

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Hilary Sweeney Program of Dental Hygiene



Why did you choose Dental Hygiene major?

I have always known I wanted my career to be within the medical/health field. After a few years declared as another major, I came to the realization that dentistry was what I was passionate about. Many people don't realize or understand the importance of oral health, how it affects your overall wellbeing, and how many other health issues can manifest and show signs within the oral cavity. I hope to use my education as a dental hygienist to join those already dedicated to the cause of helping educate others on these topics. Dental hygienists are responsible for much more than simply cleaning your teeth at your 6 month appointments. We are radiologists, educators, advocates for our rights as hygienists, a resource for our patients and much more. This ability to take on a multitude of roles is the main aspect of dental hygiene that drew me to the career field.

What are your goals upon graduation?

While this may change after further experience in clinical settings, so far I've found the specialties I enjoy

the most are orthodontics and pediatrics. Upon graduation I plan to pursue a job in either setting, and possibly continue on to get my masters.

What activities, organizations are you a part of at WKU?

I am a member of Alpha Omicron Pi Fraternity, a Panhellenic sorority, and Rho Lambda Fraternity, a Panhellenic honors society. I also serve on the Panhellenic Executive Council as the 2nd Vice President, and the Up 'Til Dawn Executive Board as a member of the Recruitment and Cultivation Committee. Within my major, I belong to WKU's student chapter of the American Dental Hygienist's Association (SADHA) in which I currently serve as the President.

Can you share your experience as representing WKU on the 2016 Homecoming court?

Over the past 3 and half years I've come to not only love but appreciate WKU and the community of Bowling Green immensely. Although I have grown and changed so much in a relatively short amount of time, my deeply rooted passion for AOII, WKU, our campus community, my peers/professors and all of the other factors that have contributed to making my college years nothing short of sensational has stood the test of time. I was honored and grateful to have had the opportunity to represent this university along side 21 other phenomenal young women on this year's homecoming court. It was truly one the best experiences I've had thus far in college and is one that I will remember forever.



Any advice about the Dental Hygiene program for future DH students?

If I could give any advice to students interested in the dental hygiene program, I would say 1.) be prepared to work harder than you ever have and 2.) take care of yourself! I've always pushed myself for academic excellence, but this program has made me reevaluate what it means to be dedicated when it comes to the classroom and clinical setting. Although it's tough, it only makes reaping the rewards of all your efforts that much sweeter! One thing I struggled with at first was adjusting to the very structured schedule of our program. Don't neglect sleeping and eating well, because it will catch up with you!



Hilary Sweeney (bottom left) is pictured here with SADHA officer team.