrooms and other initiatives over the years. We are grateful for their support.

Meet the New Head of Pediatric Dentistry

Jeff Johnson, DMD joined the LSU Health School of Dentistry in August as the new head of Pediatric Dentistry. Prior to coming to LSUSD, Dr. Johnson worked as the Director of the Graduate Program in Pediatric Dentistry at the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center. Dr. Johnson received both is DDS and certificate of pediatric dentistry from the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center in 2001 and 2003 respectively. Dr. Johnson also holds a Master's Degree in Public Health from the University of Kentucky, College of Public Health. For 14 years – from 2006 to 2020 – he was in private practice specializing in pediatric dentistry in Danville, Kentucky. We welcome Dr. Johnson to LSUSD.

Longtime Educator Receives Copping Award

Every year during the commencement ceremony, the Allen A. Copping Excellence in Teaching Award is presented to one faculty member in each of the six schools of LSU Health New Orleans. This year, the dental school award recipient was James P. Tomaszewski, DDS, who worked at LSUSD as an assistant clinical associate professor in clinical comprehensive and operative dentistry for 24 years. Dr. Tomaszewski started working at LSUSD in 1996 and recently retired in May.

LSUSD Faculty Member Receives AGD Award

Assistant Clinical Professor Kay Jordan, DDS, MAGD was the recipient of the 2020 Academy of General Dentistry's Faculty Member of the Year Award. The award was presented to Dr. Jordan for her exceptional overall support and guidance of students. LSU Chapter Chair Rachel Robinson says, "Dr. Jordan has gone above and beyond by instilling excitement and engagement in both new and existing members by helping to organize and coordinate events. She holds the chapter student leaders accountable. Her involvement is admirable, especially considering her own personal obligations outside of the organization. In a matter of four years, we have established almost 200 members and continue to grow every year." Congratulations on this award!