

The University of Michigan Regents Communication

Request for Action

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Helena Hwu Ritchie, M.S., Ph.D., associate professor of dentistry in the School of Dentistry, retired from active faculty status on June 30, 2026.

Professor Ritchie received her bachelor's degree from National Taiwan University in 1972 and her M.S. degree in microbiology from National Taiwan University College of Medicine in Taipei, Taiwan in 1975. She received her Ph.D. degree in 1984 from the Department of Human Biological Chemistry and Genetics, at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, Tx. Prior to coming to the University of Michigan as an assistant professor in the School of Dentistry, in 1998, she was an assistant professor (non-tenure track) at the University of Texas Dental School. In 2006, she was promoted to associate professor with tenure.

At the University of Michigan, she extended her earlier noteworthy first cloning of the genes encoding dentin sialoprotein (DSP) and phosphophoryn (PP) by publishing key papers in her field such as 1) Identifying several probable cis-regulatory modules whose interaction with one another could account for the spatial and temporal distribution of DSP-PP transcripts in developing tissues; 2) Demonstrating that DSP-PP precursor protein cleavage generated functional DSP and PP; 3) Comparing wild type and DSPP knock-out mice, demonstrated that the expression of DSPP precursor protein is required for normal odontoblast lineage differentiation, and 4) Describing how DSP and PP could serve as capping agents for pulp capping therapy. Dr. Ritchie has taught Biochemistry to first-year dental students, as well as Mineralized Tissue to graduate students since joining the Dental School. Dr. Ritchie also trained many students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP). She was the recipient of the Faculty Recognition Award for Outstanding Research Mentorship from the University of Michigan. Dr. Ritchie has also been an invited speaker in numerous dental research related conferences.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Helena Hwu Ritchie, associate professor emerita of dentistry.**

Requested by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. King', written in a cursive style.

Jon Kinsey

Vice President and Secretary of the University

June 2026