

SCHOOLS OF MEDICINE AND DENTAL MEDICINE

The Joseph M. Healey, Jr. 2021 Convocation

FOR THE MEDICAL & DENTAL CLASSES OF 2025

August 13, 2021 8:00 a.m. Keller Auditorium



## The Convocation Themes

Convocation honors the entering classes and has been held at the beginning of each academic year since 1985. The dual theme of convocation is the importance of viewing medicine and dentistry as vocations of service to others, and the need for physicians and dentists to maintain interest and activity beyond the health care sciences to assure a sense of balance and perspective in their personal and professional lives.





## Christine Tierney, D.M.D. Class of 1986 School of Dental Medicine



Christine L. Tierney, D.M.D., graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine and completed her General Practice Residency at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center before going into private practice in Greenwich, CT 34 years ago.

Dr. Tierney's commitment to the future generation of dentist professionals led to the following: the establishment of the Christine L.Tierney, DMD Fellowship in Dentistry which provides scholarships to dental students at UConn, being instrumental in the creation of the Dental Hygiene program at the University of New Haven and founding Women of Wisdom, a mentorship program for young female dentists in CT and New York that provides young dentists the opportunity to meet and work collaboratively with established female dentists creating a strong network of support.

Dr. Tierney is a member of the UConn School of Dental
Medicine Alumni Advisory Board, has served on the Board of the Connecticut
State Dental Foundation, was an active member for over 15 years on the
Continuing Education Council for the Connecticut State Dental Association, and
was an delegate representing Connecticut at the American Dental Association
Annual Conference. She is past President of the Greenwich Dental Society in
addition to being active in a number of professional organizations. Dr. Tierney
has extensive postgraduate training, most recently completing a TMJ and Sleep
Disorder Mini Residency in NYC. She volunteers at Mission of Mercy and Give
Back a Smile providing free dental care to patients in need.

Outside of dentistry, Dr. Tierney practices yoga, meditation, is a beekeeper and a boater. She is an avid reader and loves to travel. She has two children and recently became a grandmother.



When Joseph Healey died in 1993, a former medical student said that he couldn't quite picture the School of Medicine without him, a sentiment shared universally by colleagues and two decades of students.

Professor Healey joined the faculty of the School of Medicine in 1975 in the Division of Humanistic Studies in Medicine. His official role was to teach students how law and medicine interact and to lend his legal knowledge to discussions of social policy, including patient rights, the doctor-patient relationship, malpractice, and end-of-life issues.



His influence quickly extended far beyond his "official" role. He soon was called "Jay" by colleagues and students who flocked to discuss everything from issues facing health-care providers to baseball, one of his passions.

Soon after his arrival at the Health Center, Professor Healey described his position in this way: "My job is not to give the answers, but to ask the difficult questions."

He asked these questions constantly in the first-year course, "Legal and Ethical Aspects of Medicine and Dentistry," which he established. Students responded enthusiastically to his probing, but respectful, questioning of their views. Six classes awarded him certificates for outstanding teaching. In 1980 he won the coveted Loeser Award for teaching excellence, awarded by the second-year class.

Another Loeser Award was given to him posthumously.

Fellow faculty members also responded to his warmth and intelligence. They elected him chairman of the faculty council from 1979 to 1981, a tribute to a lawyer from physicians and dentists.

At the 1988 Commencement, Jay offered the following thoughts. They serve as fitting remarks for welcoming classes today: "In the quiet moments, when we can see through our pretensions and be most honest with ourselves, we recognize the debts we owe to others. We affirm, to paraphrase Robert Coles, the importance of making the effort to live our lives uphill, against the discouragements around us, in such a way as to explore the mysteries, to take on the tragedies, the evils, the joys of living, in such a way as to reduce the pain and spare each other at least some of life's nonsense. These are the gifts to others which truly enhance our own lives."

"...you will have many opportunities to make such gifts, and such generosity should always be at the core of your vision...It is no false sense of humility which results in the recognition of how much we owe each other and how great is our obligation to give in return for all that has been given to us."

