

# NEW AND YOUNGER MEMBERS FILE



*The Class of 2014, first day in the clinic. Left to right: Drs. Owtad, Rajyaguru, Gardiner, Prince, Surgill.*

## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

### A.T. Still University, Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health Postgraduate Orthodontic Program

By Vanessa Browne, DDS

*This column is for our PCSO residents or New/Younger Members, who are encouraged to submit manuscripts about their residency, personal, or professional life. I hope this column will instill loyalty to organized orthodontics in our residents and newer members and that they will join PCSO or some another constituent society. Dr. Vanessa Browne, [vnbrowne@gmail.com](mailto:vnbrowne@gmail.com), will be in charge of this column. – Ed.*

I asked Dr. Payam Owtad, an AAO student member and PCSO resident representative at the Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health (ASDOH) postgraduate orthodontic program, to share some highlights about his life as a resident.

**VB: Why did you apply to the orthodontic program?**

PO: I grew up playing music, which gave me an appreciation for beauty, balance, and harmony. While attending dental school, I found that creating beautiful smiles with orthodontics is in many ways similar to creating beautiful compositions with musical instruments; this similarity is in part what attracts me to orthodontics. Following this passion, I studied in Iran, Australia, and the United States, which has been the center of my focus and desire since I was 20 years old.



*Dr. Owtad*

**VB: Tell me about your orthodontic residency program.**

PO: My co-residents and I really feel fortunate to be working with Dr. Jae Hyun Park (chair/program director), Dr. Michael Papademetriou (clinical director), the orthodontic department's outstanding adjunct faculties, and the great staff. The school provides us with a very professional and convivial educational environment, along with a deep exposure to orthodontics that isn't just rooted in the fundamentals of orthodontics and conventional orthodontic methods, but extends beyond to include exposure to the latest technological advancements in clinical orthodontics and unique surgical cases. These include a variety of the most recent conventional and self-ligating bracket systems, lingual orthodontics (Incognito, Harmony), and digital orthodontics such as OrthoCAD, SureSmile, Insignia, Orapix, and Invisalign. In addition, each resident has to perform research — which for me involves a double-blinded randomized clinical trial that focuses on the effects of low-level laser therapy on orthodontic tooth movements and associated pain. I was also involved as an author in publishing three peer-reviewed scientific and clinical articles during my first year of residency, in addition to two other papers that are currently under review. Our program strongly supports our research projects and encourages us to perform high-quality clinical studies and to be involved in public health services.

**VB: What are some highlights of your residency?**

PO: There are many highlights of my residency. Some of the most memorable events were traveling to orthodontic gatherings and meetings such as GORP,

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the AAO and PCSO's Annual Sessions, and the Tweed course in Tucson. These meetings provided a chance to strengthen our friendship as co-residents, and they gave us opportunities to socialize and network with residents and orthodontists from other schools while expanding our professional knowledge and skills. Probably the most formative time we had on the road to graduation came while we worked with the 100-plus patients assigned to each resident here at the clinic. We also saw diverse patients through the community service we performed every month at the St. Vincent De Paul clinic and learned about orthodontic treatment for patients with craniofacial anomalies and cleft lip and palate at St. Joseph Hospital in Phoenix. Treating patients to ABO standards is highly emphasized in our program, and many of our residents become board certified quickly after graduation.

**VB: What are your plans for after graduation?**

**PO:** My goal is to be a private orthodontic clinician providing high-quality treatment, while staying involved in academic activities, orthodontic leadership, teaching, and new advancements in orthodontics. My ideal post-residency plan would be to find an associateship or long-term partnership position in Arizona, while keeping my eyes open for other opportunities to purchase my own practice.

**VB: Are you involved in any activities within the PCSO/AAO?**

**PO:** Serving as the PCSO resident representative helped me to get more involved in orthodontic leadership, and I realized that there are many opportunities to learn and to contribute to the profession through organized orthodontics. PCSO is a great professional platform and I encourage residents and young orthodontists to join us in the New and Younger Members Committee. Fortunately, my school and residency program has facilitated my participation in orthodontic leadership activities.



Halloween 2013: Faculty, staff, and classes of 2014 and 2015.



2013 Graduation Day. Left to right: Drs. Papademetriou, Cox, Owtad, Milde, Surgill, Gardiner, Shastry, Rajyaguru, Hillstead, Bullen, Park, and Prince.



Class of 2014, Tweed Course in Tucson, AZ.

**VB: Tell me about your family and personal interests.**

**PO:** I am privileged to have a loving family: my parents, my six brothers and their significant others, most of whom now live in Arizona. I love outdoor activities, music, volleyball, running, stand-up comedy, and most of all, spending time with family and friends.

I would like to thank my teachers for their dedication and mentorship over the course of 12 years of my dental and orthodontic education.