

SIU SDM Confers 56 Doctor of Dental Medicine Degrees During Commencement

by Megan Wieser
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EDWARDSVILLE – The Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) conferred doctor of dental medicine (DMD) degrees on 56 students comprising the Class of 2021 during its commencement ceremony held Saturday, June 5 at the First Community Arena at the Vadalabene Center on the Edwardsville campus.

“Doctors of the Class of 2021, I understand that this has been a most unusual time for both your education and entry into your profession,” SIU SDM Dean Bruce Rotter, DMD, MS, shared, “but you are bright and ambitious, with great minds and great hearts. Don’t lose sight of that. Celebrate your accomplishments, celebrate your new profession, but mostly celebrate each other and those close to you.”

The Class of 2021 was celebrated for its tremendous 100% first-time pass rate on the new Integrated National Board Dental Exam (INBDE). Students also performed

remarkably well on their Clinical Board exams, another strong measure of the School's outcomes.

Perry Tuneberg, DDS, delivered the commencement address. Also in attendance were distinguished guests SIU System President Dan Mahony and SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembroke. They wished graduates great success in the next chapter of their journey, and encouraged them to remain connected and take pride in the institution's bright future.

The SIU SDM also honored its Class of 2020 with a special hooding ceremony that afternoon. Rotter acknowledged the hard work and accomplishments of those who earned their degrees in the thick of a pandemic.

"You are a special group of people," he said. "You put in many hard hours, and distinguished yourselves through your academic achievements, quality dental care, community outreach and service efforts. You also demonstrated your resolve and resiliency as we all stepped into and negotiated the unknown realm of pandemic."

Rotter concluded both ceremonies by asking graduates to remember five important things:

Always strive to perform the best dentistry that you can and to continue a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and excellence

Treat both your patients and your staff with the utmost respect

Maintain a moral compass, striving to do what is right

Maintain a social conscience, share your expertise with those less fortunate who may need your help

Return the love and support to your family and friends, which they have already given to you through their sacrifices in helping you reach your goals

Recordings of both the 10 a.m. Class of 2021 ceremony and the 1 p.m. Class of 2020 hooding ceremony are available at siue.edu/tv.

[The SIU School of Dental Medicine](#) students manage approximately 35,000 patient visits each year at its patient clinics in Alton and East St. Louis. In addition, students offer oral health treatment, screenings and education to more than 10,000 people annually through a wide variety of off-campus community outreach events. These

opportunities provide students the training they need to graduate and become highly skilled dentists. The School of Dental Medicine is a vital oral health care provider for residents of southern and central Illinois, and the St. Louis metropolitan region.