

**ADVANCES IN DENTAL
ULTRASONOGRAPHY**

Pioneering Intraoral
Ultrasound Use in Clinical
Care and Research

**TREATING AN
AGING POPULATION**

New HRSA Funding Will
Increase Predoctoral Training
in Geriatric Dentistry

**DENTAL EDUCATION
DISRUPTED BY WAR**

Ukrainian Dental Student
Finds Learning Opportunities
at HSDM

Harvard School of Dental Medicine
Fall 2022 / Volume 82, Number 2

Harvard Dental

A Warm Introduction



Alumni Focus

Combining a Passion for Art, Science, and Community Into a Rewarding Career in Orthodontics



DANIEL CASSARELLA, DMD08, fondly recalls what he enjoyed the most about his Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM) experience. “Without hesitation, I enjoyed my classmates the most. My classmates at HSDM and HMS were inspiring, kind, thoughtful, and full of wonderful surprises. Together we laughed, faced challenges and overcame them, and pushed each other to do and become more,” Cassarella said.

Now the founder of a successful orthodontic practice outside Philadelphia, PA, and busy parent to three young girls with his wife Sarah, Cassarella still takes time to stay in touch with his classmates and other HSDM alumni. His trajectory after graduation took him to UCLA for a three-year orthodontics residency before he returned to the east coast. He has served in roles as a clinical faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine and the University of Maryland School of Dentistry and has earned accolades in the profession including being recognized for excellence in teaching and as an honoree in *Incisal Edge Magazine*’s 40 Under 40.

As Cassarella’s 15-year HSDM reunion approaches in the spring of 2023, he reflects on what drew him to the profession, the strong bonds he formed at HSDM, and how his life and career were shaped by his predoctoral student experience.

What drew you to the field of dentistry, and what do you find most fulfilling about being an orthodontist?

When I was a kid, I wanted to be so many different things all at the same time. I loved science, I enjoyed art, I wanted to serve my community, and I looked up to my parents who both were educators. I was active in sports in my youth and my coaches had a very positive impact on my life and development. Leading a team and owning a business was a goal that I set for myself at a young age.

As I considered career options, I gravitated toward those careers that could allow me to serve others while being an artist, scientist, teacher, coach, team leader, and a business owner. I never had braces or orthodontic treatment as a child, but the more I learned about the orthodontic specialty during my time at HSDM, the more I realized it is the magic career that allows me to be ten different things all at the same time, fulfilling my childhood vision. I knew it was the career that would allow me to put my skills to use to serve others and my community in the most optimal way.

How did your HSDM experience influence your career trajectory?

HSDM influenced my career trajectory significantly, but it goes much deeper. My HSDM experience had a profoundly positive influence on my life trajectory. It was an incredible opportunity to learn in a dynamic and collaborative environment. We were supported, challenged, and provided with every tool we could possibly need to take the reins of global leadership in our profession. Our class entered through a wide funnel. We all had different experiences and viewpoints. The magic of HSDM is that we exited after graduation through an even wider perspective. Our viewpoints were broadened, and perspective augmented. We were not taught *what* to think but rather *how* to think, and this is a skill that serves for a lifetime.

What advice would you give an incoming dental student?

Take some time to take inventory of the great opportunity that is ahead. Your classmates, the faculty, and your experience

will change your life. Enjoy every second, be thankful for the challenges as well as the triumphs. Set ambitious goals for yourself. The HSDM admissions committee believes in you and saw a very special spark in you. Use the years ahead to ignite that spark and shine brightly in the years to come.

A favorite quote of mine from Marcus Aurelius is “If a man knows not to which port he sails, no wind is favorable.” Decide where you want to go, and HSDM will no doubt provide a strong wind to help you reach your desired destination. It certainly did for my classmates and me!

What did you enjoy most about your student experience at HSDM?

Without hesitation, I enjoyed my classmates the most. Many of my very best friends were classmates during my time at HSDM and HMS. Our entire class remains in close touch. More than half of our class attended our ten-year reunion and brought spouses, children, and family. It was wonderful to reconnect in person and we are looking forward to our 15-year reunion coming up next year.

It has been amazing to see the impact my classmates have made on our profession in a short time since our graduation. Many of my fellow classmates have made advances in research, won prestigious grants, have assumed academic leadership positions, and have set new standards for clinical care in the academic and private practice settings. I had the special privilege of continuing to form bonds with my classmates after graduation. During my orthodontics residency at UCLA, my roommates were Mike Bundy, DMD08, and Christine Hong, DMD08, and Krisena Borenstein, DMD08, all HSDM classmates, were my orthodontic co-residents. These great friendships that resulted from my student experience are something I will cherish for my entire life.

In addition to your classmates, do you keep in touch with other HSDM alumni?

I’m grateful for the friendship I formed with Roger Spampata, DMD86, shortly after I opened my practice 2016. We’ve collaborated together on many multidisciplinary cases, and I gained deep

respect for Roger’s amazing skill as a clinician. As we worked more together over the years, our friendship grew. One of the biggest areas of common ground is our shared experience as HSDM alumni. We have recently started a tradition of attending one Harvard Football game together each year. I value my working relationship with Roger, as well as our friendship. Our common experience as HSDM graduates makes that connection even stronger. ♥

SAVE THE DATE

Classes ending in 3’s and 8’s will celebrate reunion **June 1–3, 2023**. All alumni are invited to join Alumni Day, which will be held on campus **June 2, 2023**.



Daniel Cassarella, DMD08 (right), with classmates from the Class of 2008 at their last reunion.