

SIU SDM White Coat Ceremony Affirms Future Dentists' Commitment

April 20 2022 1:24 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) hosted its 20th annual White Coat Ceremony on Friday, April 1 at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville.

The ceremony celebrated the first-year cohort of 50 dental students representing the Class of 2025 and six International Advanced Placement Program (IAPP) students comprising the Class of 2023.

SIUE Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Denise Cobb, PhD, delivered the welcome address, acknowledging the presence of SDM faculty and staff and extolling the brilliance of this year's cohort.

“This cohort represents exceptional individuals who have excelled in their efforts to become a part of this honorable profession,” Cobb said. “The 50 first-year dental students were selected from an incredibly competitive pool of 511 qualified applicants.

The six IAPP students were selected from among 226 highly qualified dentists who have earned international dental degrees. I commend all of you for overcoming long odds, distinguishing yourself among peers and embracing the opportunity to experience an excellent dental education at the SIU School of Dental Medicine.”

Cobb seized the opportunity to assure the future dentists of SIUE’s highest support toward attaining their advanced degrees.

“We are dedicated to ensuring that you have the necessary support to reach your goals and achieve success,” she said. “I am confident that each of you will embrace the opportunities and accept the challenges that you will encounter during your dental education, so that upon graduation, you will be positioned to become regional and national leaders in the field of dentistry.”

Cobb noted the distinguishing attributes of the SIU SDM, including its remarkable infrastructure and dedicated staff and faculty.

“The School’s culture of excellence, exceptional clinical opportunities, and commitment to service make the SIU SDM a central source of pride for our entire University,” Cobb said. “The esteemed faculty, the state-of-the-art preclinical lab, the clinical environment and the conscientious staff all contribute to a nationally-recognized dental education program.”

Remarks were also presented by keynote speaker Susan Bordenave-Bishop, DMD. Bordenave-Bishop currently serves as deputy regent of the Eighth District of the International College of Dentists, and treasurer of the Central Illinois Academy of General Dentistry. She shared insights from her career and extensive service experience.

SIU SDM Interim Dean Duane Douglas, DMD, led the students in the Professional Oath which pledges honesty, integrity, discretion, confidentiality, inclusive treatment, service and more. The event concluded with remarks from fourth-year student Kevin Kordi, president of the SDM Student Council.

The SIU SDM White Coat Ceremony was sponsored by the Central Illinois Academy of General Dentistry, Illinois Section of the American College of Dentists, Illinois State Dental Society Foundation and the Eighth District of the International College of Dentists.

SIU School of Dental Medicine students manage approximately 35,000 patient visits each year at 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.

Photo: SIU School of Dental Medicine first-year cohort of 50 dental students representing the Class of 2025 and six International Advanced Placement Program (IAPP) students comprising the Class of 2023 were honored during the annual White Coat Ceremony in April.

[Megan Wieser also contributed to this story.](#)