



# SIU SDM Honors Annual Scholarship Winners

by Megan Wieser  
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EDWARDSVILLE – The Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) continues its annual tradition of honoring exceptional students with scholarships to enhance their learning opportunities.

This year, Dean's Scholarship awards of \$7,500 each were presented to Kevin Kordi, of Chicago, Paulina Wisniewska, of Hanover Park, Eric Kubacki, of Minooka, and Dylan Handlin, of Springfield. Recipients of the Dr. Larry Lowe Memorial Scholarship included Nourah Abdul Kader, of Chennai, India, and Prabhjot Kaur, of Punjab, India.

“We are extremely pleased to be able to award both the Dean's Scholarship awards and the Dr. Larry Lowe Memorial Scholarship awards to these deserving students,” said SIU SDM Dean Bruce Rotter, DMD, MS. “In fact, the Dean's Scholarship awards were increased in value this year thanks to one of our donors. As there are no University funds attached to any of these scholarships, we are continually grateful to our generous donors for making these scholarships possible.”

The Dean's Scholarship was created with the goal of rewarding academic merit, assisting with financial need and increasing student diversity at the SIU SDM. Sherry Baker established the annual Dr. Larry Lowe Memorial Scholarship in memory of her late husband, an SIU SDM Class of 1977 alumnus.

Scholarship recipients expressed their gratitude for the scholarship support, which will help ease financial burdens and allow them to focus on degree completion and their pursuit of a career in dentistry.

“I have always had a deep love and appreciation for academia, and I am very thankful that my academic pursuits up to this point are being recognized with the scholarship,” Kubacki said. “I aspire to one day own my own practice in a small town, where I can treat whole families, and serve an entire community. My academic experience and clinical training at SIU SDM have been edifying and enriching, and leave me feeling highly-prepared and excited to enter the field I have chosen as an oral healthcare provider.”

Kubacki will graduate in summer 2022, as will fellow Dean's Scholarship recipient Handlin, who aspires to become an orthodontist.

“Our class is filled with spectacular individuals who have worked hard in all aspects of dental school. Therefore, I knew that I would be applying along with some outstanding students who were just as deserving of the award,” added Handlin. “I am honored to have been chosen among my peers. I intend on striving to represent SIU SDM to the highest possible standard as I continue throughout my dental career.”

“The clinical training we receive at SIU SDM is one of the finest available,” he continued. “Early exposure to the clinical setting leaves us with a wide array of experience and awareness that will enable us to prosper in our future careers.”

International Advanced Placement Program student Kaur was “overjoyed” to have received a scholarship.

“I have always been passionate about dentistry and teaching,” Kaur said. “My long-term goal is to work as a faculty member in a dental school where I can utilize my knowledge and skills to help future dentists. This award money will be helpful in lessening my financial burden, as my family recently moved to the U.S., and allow me to focus on my studies.”

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.