AAPD Resident Recognition Awards

The AAPD Pediatric Dental Resident Committee developed the **Resident Recognition Award** to recognize pediatric dental residents doing innovative and interesting activities in their training programs. Selected residents are awarded with a monetary prize, featured on the AAPD website, featured in *Pediatric Dentistry Today* (PDT), and recognized at the awards ceremony during the annual AAPD meeting.

Nominations are reviewed by a panel of at least three reviewers from the Pediatric Dental Resident Committee, New Pediatric Dentist Committee and the Council on Membership and Membership Services.

Winners are chosen based on activities during residency that contribute to one or more of the following fields: patient care, education (i.e., teaching), research, and community service. Innovation, time commitment, and significance of service to others are the primary factors considered in the selection process.

Please join us in recognizing the two winners for the Spring/Summer cycle.

**Norman Chen**

*University of Southern California*

Graduation 2018

Primary Field: Community and Public Service

Immediately starting residency, Norman Chen was engaged in improving the overall health of the children in his local, underprivileged community. In addition to improving their oral health, Chen was determined in improving their mental, social and physical health. After finishing a full day of clinical training in residency, Chen would spend his evening visiting transitional housing for homeless, single mothers to provide one-on-one counseling on life skills and emotional coping. He believes that improving children’s health begins with their families and knows the impact that education has on prevention. These sessions allow him to help alleviate some of the stresses that these mothers and their children experience on a daily basis. On the weekends, Chen would also attend elementary schools to empower children to read and encourage their creative minds in arts and crafts. He would also coach special needs children to participate in various sports activities and embrace an active lifestyle. These activities allow Chen to connect to his local community and continue his passion of serving the underprivileged to his highest capacity as he has been doing so since his early adolescence.

Community service has been a long-standing pastime for Chen that he integrated as part of his dental career. As a dental student, he has served numerous organizations giving education and treatment for families who otherwise would not be able to afford visiting the dentist, obtained grants to run low income dental clinics, and partnered with his local transitional housing to create a self-sustaining clinic that provides free dental services to the children temporarily living there. It is not surprising Chen continues to go beyond his responsibilities as a resident as he volunteers his time and guides dental students as they learn to treat pediatric patients in community clinics themselves. These activities illustrate only a snapshot of how Chen devotes his career to pediatric dentistry so that he may continue his passion in serving the children in underprivileged communities.

It became apparent to Chen there were limitations to what he can do for these families and children through these service events. To ensure more sustainable and substantive change, he felt it necessary to become involved in legislative and organized dentistry to influence social and public policies to become more transparent and equitable for these disadvantaged communities. With the assistance of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry, he was rewarded the opportunity to attend the Public Policy Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C., where he met with numerous congressional offices to advocate for children’s oral health. In addition, he recently attended an advocacy conference in Sacramento to continue influencing pertinent legislation and advocate for issues affecting children’s oral health. He was also asked by the CSPD to present to the board on the policies affecting children in California currently. Through these experiences, he is able to take his personal mission on supporting children’s oral health in his local community and raise it to the state and national level.

An integral part of Chen’s career and personal life has been dedicated to serving at-risk youth and underprivileged communities. Growing up in a low-socioeconomic neighborhood where basic needs such as dental care were not a priority gave him early exposure to the large unmet needs of his community. Throughout his adolescence and career, he has dedicated significant time to community service and outreach events that tackle issues of disparities. Although merely a resident, he feels fortunate and blessed to be in a position to continue helping those children who are in need.

**Nidhi Taneja**

*University of Connecticut*

Graduation 2017

Primary Field: Excellence in Patient Care

Throughout Nidhi Taneja’s life and prior to starting her residency, she has always been passionate about working with the special needs community. Residency training has given her an opportunity to be instrumental and effective in activities for this population from a healthcare perspective. In the first year of residency, she reached out to various sites affiliated with the University of Connecticut which play a key role in interacting with the children with disabilities. After an initial needs assessment, she specifically established collaboration with the Autism Centre at Hospital of Special Care in Connecticut. Here, she started a project to help improve ac-
cess to dental care for children with autism. With the help of the care coordination team at the hospital, she has helped more than twenty families find a Dental Home for their children.

For her initiatives of working with children with autism, she was awarded the Student Scholarship Award by the Special Needs Dental Association in April of 2016. In Chicago at their Annual Session, she presented her poster, “Dental care for autistic children.” Recently, in March of 2017, her article, “Treatment consideration for children with ASD in dental setting,” was published in the 2017 March issue of *Pediatric Dentistry Today*.

In her second year, she has taken the initiative to expand this project to do a focus group study on the topic, “Barriers to dental care for special needs children.” The letter of intent for this project has been accepted for the FY17 Graduate Student Affiliate Seed Grant Competition, sponsored by Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy. The full proposal has already been submitted.

In addition to obtaining her certificate in pediatric dentistry, she has also chosen to spend another year after residency to get a Master’s degree in Dental Sciences. The topic of her thesis is, “Dental care for children with Autism.” She has also been accepted to the 2018 Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program, that provides interdisciplinary training to improve the health of infants, children, and adolescents with disabilities. As a part of this national level opportunity, she will not only have the privilege of directly working with other specialists but also to be the face of dentistry to other health care professions.

Apart from learning the skills of being a good clinician and a responsible resident, she has taken the time to go beyond the requirements of her residency program. During her second year, she helped develop an innovative lecture series for her residency program by collaborating with fields like social work, child life and integrative medicine. These new partnerships with experts from non-traditional fields have enhanced practice and training beyond the dental field.

In addition to expanding the scope of patient care activities, she has also devoted time to leadership activities at district and national levels. In her first year, she was selected to be a Freshman consultant to the AAPD Resident Committee. As a part of this committee for two years now, she has helped facilitate opportunities for residents to contribute to AAPD activities and initiatives nationwide. Taneja was involved in evaluating and improving the resident’s award process and has now been nominated to Chair the committee for next year.

Recently, she has was also selected to be a board member of the Northeast Society of Pediatric Dentistry Committee for the upcoming year. Her role will be to provide a resident perspective to the discussions and decisions made by the board and aid in the planning of events and meetings.

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**The Dental Trauma Guide – Evidence-Based Treatment Guide**

In 2005, researchers at the University Hospital of Copenhagen started the Dental Trauma Guide to capitalize on an extensive dental trauma injuries database they had collected. The extensive catalog of trauma data is used to produce prognosis estimates for different injuries, and allows comparison of competing treatments.

Due to a loss of funding the Dental Trauma Guide is now a membership-based website. For AAPD members, the fee (normally $25 per year) is a nominal $5 per user per year.

To subscribe:

- Visit [dentaltraumaguide.org/membership-aapd-7123647361/](dentaltraumaguide.org/membership-aapd-7123647361/).
- Select the number of individual users that need to have access to the Dental Trauma Guide.
- You now have access to the unique services of the Dental Trauma Guide.

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**2018 Membership Directory Reminder**

Your Membership Directory address is printed on your membership dues invoice that was recently mailed to you. Any changes or updates to your Membership Directory information are due to the headquarters office by Sept. 15, 2017. You can verify your address on your annual dues invoice or visit the Members’ Only section of the AAPD website ([www.aapd.org](www.aapd.org)) to update your profile. Please take a few moments to verify your address information to assure that AAPD has it correctly. Questions regarding your Membership Directory address information should be forwarded to David Hydorn at (312) 337-2169 or dhydorn@aapd.org.