It is indeed a privilege to be the dean for a school celebrating its 160th birthday. In 1863 the Philadelphia Dental College (Temple University Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry) was founded during a challenging time of Civil War. In fact, the school’s first class of students were studying while the Gettysburg battle was underway nearby on hallowed ground. Since then, this school and its students, faculty, and staff have experienced all wars, pandemics, and technological revolutions that have emerged over the last century and half. Yet, more than 200,000 dentists have graduated from the dental and specialty programs offered here.

Throughout this history, this dental school has never abandoned its founding father’s vision and passion, based on structured curriculum and patient care. Dr. John H. McQuillen may not have imagined what the school could achieve, but he certainly erected the foundation during his 20 years as dean when he devoted his life to education, patient care, and research. Today, he would see that the school has provided care to millions of people from Philadelphia and the region, and that its impact on dental education and patient care has been
global. Today, he would also see that the quality of graduates has been and will remain high and that they will always be ready to practice immediately after graduation.

**Committed to care for underserved**

Going forward, Temple University Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry will remain focused on teaching a pragmatic curriculum founded on scientific evidence, so we can support contemporary and technologically advanced patient care to those who are underserved. We will continue, as we always have, to be committed to providing dental care to low-income residents of Philadelphia, children, adults, and the elderly, regardless of their medical, social, economic, behavioral, physical, and mental health needs. That focus provides our students with significant opportunities to learn from a diverse patient population who come from the community of North Philadelphia and the region.

On this 160th anniversary, the dental school enjoys an unprecedented renaissance in all programs. The school has been active in promoting digital dental practice, new practice models, care for populations with limited access to dental care, and offers modern classrooms and clinics. The school also has an active, funded research program that has produced several patents. Dr. McQuillen, committed to research and a former editor of *Dental Cosmos* (now the *Journal of the American Dental Association*), would be proud.

However, these achievements could not have been reached without the engagement of our large school community and the leadership of faculty. Hence, this celebration is for all faculty, staff, and students who have worked at this school since its inception.

**Congratulations!**
Q: You have said that you noticed a dramatic change in the school when Dean Ismail came to Temple Dental. What were your first observations?
First, Amid Ismail showed a willingness to engage a whole generation of dentists who had graduated from Temple Dental and never wanted to come back, never wanted to see the school again. He was willing to work at being present in front of these alumni, to welcome them back and help them understand his vision for the school. We used to joke that if there was one alumnus sitting on a bench in Scranton, he would go.

Then, his business background helped him figure out a new financial model. He got the university to agree to loan him money to work on facilities for the school. And he tore the school apart, building new clinics, new labs, and new teaching rooms. Then he brought in technology and developed a shiny, clean school that made us proud. The results were striking, and it was the start of a new era for incoming students.

Next, he focused on operations. He still talks about how he would come into the school and find a big, long line of patients out front. There had been no real attention given to the patient experience and how to create a flow of patients so students could get more experience while also serving the community.

He had that public health background. And he knew North Philadelphia was one of the most underserved dental areas in the country. So he worked the neighborhood, going from church to church, embracing the underserved and inviting them into Temple’s dental school as their dental care home.

Q: Did any of these changes surprise you?
The answer is absolutely, stunningly.

Q: In which ways?
We on the board knew that Amid had the Temple DNA of being gritty and tough, that whatever was in front of him, he was going to laser focus on and get it done. But change is difficult, isn't it? Massive change is herculean. It is a painful process for faculty to have their work home torn apart and go through the many structural and operational changes. Yet somehow by sheer will, they all managed through it.

None of us could have imagined someone doing in North Philadelphia what he’s done. That arc of accomplishment is a story of great educational and community leadership. What he’s been changing has the potential to inspire and improve a few generations of patients and dental students.

Yet, it isn’t just that he’s been focused on the neighborhood, the alumni, and the school. He started branching out, building bigger bridges into international communities that have been in conflict. Very early on, he brought Israeli and Palestinian students to Philadelphia, hosting them for weeks at a time. He has broadened understanding and developed lifelong friendships by using our profession as a common language. His international programs have reached as far as China, the UAE, Pakistan, India, Kuwait, and Taiwan. Also, early on, he started to bring international, leading researchers and academics to Temple, challenging them and building consensus on the proper way to treat one of humanities’ most prevalent infections, dental caries, on a worldwide basis.
THAT ARC OF ACCOMPLISHMENT IS A STORY OF GREAT EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP.

Q: Why do you think Dean Ismail came to Temple, when the challenges were so big and many other opportunities were available? I think there were 11 deanships available around the country at the time he was asked to join Temple. Amid had a lot of educational degrees—a dental degree, a master’s and a PhD in public health, an MBA—all from exceptional universities. He could have chosen any of the schools to be dean, but he chose Temple because I think he looked at Temple as a huge challenge.

Q: When you think of Temple Dental’s future, what do you see? Things are going to change a lot, aren’t they? The road ahead is going to be a phenomenal period of growth as advances in technology improve procedures, equipment, techniques, and biomaterials across the board. Temple will continue to teach our dentists the absolute and critical principles of the human medical sciences that don’t change. This is what will prepare the future generations of dentists to be critical thinking filters for what will improve patient care and outcomes.

So if you ask me what is best for the dental school to focus on in the future, it’s what the dean is already doing. It’s incorporating technology with dentistry’s fundamental principles and then teaching students the ability to adapt and to filter technology, as it keeps emerging. We just know there will be a lot of change, and a lot of it is going to hinge on technology.

A DEEPER LOOK AT MORE THAN A DECADE OF CHANGE

THE SOUL OF A DENTIST
They’re shadow interns, obligated to spend time in a dental office. For the students, the success of a practice is appealing, and they want to know, “How do I get here?”

To answer, Dr. Roberts often shares a philosophical insight. He begins: “When you graduate, you’re conferred a dental soul. You have earned it. And you give up a piece of it every time you walk into a room and treat a patient—because you’re a psychologist, you’re an engineer, you’re an artist, you’re managing a lot of complex challenges for people who are afraid. But along the way you get to know families, their children and grandchildren and become part of their lives. That’s how you get paid back for giving up some of your soul. It’s the social reward of dentistry, and it’s unmatched.”
Graduation 1973: Dr. Ronald Silverman is seated with the classmates he’s known during all four years of Temple Dental School. As the ceremony begins, a name is called, beginning of course with “A.”

“Who’s that?!” they ask. More names are announced, and Silverman and his friends quickly realize how few graduates they know. Not until the end of the alphabet do they hear names they recognize—those whom they’ve been seated next to in every class, those who have comprised their complete circle of friends.

That was life among the R’s, S’s and T’s, as Silverman describes it, when alphabetical seating and a commuter-school environment limited his ability to interact with many of the students. “I went to six weddings during my time there,” he recalls, “and all were for students whose last name began with “S.”

Other factors also contributed to his unhappiness with the school. He found the dress code and attendance requirements restrictive—and the faculty and administration less than warm and welcoming. It was all quite different from his undergraduate years at the University of Wisconsin.

At Temple Dental, he says, “We learned, and I was grateful for my degree, but it wasn’t a pleasant experience.” So he distanced himself from the school, even though his father had graduated from Temple Dental and they were a legacy family.

He especially became disenchanted when he returned from Iraq as a two-star general with a long list of achievements, all outlined in a press release that the Pentagon sent to Temple Dental. Silverman recalls that the school declined to publish the news, saying it didn’t recognize military achievements.

Dramatic change
“I didn’t want anything to do with them,” he says. But a few years later his attitude dramatically changed.

“Dean Amid Ismail has been a game changer,” emphasizes Silverman. “He sent me a personal letter, asking to meet me for lunch. He was fantastic, and he was apologetic. He won me over.”

“Now I want to help the program,” he says. “I thought I was unusual in my feelings about Temple Dental. But at a recent Board of Visitors meeting, I learned that other alumni share my opinion. Now as president of the Alumni Association, I want to convey the changes and encourage alumni to visit the school, meet the faculty, and see how Temple Dental has progressed. I would like them to see what I see and take pride in our school.”

“It’s not your father’s school,” he is quick to point out. “It’s so different and impressive, very much a part of the 21st century. Not just the advances in technology, but the openness...
and friendliness of the faculty and administration and the diversity of the students. They’re from all over the world with the women outnumbering the men. The dean knows them all, and they have personal interaction with him.”

Beyond connecting with current alumni, Silverman will be asking current students what the association can do for them. Mentoring, help with job placement, even offering doughnuts and coffee during finals are all possibilities. The goal, he says, is to show them how they will be part of a community of graduates.

Summing up how differently he sees Temple Dental now, Silverman says, “The dean’s personality and vision have made the school what it is. I’m impressed that all the students know him, are excited about him—and that the faculty are almost the students’ friends. We never had that. I didn’t even know the names of the deans when I was there.”

HIS MILITARY RECORD OF FIRSTS

- After graduation spent four years as an Army dentist
- Built and was active in a private dental practice for 35 years while also serving in the Army Reserve in various capacities
- Became first Army dentist as a brigadier general to command medical troops
- Became first major general to command all medical troops in a war zone, Iraq 2006-2007
- Achieved a 95% survival rate for combat wounds in the Iraqi war, the highest survival rate in the history of warfare
- Oversaw the Iraqi health care system for all civilians during deployment in Iraq
WHEN SHE CAME TO TEMPLE DENTAL IN 2010, DR. MARISOL TELLEZ MERCHAN ALREADY KNEW DEAN ISMAIL. SHE HAD FIRST CONNECTED WITH HIM IN THE EARLY 2000S WHEN THEY WERE BOTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN. TELLEZ WAS PURSING HER PHD IN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, AND THE DEAN WAS A MEMBER OF HER DISSERTATION COMMITTEE. LOOKING BACK, SHE SAYS, “HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A VISIONARY, A PROBLEM SOLVER, ALWAYS THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX.”

SO TELLEZ KNEW THE KIND OF SUPPORT THE DEAN WOULD OFFER HER WHEN SHE CAME FROM COLOMBIA WITH A BACKGROUND IN ACADEMICS AND IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR. “I UNDERSTOOD HIS PUBLIC HEALTH BACKGROUND, HIS INTEREST IN DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH, AND WHAT HIS DIRECTION WOULD BE AT TEMPLE,” SHE SAYS.

Hired to expand research in her area of public health dentistry and to assist in the process of centralizing research in the Department of Oral Health Sciences, Tellez has been working with many other research faculty. Together, they have been consolidating key strategic lines of research at the school.

For Tellez and Dr. Eugene Dunne, assistant professor in the Department of Oral Health Sciences, a main focus of research continues to be the management of adult anxiety. Tellez says their goal for the current clinical trial is to determine if an online program based on cognitive behavioral therapy can make a notable difference. If so, in just one hour, the easily accessible intervention can “get to the cause of anxiety,” she explains, “and avoid approaches such as pharmaceuticals, sedation, and general anesthesia that can be a burden for the patient and costly for the whole health system.”

**Intervention for anxiety**

About 300 subjects are now in the study, and Tellez and Dunne are enrolling more until they reach 450 patients. She envisions disseminating the intervention to patients at home before an appointment. “We can reach those with no access to any other kind of intervention as well as those with minimal cognitive therapy experience,” she says. “Maybe we can even reach patients who are so anxious they are not able to call for an appointment.”

When the trial’s analysis is completed, both English and Spanish versions will be ready. Meanwhile, Temple Dental is funding a pilot to evaluate the feasibility of administering the program to Spanish-speaking patients.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has funded this line of research—as have two grants from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. Their second grant totaled $2.6 million and, says Tellez, “That was a major achievement. It’s the largest award the school has ever received for research.” Initially a four-year grant, it will be extended a year until the summer of 2024 due to the challenges of dealing with Covid.
AI research

In partnership with the Department of Health Services Administration and Policy at the College of Public Health, Tellez is also studying how to use artificial intelligence for better patient care. “We have a huge need to develop more accurate models that can help us predict dental caries and periodontal disease,” she emphasizes. “In fact, we now have the possibility to leverage the use of big data for this purpose.”

Considering the potential, a large team of faculty from the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, and Public Health submitted a $3.6 million grant request last December to NIDCR to help expand the research infrastructure at the dental school. They then hope to use AI in different applications with the ultimate common goal of improving patient care.

Tellez believes that in the next 10 to 15 years commercially available systems will be incorporated into patient record software to automatically do the predictions. “Taking clinical judgement errors out of the assessment model is a huge application for AI and will change the way we provide care for patients in the future,” she notes.

Another frontier of AI research that she foresees is using AI to automatically detect dental disease. Tellez describes how commercial companies are doing a lot of beta testing with radiographs on the computer for automatic detection of caries and bone loss. However, she anticipates even a much broader capability.

Throughout her time at Temple Dental, Tellez says she has had continued support from the dean and the university to grow professionally and personally. “The dean is a public health expert,” she notes, “and that’s my area of interest.” Also, like her, “the dean has always been very passionate about working with the community.”
For Dr. Kelly Holst, it’s the little moments that have led to the big moments—especially the first one that pointed her in a new career direction. She describes the experience, an exchange that lasted only about 15 seconds.

“Are you still smoking?” she asked her patient. Expecting “Yes,” she heard instead, “No, I decided to quit. After we spoke last time, you really convinced me to stop.”

Her reaction after six years of working as a dental hygienist was transforming. “I was delighted that I had made such an impact on his health. And the experience made me wonder how much more impactful I could be with additional training. So pursuing a DMD became my next goal.”

After graduating and then starting to work as junior faculty at the dental school, Holst encountered another important moment. Dr. Maria Fornatora, associate dean for academic affairs and an oral pathologist, suggested they meet. Holst remembers thinking, “Oh, no, what does she want to meet with me about?” But, she recalls, “She didn’t want me to do anything, just sit and talk about what’s going on, how I was doing, and how she could help me. I felt supported and encouraged.”

“People talk about human connection,” Holst adds, “like it’s this organic thing that shouldn’t require work. I completely disagree. If you want to make time for each other, if you want to connect with someone, you have to put it on the calendar. You have to form a committee. You have to create the space for it. And I think Temple Dental does that well.”

Another moment
Yet another memorable moment also occurred during her first six months working at the school. She was discussing her future with Dr. Mehran Hossaini, chair of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and professor of clinical oral and maxillofacial surgery, when he asked, “Are you interested in lecturing at some point and developing curriculum?” Then hearing that she loves education and academics, he urged her to take courses, as he was doing, through the College of Education. “He put the bug in my ear,” she says, “to pursue a master’s in education.”

So she enrolled in Adult and Organizational Development. Her first course, Systems Dynamics, was “eye opening.” She explains: “I had been surrounded by people who were like me in dental and health care. Then I was in a room full of folks who came from a variety of backgrounds so different from mine.”
“Crossing department boundaries and making connections,” she says, “are really important to me. Dr. Fornatora, Dr. Hossaini, and Dr. Geraldine Weinstein are three of my mentors, all from different departments, all from different walks of academia and dentistry. I love learning from them. I’m always trying to learn from other people and make those connections. I try to be a learner and stay a learner.”

In fact, she was just awarded ADEA’s Enid A. Neidle Scholar-in-Residence fellowship. Over the next few months, she’ll be pursuing research that concentrates on issues affecting female faculty.

Reaching out
Whether it’s chairing a 2021 large-scale Mission of Mercy event in the clinic, helping a colleague to recruit patients for a pain management study, partnering with another colleague to teach student athletes about disease prevention and dentistry, mentoring two student organizations, or even collaborating across campus with a physical therapist in the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences to offer free yoga classes, Holst continues to reach out to others.

“I talk a lot, bug people a lot, and that’s how I get involved in all these projects,” she says. “I feel very, very supported, and I feel like I make a difference.”

THE HUMANISM OF INNOVATION

While at Temple Dental, Holst has purposely made connections. In fact, she believes that a presence on social media platforms may not be what’s currently innovative.

“I think that human connection and human experiences are now a bit more innovative. Having someone stop and ask you a question, display active listening or help in other ways is almost more remarkable than having someone reach you through email or an online platform.”
Four years after his graduation and two years into his position as clinical cluster leader, Dr. Nick Bizzaro has a lot to say about what’s happening at Temple Dental in digital dentistry. But he starts with a single statement: “Introducing a digital workflow into prosthetics has been a huge gamechanger.”

He explains, “We’re in transition, moving away from the old way of doing things. Not only has the dean pushed it, but Dr. Aaron Segal, restorative dentistry associate professor, and Dr. Geraldine Weinstein, professor, and have done amazing work. They’ve educated students on how to introduce a digital workflow. They’ve purchased and gotten digital equipment into the clinics so we can use it with our patients. And they’ve been able to get more and more things done inhouse, rather than sending out to a dental lab.”

Additionally, he says the school no longer is requiring students to complete a certain number of crowns or a certain number of dentures. Instead, “It’s not about specific requirements, although students still have to perform certain procedures.”

The idea is that wellness forms the basis of a thorough treatment plan. So as students implement the plan, they gain experience with the procedures. Importantly, says Bizzaro, students are not seeing patients as just procedures.

**Focus on patient health**

Rather, “Students see that it’s all connected. They’re not just looking at teeth and seeing which teeth have decay. They’re looking at overall health: blood pressure, A1C for diabetes, whether the patient is smoking. It’s everything. Patient health has been a big focus for the dean and our faculty. And that’s the emphasis and direction we’re going in.”

In fact, he says, “The dean, our administration, and our faculty have done a great job of reminding students that the person sitting in the chair in front of them is human—not a dollar sign or a procedure. As the industry skews toward a corporate dentistry model, I think that’s very important.”

Going from student and learning to becoming a professor and teaching, Bizzaro understands the two different viewpoints. “As a student you don’t really see what’s going on behind the scenes. As a professor, it’s eye opening to understand how much the administration and faculty and staff do to keep this program running.”

Although he’s always been gregarious and enjoys the interaction with patients and their families, engaging with students is especially important to Bizzaro. “I’ve watched them go through the program from the time they worked on mannequins up until the time they
graduate with their finished patient treatments. I’ve watched them develop from budding practitioners into really good, competent dentists. That’s really what drives me to come in every day. It’s why I really, really love my job, and why I plan on doing this for the long term.”

And the challenges? “As a new faculty member,” he says, “they are there. But the faculty and the administration have been very supportive and welcoming to me as a recent graduate. If I am unsure of something, I know that I can go to an experienced faculty member or to one of the specialists and ask for advice. I know that I have a ton of resources and a ton of wisdom around me that’s available to incorporate into my own practices. There is always some new technique to learn or product to try that can improve my patient care.”

160-YEAR CONTRIBUTION TO PHILADELPHIA

“I think that 160 years is important to recognize because over those years the dental school’s contribution has been not just in the way that we treat patients—but also in the way that our graduates go out and work in the community. That multiplies on itself. Students come from all over the country, and some of them graduate and go back home. But a lot of them stay and practice in the area. Add that to our legacy of a very strong clinical program, and I think that’s something worth celebrating.”

—Dr. Nicholas Bizzaro
DOROTHY JOHNSON (MISS DOT)
Temple University’s longest serving employee started working at Temple in 1957 and moved to the dental school in 1975. Dorothy Johnson, known to all as “Miss Dot,” serves on the staff of facilities management.

Miss Dot spoke about how the school has made a definite impact on the community. “They see so many patients … it’s a help to the neighborhood because this is the only one (dental facility) in a school right in this neighborhood. And the students and the patients really look forward to coming here. Not only from this area … I think we have patients from all over for what the dental school is offering.”

When asked about changes she has seen at the school, she said that so many services and students have been added. In terms of the future, Miss Dot hopes that the school will keep growing—more students and even more services.

“I think it’s beautiful that the school is 160 years old. We should be celebrating it.”

JACQUELINE LIEBERMAN, CLASS OF 2023
Dr. Saul Miller is amazing with patients and he always would take the time to tell me, “Hey, Jackie, make sure you escort her to her car, make sure that this patient gets here and is comfortable. Make sure you update the doctor on what’s going on.”

And it’s those kinds of pieces of information that you have to be taught. Because it’s something that’s not in a textbook and it’s not in lectures. It’s those interpersonal skills in relationships.

ABIGAIL GOLDSTEIN, CLASS OF 2025
One of the things that the upperclass students really emphasized to early first-year students was to find things that you enjoy doing outside of school. And during my first year, I ignored that advice. Coming into my second year, I decided to find things outside of school that also made me happy. And I joined the club lacrosse team down at Temple’s main campus.

And I’m really getting involved in all of the clubs that Temple Dental has to offer. Student government has been absolutely wonderful. It’s a great way to meet some of my peers that I may not have become close friends with and to also really interact with the faculty, my professors, and the administration to help make Temple a better place for all of us.

CHARLES LYMAN, CLASS OF 2024
Temple Dental is both hands on and hands off at the same time—they teach you and encourage you but are not too controlling. The school lets you dictate your own story, whether it’s within the dentistry field or … your life after dental school.
April 20th–21st, 2023
Twenty-First Century TMD Protocols
9:00 am–4:00 pm (12 Credits)
Alumni FREE*

April 24th–25th, 2023
Ceramic Dental Implants (Hands On)
9:00 am–4:00 pm (12 Credits)
Alumni $200*

April 25, 2023
Larry Stone Symposium: History of Ethics, Professionalism, and Regulations
Temple Dental School
Timmons Hall
12:00–2:00 pm

April 26th, 2023
Practice Valuations: Best Practices for Selling and Buying
9:00 am–12:00 pm
Alumni FREE*

Aligners in Orthodontics
1:00–3:00 pm
Alumni FREE*

April 27th, 2023
Digital Dentistry and Its Applications to Everyday General Practice! (Hands On)
9:00 am–4:00 pm
Alumni $200

April 27, 2023
Alumni Association Award Luncheon
David A. Bresler Student Life Center
Old Dental Building, 4th Floor*
10:00 am–12:00 pm Tour of the School
12:00–2:00 pm Luncheon

April 27, 2023
160th Gala Reception and Dinner
The Logan Hotel, Philadelphia
Ballroom Foyer/Ballroom Terrace
6:00–10:00 pm

April 28, 2023
Rigenera Micrografting Technology
9:00–11:00 am
Alumni FREE*

Management of Implant Site Development and Immediate Implant Placement in the Esthetic Zone: An Evidenced-Based Team Approach
12:00–3:00 pm
Alumni FREE*

April 28, 2023
White Coat Ceremony
Temple University Performing Arts Center 12:00–1:00 pm
Reception at Mitten Hall
1:00–4:00 pm

*Location: Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry at 3223 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA, 19140

Book your Gala courses via: https://noncredit.temple.edu/cde
Register for the Alumni Luncheon and the Gala Dinner by contacting Ms. Nicole Carreno at Email: nicole.carreno@temple.edu, Phone: 215-707-7541
SAVE THE DATE!

APRIL 27, 2023

YOU CAN HELP BUILD THE FUTURE TODAY!

A gift in honor of student scholarships will ensure that a deserving student has the opportunity to join the profession of dentistry and oral health care. Please consider celebrating the School's 160th anniversary with a contribution to the 160 Future Fund for Dental Student Scholarships. Kindly mail your check to the Dean's Office, Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry, 3223 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140. Thank you.