

**RIDE (Regional Initiatives in Dental Education)**  
**Program Update – March 2008**  
**(Presented by Dr. Linda Hyman – Vice Provost, MSU Bozeman)**

*RIDE program planning in Spokane is well underway and on target for a launch date of August 11, 2008 when 8 dental and 20 medical students will arrive for orientation in Spokane. The following provides an overview of the process and progress to date.*

**LEGISLATIVE PROCESS AND FUNDING**

In the 2007-9 biennium the University of Washington School of Dentistry (UWSOD) received support for the RIDE program from the Washington State Legislature (\$4.2 M, \$1.9 operations and \$2.3 capital), and from the UW Office of the Provost (\$ 202K in the form of institutional overhead allocations). The RIDE program was developed in conjunction with Eastern Washington University (EWU), Washington State University (WSU) and the UW School of Medicine, which is concurrently launching a new WWAMI site in Spokane. .

The bid for funding was helped by a strong coalition of supporters from medical, dental and higher education sectors, and the Spokane Chamber of Commerce. The RIDE-WWAMI programs also had the support of the Governor, the Senate Majority leader from Spokane County and many others. The funds have provided for a strong start for the RIDE program.<sup>1</sup>

**ADMISSIONS**

The UW School of Dentistry received a large number of applications this year (1100 for 63 slots) with high interest in the RIDE program. Of the students interviewed (some 170), more than 70 indicated an interest in RIDE program. Of the 63 students admitted for matriculation, more than 20 expressed a preference for the RIDE program. Of these, a final 8 will be selected to participate in the RIDE program. Two representatives from Eastern Washington-Spokane area were appointed to the UW Admissions Committee. Students were selected for RIDE based upon their academic strengths and a demonstrated commitment to working in rural communities and/or populations in underserved areas.

Montana applicants: Of particular note, this year the UWSOD received the most applicants ever from Montana. Twenty-seven students applied, almost double the 14 from one year ago. A number of these students mistakenly believed there was a RIDE program in Montana. (The RIDE program in Spokane is limited to residents of Washington State.) Three students from Montana were accepted, but most of the students accepted are Washington State residents.

Comment [mpf1]:

Comment [mpf2]: It isn't clear from this sentence whether or not the students selected for RIDE were selected from the Montana students; just not sure what is meant.

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<sup>1</sup> Original funding for the RIDE planning process was provided by a grant from the American Dental Association Foundation grant, the UW School of Dentistry, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Pipeline grant program. The Montana State Legislature provided specific funding to assist with a RIDE feasibility study in Montana.

## FEATURES OF THE RIDE MODEL

**First year of dental school in Spokane:** Students in the RIDE program will spend their first year at the Riverpoint campus in Spokane. This campus hosts many health science programs. For example, EWU has a large baccalaureate program in dental hygiene along with programs in occupational and physical therapy, while WSU programs include nursing, pharmacy and communications disorders. WSU also hosts another WWAMI site in Pullman (the first “WWAMI” site). The campus is equipped with distance learning-equipped classrooms, a health science library, laboratories and offices.

**Comment [mpf3]:** Is it important to note this about the first WWAMI site? Why?

RIDE students in Spokane will have many **interdisciplinary** experiences. To begin with, the 8 dental and 20 medical students will undergo orientation activities together. As they move into the autumn quarter they will take certain basic science courses together (anatomy/embryology and histology) as well as learn about ethics, professionalism, cultural competency, communication skills and patient history-taking in the same venue. RIDE students will take other courses with dental hygiene students, including introduction to dental hygiene and dental assisting, and periodontology.

**Second and third years of dental school:** RIDE students will return to Seattle for the majority of their second and third years of dental school.

**Community-based education:** Community-based education is a key portion of the RIDE program model:

- After the first year of dental school RIDE students will be required to spend 4 weeks in a rural or underserved community dental site (either public health, private dental practice or Indian Health Service site), similar to the RUOP program for medical students.
- After their second year RIDE students will again spend 2-3 weeks in a rural or underserved community site.
- In their fourth year all RIDE students will spend 4-6 months in community-based practice sites, completing and refining their clinical skills while delivering services in a variety of needed sites.

## EDUCATION

**Curriculum:** All RIDE courses in Spokane have a local course director. Some RIDE courses will combine on-site teaching with distance learning. Occasionally a UW guest lecturer may be used. UWSOD course directors and RIDE course directors are in close communication to ensure educational equivalency. The UWSOD Curriculum Committee will maintain oversight.

At this time the curriculum plan is almost entirely complete. The final details will be completed at the AWARE (All WWAMI Regional Education Retreat) in Seattle in June 8-10, 2008, organized by the UW Schools of Medicine and Dentistry.

**Faculty:** Faculty for the RIDE basic sciences courses are from EWU and WSU. Several RIDE courses will also utilize distance learning from Seattle. Faculty for dental-specific courses are from the EWU School of Dental Hygiene and the dental community. Interest in participation has been high among local dental practitioners. One UW School of Dentistry faculty member is moving to Spokane to assist teaching basic dental anatomy and occlusion. On February 13, 2008 an all-RIDE faculty retreat was held in Spokane. All were enthusiastic about the launching of this landmark inter-institutional, inter-professional program.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Components of RIDE infrastructure are almost entirely in place at UW, and are being put in place at the Riverpoint campus. Additional staff persons have been hired to assist with launching the program and organizing outreach rotations. A dentist in Spokane has been hired as Regional Clinical Director to assist on-site with organization and oversight of rotations. Capital projects at UW are on schedule and will start this summer. Specifically, the Simulation clinic-laboratory will be expanded to house 17 additional students. The minor capital projects needed in Spokane are under planning as well.

## **ACCREDITATION**

The RIDE Program currently has received accreditation from the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) “without reporting requirements.” The next formal UWSOD Accreditation will take place November, 2009, and is expected to carefully scrutinize the RIDE program. The RIDE evaluation team has been assembled as well as the faculty and staff that will assist with the accreditation process.

## **MISSION OF THE RIDE PROGRAM**

### **Vision**

The vision of the Regional Initiatives in Dental Education (RIDE) program is to improve the oral and overall health of the public in the Northwest region through increased access to high quality dental care.

### **Mission**

The primary mission of RIDE is to provide access to high quality, publicly-funded dental education to states and regions in the Northwest in order to develop dentists who will make a personal commitment to serving the needs of rural and underserved communities.

RIDE is an outgrowth of the University of Washington School of Dentistry's (UWSOD) mission to take a leadership role in improving the health and well-being of the people of the community and the region through outreach programs that are especially attentive to minority and underserved populations.

**Goal 1:** Increase numbers of dentists practicing in eastern Washington and other regions of the Northwest through a regional model of dental education.

**Goal 2:** Ensure equivalency of all UWSOD students' educational experience to become competent oral health professionals.

**Goal 3:** Provide students with community-based experiences with diverse populations to foster cultural competency, social responsibility and professionalism.

**Goal 4:** Create mutually beneficial partnerships with private and public dental entities to foster dissemination of knowledge and access to high quality dental care.

**Goal 5:** Promote innovative, inter-professional educational experiences for dental students to foster a team approach to health care.

**Goal 6:** Ensure sustainability of RIDE program and development of a flexible and responsive infrastructure in Seattle and all regional sites.

**Goal 7:** Develop, implement, and maintain an evaluation system for monitoring RIDE benchmark goals and objectives.

## COMMUNITY-BASED ROTATIONS IN MONTANA

Although there is no RIDE program in Montana at this time, the UWSOD remains committed to helping meet the dental workforce needs in Montana and other states in the WWAMI region. The UWSOD is continuing to send students out on rotations in Montana, prioritizing when possible students from Montana. For the most part these rotations have involved students who have completed their first year of dental school and participate in a dental “RUOP” (rural/underserved opportunities program) program for 4 weeks. Other students have worked for 2 weeks during their fourth year.

This effort has been supported by dentists from the Montana Dental Association who have volunteered their time, community health centers in Montana, the AHEC and SEARCH programs when funding has permitted, and several Indian Health Service sites (Crow, Browning). Other funding has been provided by the UW School of Dentistry and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant (that has now ended).

Students have placed a high value on these outreach experiences, providing the momentum for continuation of these community-based experiences. Building on funding provided originally by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the UWSOD has now hired a full time outreach manager to assist with this effort for the long term. However the direct costs of student rotations (travel and lodging) are still often difficult to fund.

### ***For One Student – A Big Success***

*A senior dental student at the UWSOD from Montana recently announced he would work in the Cooperative Health Center in Helena upon graduation. One of the first students to go out on a dental “RUOP” experience in Montana after his first year in dental school, this Montanan returned again to the same site in his fourth year. He will take over practice from the dentist who runs the Cooperative Health Center dental program (Dr Mike Johnson), a UW alumnus who has welcomed many students into his practice (and his home!). This one clearly stuck – and it is a story that could be repeated.*