

# Dugoni School Faculty Win Align Technology Grant for Orthodontic Research

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Dr. Mirek Tolar

Several faculty members at University of the Pacific, Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry, recently received a research grant from Align Technology, Inc. Dr. Mirek Tolar and colleagues Dr. Robert Boyd, Dr. Mohammed Fallah, Dr. Marie Tolarova and Dr. Hee Soo Oh were awarded \$25,000 for their project "Phase II study on gingival crevicular fluid biomarkers of tooth movement by Invisalign®."

Dr. Tolar notes the many people involved in the Phase 1 of the study who helped collect and analyze thousands of specimens that enabled the team to generate competitive data for the Phase II application. Phase 1 participants included Dugoni School orthodontic residents Drs. Walied Touni, Elyse Garibaldi, Iroshini Perera, Olakunle Ajanaku and Mona Derentz, along with research fellows and visiting scholars Drs. Veronica Lee, Ethan Tencati, Melanie Seto, Fateh Arslan and others.

An independent academic committee used a blind evaluation process to review applications, and Align Technology made the final determination of the winners. In all, twelve groups of researchers received awards from Align Technology this year. The grants are intended to fund research into orthodontic and dental treatments. Nearly \$300,000 is being awarded to researchers at universities in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific.

"As leaders in clear aligner therapy, we are committed to the advancement of the orthodontic and dental fields. Innovations in technology have provided more insight than ever before into clinical and scientific research, and we are pleased to support universities around the world aimed at the improvement of dental and orthodontic patient care," said Zelko Relic, Align Technology vice president of research and development.

Align Technology designs and manufactures the Invisalign® system and iTero® intraoral scanners and services.

The Dugoni School's history with Align Technology goes back many years. The company was established in 1996 and started producing aligners in 1997. In the same year, the Dugoni School's Department of Orthodontics, chaired by Dr. Robert Boyd, started a clinical study testing clinical

feasibility of the Invisalign® system. During following years, a number of articles were published deepening and broadening indications and methods of orthodontic treatment by aligners.

"Nowadays, after 20 years, we are continuing to study biological mechanisms underlying tooth movement in patients with aligners," said Dr. Tolar. "We believe that results of our study will contribute to better treatment planning, better outcomes and patient satisfaction."

To learn more about research projects at the Dugoni School of Dentistry, visit the "Research in the Spotlight" section on the school web site.

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