On Wednesday, June 1, 2011, “The University of Texas School of Dentistry at Houston” became the new name of the UT Dental Branch, marking a return to the name the school held when it became part of UT System in 1943.

Dean John A. Valenza, DDS, (Class of ’81), led the drive to change the school’s name in a bid to end confusion about whether “dental branch” referred to a school, a department, or some other entity. The name has also sometimes been confused with “UT Medical Branch” in Galveston.

UT System Regents approved the name change in February.

The dental school remains part of The UT Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) and will use the initials “UTSD” on second reference, or UTHealth School of Dentistry. The School of Dental Hygiene is now the “Dental Hygiene Program,” and the Postgraduate School of Dentistry will be known as “Advanced Education Programs.”

The process of changing the university and dental school’s websites, directories, publications, signage, social media sites, etc. has begun and will continue for several months.

In mid-2012, UTSD will get a new phone number and address (7500 Cambridge St.), when the school moves to a new 300,000-square-foot replacement building in the UT Research Park on the Texas Medical Center’s South Campus.
Craig S. Armstrong, DDS ‘89, has won the Texas Dental Association’s Service Recognition Award for his highly effective “Minority Report” to the American Dental Association’s 2010 Council on Dental Practice. The award was presented at the TDA Annual Session in San Antonio in May.

Armstrong, a West Houston general and cosmetic dentist, represents the 15th District on the council, which in 2010 was charged with looking at changing ADA policies with regard to allied dental personnel. The council passed resolutions that would have effectively permitted non-dentists to perform surgical and irreversible dental treatments on patients. Armstrong voted against the resolutions and, upon returning home, wrote a minority report speaking out against the council’s resolutions.

The report was submitted to the ADA Board of Trustees and subsequently to the 2010 House of Delegates, who overwhelmingly voted not to adopt ADA policies allowing non-dentists to perform such procedures.

Armstrong has served the TDA on its board of directors, DENPAC Board, Council on Dental Economics, Council on Dental Benefits and Oral Health, and as a delegate and alternate. He has also served as president of the Eating Disorder Association of Houston and spoken to national media outlets as an expert on bulimia’s effect on teeth. He holds a patent for ClearMatch Shade Analyzing Software, a tooth shade analysis system, and was involved in the early development of veneers.

He is married to fellow UTSD graduate Judith Mabrito, DDS, of the Class of ’84. She maintains a separate general dentistry practice in downtown Houston.

The University of Texas School of Dentistry Alumni Association has chosen Houston esthetic dentist Craig Mabrito, DDS, as 2011 Alumnus of the Year. He said he is “humbled and honored to be named in the same category of those who have preceded me.”

Mabrito grew up in San Antonio and attended Texas A&M Kingsville before coming to UTSD, where he graduated in 1973. He served in the U.S. Air Force and taught at the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine, and in the process came “to appreciate the fine education [UTSD] had provided at a very reasonable cost,” he said.

He taught part-time at UTSD from 1977-81 and stayed as a guest lecturer until 1986. He was also co-founder of Reality, an information source for cosmetic dentistry. Mabrito is a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry, the International College of Dentists and the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, and he is a member of the American Dental Association, Texas Dental Association, and Greater Houston Dental Society. He has also served as president of the Eating Disorder Association of Houston and spoken to national media outlets as an expert on bulimia’s effect on teeth. He holds a patent for ClearMatch Shade Analyzing Software, a tooth shade analysis system, and was involved in the early development of veneers.

He is married to fellow UTSD graduate Judith Mabrito, DDS, of the Class of ’84. She maintains a separate general dentistry practice in downtown Houston.

The Texas Dental Association has awarded its Gold Medal for Distinguished Service to UT School of Dentistry Adjunct Clinical Professor S. Jerry Long, DDS (Class of ‘66) of Houston. The award is the TDA’s highest honor and was presented at the Annual Session in San Antonio in May. Long is currently co-chair of the school’s Open to Health initiative, raising funds for scholarships, faculty endowments, research, community outreach and the new dental school building.

Over his career, he has amassed an array of honors, including being named Texas Dentist of the Year™ by the Texas Academy of General Dentistry, and “Outstanding Alumnus” by the UTSD Alumni Association, an organization he has also led as president and board member. He has held several posts with the American Dental Association (ADA), including delegate, alternate and vice chairman for the 15th District, chair of the ADA’s Council on Government Affairs, and on the boards of several ADA councils. Locally, he has served as president of the Greater Houston Dental Society and general chairman of the Star of the South Dental Meeting. He is a winner of the Jack Harris Award, presented by the Greater Houston Dental Alliance.

Long is a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry and fellow and past president of the Texas Section, American College of Dentists and the Texas Section, International College of Dentists. He has also served as president for both the Southwest Prosthodontics Society and the Southwest Society of Oral Medicine.

Dr. Armstrong Receives TDA Service Recognition Award

Dr. Long Awarded TDA Gold Medal for Distinguished Service

Dr. Armstrong Receives TDA Service Recognition Award
The Search Is Over
Dr. Valenza Chosen to Lead ‘UT School of Dentistry’

By Rhonda Moran, School of Dentistry

John A. Valenza, DDS, has been named dean of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Dentistry, effective June 1, 2011 – the same day the school retired the name “Dental Branch.” UTHealth President ad interim Giuseppe Colasurdo, MD, announced the appointment during graduation exercises in May.

Valenza has been interim dean since 2009. He is the first alumnus to serve as dean in the school’s 106-year history.

A native of Houston, Valenza attended UT-Austin before enrolling at the School of Dentistry, where he graduated in 1981. He completed a general practice residency at the University of Tennessee Memorial Hospital in Nashville, where he also practiced and served on the faculty of Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry. He joined the UTSD faculty in 1987.

Valenza initiated the nationally recognized General Practice Residency program with Memorial Hermann Hospital-Texas Medical Center and has held a number of leadership positions, including director of advanced education, associate dean for patient care, and executive associate dean. He is responsible for many innovations, including use of electronic patient records and digital imaging, enhanced clinical simulation, faculty practice, clinical credentialing, clinic rounds, the current mobile dental van, and expanded community outreach programs and clinics.

He also led the design and construction of the new, state-of-the-art dental school building and conference center. Both are scheduled to open in mid-2012.

Valenza’s research has focused on the application of technology and informatics in dental practice, as well as clinical simulation. Under his watch, the school’s Open to Health fundraising initiative has had continued success, and he created a successful podcast series, UTSD V-flash!, to address issues at the school and enhance relationships with the school’s alumni, organized dentistry and the community.

He is a member of the American Dental Association, American Dental Education Association, American Association of Hospital Dentists, Texas Dental Association and The University of Texas Academy of Health Science Education. Valenza is also a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry, the American College of Dentists and the International College of Dentists.

2011 Graduation Ceremony Last Under ‘Dental Branch’ Name

For the last time under the name “Dental Branch,” the oldest school of UTHealth held its 106th Graduation Convocation ceremony May 20 at Cullen Performance Hall on the University of Houston campus, recognizing 82 DDS graduates, 21 master’s degree candidates and 36 who earned postgraduate certifications. Thirty-four bachelor’s degrees in dental hygiene were awarded.

As a special keepsake, the graduates, stage guests and faculty members present were given challenge coins that acknowledged the school’s past, current and future names while “denot(ing) your status as witnesses to the end of this era and the start of a new one,” said then-Interim Dean John Valenza. Assistant Professor Shelli Peters, DDS, gave the inspirational message before UTHealth President ad interim Giuseppe Colasurdo, MD, greeted the graduates and announced Valenza’s appointment as permanent dean, effective June 1. The dental and dental hygiene class presidents, Summer Ketron and Robyn Henderson, respectively, addressed the audience as well. The keynote speaker was UTSD alumnus and Texas Dental Association Immediate Past President Ron Rhea (DDS ’72).
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the legacy of Dr. Ralph Cooley, an innovator who inspired others to continue the advancement of dentistry. The endowed professorship will help to recruit and support the work of a biomaterials clinician/scientist.

The gift also supports the construction of UTHealth’s first multi-purpose facility for use campus-wide. The Denton A. Cooley, MD and Ralph C. Cooley, DDS University Life Center, which is expected to open in 2012, will serve as a place for professional conferences, meetings and other events. The 14,000-square-foot center will seat up to 400 people.

“Dr. Cooley has been a tremendous friend to UT, and we thank him for his continued support,” said Giuseppe Colasurdo, MD, president ad interim of UTHealth. “We all know Dr. Cooley as a giant in the medical field and with this generous gift have learned that helping others through innovation and technology is in Dr. Cooley’s DNA.”

During the early to mid-1900s, Ralph Clarkson Cooley, DDS, rose to prominence as a pioneer who transformed the field of restorative dentistry.

As one of the first graduates of the Texas Dental College, which later became The University of Texas School of Dentistry at Houston, he started his practice in his family’s home in the Houston Heights.

The good-humored dentist soon moved his successful practice downtown, first to the Binz Building and later to the Gulf Building, and his patients included some of Houston’s most prominent leaders.

Over the years, he refined dental techniques and invented products to restore smiles. His family, including the younger of his two sons, Denton, was by his side for many of these professional milestones.

Described in the May 1955 edition of the Texas Dental Journal as “one of the better known and admired dentists of this country and one of the relatively few dentists with an enviable international reputation,” the late Cooley was perhaps best known for his invention of Copalite. The varnish was designed to coat and desensitize a tooth before the cavity was filled.

“It was brilliant,” said Frank K. Eggleston, DDS, a retired Houston dentist and immediate past president of the American Academy of Restorative Dentistry. “Before Copalite, there was nothing like it. It calmed the tooth and dried almost immediately. I don’t know a dentist in the United States who didn’t have a bottle of Copalite.”

Delta Dental of California Supports UTSD with $350K Donation to New Facility

Delta Dental of California has donated $350,000 to The University of Texas School of Dentistry to create the Delta Dental Assessment and Research Clinic in the new dental school building. The first-floor clinic is expected to be one of the most heavily used areas in the building for patients new to the School of Dentistry, and for clinical research conducted by students and faculty.

“We are honored to be included among the project founders, contributors, and leadership who all share a vision to increase access to dental care for underserved populations,” said John Yamamoto, DDS, vice president of professional services for Delta Dental of California.

Delta Dental of California is the parent organization for its dental insurance program in Texas and has been a supporter of dental education throughout the western U.S. with a focus on access to care and pediatric dentistry. The gift represents the largest corporate-based contribution in the five-year history of the Open to Health fundraising initiative at UTSD.
Other inventions included the Cooley Dam and the Cooley Peg. His father’s inventions likely motivated Denton Cooley to make innovations in his own profession, he said.

A University of Texas at Austin graduate, Denton Cooley earned his medical degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1944. Like his father, he served in the military. In 1951, he returned to his hometown and went on to become a world-renowned cardiac surgeon and the first to perform a successful human heart transplant in the United States. The pioneer of many techniques used in cardiovascular surgery today, he has helped develop at least 200 surgical products, including the heart/lung machine.

“I talked to many of my father’s patients, and they said every time they went to my father’s office, he spent so much time talking about my career,” Cooley said. “He was so proud that I was at Johns Hopkins and doing all these things in my profession, and I think he was very proud of what I was doing.”

Likewise, Cooley was proud of his father. “He emphasized honesty, dedication to your profession, hard work and providing for your family unit,” he said.

A former president of the American Academy of Restorative Dentistry and the Texas Dental Association, Ralph Cooley tried to convince his youngest son to become a dentist and take over his dental practice. In an effort to sway young Denton’s interest toward dentistry, he would invite his son to the dental lab to work. Once, Denton required some dental work, so his father instructed him on how to craft his own inlay, a tooth filling shaped to fit a cavity and then cemented into place.

Years later, Denton Cooley was in London and had an appointment with a dentist who praised the father’s work and admired the inlay the heart surgeon had, as a teenager, shaped with such precision based on his father’s instructions. The inlay, which remains in Denton Cooley’s mouth to this day, was not merely the crude chunk of gold that was customary at the time. It was perfection.

“People say my dad was the best dentist in the world.”

Wades Make Additional $150K Gift in Support of Pediatric Dentistry

Herbert L. Wade, DDS ‘69, ‘71 and his wife, Sally Dee Wade, both of Bryan, have designated an additional $150,000 to go to a professorship in pediatric dentistry established in their names at UT School of Dentistry in 2008. Their combined gifts will fund the Herbert L. and Sally Dee Wade Distinguished Professorship in Pediatric Dentistry, which will be available to the school upon their passing.

John Greer, executive director of development at UTSD, said planned gifts can be made using existing holdings to fund a trust or annuity that will create income for the donor, with the principal eventually going to the school. For more information about planned gifts, call the UTSD Development Office 713-500-4380.
By Rhonda Moran, School of Dentistry

With the sound of a bugle and a click of a mouse, the “Dental Derby” took off on the computer screen over the summer, pitting alumni of The University of Texas School of Dentistry against each other by class year and specialty in a friendly competition to raise funds for the new building, scholarships and the Dean’s Excellence Fund.

By going to www.opentohealth.org/DentalDerby, anyone could see how the groups were doing, making the site an entertaining tool for the 31 volunteer class captains recruited to reach out to their classmates, said John Greer, executive director of development at UTSD.

Nearly $400,000 was collected from 200 donors between April 1 and July 31, including more than $100,000 as a direct result of the Derby. The Class of 1969 won first place, with $151,000 in gifts committed. The Class of 1973 took second place with $33,800 and the Class of 1954 came in third with $15,700. Making up the rest of the Top 10 were the Classes of 1976, 1983, 1981, 1977, 1980, 1972 and 1966.

Perhaps the biggest success, Greer said, is that a third of those gifts came from first-time donors to the school. “It’s moved many people from just thinking about doing something for the school to actively making the gift, and that establishes a relationship that’s meaningful to both parties,” he said.

Having the support of Open to Health Volunteer Chair W.R. “Bill” Birdwell, DDS ’73, and UTSD Dean John A. Valenza, DDS ’81, made it easier to recruit School of Dentistry alumni to pitch the race to their former classmates, Greer said, and having classmate involvement was crucial. “We’re all more likely to value information that comes from a friend,” he said.

One class captain, Elizabeth Hunsaker, DDS ’85, of Bellaire, said she agreed to help because she has “a real passion for the dental school. We need to realize what part it’s played in our lives, and we need to give back so it can be a better place in the future,” she said.

Texas subsidizes the cost of an education at its three dental schools – something Hunsaker believes her fellow alumni may not fully realize. But financial support from the state has been declining over the past decade and took an even sharper hit with the recession, so alumni support is more important than ever.

“It takes heart and money to make things happen,” Hunsaker said. “The School of Dentistry expresses special thanks to all the class captains who participated in the Dental Derby:

B.J. Westbrook, DDS ’54
B. Brooks Goldsmith, DDS ’59
W. Kenneth Horwitz, DDS ’61
Leslie O. Fullerton, DDS ’65
S. Jerry Long, DDS ’66
Jerry P. Katz, DDS ’68
Herbert L. Wade, DDS ’69
James W. Chancellor, DDS ’71
David C. Woodburn, DDS ’72
Douglas W. Bogan, DDS ’73
James D. Condrey, DDS ’75
Donald A. Lutes, DDS ’76
Gregory K. Oelfke, DDS ’77
Joseph M. Piazza, DDS ’79
Byron L. Novosad, DDS ’80
J. Brad Loeffelholz, DDS ’81
Marvin J. Olim, DDS ’83
Scott H. Coleman, DDS ’84
Elizabeth A. Hunsaker, DDS ’85
Steven A. Laman, DDS ’86
James R. Foster, DDS ’87
Boyd W. Shepherd, DDS ’88
Craig S. Armstrong, DDS ’89
Ingrid E. Duebbert, DDS ’91
Dean V. Hutto, DDS ’92
Rita M. Cammarata, DDS ’96
Hugh P. Patton, DDS ’97
Jeffery R. Brunson, DDS ’00
David W. Kostohryz, DDS ’05
Candelaria V. Rodriguez, DDS ’06
Tiffany Tredway-Ransom, DDS ’09
Dwight D. Peccora, DDS ’10

UTSD’s ‘Dental Derby’ Brings in Cash and New Donors

Give Kids a Smile Day 2011: 300 kids + 325 volunteers = Wow!

More than 300 children with acute dental needs and limited financial resources got free dental treatment April 2 at Give Kids a Smile Day, an annual event sponsored by The University of Texas School of Dentistry, the Greater Houston Dental Society, Susman Family Foundation and 24 other sponsors and partners.

Approximately 325 volunteer dentists, dental hygienists, students and dental school faculty and staff members performed nearly 1,800 procedures (an estimated $164,000 value) for the children, topping last year’s record of 200 children, 1,700 procedures and an estimated $125,000 value of care.

This year, prescreening was done through the San Jose Clinic, Episcopal Community Health Outreach Services, the Houston Asian Dental Society, Good Neighbor Healthcare Center, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Friends for Christmas (Houston ISD) and Communities in Schools-Houston.

Interim Associate Dean for Patient Care Matthew “Mickey” Seals, DDS ’77, said the GHDS has been a major partner in Give Kids a Smile Day since 2004. Major funding comes from the Susman Family Foundation. “Without them, we wouldn’t be able to do this on a regular basis,” he said.
Members of the Edward C. Hinds Academy for Oral Surgery have donated more than $70,000 to The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston to equip a special operatory in the oral surgery suite of UT School of Dentistry’s new building.

The academy is an alumni organization named for the late Edward Hines, DDS, MD, who established the school’s Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Program in 1949 as one of the first formal oral surgery training programs in Texas.

“The Hinds Academy Operatory” will have state-of-the-art oral and maxillofacial surgery equipment for patient care and for education of residents and dental students. It will also be developed as a facility suitable for simulation exercises to meet state anesthesia certification requirements. The gift will be commemorated with a plaque.

Dr. Mark Wong, OMS chair at the School of Dentistry, said the department and school “appreciate the enthusiastic support shown by our alumni for a facility that will help maintain a strong presence for oral and maxillofacial surgery in the new dental school.”

These donors have given $1,000 or more to The University of Texas School of Dentistry between Dec. 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. All gifts are counted as part of the Open to Health initiative. For information on ways to support growth at the School of Dentistry, contact John Greer, executive director of development, at 713-500-4380 or John.T.Greer@uth.tmc.edu.
Retired Sugar Land Dentist Now a Top NFL Referee

By Karen Fox, ADA

Retired Sugar Land dentist Walt Anderson, DDS ’78, stood midfield for the coin toss Feb. 6 in Cowboys Stadium before a crowd of 100,000 and a television audience of 111 million more. It was heads; the Green Bay Packers would have the ball first, and so began Super Bowl XLV and Anderson’s duties as referee.

It was his second turn officiating at a Super Bowl – this time as head of the game’s seven-man crew – since becoming a National Football League referee in 1996. Super Bowl XLV was the 15th playoff game he’s officiated.

Anderson practiced dentistry until 2006, but football has always been a big part of his life. He played football at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville and was a student at UT School of Dentistry when his father, a football coach, recommended his son pursue officiating as a way to stay active and be in the game.

Anderson started out by officiating junior high games and working up to the college level, where he was scouted for openings at the professional level. He began his NFL career as a line judge.

Now 58, Anderson believes he’s got another five years or so at the pro level, but plans to keep a hand in the game by training officials for college football. Currently, he’s also coordinator of football officials for the Big 12 Conference.

During his NFL career, Anderson met Dr. David Warden, an Oklahoma dentist and retired NFL official. For an entire season, Drs. Warden and Anderson were on the same officiating crew.

“I was the line of scrimmage guy, he was the field judge,” Anderson said. “We joked that they must have felt the others needed help with their oral hygiene because they put all the dentists on one crew.”

See the full article at: www.ada.org/news/5339.aspx.

Keep in touch
Send your updated postal addresses, email addresses, phone numbers or story ideas to:
Rhonda Moran, Editor
Rhonda.Moran@uth.tmc.edu
713-500-4023  Fax 713-500-4071

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