On Campus

Dennis A. Mitchell Named Dean of Dental College

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Rudy Diaz

Dennis A. Mitchell ’97PH, a Columbia professor and longtime senior administrator, has been named dean of the College of Dental Medicine, a role he had been fulfilling on an interim basis since February 2025.

A clinician and scholar whose academic work has focused on the oral-health needs of underserved populations, Mitchell has been a member of the Columbia faculty since 1991. He earned his doctorate in dental surgery from Howard University and his master’s in executive health-services management from Columbia’s Mailman

School of Public Health.

In medical circles, Mitchell is best known for conducting research on the oral manifestations of HIV. He also co-created and helped to launch Columbia's Community DentCare Network, which since 1996 has provided dental services to residents of Harlem and Upper Manhattan regardless of their ability to pay.

While maintaining his faculty appointment at the dental college, Mitchell joined Columbia's Office of the Provost in 2014 as senior associate provost for faculty diversity and inclusion, rising to vice provost for faculty advancement in 2019 and senior vice provost for faculty advancement in 2021. He was then appointed executive vice president for university life and the University's interim provost before assuming the roles of senior adviser to the president on inclusion and belonging and senior vice provost for faculty advancement. In those most recent roles, he oversaw the University's efforts to create and enhance faculty development programs.

Mitchell's priorities for the College of Dental Medicine, he says, include facilitating the creation of new knowledge through research; expanding access to dental care by broadening the reach of the college's clinics; and preparing students to become clinical and academic leaders.

"As one of the leading dental schools in the country, it is our mission and responsibility to both train the next generation of oral-health-care leaders and to develop leadership and vision in our faculty," Mitchell says. "I look forward to supporting our students, faculty, alumni, and staff as we work to extend and enhance the culture of excellence that is evident in every facet of our work."



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