



Missouri & The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research



FY20 Total Funding: **\$3,659,891**

Number of Institutions Funded: **4 (Stowers Institute for Medical Research; University of Missouri Kansas City; University of Missouri-Columbia; Washington University)**

Number of Grants Awarded: **10**

Number of Congressional Districts with NIDCR Grants: **3**

Improving Missouri's Oral Health Through NIDCR Funding:

- Head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) is the sixth most common cancer worldwide and accounts for roughly 3-5 percent of all cancers in the United States. Despite improvements in surgical procedures, radiotherapy and chemotherapy, overall survival rates have not improved over the past few decades. Researchers at Saint Louis University have recently identified a plant-derived natural product, bitter melon extract (BME), which can induce HNSCC cell death. They are investigating this natural product as a preventive and therapeutic agent against HNSCC.
- Over 47% of adult U.S. population has periodontitis. Periodontitis is an oral inflammatory disease resulting in swollen gingiva and tooth loss due to resorption of bone. Researchers at the University of Missouri Kansas City are investigating the poorly understood mechanisms responsible for initiation of bone loss in periodontal disease. Results from this study will contribute to the design of safer and more effective drugs to treat patients suffering from tooth loss associated with periodontitis.

