

UCSF Academic Senate

— 2024 —

Clinical Excellence Awards

Senior Faculty

“Her unparalleled clinical acumen, commitment to innovation, and fervent dedication to education distinguish her as a standout candidate for this prestigious award.”

—Nominator *Christine Hong, D.M.D., M.S.*
Interim Chair, Division of Orthodontics
UCSF School of Dentistry



[senate.ucsf.edu/
clinical-excellence-awards](https://senate.ucsf.edu/clinical-excellence-awards)

Mona Bajestan, DDS

School of Dentistry

For her outstanding leadership, clinical vision, and patient-centered care, Mona Bajestan has been selected as the 2024 recipient of the Academic Senate's Clinical Excellence Award for Senior Faculty in the School of Dentistry. As the Orthodontic Clinic Director, her leadership not only enhances the operational efficiency of the clinic but also enriches the learning environment for UCSF students.

Advancing UCSF PRIDE Values

One patient stated: "For you, my treatment was one of your successful treatments but for me, that was a lifetime milestone for which I had lost my hope before seeing you." This testimonial underscores the profound personal impact of Dr. Bajestan's clinical care on the patient.

Bajestan's influence extends beyond patient care; she is deeply involved in the education and mentorship of residents. She serves as the course director for multiple courses, many of which she has designed or restructured to meet the evolving needs of the orthodontic program.

Bajestan supervises the largest number of resident cases among our faculty, earning her the unanimous respect and admiration of her students. In 2021, she was selected as a Fellow of the American College of Dentists, one of the most prestigious honors in the field. Additionally, she was recently inducted into the Academy of Medical Educators, further proving her excellence in education and her role in shaping the future of dental professionals.

Beyond her clinical and educational roles, Bajestan is an active and dedicated member of the UCSF community. She has served on several School of Dentistry and campus-wide committees, including the Committee on the Status of Women and the Committee on Equal Opportunity.

About the Academic Senate Clinical Excellence Awards

The UCSF Academic Senate advances health worldwide by enabling shared governance, representing faculty voice in critical matters, and promoting faculty collaboration and PRIDE values in graduate education, biomedical research, and service.

Established and reviewed by the Clinical Affairs Committee, the Senate's Clinical Excellence Awards recognize faculty who have demonstrated excellence in clinical care across all our schools and practice care sites. Awards are managed by the Office of the Academic Senate at UCSF.

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Clinical Excellence Awards

Early Career Faculty

“By collaborating with behavioral colleagues from UCSF Psychiatry, Dr. Star has created a model that not only improves access to care but also enhances the overall dental experience for [patients with autism spectrum disorder].”

—Nominator Michael S. Reddy, DMD, DMSc
Dean, UCSF School of Dentistry



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Jean Star, DDS, MPH *School of Dentistry*

For her outstanding contributions to clinical education, interdisciplinary collaboration, and pediatric patient care, Jean Star has been selected as the 2024 recipient of the Academic Senate's Clinical Excellence Award for Early Career Faculty in the School of Dentistry. Her work not only improves patient outcomes but is also advancing the field of pediatric dentistry for children with special needs.

Advancing UCSF PRIDE Values

Star's interdisciplinary educational background, spanning economics, public health, and pediatric dentistry, uniquely positions her to bridge clinical practice with public health strategies. Her commitment to pediatric care is exemplified by her leadership in developing the "STAR Smiles Program" at the Parnassus Dental Clinic, a groundbreaking initiative focused on providing desensitization interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder. Through collaboration with UCSF Psychiatry, Dr. Star has created a model of care that not only improves access to dental services but also enhances the overall patient experience for vulnerable populations.

As the only pediatric dental attending who speaks Spanish, she plays a vital role in providing care to a diverse patient population. Her focus on children with special health care needs, often from underserved settings and racial minority groups, demonstrates her commitment to equitable healthcare delivery.

Dr. Star is a trusted and respected clinician, working closely with families to understand their child's challenges. Her work with teledentistry and the UCSF Virtual Dental Home program is helping extend dental care to children in rural and school-based settings, improving access to care for those who need it most.

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