

2019 A H WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP

The AHW Scholarship is awarded each year in the amount of \$500 to a student in the first (Junior year if in a 4year program) of the fall semester in a Virginia Dental Hygiene Program. Those Virginia dental hygiene students with at least a 2.5 GPA (4.00 Scale) are eligible for this scholarship. Each applicant must be a member of an ADHA Student Chapter and must have demonstrated qualities for success in the dental hygiene program. The students are asked to submit an essay that answers the question, “What role or support are you prepared to contribute to ADHA (National, State, or Local) and the dental hygiene profession after graduation from the dental hygiene program?”

This year there were six applicants – 4 from VCU, 1 from VW/Roanoke and 1 from VW/LFCC. The winning essay came from Denise K. Steers-Smith from VCU which read as follows:

Walter H Judd once said that people often say that, in a democracy, decisions are made by the majority of the people. Of course, that is not true. Decisions are made by a majority of those who make themselves heard and who vote –a very different thing. Upon graduating from the dental hygiene program, I will be prepared to accept a role that will empower our profession at the local ADHA level. I am a firm believer in fighting for what you believe in because if you don't speak up for yourself, who will? Contributing to ADHA at the local level will allow me to introduce possible change for the greater Richmond area and be that voice for hygienists. I desire to push the envelope and advocate for transformations in our scope of practice sanctioning us to have more freedom. Examples would include both clinical and educational changes such as; allowing the administration of local anesthesia without the care of an attending dentist and removing the live patient board. Richmond can be a district where dental therapy offices exist and hygienist provide minor restorations with a gold standard of care. These changes cannot occur unless individuals, like me, are passionate and driven to promote advances in our career field. My future will include working my hardest not only to delegate for the future of hygienists but also to advocate for public health, individuals who are in dire need of care. I aspire to open and run a free dental clinic in the Chesterfield County area. I believe that all individuals deserve the same care and treatment and should not be deprived of something so significant to living a healthier life. Dental hygiene school will prepare me to be a hygienist but also an instructor, caregiver, delegate, and a voice for hygienists in the greater Richmond area.

I would like to thank Trish MacDougall, Moe Thompson and Melanie Bartlam for serving as Judges. They commented that all of the submissions were excellent and choosing a winner was very difficult. I would also like to thank Helena Nefferdorf, Christina Tulloch, Regina Dixon, Ryan Maphis and Laura Montemurro for their time and effort in participating this year in such a tough competition and going above and beyond what's expected from their difficult studies.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Kitner, RDH, BSDH

AH Williams Scholarship Chair