

## A tradition of clinical education, leadership training and strong research

**W**HEN DR. GREG HUANG SUCCEEDED DR. Greg King as Orthodontics Department chair last Aug. 1, he knew he'd inherited something special.

"One of our strengths is that we provide a really solid clinical education," says Dr. Huang, 46. "At the same time, we are also very proud of our track record for training educators and leaders in the orthodontic field. Our challenge is to remain on the cutting edge of technology and research. We have to be really discriminating about what techniques and appliances have lasting value. ... There's lots of advances with new technology, materials, and appliances in orthodontics. We try not to get swept up in too much hype."

The graduate program, he notes, has achieved an enviable reputation, having trained many department chairs. Competition for the five student openings has always been fierce, with 250 or more applicants a year.

Dr. Huang, who directed the graduate program before assuming the department chair, hopes to expand by restoring a sixth student slot, lost in the transition from a 2-year to a 2 1/2-year program eight years ago. The slot had been earmarked for foreign students.

"We've had a pretty profound influence internationally because of that policy to train international students," Dr. Huang says. His plan entails adding space in the Orthodontics clinic for that sixth student.

Dr. Huang also plans to continue Orthodontics' tradition of strong research. "We've always had at least one faculty member who is a basic scientist," he says, with Dr. Sue Herring the incumbent in that role. In fact, he notes, faculty members Dr. King, Dr. Anne-Marie Bollen and Dr. Doug Ramsay all have PhDs.

Orthodontics will also continue its focus on interdisciplinary education, he says. Students rotate through Seattle Children's hospital, treating craniofacial patients,

and Orthodontics also works with Pediatrics Department grad students on mixed-dentition patients.

Dr. Huang also sees a need to identify replacements for senior faculty, and says the department must navigate the conversion to digital technology. He would also like to foster closer ties with area orthodontists. "I strongly believe we are a community of specialists," he says.

Dr. Huang joined the SOD faculty as a part-timer in 1999 after practicing privately in Florida and teaching at the University of Florida, where he had earned

his DMD. He started his dental career in a comfortable spot: next door to his father's pediatrics office in Plant City, Fla. "I was very proud that at the time I was practicing, my dad was still practicing," he says.

But "I wanted a little bit more of a challenge," he says. So Dr. Huang returned to Seattle, where in 1989 he had earned his MSD and Certificate in Orthodontics at UW. On his return, he enrolled in the MPH program at Dr. King's suggestion. After winning his latest degree — he has a special interest in epidemiology — he shifted to full-time teaching.

Dr. Huang served as the Chair of the American Association of Orthodontists Council on Scientific Affairs for the past two years, and last year was appointed as a consultant to the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation.

He has been married eight years to Shu-Fen Huang, and they have two young children. His hobbies include photography, along with racquetball and hiking in the Cascades. He also enjoys playing the piano, and sometimes is lucky enough to have his children ask him to play as they fall asleep.

He may no longer practice next door to his dad, but one of his three brothers does practice orthopedic surgery in Seattle. "I straighten teeth, he straightens bones," Dr. Huang says with a grin. ■

