

# Articulate

DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Congratulations on making it to the end of another year of dental school... and what a year 2020 was!

To our graduating cohorts, I hope that you are entering a new chapter of your lives full of excitement and passion. The knowledge and wisdom bestowed upon you by your academic staff, mentors and the ADA is only the beginning of what I hope will be a fulfilling career. Remember that balance is key, especially in your working lives. Don't be afraid to take some time out – take up a new hobby, spend time with loved ones or go on a trip away. By doing so, you will remain invigorated and motivated to becoming compassionate and skilled practitioners.

I have had the incredible pleasure leading the dental and oral health student community in the strange year of 2020. Tackling a whirlwind of challenges and setbacks, students from all across Australia have persevered and continued to grow into budding oral health professionals. I am so incredibly proud of the student community that is ADSA.

After having to cancel our annual Convention that was set to be held in Melbourne, our team immediately began planning an online alternative. The result was an incredible week of online seminars and workshop with many highly renowned speakers from all over Australia joining us to share their wisdom. A huge thank you to Sabrina Escuza who convened the week.

Our Vice President, Han, headed a revamped mentoring programme and introduced an observation program, in collaboration with General Dental Residency, linking a cohort of final year mentees with mentors from all across Australia. The programmes are set to start in the new year so keep an eye out for more information.



We continued to develop and roll out the ADSA Outreach curriculum, headed by Immediate Past President, Emma, and Community Officer, Xin Jie. With the difficulties of COVID-19, our plans to expand nationwide were temporarily halted but we are so excited to do so in 2021 with the help of our enthusiastic university representatives.

It has been my greatest pleasure to work alongside such an astonishing and hardworking committee and to have served dental and oral health students from across the nation. I will continue to be a part of ADSA as the Immediate Past President in 2021 and I cannot wait to share with you all everything we have already planned for the new year. I feel so grateful to be a part of such a close and supportive professional network. I would like to thank all of our professional partners for supporting us and adapting to our changes in this unprecedented year. Without them, ADSA would not be able to serve the community as well as we do.

I am so excited for all that is to come in 2021 under the incredible leadership of my successor, Joanne Ling. I wish her all the best in her endeavours – ADSA is in great hands.

I hope you are enjoying some well-deserved time off. All the best for the new year.



**Phillip Nguyen**  
**ADSA President 2020**



# VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT



To call 2020 an unprecedented year is an understatement at the least! This year truly brought with it a whole series of highs and lows. As they say, through adversity comes strength! I could not be prouder of the hard work and commitment that the entire committee has put in this year- from the sub-committee, general and executive committees, university representatives, and of course, my right-hand man Phillip who have stuck by my side throughout the whole year and supported me in my endeavours. The passion and dedication this committee has towards enriching the life of their fellow dental students is truly inspiring.

This year we saw a continuation of the wonderful initiatives put in place by previous committee members such as 'ADSA Talks' and 'ADSA Cup', as well as the introduction of new events including the 'ADSA Convention: COVID Edition' and the online 'Graduation Series'. Even through all the difficult times, this year encouraged us to adapt to the situation at hand, to change the way we learn, think and socialise. The team here at ADSA were hard at work planning and bringing new ideas to life during quarantine and I am so very proud and excited to launch many new initiatives in 2021. Next year will see the commencement of the ADSA x GDR 'Dentist for a Day' Program, the 'ADSA Final Year Mentor Program' and the planned expansion of our 'Community Outreach Program' to name a few.

I have every bit of faith and confidence that next year's President and Vice President, Joanne and Kylin, will do a fantastic job of leading the incoming committee in creating numerous and unique volunteering, advocacy, academic and social opportunities for all ADSA members to enjoy.

So cheers to a normal (not COVID normal) 2021!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Han Pham'.

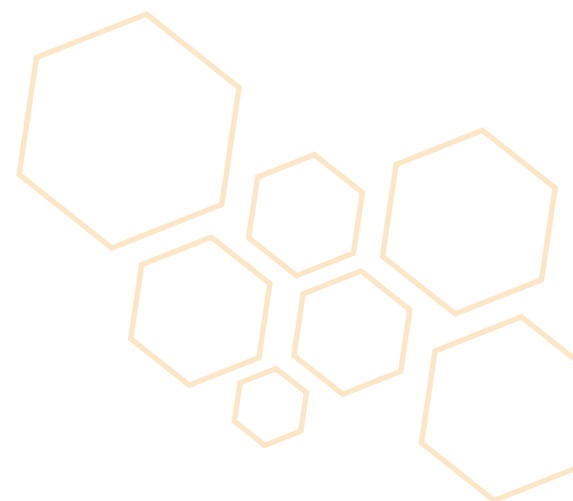
**Han Pham**  
**ADSA Vice President 2020**



# COMMUNITY OFFICER'S REPORT

There has definitely never been a year that has shown us the true importance of being “all in this together” like 2020. I feel extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside my passionate subcommittee, Margo and Rojina, to build a sense of community among a student body facing the stress of isolation and uncertainty about their futures. Kicking off with the annual ADSA Blood Drive, we were in awe of the generosity and compassion that many showed in donating, despite the new logistic difficulties they encountered in accessing donation centres. In a time where blood donations were at a critical level, each university joined together to encourage as many students as possible to provide these essential donations and we thank everyone who took part.

This year I am particularly proud of the community team in successfully making the ADSA Health and Wellbeing Blogs into a reality. Wanting to put a spotlight on wellness, especially during what has been a particularly stressful year for many, our monthly blogs provided valuable insight into both the unique and shared experiences that we all have as dental/OHT students. Thank you to all those students who shared their own stories and words of wisdom with the rest of the ADSA community to highlight the importance of taking care of ourselves while pursuing our studies and personal goals. Our focus on wellness extended through coordinating the efforts of the ADSA uni reps in hosting both in-person and online RUOK Day activities across the universities, and our online ADSA Wellness Week campaign which placed an emphasis on reaching out and speaking out for mental health as students and future dental health professionals.



Once again, a major priority for us was promoting and raising awareness among the wider community of various health and social causes which are close to our hearts as dental students. From continuing to support Head and Neck Cancer Australia (formerly Beyond Five) through raising funds in the annual Soup for the Soul campaign, to our online oral health promotion campaign during Dental Health Week, we hoped to help improve the health of the wider community in any capacity we could.

Also aiming to continue encouraging ADSA members to engage with the community through volunteering, we revamped the volunteering hub section of the ASDA website – collating local to international opportunities into a user-friendly platform with the intentions of providing regular updates on opportunities to volunteer. However, we faced the challenge of a widespread climate of social distancing and restrictions, and so it was made all the more special when we were able to shed a spotlight on special individuals who had been volunteering throughout their time at dental school and share their invaluable experiences during National Volunteer Week.

Our primary school outreach program was also forced to run at a much more limited capacity this year in Perth, however we are

delighted that our dedicated members over in Adelaide have worked hard this year to attain the necessary resources and support to launch their very first pilot program early next year. This brings us closer to our vision of expanding our volunteer program and improving the oral health literacy of children across the country in areas of low socioeconomic advantage to combat the high prevalence of caries. Despite the setbacks, I am glad we were able to continue improving ADSA community engagement with health and social impact initiatives and exposing our members to the benefits of volunteering.

To say it has been an amazing experience being a part of the ADSA committee as Community officer this year would be an understatement. Thank you to the incredible executive and uni reps for their diligence and dedication to elevating the experiences of the dental/OHT student community. Although we could not be together in person this year, I look forward to meeting all the inspiring individuals I have been fortunate to work with in the near future!



**Xin Jie Tan**  
**ADSA Community Officer 2020**



# THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY HABITS

**Anna Nilvéus Olofsson**

DDS, Manager Odontology and  
Scientific Affairs, TePe

While toothbrushing is an established habit for the vast majority of people, the picture is different when it comes to interdental cleaning. The benefits of interdental cleaning are obvious to us dental professionals, but how do we overcome the difficulties in transferring this knowledge to our patients and help them form and maintain healthy habits?

## Understanding the pathway to change

In healthy patients, the goal is, of course, to maintain the good habits that are already a part of their daily routine. However, in treating periodontal disease or caries, health-minded patients and an active, conscious change of habits are necessary in order to achieve the desired level of oral

hygiene. In aiming to improve the oral health of an individual, it is of great help to understand some of the mechanisms involved in changing and forming new habits, that is, the process by which new behaviours become fully adopted.





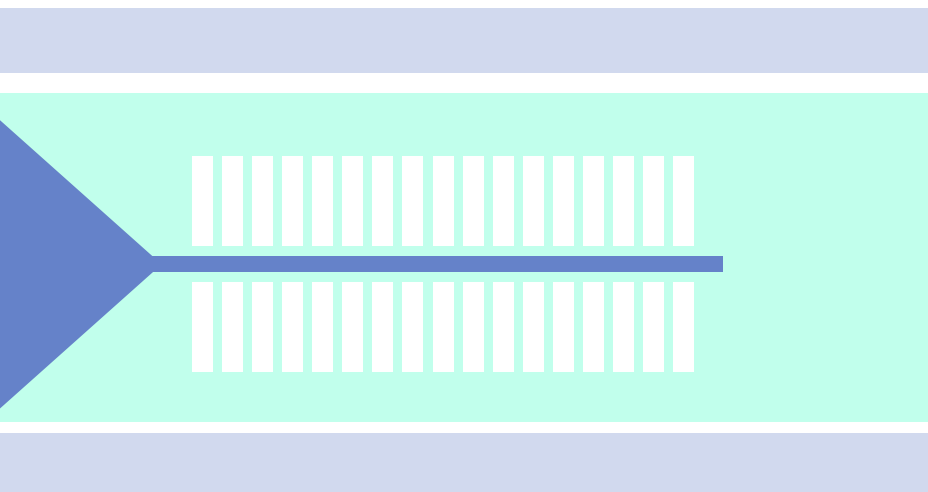
### The importance of a patient-centred approach

Making the patient's situation the starting point for a workable solution will enhance the conditions for compliance and habit formation. The foundation is a respectful relationship between dental professional and patient, which also creates a sense of mutual responsibility. Sharing all relevant information with the patient is essential because knowledge is an important factor in the process of acquiring new habits.

The caregiver should inform the patient about his or her oral status and needs and assist the patient in his or her task of evaluating and, if necessary, considering changing

current habits. Thus, the patient will become actively engaged in his or her life situation. However, in such negotiations the patient's wishes and beliefs must be respected before an agreement can be reached.

Creating immediacy through verbal and non-verbal communication can contribute to the quality of the interaction. Body language, eye contact, and facial expressions, in combination with active listening and tone of voice, are all effective tools to create bond and trust, but these need to be balanced so as not to be misinterpreted as intimacy.



### The desired habit of interdental cleaning

Research has shown that assessing the patient's abilities and motivation before giving oral self-care advice will help in achieving compliance. Recommendations on the optimal interdental cleaning device must, therefore, be based on the clinical situation as well as the patient's manual dexterity and level of motivation. Choosing a device that is easy to use and taking the patient's preferences into account, will facilitate a positive outcome. Here it can be noted that research findings point to the

interdental brush as the most effective cleaning device and the one that most patients prefer to use.

The interaction continues as the dental professional instructs the patient how to use the chosen device and ensures that he or she has mastered the technique, while it becomes the patient's responsibility to perform the oral hygiene regime at home in order to establish the habit of interdental cleaning.

## Context, repetition and time

Participants of a study were followed as they established a self-chosen habit, which differed between them. Automaticity increased over time, and it took an average of 66 days – with a range of 18 to 254 days – for the habit to become fully adopted. Worth noting is that one missed opportunity to perform the activity had no impact on the habit-formation process, and repeating the activity in a consistent setting enhanced the automaticity until a stable habit was formed.

Taking these findings into account, it is natural to guide the patient in finding a suitable context for cleaning interdentally. It may be performed in the bathroom in conjunction with the evening toothbrushing routine, but this need not necessarily be the case.

Furthermore, all obstacles that can interfere with habit formation should be eliminated as far as possible. For instance, it might be wise to recommend that the patient purchase enough products to last throughout the habit-formation period. The gap between the intention to form a habit and its full adoption needs to be minimised, especially because the process might take quite some time. Using a monitoring diary or setting up intermediate goals can also be facilitating factors in the habit-formation process.

Habit formation is a step-by-step process, where a single missed opportunity to perform the desired behaviour does not affect the results as a whole. Even if the process is interrupted or a habit is lost, it becomes a little bit easier every time one tries to re-establish the habit. Understanding this is helpful for both the dental professional and the patient in the sometimes difficult process of adopting a healthier lifestyle.

## Conclusion

Without gaining the patient's cooperation and having the individual in focus, dental professionals will never succeed in their attempts at establishing interdental cleaning as a fully developed habit. The dental professional has an important role to play, both as a psychological motivator and as an instructor in choosing and using the proper devices. Facilitating habit formation for the patient is indeed a challenge, but also an inspiring one.

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# ORAL HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT



Although presenting a unique array of setbacks and challenges - 2020 has proved to have been a fruitful year for the oral health portfolio within ADSA, oral health students nationally and the profession more broadly. Despite a global pandemic, it was wonderful to see students being able to continue aspects of their studies and play a pivotal role in the delivery of dental care. As arduous as 2020 was, I am confident that the experiences gained this year will stand us in good stead to be the future leaders of our profession.

I would be remiss to not mention the new regulations regarding the scope of practise of dental hygienists, therapists and oral health therapists brought in July of this year. The revised regulations recognise the clinical autonomy of dental professionals and remove the requirement of a "structured professional relationship with a dentist". More than just a matter of verbiage, the revision heralds a significant milestone in the evolution of the aforementioned dental professions.

Stepping into the role of the ADSA Oral Health Officer this time last year, my primary goals were to work towards better integrating oral health therapy within the organisation's landscape and promote the interests of students in matters of academic and professional importance. I am pleased to announce that, over the course of the past year, oral health students' engagement with ADSA events and initiatives has significantly increased. This increased involvement has

been noted across digital, social engagement and attendance at the ADSA AGM, Online Convention and Graduation Series webinars. I hope to see this encouraging trend continue well into the new year, as ADSA continues to provide opportunities for student / clinician mentorship, networking, industry partnerships and getting involved within the profession.

Thank you to the Australian Dental and Oral Health Therapists' Association (ADOHTA) and the Dental Hygienists' Association of Australia (DHAA) for their support, guidance and clarity over the past year. Their tireless work and advocacy has undoubtedly helped dental professionals navigate the turmoil of the COVID-19 pandemic. I would also like to congratulate Ping Archawapongpanish on her appointment as the 2021 ADSA Oral Health Officer and wish her well in the role for the year ahead.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to have served and advocated for you - I am looking to seeing what next year brings for the profession and the student body of ADSA!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zohair Kazmi'.

**Zohair Kazmi**  
**ADSA Oral Health Officer 2020**





The much anticipated annual ADSA convention was scheduled to be held at the University of Melbourne this year, until COVID – 19 stormed the state of Victoria and forced everyone into lockdown.

All plans were scrapped, and the convention was going to be cancelled, until the ADSA committee came up with the idea to create an online convention. Having never been to a convention herself, Sabrina Escuza (DDS 3, unimelb) reluctantly agreed to take on the organizational challenge, with the strong support from ADSA exec and A/P Matt Hopcraft, C.E.O. of ADAVB.

The modified convention took the form of a week-long webinar series held on the Zoom platform, that was simultaneously live streamed to a Facebook page. The videos remained on the page until the end of the week, for casual viewing of anyone unable to attend the live webinar on Zoom. Students were able to ask questions in real time on Zoom, as well as afterwards on the Facebook page. Sponsorship from Guild, Orasoptic, KavoKerr, and TePe allowed for

fun to be had. Prizes were given to winners of dental bingo and lecture lottery, where a lucky student from each lecture won a gift voucher – some taking home gift boxes, Orasoptic loupes and a Spark light! A/P Matt Hopcraft even hosted an online culinary competition and treated viewers to a “Cooking show with the CEO.”

Overall, the convention was a success, with some videos reaching over 1,200 views. The program was particularly special because students were not only able to be inspired by the many specialties, but also by strong, dynamic and intelligent women that have taken dentistry and made it into something bigger; making changes in the care of survivors of sexual assault, using their talent for forensic investigations, and being the top of the game in oral and maxillofacial surgery.

Hopefully next year everyone will be able to shake hands with their future colleagues and meet their role models face to face, but until then, stay safe Australia.

See you all soon!



With COVID causing massive interruptions to learning and placement nationwide, ADSA listened to the numerous concerns of final year students regarding the growing uncertainty surrounding the transition between university and working life. This then became the inspiration for the first ever 'ADSA Graduation Webinar Series'.

Following the success of the 'ADSA Convention: COVID Edition' webinar week and with hundreds and thousands of dental students stuck at home, we knew that students were itching for content. However, we wanted to focus on providing information that would not be available in any university curriculum. We hosted a total of 8 webinars over the span of 5 days covering topics such as dentolegal issues, 'Continuing Professional Development' (CPD), specialisation pathways and even what to look for when applying for a job.

We would like to extend a special thanks to all the wonderful speakers who took the time out of their days to organise and deliver lectures, as well as answer the live Q&A questions from our enthusiastic students. With hundreds of views per webinar and even some prizes on the line, the response was even greater than we expected! It is safe to say that this event was a remarkable success and upon popular demand, will be returning in 2021 with even more content!

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# ADSA

## *Special Mention:*

### Dr Conny Qian

La Trobe University Class of 2019



Life as a new grad has been challenging and rewarding in many ways, and right from the get-go, finding a job was one of the first hurdles.

I started applying for jobs towards the end of October, and a few of my friends had already found positions by then. It is easy to feel the pressure when you compare yourself to others, and I certainly felt nervous by the start of December. After 40 odd applications, a handful of interviews and an offer interstate, I decided to keep looking while also wondering if I could afford to be so picky. Understandably, a modern, multichair practice with full-time work hours, and a supportive senior dentist is a lot to ask for when I don't have much to offer in return. But one can dream, and a few months of job hunting can be considered a break after all those years at uni. It took a bit of patience, a fair amount of luck, and by January I had found a great place where they also thought I was a good fit for them.

Almost a year later, I still feel lucky to be at my current workplace, however, the reality is that most people don't stay at their first job. Sometimes you go into things knowing they won't work out. Friends who accepted jobs at places with red flags are no longer working there, and one was even harassed by management for leaving. Your first time job hunting will probably not be your last, but consider what is important to you when it comes to a workplace so hopefully you'll be off to a right start.

A country practice can be a great place to start as a new grad. Books can be busier and patients may be more forgiving. You also get to do a variety of treatments across the different disciplines compared to metro colleagues who have told me their days consisted mostly of check-ups, cleans and fillings.

That being said, the second hurdle is to build your books, retain new patients and gain case acceptance for bigger procedures. This ties into patient communication, as well as the business side of dentistry which we don't learn much about at uni. I would recommend attending a communication course early on. For public dentistry and the student clinics, gaining treatment acceptance may be easier when cost is not involved, but conversely, when something is free it may not be valued as much. So it is still important to convey to the patient why they need the treatment and the consequences of not getting it done to motivate them to attend the appointments!

I hope you'll find these tips helpful in some way. Best of luck out there and enjoy the journey ahead, there is a lot to learn but I can guarantee it will be a lot of fun too.

**Dr Conny Qian**



# University Updates

## The University of Adelaide

The University of Adelaide started strong with students with high hopes and exciting goals for 2020, however it took a hard left turn when COVID-19 restrictions began. The Adelaide University Dental Students' Society (AUDSS) quickly adapted with new initiatives during quarantine to help improve students' mental health and well-being, as well as keeping them on top of their academic studies including moving our in-person AUDSS Academic and Professional Development Program (AAPDP) and Specialist Study Clubs (SSC) to online webinars which was received extremely well. The AUDSS also developed a COVID-19 quarantine series where students would record a 'Day in the Life' highlighting the challenges and struggles during the quarantine period and tips to improve their mental health.

The students were challenged to build resilience throughout our quarantine and we thankfully returned to clinic and simulation clinic sessions by the end of the year. This year has been extremely difficult for many students and we would like to thank our year coordinators, year representatives and AUDSS members for working tirelessly to get our cohorts back on our feet and keeping us busy during the quarantine. We are looking forward to the brighter future of 2021!

**Michael O'Laco**  
Year 3



# Central Queensland University



During COVID-19, CQU was forced to close and all simulation and clinical sessions were put on hold, so most students went back home to where they are from. Online lectures were delivered via zoom with lots of case studies to keep us busy and exams were completed online. Since Oral Health is so practical, all students were able to resume practical elements on campus in July for term 2, although all content was still provided online.

University supervisors sent home typodonts and disposable handscalers for students to continue maintaining their hand skills for debridements.

As the uni was closed for majority of term 1, all students have had a term 3 to catch up on all the practical content which was unable to be completed. Although COVID-19 was a challenging time, having all the extra theory and activities at home were beneficial for most students. Resuming with the hands-on components of the course, it helped the theory learning make sense once put into the practical aspect.

A major challenge for the Oral Health students was staying motivated to continue studying at home and being disciplined to complete assessments before the due dates.

The biggest change was from being on campus full-time to being back at home and learning online.

**Chloe Benedickter**  
**OHT Year 3**



# Charles Sturt University

During a challenging year, the CSU SDA has both grown and given back to its members more than ever before:

- The first ever SDA Happy Dental Socks! Given out FREE to our first 50 members, competition winners, First Year members and all Dentistry staff at CSU Orange - with discounted socks being made available for sale via our webshop.
- Six Online Trivia Nights with several voucher prizes
- An RUOK? Day event with Australian Dental Students' Association - ADSA offering free coffees, baked goods and most importantly - a conversation!
- Free online educational seminars in conjunction with SDA sponsors and other university student groups
- The first ever Dentistry Ball held at Orange City Bowling Club
- Introduction of 'First Impressions': a mentoring program which paired first year students with students from other year groups
- A Hoodie Design Competition where our students had the chance to design the official SDA merchandise



Still to come!

- Annual Dent Revue
- SDA x ADA NSW Futures Night
- Online City2Surf
- Halfway Ball
- Graduation Ball
- A Gala End Of Year Event

The recognition from attaining these awards will go a long way towards establishing the SDA and CSU Orange campus within our Charles Sturt University framework. It will also allow the SDA to grow in confidence and be able to host even more events in future! So we thank you for your support and hope you can help us win this year.

**Tanisha Fernando**  
Year 3





# Griffith University



As with any year, 2020 began with bubbling anticipation and excitement of students entering a promising year. However, towards the end of March, our Sim laboratory and Undergraduate clinics were forced to close until further notice, due to the developing Covid-19 situation.

With face to face activities stalled, the Griffith University Dentistry Students' Association (GUDSA) held many online sport challenges to keep active during quarantine, as well as a Weekly Trivia Night. There were many prizes and bragging rights on offer!

As restrictions gradually eased in South East Queensland, we were able to return to our labs and clinic, to resume our courses. GUDSA was able to organize sports events such as Lawn Bowls Night and Holiday Skate Night so students could let off steam after finals. Throughout the year, some of our fellow students who were stuck overseas were able to make their way back to campus, to resume clinical training. We

wish them a speedy and safe return!

The third years were able to celebrate a milestone of being halfway through Dentistry, with a lunch at Palm Beach, while our graduating final year students were able to successfully hold the Graduation Ball at the exquisite Palazzo Versace, ending a challenging year on a good note.

Despite a year filled with unexpected twists and turns, the Griffith School of Dentistry and Oral Health showed great flexibility and adaptation to continue our education in a testing time. Our students have also risen to the occasion, demonstrating perseverance and strength during this challenging year. With a vaccine hopefully on the horizon, we look forward to a brighter outlook for 2021. As Cooper said in the movie, Interstellar: "we'll find a way, we always have".

**Jason Son**  
Year 2

# James Cook University



2020 – the year that no one saw coming. At least, that’s how it felt. So many twists and turns, ups and downs, and as we near the end – we should take stock of what we are grateful for. James Cook University in Cairns was one of the fortunate universities with regards to COVID cases. The virus didn’t reach Cairns until mid-march. We had heard stories of what was happening overseas, and in the more populated Australian cities, so we knew it was only a matter of time. The JCU Dental Clinic was shut within one day of news that someone in Cairns was placed into quarantine. In-person lectures were cancelled until further notice, and the students were given one week of break while administration worked tirelessly to come up with a plan for what to do next.

It was a confusing time – many students decided to return home, both nationally and internationally, while others were worried they would not be able to return to study once things began to return to normal. Many were fortunate to spend the next few months with family and some in lockdown with friends. Throughout this time, online lectures and workshops became the new normal. Things started to look up around May-June when the university released details surrounding second semester. For the clinical years, students were asked to

return early for two weeks of double clinic to make up for lost time. Throughout the semester, fourth years had their clinical hours extended to a four-hour session with the hopes of seeing more patients to prepare them for placement. In addition to COVIDSafe measures, two students from each bay became “student support” to assist others adhere to the new COVID restrictions and minimize the overall number of patients in clinic at one time. It was quite a big adjustment, but it was valuable for the safety of our patients, students and staff.

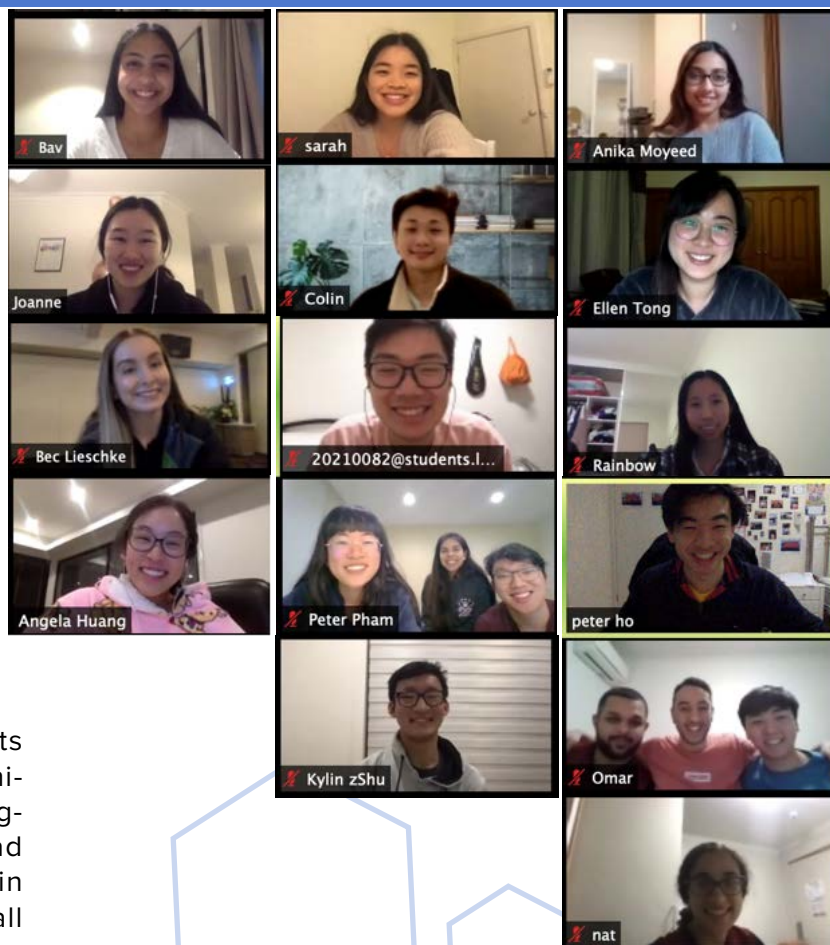
Once we returned to university, classes remained online. The only on-campus interactions were for clinic, simulation clinic, and some practical sessions. Slowly but surely, (almost) everything returned to normal. I consider us lucky to have had so much support from both administration and clinical staff. It was a difficult year and everyone was understanding of that. In a time when things were tricky, we came together to make it a little easier on everyone. And I am so thankful for it.

**Pyper Smith**  
**Year 4**

# La Trobe University

The community of thriving dental students and the BOHDS committee at La Trobe University begin every year with an unimaginable amount of enthusiasm and a head full of ideas, ensuring 2020 started off in full force. Students bonded across all cohorts in the warm weather that Bendigo offered over multiple events such as the pool party and market day. The committee continued to plan other events such as the dental ball and camp. Unfortunately, as the excitement grew till the weekend leading up to the BOHDS camps so did the spread of COVID-19, causing all classes and events to be cancelled, including the camp which was only 2 days away.

Students were left with no choice but to adjust to the new norm of remote learning as simulation clinics and placements were stopped and all lectures were given through zoom. Nevertheless, all students showed their determination in making the most of a difficult situation as they tried to find a silver lining in what seemed to be an unimaginable situation. Students took the extra time to delve back into their hobbies, prioritize their fitness and spending time with family. Additionally, the BOHDS committee never ceased its pursuit to hold the BOHDS family together as they planned and successfully executed multiple virtual events including the movie night, games night, weekly wellbeing posts and online competitions.



As the restrictions begun to ease, slowly students returned to campus and their placements scattered across Victoria. While some have finished university for the year, others are continuing to keep up the hard work, continuing their placements during December. While COVID-19 has presented us with endless challenges, not only have the community of students at La Trobe University faced and overcome them, but they have come out on the other side as more appreciative and resilient individuals. However, we all do hope that 2021 will allow us to return to our physical classrooms as a hands-on experience is the best way to learn and stay connected with our peers.

**Anika Moyeed**  
**Year 2**



# The University of Melbourne



The year 2020 was one of a kind. The year began with a warm welcome to all the incoming dental and oral health students as per the tradition. The annual scrub scrawl and dental camp hosted by our beloved MDSS were a success, but very soon, the circumstances changed beyond what anyone could have ever imagined. The school officially switched to online learning on the 23rd of March due to the rising number of Covid-19 cases in Victoria. Clinical sessions were replaced with zoom discussions and seminars, with hopes that face to face teaching would recommence in semester 2.

Our lecturers and demonstrators put in their best efforts to transfer learning to an online platform, preparing us for various scenarios when clinics would eventually resume. All those hopes of face to face teaching almost came crashing down as the second wave of Covid-19 hit Melbourne in late July.

Through the dedication and perseverance of our staff, some practical work was still able to be recommenced even under stage

4 restrictions. Slowly, DDS4 students were able to attend their rural rotations, while the rest of the year levels were able to practice weekly on mannequins in the meantime. With resilience and strength, we continued with online seminars until clinic officially recommenced in November. Overall, the amount of clinical hours lost during the year has compelled our school to delay graduations until March. Consequently, all the year levels are excited to continue putting all the didactic learning to practice, with ongoing clinics after the Christmas break until March 2021.

Although some of our best events such as the dental ball were cancelled, MDSS was able to host the biggest online Trivia night and celebrated RUOK day by initiating MDDsXLoveLetters to help foster some positivity in the middle of lockdown. We hope that in 2021 we will be able to resume the social aspects of University with more events from MDSS and ADsA that bring our community closer together.

**Arina Rawat**  
**DDS3**

# The University of Sydney

This year started off extremely enthusiastically with our President Anthony Yamine and the 2020 SUDA committee full of ideas and great ways to integrate all year levels. We started with a packed orientation week and a fantastic beach events for the first years, which really made everyone feel welcomed into the USYD family.

As the weeks progressed, so did COVID-19. This drastically changed all of our plans, and so we had to opt for some new ways of keeping us together, while we were so far apart. The SUDA community has started some great initiatives, such as a BOH and DMD pantry at Westmead. This gives everyone the opportunity to access groceries that they may not be able to get at this time and relive some of the pressure. Other activities include online quiz nights whereby all BOH and DMD students have been invited to partake for some excellent prizes and some online webinars to increase our clinical knowledge from the comfort of our homes. As Semester 2 rolled in, we started to go back to some normality as the simulation clinics opened for the DMD1 and 2's and patient clinics for the upper years. The ease in restrictions also allowed for some social sport which was a fantastic way for the first years to integrate with other cohorts.



Overall, the year did not resemble the initial plans. However, each cohort became extremely resilient and united to make it to the end. The USYD DMD cohort has truly become a big family, especially with the limits on most of our students returning home for Christmas. We hope next year we can continue to grow and increase the social side of dentistry.

**Eveline Dwyer**  
Year 1





# The University of Queensland

In the latter half of the year, things began to calm down and regular uni life kicked back in. And oh, how grateful we were to speak such words like 'regular uni life'. Our students truly began to appreciate being able to do mundane activities like using the ultrasonic, having small talk with a friend during the lunch break and sitting down to eat a meal!

The dental ball was unfortunately cancelled for the year, but the student committee made the most of it to give everyone the warmest welcome back. A night filled with bottomless free drinks, pizza and snacks at Bowen Hills was happily received by students deprived of human interaction, and a stunning firework show coincidentally occurring on the same night was the cherry on top. A range of other events were organised including two loupes trade-shows, badminton, basketball and dodgeball battles, grad info evening, and even an online academic seminar by our very own Professor Laurie Walsh on lasers!

This was an added silver lining of studying online: the incredible opportunities to tune into renowned local and interstate speakers via ZOOM seminar blocks, like the Graduation series organised by ADSA. The student feedback at UQ across all cohorts was phenomenal, and I know the introduction of this new mode of learning was very eye-opening for many of us.



ProctorU was cancelled for all dentistry exams in Semester two- and what a true blessing this was! Apart from severely reducing our motivation to tidy the study room for show to our proctors, this came as an enormous relief to our students who were already struggling to juggle the increased lecture load upon normal full-time clinical hours. The dental schools' tireless efforts in maximising our books to give us as much compensated time as possible was truly appreciated, especially the extra 4-week block of catch-up clinics organised for late-arriving international students who were stuck overseas.

We are incredibly grateful for having been able to complete the semester and hope that good things are in store for Australia and the rest of the world in 2021.

**Michelle Zhang**  
Year 4



# The University of Western Australia



2020 in OHCWA began with a lot of passion and excitement, with everyone starting with a fresh mind, full of ideas to learn more & enjoy their time at the dental school. This spark of excitement soon achieved its peak at our “prime & bond” event, which was a great way to meet the other year groups and have a few drinks (or more) together. After that, unfortunately COVID-19 began to slowly delay the amazing events & plans the new UDSS team had for the year and eventually the classes got cancelled, clinic sessions got postponed and we began to shift to online learning. This was extremely worrisome for our DMD3 & DMD4s who were supposed to finish certain requirements, more so for our DMD4s as they feared their graduation may be postponed.

We were extremely fortunate to be in Perth. Being isolated from the rest of the country certainly helped our community to overcome COVID-19 quickly and have it under control. UDSS had to cancel a potential pub crawl/ wine tour, postpone the annual GV black cocktail night and many students had to make some sacrifices to get through this period, with some students even being

stuck overseas and not able to come back for semester 2. We started semester 2 with a plan B schedule, in case of a second COVID-19 wave. All lectures and exams were shifted online but we continued to attend clinic and optech and continued learning & improving ourselves, while enjoying some activities planned by UDSS; the annual quiz night, soup for the soul, Ping-Pong tournaments, pool tournaments, sports day at bounce, R U OK bake sale, UDSS love letters, along with the many amazing journal clubs.

Our committee members managed to plan an amazing 2020 ball dinner, which was a great way to end this year. It has been a tough year for all our DMD students, but we did it! We were all in this together and managed to pull through! All the best to the amazing dentists of the class of 2020, who despite all the obstacles were able to graduate at a beautiful ceremony and good luck to all DMD students 2021.

**Yasmine Mishani**  
**DMD2**





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