



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contacts: Bill Marse at UMKC

marsew@umkc.edu, 816-235-2104

Lynn Whittaker at AAL

lwhittaker@academicleaders.org, 478-433-5496

**Inaugural Class of ITL Scholars Completes Advanced Teaching and Learning Program Held at UMKC School of Dentistry**

KANSAS CITY, MO—When the first participants completed the Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) in the Health Professions Program for Dental School Faculty, the boost for dental education was palpable. “Since my faculty experience so far has been as a part-time educator,” said Dr. Maria Fiocchi, a periodontist at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, “the ITL has given me the educational tools to ease my transition into full-time academia. I feel that I will not be guessing what may work for my students; I now have information to practice ‘evidence-based teaching.’ I have already observed the positive changes in my students’ learning experience.” Dr. William Payne, a Kansas practitioner, also felt the change. “I enrolled in this program to educate me for a transition from private practice into dental school teaching,” he said. “The ITL program has taught me everything from how a dental school operates to how to give a PowerPoint presentation to how to communicate with Gen Y students. This course has answered all my questions concerning academic dentistry and prepared me well for what I expect to be a stimulating new career.”

Fiocchi and Payne are two of the 23 current and prospective dental educators who are fulfilling the vision of Dr. Karl Haden, president of the Academy for Academic Leadership, which conducted the 2006 ITL program in conjunction with its collaborative partner, the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry. “Academic dentistry—which is the foundation of the dental profession—is facing a faculty recruitment and retention challenge that will increase in the next decade,” Haden said. “We designed the ITL program to assist dental education in meeting that challenge by helping new dental school faculty and dentists in private practice gain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the dental school environment.”

“We congratulate the first group of ITL Scholars on their success in this challenging and innovative program,” said Dr. Michael J. Reed, Dean of the UMKC School of Dentistry. “Both their institutions and the profession will benefit from their enhanced effectiveness and commitment to academic dentistry. UMKC was delighted to collaborate with AAL on the Institute.”

The 2006 ITL program, which was organized into three residential sessions held at UMKC in July, September, and November, focused on instruction in teaching methods, career development, and the academic environment. The program was designed and conducted by nationally recognized experts in education, curriculum, leadership, and higher education administration including Prof. William Hendricson, Dr. Mary Sudzina, and Dr. Judith Albino, as well as Haden and faculty and administrators at UMKC. Learning formats included discussion in large- and small-group sessions, interactive exercises, and case-based and problem-based learning, as well as assignments to apply ITL learning at the Scholar's home institution.

The 2006 ITL Scholars were Dr. Maha Ahmad, University of Illinois at Chicago; Dr. Larry Crisafulli, Howard University; Dr. Georgia Dounis, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Dr. Maria Fiocchi, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Dental Branch; Dr. Eric Gottman, University of Missouri-Kansas City; Dr. Steven Hackmyer, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Dr. Lavern Holyfield, Baylor College of Dentistry; Dr. Katherine Howard, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Dr. Lisa Itaya, University of the Pacific; Dr. Ryan Johnson, University of Missouri-Kansas City; Dr. Joe Krayner, Medical University of South Carolina; Dr. Sharon Lanning, Virginia Commonwealth University; Dr. Charles Larsen, New York University; Dr. Jason Mailhot, Marquette University; Dr. Joseph Parkinson, University of Missouri-Kansas City; Dr. H. Whitney Payne, Baylor College of Dentistry; Dr. William Payne, private practitioner, McPherson, KS; Dr. Joel Schwartz, University of Illinois at Chicago; Dr. Medha Singh, Tufts University; Dr. Gerda Thalheimer, private practitioner, St. Louis, MO; Dr. James Trotter, private practitioner, Overland Park, KS; Dr. Michael Turner, New York University; and Dr. Merlyn Vogt, University of Nebraska.

Five of these Scholars (Fiocchi, Krayner, Lanning, Mailhot, and Singh) were awarded fellowships from the American Academy of Periodontology Foundation to participate in the ITL program.

In 2007, ITL programs will be conducted in two phases and will be held at UMKC (Phase I: July 12-15; Phase II: Sept. 14-16) and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (Phase I: Aug. 16-19; Phase II: Nov. 9-11). For more information on the ITL programs and the Academy for Academic Leadership, go to [www.academicleaders.org](http://www.academicleaders.org), email [info@academicleaders.org](mailto:info@academicleaders.org), or call 404-350-2098. For information on the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry, go to [www.umkc.edu/dentistry/](http://www.umkc.edu/dentistry/).

The University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), one of four University of Missouri campuses, is a public university serving more than 14,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. UMKC engages with the community and economy based on a three-part mission: visual and performing arts, health sciences, and urban affairs.

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*For photos, please contact Lynn Whittaker at [lwhittaker@academicleaders.org](mailto:lwhittaker@academicleaders.org).*