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## Passion, opportunity shape vibrant academic career

Tara L. Aghaloo, DDS, MD, PhD, experienced firsthand the benefits of a helping hand early in her career. Today, she welcomes the chance to offer a steadying hand to others following a path she knows well.

Dr. Aghaloo was assistant professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery at UCLA's School of Dentistry in 2003 when she learned of the Faculty Educator Development Award (FEDA) jointly funded by AAOMS and the OMS Foundation. FEDA – in its second year at the time – was offering \$30,000 a year for three years in exchange for a six-year commitment to academia.

“FEDA was a great idea,” Dr. Aghaloo said. “It helped bridge the financial gap for enthusiastic young faculty members like me, encouraging us to stay in academia and easing the financial consequences of that decision.”

The OMS Foundation continued to support Dr. Aghaloo's aspirations in academia and research. Her experience as a member of Dr. Gary Bouloux's award-winning team at the AAOMS Clinical Trials Methods Course in 2008 inspired her to apply for an OMS Foundation Research Support Grant in 2010. Her project, “Marrow Stromal Cell Site Specific Differences in Bone Regeneration,” was approved for funding in 2011

and received the Foundation's Stephen B. Milam Research Award as the top-ranked proposal that year. She has remained active as a researcher, specializing in bone regeneration and osteonecrosis of the jaw.

In 2016, UCLA's School of Dentistry received a Student Research Training Award from the Foundation, offering Dr. Aghaloo an opportunity to share her passion, experience and expertise as a researcher with the next generation of UCLA's OMSs and scientists.

Today, Dr. Aghaloo is assistant dean of clinical research, professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery and director of the Clinical Research Center at UCLA's School of Dentistry. She also is an active mentor and role model to those considering a similar career path. This spring, she served as moderator for Clinical and Scientific Innovations for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (CSIOMS), a conference that helped chart her professional course more than a decade ago and to which she has contributed as a member of the AAOMS Committee on Research Planning and Technology Assessment since 2012.

She also recently accepted a full appointment to the Foundation's Committee on Research, an opportunity to meet, mentor and champion oral and maxillofacial surgery researchers.



Tara Aghaloo, DDS, MD, PhD

“As an early beneficiary of the Foundation's generosity, I'm looking forward to helping others reach their full potential and realize their career goals,” Dr. Aghaloo said. “It's critical that our specialty advances through well-designed basic and clinical studies, not just anecdotal evidence. That requires a solid commitment to research, and THAT takes money.

“If we are to hold our position as the experts in our profession, then we need to create and own the new knowledge that will define our future,” she added. “We can't afford to rely on others to share their knowledge with us. It's imperative that we accept that responsibility, appreciate those who helped us succeed and then extend our hand to those following in our footsteps.” ■

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# 60 years and still going strong

When I was 30, I assumed that most 60-year-olds had things wrapped up or close to it. Since then, I have discovered that many of the 60-year-olds I know are just hitting their stride.

So it is with the OMS Foundation, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year with optimism, energy and a firm belief that our best work may yet be ahead of us.

A look back at our history reveals how far we have come and how true we have remained to our founders' vision. In its early days, the Foundation supported the first Research in Oral Surgery Conference, the first International Conference on Oral Surgery and the first OMSITE exam for residents. OMS residents could apply to the Foundation to "sponsor" their humanitarian service on the SS Hope, a hospital ship deployed in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Fast forward to 2019, and our programs' budget includes funding for the Resident Transitions into Practice Conference, CSIOMS and Global Initiative for Volunteerism and Education (GIVE), which supports residents serving with humanitarian healthcare teams. Our mission statement has evolved a bit, but our purpose remains true to our founders'

intent: to improve the quality and safety of patient care through innovative research and education.

The biggest differences between 1959 and 2019 can be measured in capacity and ambition. Thanks to the vision, leadership and generosity of countless "giants" of our profession, we are blessed with an endowment that's around \$14 million. Its proceeds support our annual programs budget, and the Foundation this year will disburse more than \$600,000 to support research, education and academic excellence.

Where will we go from here? We are committed to supporting the discovery of new knowledge relevant to our specialty and proving its validity with solid research. We are committed to sharing that knowledge through high-quality, accessible education programs. Our patients look to their OMS for the most advanced level of care available, and we are committed to keeping that knowledge pipeline flowing. It's up to you, however, to help us fulfill these commitments.

In this issue, you'll find stories of gratitude, stories of generosity and stories that combine the two. Dr. James Swift - who with his wife, Lori, recently pledged

\$100,000 to the Foundation - counts two Research Support Grants and a Student Research Training Award among his early-career milestones. He and Dr. Tara Aghaloo share the opinion that benefiting from another's generosity creates an obligation to pay it forward.

Who among us has *not* benefited from another's generosity? It is our turn now to pass along the good that has come into our lives to help those following behind us. You can add gratification by recognizing a benefactor with a tribute gift acknowledged on our website and in a personal note to the honoree's family. Donate in May, and USOSM will match your gift, up to a total of \$25,000. Now *that's* a package worthy of a 60th birthday.

**Thank you for joining me in this important work! ■**

*Kathy A. Banks, DMD*



Kathy A. Banks, DMD  
OMS Foundation Chair



Back row from left:  
*Thomas F. Burk, DMD, MD*  
*Thomas P. Williams, DDS, MD, FACS*  
*Louis K. Rafetto, DMD*  
*Brett L. Ferguson, DDS, FACS*  
*Dale J. Misiek, DMD*  
*W. Frederick Stephens, DDS*  
  
Front row from left:  
*Victor L. Nannini, DDS, FACS*  
*William C. Passolt, CPA*  
*Kathy A. Banks, DMD*  
*J. David Johnson Jr., DDS*  
*Douglas W. Fain, DDS, MD, FACS*

## 2019-20 OMS Foundation Board of Directors

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W. Frederick Stephens, DDS  
Thomas P. Williams, DDS, MD, FACS  
Thomas F. Burk, DMD, MD,  
*ROAAOMS Liaison*

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## STINGel oral cancer investigation continues

*In 2017, the OMS Foundation awarded a \$75,000 Research Support Grant to the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and Dr. Simon Young for a promising head and neck squamous cell carcinoma immunotherapy investigation. The following is an update from Dr. Young:*

Cancer immunotherapy has arisen as an exciting treatment modality for several advanced-stage cancers with two “checkpoint inhibitor” therapies approved by the FDA for head and neck cancer in 2016. Durable anti-tumor responses have been shown in patients who respond to this therapy, although success rates remain in the range of 15 percent to 20 percent.

A new class of immunotherapeutics in Phase I clinical trials is based on synthetic cyclic dinucleotides (CDN) and has been found to produce strong anti-tumor responses in preclinical models through the Stimulator of Interferon Genes (STING) pathway. HNSCC remains a challenge, however, with CDN monotherapy showing only minimal efficacy in preclinical models.

Using a biomaterials approach, our lab developed a hydrogel-based platform called STINGel to deliver the CDN molecule as an intratumoral injection. In the laboratory setting, STINGel was shown to be highly effective at killing tumor cells in vitro. However, we were most surprised by the efficacy of STINGel

in a challenging mouse model of oral cancer that has previously been shown to be unresponsive to conventional immunotherapies.

Over the past year, we have continued to optimize our hydrogel system to better control the release of the CDN molecule and tested a host of enhanced STINGel variants on multiple oral cancer models to determine the broad efficacy of this approach.

Our enthusiasm for this novel cancer immunotherapy platform is shared by the broader research community and has resulted in two publications and federal funding in the form of an R21 grant (R21 DE027794) through the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR).

Initial support from the OMS Foundation allowed us to generate the data needed to compete for these highly competitive federal funds. We are extremely grateful to the OMS Foundation and the OMS community for their support of this exciting work and hope to obtain more comprehensive funding in the form of an RO1 grant in the near future.

Most importantly, we hope to enhance our understanding of how cancer can be rendered more susceptible to immunotherapy and improve outcomes for patients with HNSCC in the future. ■

### Alliance offers travel scholarships for spouses

The OMS Foundation Alliance is accepting applications for its Norma L. Kelly Resident Spouse Scholarships, offering \$1,000 to offset the travel expenses of resident spouses attending the 2019 AAOMS Annual Meeting in Boston, Mass. Applications will be accepted April 15 to July 1.

With support from OMSNIC, Kelly scholarship recipients are welcomed as guests of honor at Alliance events at the Annual Meeting in order to enjoy numerous opportunities to network and connect with other Alliance supporters. ■

Learn more and apply at [OMSFoundation.org/Alliance/Scholarships](http://OMSFoundation.org/Alliance/Scholarships).  
**Questions?** Call 847-233-4304 or email [programs@omsfoundation.org](mailto:programs@omsfoundation.org).

### Alliance plans health walks, Tuscan Kitchen Annual Event

Allied staff, family and friends of the OMS community are invited to start their Annual Meeting days with a scenic, social “health walk” with the OMS Foundation Alliance. The at-your-own-pace walks originate at the AAOMS headquarters hotel at 7:30 a.m. and finish with a casual breakfast at Buco Trattoria at 8:30 a.m. Sept. 18 to 20. Advance registration is not required.

The Alliance’s 2019 Annual Event on Sept. 19 will feature a luncheon and cooking class at Boston’s famous Tuscan Kitchen Seaport. Learn from the pros how to build regional Italian flavor into menus, enjoy a luncheon with friends and get an insider’s perspective on the Foundation’s new Global Initiative for Volunteerism and Education (GIVE) program. Tickets are \$130 per person in advance; and \$150 after Sept. 1. ■

### Featured Donors: Dr. James and Carmen Hupp

“Carmen and I give to the OMS Foundation because its mission rings true to us and we love knowing how well they steward our gifts. We are enthusiastic supporters of the new Global Initiative for Volunteerism and Education (GIVE), which promotes

good global citizenship through the sharing of our talents with patients and clinicians in underdeveloped nations around the world. We support GIVE through the OMS Foundation Alliance and urge others to do the same.”



## Foundation expands programs support in 2019

To continue its goal of helping advance the OMS specialty, the OMS Foundation Board approved to support research and education in 2019. Approved programs include:

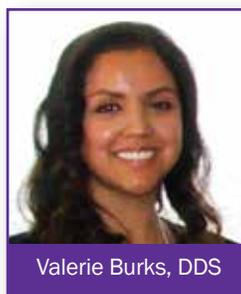
- Two Faculty Educator Development Awards (FEDA) – \$260,000
- Support of 2019 Clinical and Scientific Innovations for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (CSIOMS) conference – \$20,000
- Support of 2019 Resident Transitions into Practice Conference – \$5,000
- 12 Resident Travel Scholarships for 2019 CSIOMS – \$12,000
- Support of Surgical Council on Resident Education (SCORE) development (\$20,000 per year for three years) – \$60,000

- Nine Norma L. Kelly Resident Spouse Scholarships – \$9,000
- Five Global Initiative for Volunteerism and Education stipends – \$12,500

Also approved were three Research Support Grants of \$75,000 each that are awarded to:

- University of Washington School of Dentistry for “To Operate or Not to Operate? Stigma and Quality of Life Outcomes in Craniofacial Fibrous Dysplasia” (Stephen B. Milam Research Award recipient)
  - Principal investigator: Andrea Burke, DMD, MD
  - Co-principal investigator: Amanda Konradi, MA, PhD (Loyola University Maryland)

- University of Illinois at Chicago for “Targeting Mechanobiological Pathways to Attenuate Dysfunctional Remodeling in TMJ-OA”
  - Principal investigator: David Reed, PhD
  - Co-principal investigator: Michael Han, DDS
  - Co-principal investigator: Louis G. Mercuri, DDS, MS (Rush University Medical Center)
- Providence Cancer Institute for “Role of Epigenetic Modulation in Anti-OX40 Immunotherapy Resistance”
  - Principal investigator: Chi Viet, DDS, MD, PhD
  - Co-principal investigator: R. Bryan Bell, DDS, MD, FACS



### Meet Norma L. Kelly Scholarship recipient Valerie Burks, DDS

*Valerie Burks, DDS – a Norma L. Kelly Resident Spouse Scholarship recipient – shares her thoughts about the Alliance.*

I am extremely grateful to have received a generous scholarship

from the OMS Foundation Alliance. It afforded me the opportunity to accompany my husband to the 2018 AAOMS Annual Meeting.

It was quite the dynamic being a general dentist myself and finding myself married to an OMS resident. The long hours, demanding schedules and long years of schooling still take a toll, but it was very nice meeting other dentist spouses. They understood the unique challenge of having to put your career on hold and the inability to put down roots at your office as you're only a temporary presence, counting down the years until graduation.

It was good to meet all the other spouses and learn how they juggle their home lives, manage a household, children, pets, etc.

The Alliance members I did get the chance to meet and speak with were all pleasant and very welcoming. I enjoyed chatting with them and learning where all they are now and how much everyone's hard work had paid off in the long run.

What I really enjoyed was being given the chance to see deeper into my husband's world. Aspects of our careers may have some overlap, but it was eye-opening to see and meet the people who have made such an impact on him. We had dinner one evening with his future employers and, before the end of the week, he had signed a letter of intent to commit to working with them. Without this scholarship, we wouldn't have been able to meet these individuals as we've met every other decision in our marriage together as a team.

Again, I am grateful I was afforded the opportunity to spend a week with my husband supporting, networking and accompanying him at the AAOMS Annual Meeting. I am grateful to the Alliance for all it has to offer. It is my hope to return the favor in kind to some spouse who is looking to do the same in the future. ■

### Save the Date

- May 1 to June 1:** Donate to 'Double Your Impact' gift match
- July 1:** Resident Spouse Travel Scholarship application deadline
- July 15:** Research Support Grant application deadline
- July 15:** Student Research Training Award application deadline
- Sept. 19:** Alliance Annual Event at Tuscan Kitchen Seaport



## \$100,000 gift to help ‘make the world a better place’

With his career devoted to making an impact in the OMS community, James Q. Swift, DDS, FACS, wants to help ensure the specialty’s future. That’s why he and his wife, Lori, have pledged to give \$100,000 to the OMS Foundation over 10 years.

“Thinking about what I’ve been given, I feel an obligation to share the rewards of my career to help sustain the specialty’s forward momentum,” Dr. Swift said.

“Lori and I chose to support the Foundation because its work is positive, effective and verifiable.”

Dr. Swift’s wide-ranging and substantial contributions to the OMS specialty are many. He is professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry and former president of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and American Dental Education Association, and he served as a director of the OMS Foundation from 2008-12. He has

performed clinical research in pain and pain management, TMJ disorders and dental implants.

“The Foundation plays a key role in identifying the most important issues to the specialty and applying resources to resolve them whether they’re related to global oral health, general anesthesia, technology, techniques or procedures,” Dr. Swift said.

Among his many honors, the OMS Foundation presented Dr. Swift with its Ambassador Service Award in 2004 and its Daniel M. Laskin Award, honoring the top *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery* article of 1998. Dr. Swift also has served as chair of OMSNIC’s Board of Directors since 2014 and has been a member of the OMSNIC board since 2006.

“Like most of the oral surgeons we know, we want to make the world a better place,” Dr. Swift said. “If our gift inspires others to give, then that’s reward enough for us.”



Dr. James and Lori Swift

*Every gift is significant, especially yours! Support the important work being done by the OMS Foundation with a donation to its 2019 Annual Fund Campaign at [OMSFoundation.org/Donate](http://OMSFoundation.org/Donate). ■*

## Residents attend Transitions into Practice Conference



*About 75 OMS residents attended the 2019 Resident Transitions into Practice Conference at no charge, thanks to financial support from AAOMS, the OMS Foundation and other supporters.*



## Featured corporate donor: USOSM

U.S. Oral Surgery Management collaborates with premier oral and maxillofacial surgeons to offer a partnership solution for continued and accelerated practice success as the healthcare landscape becomes more competitive and the regulatory complexities increase. Serving as an extension of the clinical mission of its surgeon partners, USOSM preserves clinical autonomy and keeps the focus on patient care and exceptional patient outcomes.

“U.S. Oral Surgery Management is proud to partner with the OMS Foundation,” said Richard J. Hall, president and CEO of U.S. Oral Surgery Management. “Our commitment to supporting the education, training and research of the oral surgery profession is embedded in our core values and mission of fueling innovation and clinical excellence. Investing in the Foundation today ensures the future success of oral surgeons tomorrow.” ■



# It's our turn.

“Our specialty blends the best of dentistry and medicine, thanks to deliberate and planned efforts of our predecessors and peers. Susan and I give in recognition of those who gave before us, and to support the research and education that will preserve the preeminence of the OMS specialty.”

– Dr. Colin and Susan Bell, Featured Donors



Your gift to the OMS Foundation supports innovative research, education opportunities for residents and a strong academic sector. **Donate now to DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT! U.S. Oral Surgery Management will match every gift to the Foundation received May 1 - June 1, up to a total of \$25,000.**

The OMS Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.



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