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ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Vale Professor John Clement

Professor John Clement held the inaugural Chair in Forensic Odontology, was a Professor at the University of Melbourne and was former Deputy Head of the Melbourne Dental School.

All three roles carry enormous responsibilities for the community and the University, but, in title alone, they do not do justice to John's humanity, his love of being around people, and the enormous array of skills and knowledge that he shared with the world for its benefit.

John joined the University from Britain in 1989 and was shortly afterwards appointed head consultant forensic odontologist to the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM). As a forensic scientist, his expertise involved inferring a person's history by examining their skeletal remains. Through VIFM, he worked closely with the Coroners Court of Victoria and was part of the disaster victim identification teams that responded to the Bali bombings of 2001 and the 2005 Boxing Day tsunami in Thailand.

Over his career spanning more than 40 years, John's work was crucial for the families of victims and for legal redress. He also worked in the mortuary after the Black Saturday bushfires that devastated Victoria in 2009 and served on expert advisory panels dealing with the identification of missing persons and human remains following conflict and civil strife. These are perhaps the most high-profile examples of John's work in forensic odontology but there are many other instances around the world where John's expertise was called upon.

John exemplified community compassion, which he demonstrated daily. The care he displayed, his painstakingly systematic approach to his work, and his skill in uncovering identity and truth was inspirational. In my very limited personal experience of John's care and consideration in the forensic environment, I saw firsthand not only the value of his work but also



Professor John Clement at the Grant Museum of Comparative Anatomy, London.

how John cared for people after death. It was both an enlightening and a reflective experience.

In his work at the University of Melbourne, John proved to be a gifted researcher, teacher and mentor. He frequently published in high-impact international scientific journals and founded the Melbourne Femur Collection, which attracts the attention of researchers in fields ranging from medical science to anthropology around the world. He helped develop his students' technical expertise while instilling in them the need to nurture their compassion and sensitivity as they pursued careers in forensics, dentistry and research. This care and mentoring extended to his Melbourne Dental School associates, who are devastated by the loss of their friend and colleague.

John was also a trusted deputy head of school. He was a wonderful, sympathetic yet critical ear for me and provided a

gentle voice of reason and reassurance. John blessed us all with his brilliance, his thoughtfulness, his loyalty and his humour.

Many of us shared his love of motorbikes, of vintage cars and of the Australian bush. We relished the shared activities and conversations, which were often sprinkled with stories of John's multihued life experiences.

At the School, we heard from John on so many occasions how important family was in his life. On behalf of the Melbourne Dental School, the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences and the University of Melbourne, I extend my condolences to John's wife Pauline and their children, Hannah, William and Alice.

Professor Mike Morgan
Head, Melbourne Dental School



A message from the Head of School

Over the almost 30 years that I have been at the University of Melbourne, I have seen a series of constants within our graduates. While the faces change, and the life experiences are more varied than ever before, the requisite skills, knowledge and attributes of our graduates remain industry-leading.

It is a wonderful set of constants and we should be reassured by it. Despite this, every graduating student I've ever seen has uncertainties about whether they are sufficiently educated to make it in the world that awaits them.

I have no such concerns. I also know that, just as there are variations within student cohorts, the future paths of our graduates will differ. In the words of Sarah McBride, the American transgender rights activist, "No two paths are the same. Each of us travel with different privileges, challenges, and perspectives – some limiting, others illuminating."

Becoming a health care provider provides great privileges and enormous responsibilities. All our graduates are capable of shouldering those responsibilities and should not feel restricted in their choices or in the paths that they wish to travel.

I wish all our readers well for the season. The support that the broader profession provides to the Melbourne Dental School continues to be high, and for this we remain very thankful. As a School we rely on the profession's generosity, and they (you) never fail to deliver. As Head of School I am grateful and heartened for the future.

Professor Mike Morgan
Head, Melbourne Dental School

Unique clinical experiences for dental and oral health students

The Melbourne Dental Clinic (MDC) provides world-class training to Melbourne Dental School students in their final year of study.



Andrew Stott, CEO, Melbourne Teaching Health Clinics.

MDC was established by the University in 2013. This year, it supported 116 students with approximately 27,500 hours of clinical placements over 7000 sessions.

Prior to the establishment of MDC, clinical placements were only available in public health settings. Students who undertake training at MDC have the chance to gain real-world experience in a private practice setting.

"The School recognised that the vast majority of graduates go on to work in private practice, but 100 per cent of the clinical placements were in public health settings," says Andrew Stott, who joined the MDC as the CEO of Melbourne Teaching Health Clinics in 2017.

Beyond technical training and support for students, MDC manages all business operations including administrative support, front of house, business development and marketing, along with the finance functions.

"Students have good exposure to what managing a private practice involves. They get an overview of what it really means to be a part of a large organisation, as well as putting into context the importance of customer service and establishing goodwill; the general mechanics of running a business.

"Students have the opportunity to discuss with the patient aspects of customer service they may not have before, such as what the out of pocket cost is going to be and how many appointments are going to be needed.

"They are aiming to provide their patients with the best possible clinical quality and customer service outcomes, all in a timely manner," says Stott.

To facilitate these clinical placements, MDC has recruited a workforce of around a dozen clinical supervisors who are permanent part-time employees.

"Approximately two-thirds of our supervisors are alumni. Their contributions enable us to educate our students at the highest standard," says Stott.

This unique opportunity for students has also created a new career pathway for experienced dentists.

"We have identified that there is demand from dentists to make a career out of clinical education. We are supporting dentists and our alumni to make the step to becoming clinical educators," says Stott.

By providing students with private practice experience before graduation, MDC plays a pivotal role in training the next generation of dental and oral health professionals.

To find out more about the Melbourne Dental Clinic, visit
dental.unimelb.edu.au/dental-clinic

Mentoring program successfully expanded in its second year

The Melbourne Dental School mentoring program has had a successful second year in 2018.

The program was designed to help final year Doctor of Dental Surgery and Bachelor of Oral Health students transition smoothly from university to professional practice. Forty-two mentor-mentee pairings participated in the program this year – almost double the numbers from the pilot program in 2017.

Final year Doctor of Dental Surgery student Hilary White, who was mentored by paediatric dentist Dr Mihiri Silva, said the program has helped her prepare for her clinical career.

“The mentoring program has been pivotal in helping me navigate the pathway from dental student to dentist. Mihiri is an inspiring mentor; her understanding of the profession and experiences has been so valuable.”

The mentoring program also offers Melbourne Dental School (MDS) alumni an opportunity to remain connected with the school through a unique and meaningful volunteer experience.

“It has been an amazing year and I feel very fortunate to have been part of the program,” says Dr Silva.

She encourages other MDS alumni who are interested in mentoring to get involved in the program.

“It has been wonderful to get to know Hilary and see her energy and excitement about her future in dentistry. I feel really optimistic about the future of our profession meeting such bright students! It has also been great to hear about what it’s like to be a dental student today – there have been so many changes since I studied dentistry.”

The students who participated in the program this year are set to graduate this December. Hilary, for one, is approaching this important milestone with confidence.



Dr Mihiri Silva and Hilary White.

“Mihiri has guided me to critically think about my dental career goals and find pathways to best achieve them. This has definitely helped moving into the work force appear less daunting.”

Mentor a final year student!

We are now accepting expressions of interest for the 2019 Melbourne Dental School Mentoring Program.

If you are working in general practice and have a keen awareness of the current professional environment, we would love to hear from you. Applications from overseas or interstate alumni are welcomed.

As a mentor, you will have the opportunity to share your knowledge, skills and experience with your mentee in a one-on-one partnership.

The 2019 program will run from February to November. To express your interest in the 2019 program, or for more information, email: mdhs-alumni@unimelb.edu.au

How your support makes a difference

Thank you to all the MDS alumni who have contributed to student scholarships this year. Your support means the world to recipients who are able to pursue their studies unencumbered by financial disadvantage.

“I would like to say thank you to the scholarship donors for not only alleviating my financial burden but also for inspiring me to think beyond myself and help others in the community; something I will take with me throughout the rest of my life.”

Christiana Wu

Third-year dental student

Professional Postgraduate Scholarship in Dentistry – 2018 recipient

To learn more about supporting students through scholarship contributions, visit:
mdhs.unimelb.edu.au/engage/giving/mdhs-scholarships-fund

Student cultural exchange trip

By Emma Liu and Lucy Wen - DDS second year students

Just after mid-year exams, seven Doctor of Dental Surgery students undertook a nine-day cultural exchange program in Japan, accompanied by Dr James Fernando, Dr Luan Ngo and Dr Cindy Nguyen. This was a golden opportunity to expand our horizons in the international dental community and strengthen the relationships Melbourne Dental School (MDS) has with dental schools in Japan.

Our trip began in Tokyo, where we were lucky enough to fit in some sightseeing before the official program commenced. We visited famous places around Tokyo including Akihabara, Ueno, Shinjuku, Shibuya and Harajuku, and stuffed our faces with Michelin star ramen, tonkatsu and yakitori.

Our cultural exchange began at Tokyo Medical and Dental University (TMDU) in Ochanomizu. During our whirlwind stay at TMDU, dental students and researchers gave us tours of the facilities and introduced us to the structure of the six-year undergraduate Japanese dental course. We were fascinated to learn that the profession is separated into over 50 specialisations with a heavy emphasis on research, including cariology, periodontics, sleep dentistry and even space dentistry.

Next, we were fortunate to be guided through the Research and Development Department of GC where we saw their extensive product range, including some familiar CPP-ACP products developed by the Oral Health CRC under Professor Eric Reynolds of MDS.

Our next stop was Tsurumi University (TU) near Yokohama, a dental school MDS has

a strong and lasting relationship with, made possible by the late Professor John Clement. TU often sends a group of staff and students to visit MDS (including earlier this year) and we were welcomed by familiar faces upon arrival. Here, we had a meeting with the Dean, Professor Chikahiro Okubo, as well as a guided walk through Sojiji Temple, a large Buddhist temple that shares the campus with TU. Spending time with the Japanese dental students was by far the

best part of our trip, with many wonderful conversations, presentations and gifts exchanged.

This was truly a rare and valuable experience unlike anything else we have done during dental school. Being able to compare our dental cultures and meeting the incredibly kind and spirited people at TMDU and TU will probably remain our most memorable and heart-warming experience as MDS students.



Students meeting with Dean, Professor Chikahiro Okubo, at Tsurumi University.



Welcome party at Tsurumi University.