

Student Research Group

Department of Dentistry

University of Alberta





President

- ***Pranidhi Baddam***, Position: President & Representative for Research Intensive Graduate Programs. Degree in Progress: PhD Medical Sciences (Oral Biology). Originally from India, Pranidhi moved to Edmonton 12 years ago. She completed her BSc in Biological Sciences at the University of Alberta. Pranidhi is pursuing her PhD in Dr. Daniel Graf's lab and her research focusses on the role of Bone Morphogenetic Protein 7 (BMP7) in cartilage biology, specifically how cellular and molecular defects in cartilage leads to nasal septum deviation. Apart from research, she devotes her free time to traveling, hiking, playing Badminton and watching Basketball.



Vice-President

- **Daniela Roth**, Position: Vice President & Representative to FoMD Faculty Council, Degree in Progress: MSc Medical Sciences (Oral Biology Program). Daniela has been attending the University of Alberta since 2014 - starting with a BSc in Physiology and Developmental Biology. While her interest in pathology drew her to physiology first, she ended her degree with a newfound passion for developmental biology. Her foray into research began with zebrafish retinas, which led her to pursue a graduate program in development. She is now a 2nd year student in Dr. Daniel Graf's lab, studying Bone Morphogenetic Proteins and the role of midfacial sutures in craniofacial growth defects.



Secretary

- ***Linneth Immaraj***, Position: Secretary & Postdoctoral Research Fellow representative. Linneth is originally from India, born and raised in Kuwait. She completed her BSc and MSc (Biotechnology) in India followed by MSc (Molecular Medicine) from University of Sheffield, UK and, pursued her passion for science by completing her PhD studies at the Cardiff Metropolitan University. Her doctoral thesis explored the “Effect of polyunsaturated fatty acids on markers of cellular senescence and telomere length”. She’s currently pursuing her Postdoctoral training with Prof. Maria Febbraio exploring “the role of endothelial CD36 using mouse knockout models”. Linneth is an avid reader, loves to cook, enjoys ‘moming’ her two boys and playing the guitar.



Treasurer

- ***Umar Rekhi***, Position: Treasurer and Member at large, Degree in Progress: Ph.D. Medical Sciences (Oral Biology). Umar is a foreign-trained dentist who completed a BDS from University of Health Sciences, Pakistan. He joined the University of Alberta in 2016 as a master's student in Prof. Febbraio's lab and later transferred to PhD-Oral Biology. His research interest is Periodontal Disease and the Role of Endothelial Cell CD36 in Atherosclerosis. Besides this, he loves to travel.



DDS representative

- ***Simran Sarao***, Position: DDS Representative, Degree in Progress: Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS). Simran moved to Alberta from Denver, Colorado when she began her undergraduate degree in Biology at the U of A. After completing two years' worth of undergraduate courses she was accepted into the DDS program. She became interested in the SRG after completing a research project through the Summer Student Program under the supervision of Dr. Liran Levin. She is currently in her second year of the DDS program and is working on a dental trauma research project. Simran enjoys living in Edmonton, although she misses the mountains back home sometimes. Outside of dentistry she likes to play tennis, violin, and is a black belt in Combat Hapkido.



Dental Hygiene representative

- ***Dominic Votta***, Position: Dental Hygiene Representative, Degree in Progress: BSc. Dental Hygiene. Dominic completed a two-year pre-requisite program at the Medicine Hat College where he received a scholarship to play for the Medicine Hat Men's Rattlers Soccer Team. After this, he moved to Edmonton to attend the University of Alberta where he finished a Bachelor of Science majoring in Psychology and minoring in Sociology in 2018. Along with this degree, Dominic also completed a Certificate in Engaged Leadership and Citizenship. With a passion and interest in teeth from a young age, Dominic pursued another BSc at the University of Alberta in Dental Hygiene and is now in his second year of the program.



GSA representative

- **Julia Piche**, Position: GSA Representative, Degree in Progress: MSc Medical Sciences (Oral Biology). Julia completed her undergraduate studies at The University of Winnipeg with a BBA in Business and Administration and a BSc Honours in Biochemistry. There, she completed two research projects titled, “Exploratory Behaviour Predicts Recapture Rate but Not Home Range in *Tamias minimus*” and “Correlating the Effect of Leaving Group/Linker Atom upon the Viability of Truce-Smiles Rearrangement Substrates”. Julia’s current research project is titled, “Cellular Fatty Acid Uptake by CD36: Identifying Amino Acids That Play a Critical Role”. In her spare time, Julia enjoys baking, watching football, and spending time with friends.



Clinical Graduate Student representative

- ***Maryam Elyasi***, Position: Clinical Graduate Student representative. Degree in Progress: PhD (Orthodontics). Maryam completed a DDS degree at the Azad University (Tehran Branch) in 2010).. She joined the University of Alberta in January 2014 as an MSc student in Dentistry and admitted/transferred to PhD-Orthodontics program in January 2016. She successfully passed her Candidacy examination in August 2016, and passed the Dental Specialty Examination in Orthodontics in June 2019. She plans to defend her PhD thesis in the near future. At the University of Alberta, she has received twenty-five competitive awards and grants including international- (i.e., American Association of Orthodontics Foundation Resident Award), national- (e.g., Alpha Omega Foundation Research Grant), provincial (e.g, Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship), and local (e.g., 75th Anniversary Award) and published 15 papers in peer-reviewed journals.



Graduate Studies Committee representative

- **Karen Ho**, Position: Graduate Studies Committee representative. Degree in Progress: MSc Medical Sciences (Oral Biology). Karen completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Alberta with a BSc (specialization in dental hygiene). She is a registered dental hygienist who is currently pursuing graduate studies under the supervision of Dr. Maria Febbraio and Dr. Liran Levin. Her research project is titled, “The Impact of Loricrin Deficiency in age and *Porphyromonas gingivalis* Induced Periodontal Disease”. Karen is also a clinical instructor for the department of dental hygiene and periodontics department in undergraduate dentistry at the University of Alberta.