



SIU School of Dental Medicine welcomes inaugural class of new International Program

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EDWARDSVILLE - The **Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM)** has expanded to meet the demands in the international dentist community through its International Advanced Placement Program (IAPP). The inaugural class of six students began the 27-month program on the Alton campus in February.

The IAPP enables qualified dentists who have graduated from an acknowledged international dental school to pursue a doctor of dental medicine (DMD) degree at the SDM. Program graduates will be able to obtain licensure to practice dentistry in the U.S.

“This program was designed to align with the SDM’s philosophy and mission of exceptional patient care and the education of excellent general dentists for the area,” said Daniel Ketteman, DDS, director of the IAPP. “It will expand the patient care at the SDM by having experienced practitioners of the dental healing arts caring for more complex cases than our traditional students.”

Students in the IAPP will first complete a three-month Clinical Certification Course. They will then merge with the SDM’s junior class to complete the final two years of the DMD curriculum. According to Ketteman, two-thirds of the inaugural class were previously dental specialists in their home countries.

Dileep Varghese, a 38-year-old native of India, is a member of the IAPP class. Varghese has practiced dentistry in India, and worked as a dental assistant and dental hygienist in the U.S.

“I want to extend my sincere thanks to all who have worked hard to make this program become a reality and for giving us a chance to pursue our dream of practicing dentistry in this country,” Varghese said. “I have always known that the standard of dental education in this country is consistently high, and I take it as a challenge to rise up to the occasion and keep the professional standards high.

“The most rewarding thing about my profession is the positive and constructive transformation in the lives of the patients who get the right dental care,” he continued. “It changes the quality of life, and turns it enjoyable and fruitful. The gratitude that I have received from my patients during my practice in my country gave me satisfaction and the drive to do more for them.”

“I am amazed at the lengths these individuals have gone to in order to be with us on campus,” Ketteman said. “They are dedicated, enthusiastic and willing to confront any hurdle in order to resume practicing the profession that they are all so passionate about.

“My goal is to continue to seek out the most talented and dedicated applicants in order to make the SIU School of Dental Medicine’s IAPP one of the premier international dentistry programs in the nation.