

Good Afternoon Honorable Trustees and Distinguished Guests,

My name is Roseanna Torres and I am a senior student in the dental hygiene program here at the New York City College of Technology. First and foremost, I must say that I am incredibly honored to stand before you in our brand-new 1,000 seat theater. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for our new academic complex, the enhancements that were made to our dental hygiene patient clinic and didactic environment, as well as the extraordinarily high quality of education that I have received here as a student.

Our new building is a significant investment by the state of New York, and I would like to personally thank everyone who was involved in this project. In particular, the board of trustees deserves to be recognized for researching and securing the funding. On behalf of our dental hygiene department, thank you so much for your tenacity. I am certain that because of your efforts, future generations of students will be given greater professional opportunities by being more technologically adept and prepared to enter the workforce.

Technology is prevalent in every profession and it is constantly changing and improving the way we learn, teach, communicate and collaborate. Being one of the first students to call this building my home, I have already seen the positive impact that the newly implemented technology has had both in the classroom and in our patient care clinic facility.

When patients exit the elevator to our floor, they immediately enter our reception area. First impressions always make the biggest impact, and our expansive new patient lobby certainly creates a positive one. Our modern, energy efficient patient care clinic features spacious cubicles, each equipped with personal computers for access to our electronic patient record-keeping software. Having access to digital records allows us to effectively track and analyze patient history and treatment planning, and it helps prepare us for a professional world that demands these skills. Our state-of-the-art radiology lab offers the latest in digital X-ray equipment and allows us to immediately provide our patients with electronic copies of their results. As you can probably imagine, our patients are having more comfortable experiences since they are provided with more convenient and better-quality oral health care. Additionally, students are more confident and motivated while treating their patients.

The dissemination of information is improved and communication between faculty and students is enhanced because of our new classrooms' contemporary design, bright, natural lighting and access to modern multimedia equipment.

As dental hygiene students, it is our professional and ethical responsibility to provide our patients with the best care and treatment available. As we know, this all starts with the foundation of a good education. I had no prior dental experience when I entered the dental hygiene program here at City Tech. Initially, I thought this was a huge disadvantage, so I incorporated the skillset that I had developed during my previous career as the Managing Director of an asset management firm in New York City. As a result, I was able to excel in areas such as scientific research. In fact, for the past two semesters, I have been participating in the Emerging Scholars Program, where I am involved in a research project focusing on assessing new patients' feedback to dental care received in our clinic. While analyzing data from patient surveys, I learned that many people don't even know if they have dental insurance. This inspired me to organize a dental insurance information session at City Tech, which will be incorporated into City Tech's Annual Wellness Fair this year. I expect this event to bring more patients into our clinic.

Additionally, last semester, my scientific research poster was selected to be presented at The Greater NY Dental Meeting at the Jacob Javits Center in NYC. The topic was based on my interest in myofunctional therapy and the role of the dental hygienist. I also presented it at the New York Dental Hygiene Association conference in Syracuse, where I was elected as a student delegate to represent all dental hygiene students in New York State.

Over the past two years, my clinical skillset has been meticulously developed under the supervision of our expertly skilled faculty, which consists of truly inspiring registered dental hygienists and dentists. I was also selected to be part of the Jewish Foundation for the Education of Women Scholars program, which has provided me with many networking opportunities including the invaluable experience of receiving a summer internship at a very modern, actively expanding private dental practice. This incredible hands-on experience truly justified my future career decision.

Because I am firmly committed to advancing education, practice and licensure within the dental hygiene profession, I also joined our Student American Dental Hygiene Association chapter (otherwise known as SADHA) and became the president. As a student leader, my most important goal has been to motivate, encourage and empower my fellow students. As SADHA president, I developed and implemented our student mentor/mentee program which consists of "student office hours" in which either freshman students or students interested in applying for the program can meet with SADHA officers in a private, classroom-based setting to discuss any concerns, goals or questions that a more seasoned student may be able to assist with.

The experiences that I have had as a student in the dental hygiene program at City Tech have fueled my passion for the profession in a way that I never could have imagined. I am confident that I am prepared to start my future career as a hygienist because of the education that I have received here. I look forward to being able to contribute to the economic and professional vitality of our great state of New York as a Registered Dental Hygienist and it is my hope that with your continued support of City Tech's programs, many more students will have an experience like mine. Thank you for your time and attention.