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Dean Williams to Examine Student Debt

According to the ADA Center for Professional Success, dental students graduate with about \$250,000 in student debt on average. Many new graduates report significantly greater student loan debt than the average. Dentists are not alone. ADA research shows that high debt-to-income ratios are hitting a number of professions. Dentistry is fourth, behind veterinary medicine, optometry, and pharmacy. [See ADA Information.](#)

Once I conclude my term as dean, my sabbatical year will include a study and review of dental student debt issues in U.S. dental schools. The purpose of my study is to learn what dental schools are doing to: 1) teach financial literacy, 2) reduce student borrowing, 3) control student costs, 4) support students following graduation, and 5) identify best practices to minimize student debt.

ADA research shows that dentists with higher debt are more likely to enter private practice and work longer hours and are less likely to specialize. Characteristics such as sex and race also play a critical role in influencing career choices.

I am excited to learn more and hopefully influence improvement for the future for dental students.

The month of May marks the culmination of hard work for another outstanding graduating class of IUSD students — DDS, Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, MSD, and PhD. IUSD Commencement Weekend (May 9-11) events are [highlighted here](#). We continue to make changes to our commencement ceremonies as guided by the IUPUI campus. We are holding our first events Thursday afternoon and evening when we celebrate the Dental-Medical Uniform Services Commissioning Ceremony at 5 pm and then our annual Spring Honors and Awards dinner at 7 pm.

Graduation is the ultimate academic experience for me. I attended my 45th college reunion recently from Transylvania University in Lexington, Ky., and was amazed how quickly the years have gone by. Our new graduates may still be practicing in the year 2055 and beyond so we must equip them with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and values to adapt and grow over these years. It is a lofty task but one Indiana is known for doing well. I have great confidence that our graduates will embrace their futures and grow with the times.

Congratulations to all! Educating students, creating new knowledge, and preparing a future-ready oral health workforce are the keystones to further our efforts to make Indiana...*one of the best dental schools of the 21st century.*

Final Edition of First Friday – June 7, 2019

As June 30, 2019, approaches, I finish my term as IUSD dental dean under IU policy. I will have completed nine (9) years and two weeks as of June 30, 2019, at Indiana. I am in my 21st year as a dental dean, serving in this decanal role in both North Carolina and Louisville since late 1998. It has been a delight and honor to serve these fine institutions, and I am honored to have served IU. I will cease publication of *First Friday – Dean's Update to the IUSD Community* – with the June 2019 edition. I have been writing this monthly publication for eight volumes (8 years) for a total of 80 editions. All editions are digitized and [available here](#) as part of our digital library project. Thanks to the loyal readership over the years!



Another link to the First Friday Archives: <https://archives.iupui.edu/handle/2450/6318>.



Dentistry, Disruptive Technology, and Changes in Diagnosis and Oral Care Delivery

Are we ready for disruptive technologies in oral health care? For years, [Clayton Christensen of Harvard](#) has discussed all sorts of “disruptive innovations” to improve delivery of goods and services. Think Amazon and retail stores. On April 25, [CVS pharmacy announced an affiliation with SmileDirectClub](#) to provide direct-to-consumer “orthodontic appliances.” The drugstore chain will open “hundreds” of SmileDirectClub locations inside its stores this year, with more to follow. Called a SmileShop, customers can receive a 3D scan of their teeth to create a pair of invisible braces. At first, this sounds like a way for the cost of orthodontic care to be less because these services are centralized with fewer personnel potentially involved. However, where is the diagnosis and treatment planning? It may be easy to convince the consumer that dental care delivery is a simple activity, yet it is a highly specialized service that requires science, professional judgment, and expertise to achieve excellent clinical outcomes. ADA President Jeff Cole has voiced concerns with the FTC, stating, “Our chief concerns centered on patient safety; transparency in diagnosis and treatment planning; and patient recourse when the results are not positive.” This is one “disruption” to follow.

Dr. Angeles Martínez-Mier Recognized: Global Impact Research

IU has announced [high-impact international research projects](#) that engage one or more of the IU Global Gateway offices and the communities they serve. The [Global Gateway Network](#) includes offices in Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, New Delhi, and Mexico City. **Dr. Angeles Martinez-Mier**, IUSD faculty and department chair, will study urinary fluoride in pregnant women living in Mexico City. The research results regarding fetal growth and development will be relevant not only for Mexico but for other global communities that could have similar fluoride exposure levels and to inform health policymakers worldwide.

ADA Wellness Podcast Available

Dr. Emelia Sam of Howard University shares her perspectives on mindfulness and developing a foundation of compassion. As an oral surgeon and educator, she instills mindful behaviors in her students and helps her patients feel most comfortable when under her care. This is episode four of [Beyond the Mouth](#), an ongoing podcast series in which Dr. Betsy Shapiro of the ADA chats with a diverse group of people who advise on the non-clinical challenges dentists experience every day.

Governor Signs HB 1569

On April 24, 2019, the Indiana Governor signed House Bill 1569, which contained modifications to the dental practice act by removing the term “limited” in front of dental licenses and lifting the percentage limits on the number of foreign-trained faculty that could be licensed in academic positions. The full text of the bill is [here](#).

Coffee and Donuts – Join us on Friday, May 3, from 7:30 to 9 am for the monthly First Friday school gathering. Complimentary coffee, donuts, and fruit will be served in the student lounge.

Upcoming IUSD Events

- May 8, 2019 – IU Fort Wayne Campus Commencement
- May 9, 2019 – IUSD Graduation Awards Ceremony
- May 10, 2019 – IUSD Graduation Convocation
- May 11, 2019 – IUPUI Campus Commencement
- May 19, 2019 – IUSD White Coat Ceremony for the Class of 2022
- June 15, 2019 – IUSDAA Alumni Dinner and Class Reunions, French Lick Hotel



Thanks to each of you for your dedication to and support of the Vision and Mission of IUSD. I'll be back next month with **the FINAL edition** of *First Friday...Dean's Update*.

-John

Check out all the current IU Dentistry news on our website: www.dentistry.iu.edu or on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/IUDentistry