

Medical University of Varna, Faculty of Dental Medicine

TEXT: Plamen Nenkov

A few months until the graduation of the first alumni in the newest school of dentistry on the Balkan peninsula and probably in Europe will take place.





The sea capital of Bulgaria, Varna, has an over 2,500-year history. It was populated by the ancient Thracians, Romans, Greeks and last but not least by the Bulgarians. It keeps the spirit of all epochs but always follows the contemporary trends in all fields with all kinds of innovations and uses the detached eye of its academic community as a reviewer. Varna has always been an attractive city for merchants, navigators and explorers, conquerors, travellers and, nowadays, for students.

University

Varna Medical University was established in 1961 when the first students began their academic studies in medicine. Today, the University is a modern educational, scientific and therapeutical centre in North Eastern Bulgaria and the Balkans. It is an autonomous higher school for academic training in medicine, dental

medicine, public health and pharmacy as well as for postgraduate studies. It is a centre for diagnostic and therapeutic training of national and international repute. For the 48 years of its existence, Varna Medical University has respected the most important values for high quality of the education, stable learning environment, scientific and faculty potential and practical orientation of the students' training and intensive social life which attract students, postgraduate and PhD students, with opportunities for development and observation of traditions.

Faculty

In 2005 the faculty of dental medicine was founded. During the six years of training, my colleagues and I had the chance to learn 'straight from the horse's mouth'. Lectors and assistants teaching at the university are some of the best in their field in the country and most of



them are acknowledged and valued worldwide. Guest lecturers are frequently invited in order to keep the students up to date with the newest trends in dentistry and wide sight of the science. Two years ago our faculty became the first in our country to have Implantology as a separate and obligatory academic discipline. For the opening of the Implantology center Ady Palti, DMD (Germany) was invited as a lecturer. He is also the president of the German Society of Oral Implantology (DGOI) and president and member of the Board of Directors of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists (ICOI).

Years are passing slightly and tenderly and the faculty in Varna is wrapped with knowledge, traditions, and achievements. A few congresses were held under its warm hospitality: 14th Congress of Balkan Stomatological Society, 9th Congress of Bulgarian Dental Association, 41st EDSA Meeting and 7th EDSA Con-

gress are few of many congresses, trainings and seminars that took place under the patronage of Medical University of Varna.

Students

During one of these congresses (European Dental Students' Association Meeting & Congress in April 2008) all of us, all students from my faculty, had the opportunity to meet dental students from other countries for the first time. This was the moment that you got addicted to these events! Six months later, we already had a local dental students association and became full members of EDSA. For me personally, during the three years of experience with EDSA, I became part of the magazine editorial team as Co-Editor, and finally EDSA Vice President. An experience that I highly appreciate and a time when I made a lot of friends that I value highly. Of course, a lot of projects are taking place in the Faculty of Dental Medicine of Varna due



to the EDSA membership. This type of association is of great importance to unite our dental society, even in the first steps in it, and keeps the creative, innovative and adventurous spirit of all future dental medicine doctors.

Following your dream

I truly believe that my school has prepared all of its students, including myself, quite well for a future prospective dental practice, being part of a dental team and even an academic career. It is commonly known that the beginning is hard, but following the heritage of our ancestors and laying the foundation of the future trends is, I think, the key for an excellent academic dental education. We are writing the history of the Faculty

of Dental Medicine, Varna. We are its future.

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Plamen Nenkov is graduating from the Faculty of Dental Medicine in Varna, Bulgaria. He is deeply interested in scientific work and already having a few scientific articles, considering specialty in Periodontology. Devoted to dental associations and magazines he is Immediate Past Vice President of the European Dental Students' Association and always pleased to write for AIM.

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