



provisional

UTSD ASDA NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3 | JULY 2018

PEDAL PARTY RECAP WEDNESDAY // JULY 3, 2018



The rains of Houston didn't "brake" our summer pedal party! On the eve of the 4th of July, our ASDA chapter had its first pedal social with members riding around Midtown in 3 fully loaded bike bars. Organized by our amazing Social Chairs, Sally Hays and Jennifer Siller, the event was a fun jaunt in the city on a completely pedal-powered bike.

"THIS NEW EVENT WAS SUCH A FUN NIGHT! IT INTERMINGLED THE DENTAL CLASSES AND ALLOWED US TO RELAX AND HAVE FUN WHILE BEING OUTSIDE AND ACTIVE. I ENJOYED GETTING TO KNOW PEOPLE THAT I NORMALLY DON'T SEE AT SCHOOL!"

- Sally Hays, rising DS4



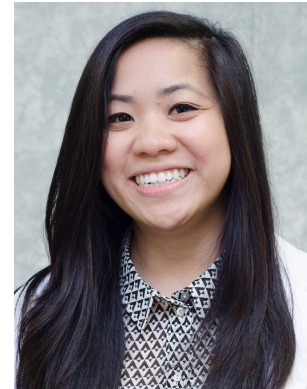
JOKE OF THE DAY

Q: What does the dentist of the year get?

A: A little plaque.



Canine GUIDANCE



Christine Nguyen '19

In this non-salaried, stress-inducing, 8-5 “job” we call dental school, it certainly helps to have someone to come home to who is absolutely ecstatic to see you. Someone who can turn a frown upside down and make your heart flutter at the speed of light. Someone who makes you forget about whatever bad day you had and reminds you that having a dental dam snap on you for the FIFTH TIME is not the worst thing in the world. Not everyone is lucky enough to have this support, and sometimes this someone comes in the form of a fluffy, four-legged creature with floppy ears and a wagging tail. **Wait, what?** Yes, you read that right—I’m talking about our cats, our dogs, our bunnies, and our snakes (maybe not four-legged snakes... that would be so scary... but you get the idea). Pets give us more than we give them credit for, and my dog has certainly guided who I am as a student dentist.

It’s commonly accepted that having a pet helps to reduce stress, improve self-esteem, and increase happiness; however, I would go so far as to argue that having a pet can also make you a better clinician. Bella (my part-chow, part golden retriever) certainly provides stress relief and improves my mood with her big brown beady eyes. Her name might as well be “Serotonin” with all the anti-depressive effects she brings. More importantly though, Bella has helped me to foster compassion, and has taught me how to read non-verbal cues – two things that have made me the clinician I am today.”

When my family adopted Bella at the ripe young age of 2.5 (almost 18 in dog years—she was a TEENAGER), we had no idea what we were doing or getting ourselves into. We didn’t even have a dog food for her, let alone a leash and collar. Thinking back, I remember restless nights as a new dog parent feeling clueless, uncertain, fearful, and even worried. Were we giving her the best home? Did she understand where she was? How was she feeling and did she even like us? However, as time went on, we were able to understand Bella more (she made it clear she was alpha, and, honestly, I respected that). Through her excited tapping toes, tail wags, and even snarling teeth at cats, we learned what she liked, disliked, loved, and felt apathetic about. We taught her some tricks and she learned how

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to respond to our tones and commands. Ultimately, our relationship has improved over the years, and I believe we have provided the best forever home we possibly can for her.

I think back on my days as a fresh second year in clinic and remember experiencing the same feelings and questions as when we first got Bella. I wanted to provide the best care for my patients and wanted them to understand their dental treatment and feel taken care of. I felt lost, too. As with Bella, though, my experience in clinic eventually improved as I learned to understand my patients' non-verbal cues. I began to pick up on body language that didn't necessarily match what my patients were verbalizing.

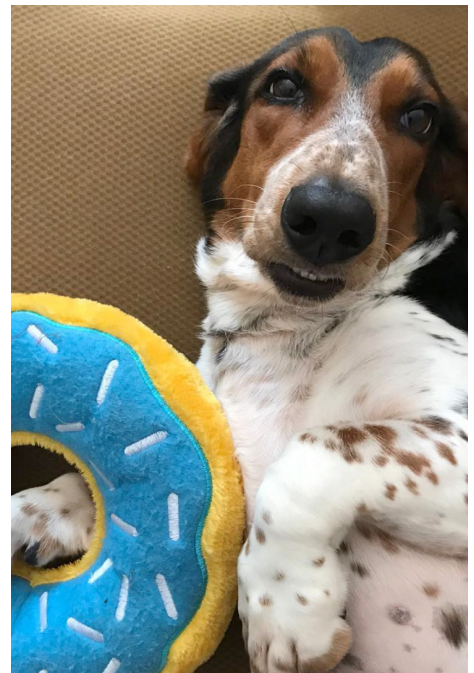
I believe I now provide a unique, positive experience of healthcare for those I treat, and it is borne from things I learned when raising a teenager puppy. Maybe my blood pressure has decreased and maybe I am less stressed — science suggests these happen when having a pet. Yet having a golden-chow taught me things you cannot read in a book. She has made me a better student dentist. Pets may wait for humans to give them a forever home, but we humans are truly not home until we have a fluffy companion (or snake or bird, whatever is your fancy). My canine guided me and made me a better person as well. I hope I never forget what I learned from Bella and use the skills I have gained from raising her throughout the rest of my career.



BELLA (CHRISTINE NGUYEN, '19)



ODIN (JEANNIE BINDER, '21)



LADY (SELINA GARCES, '19)

Tag us @utsdhoustonasda on pictures of your furry friends with **#CanineGuidance** or **#FelineFridays** to be featured on the Houston ASDA Instagram page!



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