

University of Illinois at Chicago  
College of Dentistry



## Mentoring Program



A joint collaboration of the:

- ◆ UIC Dental Alumni Association
- ◆ UIC College of Dentistry and
- ◆ Chicago Dental Society

## WHAT IS THE MENTOR PROGRAM?

The Mentor Program introduces students to dental professionals who are members of organized dentistry. The program fosters relationships between practitioners and students during their training. It provides an avenue for students to take when looking for additional information, considering career options and seeking opinions from “someone who has been there.” The Mentors Program also introduces students to the concerns and ideas that will be important in their future careers.

## WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE MENTOR PROGRAM?

The Mentor Program enables students to obtain advice and guidance for some of the concerns involved in beginning a dental career. It is intended to integrate the dentist of tomorrow with the dental community. Student will have the opportunity to interact with practitioners from organized dentistry so they can begin to understand their concerns.

## HOW DOES THE MENTOR PROGRAM WORK?

Interested students and practicing dentist complete screening forms. The forms will be used to pair students with dentist. A dentist is initially paired with two dental students. Each program participant is asked to commit for two years, though long term informal professional relationships may continue.

The program begins with an annual dinner where new mentors and protégés meet for the first time and are welcomed into the program by previous participants. From there, the mentors and protégés define how they want the relationship to progress. Several organized social opportunities will be offered throughout the year. These organized events should be supplemental with visits to the mentor’s office to answer the students’ questions regarding the operation of a private office.

## WHAT IS THE CHICAGO DENTAL SOCIETY?

The Chicago Dental Society was organized in 1864 and incorporated in 1878. The objective of the Chicago Dental Society is to encourage the improvement of the health of the public, to promote the art and science of dentistry and to represent the interest of the members of the profession and the public that it serves.

When joining the Chicago Dental Society, a dentist also becomes a member of the American Dental Association and the Illinois State Dental Society. However, instead of paying three separate dues invoices, members pay once annually to belong to all component (local), constituent (state) and national levels.

## WHAT IS A MENTOR?

A mentor is a practicing dentist, who is a member of organized dentistry and willing to be an additional resource to the dentist of tomorrow.

A mentor can be:

- ◆ A wise and trusted friend
- ◆ A good listener, someone who cares
- ◆ Someone who helps another develop his or her own vision and work to their fullest potential
- ◆ A resource for information

Responsibilities of the mentor:

- ◆ Initiate first contact and then communicate frequently
- ◆ Express your expectations for the relationship and define what you hope to gain from and offer to the relationship
- ◆ Provide an opportunity for the protégé to observe the operation of a dental office
- ◆ Invite your protégé to participate in professional activities with you, such as component meetings, continuing education and meetings with dental suppliers.

## WHAT CAN A MENTOR DO FOR A PROTÉGÉ?

A mentor can help a protégé:

- ◆ Explore career possibilities
- ◆ Network with colleagues
- ◆ Work through problems with a new perspective
- ◆ Share expertise and experience
- ◆ Aid in developing dentistry's future professionals
- ◆ Give back to the profession
- ◆ Stay apprised of changes in dental education
- ◆ Make a real difference in the life of a dental student



## WHAT IS A PROTÉGÉ?

A protégé is a dental student who is interested in enhancing his or her dental education by forming a relationship with a practicing member of the dental profession.

A protégé has:

- An open mind
- A willingness to learn
- A commitment to his/her future
- A willingness to be an active participant

### Responsibilities of the Protégé:

- ◆ Communicate openly and freely
- ◆ Honor appointments and commitments
- ◆ Express your expectations for the relationship and define what you hope to gain from and offer to the relationship
- ◆ Provide feedback to your mentor
- ◆ Share your thoughts about schools, the profession and entering practice. The protégé actively seeks the mentor's opinion

### BASICS OF EVERY MENTOR/PROTÉGÉ RELATIONSHIP:

- ◆ Be willing and eager to listen and talk
- ◆ Be honest
- ◆ Be enthusiastic and positive
- ◆ Feel free to share your opinion, but guard against telling someone what to do or not to do
- ◆ Enjoy yourself, have fun and thank your mentor for the time and attention Important: A protégé is an observer only.



### WHAT IF THE RELATIONSHIP DOESN'T WORK?

If you've tried your best to communicate with each other and the relationship is not working, contact the program coordinator at the College of Dentistry or the Chicago Dental Society. If you feel you are not well matched, another attempt will be made to pair you with a new mentor/protégé.

The UIC College of Dentistry, the UIC Alumni Association and the Chicago Dental Society are excited about the opportunities the Mentor Program affords. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

## ETIQUETTE OF OBSERVATION

Guidance on Observation During Dental Patient Treatment University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry.

Observations during patient treatment allows guest a special learning opportunity. However, observers must remember that the focus of the practitioners and staff is caring for the patient. Additionally, observation is allowed only by patient permission. Health care is considered by most persons to be a highly personal and occasionally uncomfortable experience. Be sensitive to the patients, practitioner and staff. With this in mind, remember the following as you observe during your patient treatment procedures.

- ◆ All patient information is strictly confidential. This includes health history information, procedures performed and information given by or provided to the patient. Even personal comments by the patient or patients reactions to treatments should not be discussed with others outside the treatment team.
- ◆ Because the primary concern of the dentist and staff is safe and effective patient care, observation should be quiet and unobtrusive. Do not ask questions or comment on treatment unless invited to do so. Different treatment teams have different styles. While the treatment may seem relaxed and informal to increase patient comfort, remember the dentist and staff focus is on the patient.
- ◆ Be prepared to explain your interest in observation to the patient. Most persons are more than willing to help in the education of a future health professional. However should a patient request that you not be present during treatment, let the patient know you understand and leave immediately.
- ◆ Follow the infection control guidelines requested of you by the treatment team. You may be asked to wear a moisture resistant gown, safety goggles, a facemask, and gloves.
- ◆ Do not be judgmental. Information provided by patients may shock you. Treatment may at times seem grisly. A staff member may act in a manner you do not like. DO NOT offer your opinion, make a face, or say anything in front of the patient. If something is bothering you, leave the room or area.
- ◆ Dress professionally. Use the standards set by the practitioners and staff.
- ◆ If you feel it is appropriate, thank the patient for the learning opportunity provided by your observation.
- ◆ The practitioner and staff will probably welcome questions about procedures, patient management and office management in a setting away from patient. Use your best judgment on how extensive such discussion should be. Are there a lot of emergency patients waiting? Or does there seem to be a lull in which more extensive discussions can occur?
- ◆ Thank the practitioner and staff at the end of the day.



## UIC COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry is to promote optimum oral and general health to the people of the State of Illinois and worldwide through excellence in education, patient care, research, and service. The College identifies the following goals to meet this mission:

- ◆ To prepare highly qualified healthcare professionals, educators, and scientist in the basic and oral health sciences;
- ◆ To provide patient-centered care that is comprehensive and compassionate for a culturally diverse population;
- ◆ To provide students oriented educational programs that prepare individuals for the thoughtful, ethical practice of dentistry and life-long learning;
- ◆ To foster collaborative research and develop specialized centers for innovative research in areas of health and disease;
- ◆ To address community and regional health care policy at the university, state, and national levels;
- ◆ To maintain a leadership role in forming health care policy at the university, state, and national levels;
- ◆ To be a worldwide resource for continued professional development;
- ◆ To provide an environment for individual growth founded on mutual respect and professionalism; and
- ◆ To value and seek diversity in students, staff, faculty and patients

## CHICAGO DENTAL SOCIETY MISSION STATEMENT

The object (Mission) of this society shall be to encourage the improvement of the health of the public, to promote the art and sciences of dentistry and to represent the interest of the members of the profession and the public which it serves.



## Contacts:

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