



DESTINATION DENTAL SCHOOL

2023 Report



University at Buffalo
Office of Equity, Diversity
and Inclusion
School of Dental Medicine

CLASS OF 2023

2023 COHORT
Participants in the 2023 program represented 13 U.S. states and 23 universities and colleges. Ages ranged from 19 to 37 years old and 80% identified as female. All members of the 2023 cohort identified as underrepresented in the field of dental medicine.



Pathways to Dentistry

Scientific workforce diversity is essential to excellence within STEM fields. According to the National Institutes of Health, women, individuals from low-income families, individuals identifying as an underrepresented minority (URM) or Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/Latinx, American Indian and Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander and Hawaiian, and individuals with disabilities are underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences workforce. Although this percentage has increased over the past decade, the change is modest. Additionally, according to the American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute, 10% of dentists are URM, with Black and Hispanic dentists significantly underrepresented. These numbers are well below the proportions reported for the same groups in the U.S. Census. Women are also significantly underrepresented within the faculty of dental schools.

The University at Buffalo's (UB), School of Dental Medicine (SDM), one of the nation's premier centers for dental education, research and patient care, ranks number 7 in the nation and number 11 in the world. We are committed to supporting and training the next generation of dentists and reducing oral health disparities across the United States. To this end, we have invested significantly in pathway programs.

In 2018, UB SDM, in collaboration with the Seneca Nation Health System established the Native American Pre-Dental Student Gateway Program, a pathway program for students who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native. In 2021, UB SDM's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion launched Destination Dental School (DDS) to increase the enrollment of underrepresented students in the field of dental medicine. Our pathway programs have provided joint programming since 2022. Since 2021, the DDS program has graduated 74 fellows representing 25 states and 47 colleges and universities.

The 2023 DDS cohort met over 7 weeks during the months of June and July. The first six weeks, held virtually every Saturday, introduced the disciplines/specialties of dentistry, the DAT, the admissions process, academics in dental school, and provided additional and optional DAT tutoring. Following our virtual meetings, participants traveled to the University at Buffalo for a full week of in-person, intensive training at the

School of Dental Medicine where over 70 faculty, students and staff supported rotations within specialty clinics, hands on activities (resin placement, suturing, alginate impressions, bleaching trays, and 3D root canals), DAT tutoring sessions, mock interviews, resume clinics, research presentations and local excursions.

Our Learning Objectives

- 1 Understand day-to-day life as a dentist and dental student.**
Participants learn about the different disciplines of dental medicine through presentations and panel discussions. They also participate in hands-on activities that increase hand skill development.
- 2 Strengthen future dental school applications.**
Participants learn about the DAT and recommended study habits, participate in intensive tutoring sessions, and take practice DAT exams. Participants prepare for the dental school admissions process by learning about admissions policies and procedures from students, faculty and staff, participating in mock interviews, and working on dental school application materials.
- 3 Learn how to propose and develop a research topic.**
Participants' capstone projects center around a research topic in oral health. Teams learn best practices in conducting research and present their findings during in-person capstone research presentations.



Destination Dental School received the 2022 and 2023 'Inspiring Program in STEM Award'

Each year, *INSIGHT Into Diversity* recognizes colleges, universities, and organizations that have established cutting-edge programs, events, and initiatives devoted to the work of improving diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in STEM. Destination Dental School was selected as one of 77 (2022) and 79 (2023) programs across the nation for the Inspiring Program in STEM Award, highlighting programs that demonstrated inventiveness and dedication in supporting a new generation of high-achieving scholars and professionals.

Outcomes and Impacts

Program Outcomes

Pre- and post-program surveys measured change in participants' perceived knowledge, preparedness and likelihood of applying to dental school. 90% of participants responded to the pre-program survey and 97% responded to the post-program survey.

Knowledge

2023 Pre- Post-Program Survey Responses
Percentage of participants who believed they were knowledgeable about...

Field	Pre-program	Post-program
'the field of dental medicine'	49%	81%
'disciplines in dentistry'	26%	81%
'day-to-day life as a dentist'	58%	80%
'DAT test'	45%	81%
'application process'	37%	85%
'strategies to improve applications'	12%	89%
'interview skills'	13%	84%
'research'	23%	70%
'research in dental medicine'	7%	73%

Preparedness/Likelihood

Perceived preparedness to "apply to dental school" increased from 15% to 69%, likelihood of applying to "dental school" from 96% to 100%, and likelihood of applying to the "UB School of Dental Medicine" from 78% to 100%.

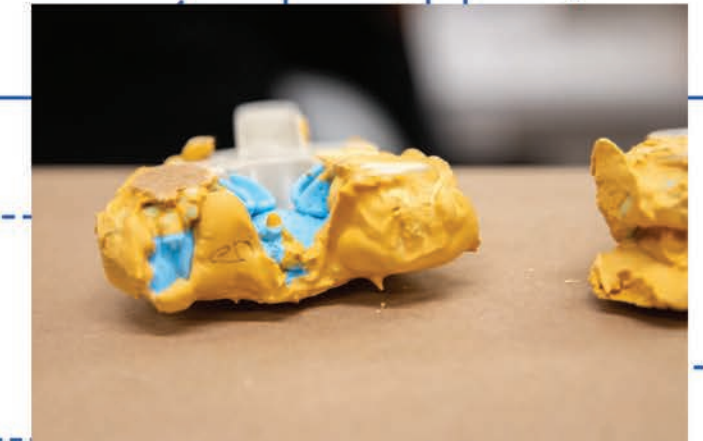
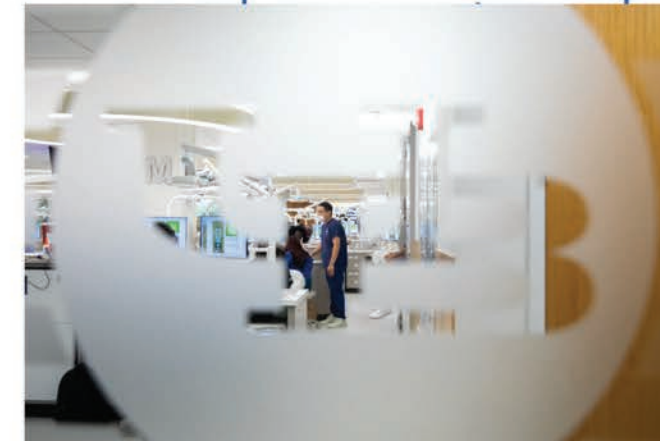


Barriers

When asked what barriers impact their ability to attend dental school, participants responded, in order of frequency: finances, DAT, personal, GPA, supportive community that upholds EDI, dental school system/admissions, mentorship

Resources

When asked what resources would help participants to successfully complete dental school, they responded, in order of frequency: financial support, networks, mentors, study resources, pathway programs, community-based dental programs, affinity groups, support systems, personal, application information.



Measuring Impact

An annual survey measuring program outcomes including educational status, DAT, DDS applications and enrollment, mentorship, and demographics is distributed to all DDS alumni every year. In August 2023, this outcome survey was sent to 85 alumni who graduated from the program since 2021. Of the 85 participants, 41 responded (48% response rate).

- 98% are still pursuing a career in dentistry.
- 63% of students in academic programs were involved in research.
- 61% of students had a mentor who guided them through their academic journey.
- 80% of individuals with a mentor state their mentor has ensured their academic success.
- 59% have taken the DAT with an average reported score of 19.
- 19 students have submitted applications to dental school and 3 are currently enrolled.



This program exceeded my expectations. It gave me a beacon of hope for my future to know that I can do it and will do it one day. I am better prepared to apply and attend dental school because of the DDS program at UB



DDS not only surpassed our expectations but also assisted in the development of confidence and a sense of belonging. Everyone we spoke to throughout this program served as a source of inspiration and motivation for us. The dental students talked about their journeys and experiences with a sense of humility and vulnerability



I am more aware of the need for future dental professionals like myself who will close gaps, be a great representation and fill a need for many communities that lack adequate dental care



[DDS] only strengthened my desire towards dentistry to see first hand what it's like, how to get there, and hearing from people who had to go through struggles and still made it. I found it so cool to meet so many different people with different backgrounds that all have different interests within the field of dentistry. I was able to learn from not only administration and student, but from my peers.

[DDS] has made me want to be a dentist even more and made me feel more confident...[and] determined with the idea that I will become a dentist and I will break any barriers standing in my way by persevering and most importantly not giving up. Moreover this program makes me feel more comfortable as a first generation African American woman because I realize there are people like me and I am not alone in this profession/process and I know no matter what I go through in this process I have people I can reach out to and relate to and together we will all be future dentist[s] and make the world a better place.



Our Contributors



The DDS and Gateway program were organized by the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine. Our leadership team included Dr. Wendell Carmona, DDS Program Director; Dr. Joe Salamon, Gateway Program Director; Dr. Thikriat Al-Jewair, Assistant Dean of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at UB SDM; Dr. Arian Johnson, Founder of DDS and UB SDM alum ('21); and Ms. Jessica Scates, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Operations at UB SDM. Over 70 UB faculty, students and staff volunteered their time to support the 2023 program.

The 2023 program would not be possible without the support from our generous donors and sponsors. Donors for Destination Dental School include the Philip and Catherine Galeota Fund and the UB SDM Alumni Association. Donors for the Native American Pre-Dental Student Gateway Program include the National Indian Health Board, Seneca Nation Health System, Seneca Iroquois National Museum, and United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET). Donors for combined programming include: Eighth District Dental Society, Evolution Dental, Ivoclar Vivadent, Kerr Dental, Patterson Dental, Stellar Dental Management, UB SDM Department of Pediatric and Community Dentistry, UB SDM Office of Student Affairs and DAT Bootcamp.

Our Graduating Classes



Class of 2023: (bottom row L to R): Angelina Godinez, Tavia Halsey-Willie, Linda Benson, Derrick Pouncy, Megi Rama, Fatoumata Magassouba, Nia Benson, Pauline Kirsten Regalado, Naya Weems, Eliese Maybee, Kelsey Locklear, Autumn Tsosie; (second row L to R): Natasha Stewart, Tyler Nelson, Samantha Williams, Kartumi Mohammed, Aniyah Sievwright, Denerick Simpson, Madison Nuñez, Christin Willie, Jeanette Sako; (third row L to R): Courtlyn Brown, Aiyana Reyes, Abdulla Mufleh Odeh, Jihad Almadrahi, Rakibul Islam, Kwame Adu, Latonya Plummer, Khrystyna Adam, Siobhan Robinson

Class of 2022 (in alphabetical order): Ivanna Bennett, Ruhshana Bobojonova, Jasmine Boyd, Lakasjah Brown, Nikita Coleman, Shelby Curry, Reya Das, Patricia Dixon, Ariela Gomez, Joseymi Goris, Jason Johnson, Dawn Landon, Stephany Lopez, Fatou Ndiaye, Jacob Oxendine, Annaliza Quarshie, Yanelly Reyes, Kadira Richardson, Frida Sandoval, Hawa Sano, Sarah Santiago, Isabel Santos, Karina Sarmiento, Simbiat Taiwo, Kaela Tyler, Monday Udosen, Allison Wasuli, Amaya Williams, Abdul Yates

Class of 2021 (in alphabetical order): Kadiatou Barry, Sharika Been, O'Maya Brown, Frandy Castellano Gutierrez, Chandler Cleveland, Kiyah Coco, Senai Daniel, Marithza Flores, Jasmine Gray, MaTeenah Ige, Rhianna Jack, Alexis Jackson, Aron Jones, Britt McCall, Darling Mendoza, Jamaal Nafiu, Ikodiya Okoroafor Kalu, Jasmine Pryor, Sebastian Romero, Rosalia Sedano, Charity Turnboe, Jalisa Whitehorse, Jamyla Young, Ni-na Zylberberg

UB | University at Buffalo
**Office of Equity, Diversity
and Inclusion**
School of Dental Medicine

www.dental.buffalo.edu/destinationdentalschool

