

UWO alumnus shines as dentistry director

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University of Wisconsin Oshkosh alumnus Dr. Patrick Roetzer's career sparkles as his life-long goal recently came true—becoming director of clinical operative dentistry at the University of the Pacific.

Hard work and many hours of small talk recently brought Roetzer to the directorship at the university's Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry in San Francisco, Calif., where he focuses on education and research.

Roetzer's other accomplishments include serving as the clinical affairs director at Danville Material and holding more than 17 patents on dental devices in foreign and domestic markets. His patents on popular dental tools used for restorative dentistry include a post-placement and removal drill called the Unicore Drill, a lip and cheek retractor and the Ultrapro Tx, an ergonomic hand piece.

He also was inducted into the International College of Dentists and is listed in the Best Dentists in America. Roetzer received the UWO Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2005.

Although a resident of California, Roetzer still thanks UWO for the social and educational experiences the university provided him. He takes pride in his Titan education.

"If I were raising a child in Oshkosh, I would encourage them to go to UWO," Roetzer said.

Roetzer received his bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in biology from UWO before going on to graduate from the Marquette School of Dentistry in 1974. Being extremely involved on campus, Roetzer recalls enjoying his time at UWO.

While attending UWO, Roetzer was involved in the Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity, an experience that helped to influence his successful career.

"I grew up in a rural part of Wisconsin," Roetzer said. "Being involved in Sigma Tau Gamma taught me how to socialize in business."

He learned the art of "schnabeling," an art form that Roetzer calls "meaningful small talk." Doing this enabled Roetzer to learn about people's lives, to get them to open up to him and to network with people from different demographics.

"Getting to know all my professors, even on a personal level, was an accomplishment," Roetzer said. "When I needed help they were readily available."

Roetzer worked nearly full-time while an undergraduate student in order to continue his education, stuffing newspapers for the *Oshkosh Northwestern*, working at a local store and as a parking lot attendant

at Reeve Memorial Union. He went on to become the first in his family to graduate from college and the first to earn a professional degree.

It was through his involvement at UWO that Roetzer met his wife of 41 years, also a UWO alumnus. Nancy Roetzer (Larson) '72, received her bachelor's degree and two master's degrees in reading and special education.

"My wife got hired as a teacher in California in 1974 when no one was hiring, because of her reputation for going to Oshkosh," Roetzer said.

The reputation that Roetzer believes Oshkosh holds is what helped him and his past roommates, all from blue-collar families, receive great educations and go on to become successful in their careers.

"My roommates all got into good medical schools and law schools, and one is now a well-known pathologist in Milwaukee," Roetzer said. "My time at UWO was four of the best years of my life."

Roetzer's professional career after graduating from dentistry school took him to California, where he established his own dental practice, the Carquinez Dental Group in 1977.

"My practice was like a second family to me," Roetzer said. "The people I founded it with are still there 37 years later."

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