

QCC professor honored with Yankee Congress Dental Assistant Award

WORCESTER — Jennifer McKeon, professor of dental assisting and hygiene at Quinsigamond Community College, has been awarded the 2021 Elizabeth A. Baer Award, by the Yankee Dental Congress.

This annual award is presented to a dental assistant who has made significant contributions to the Massachusetts Dental Assistants Association and the Massachusetts Dental Society. Award winners must have at least 10 years of cumulative membership in the Massachusetts Dental Assistants Association and 10 years cumulative years of practice as a dental assistant in the dental profession.

“I am very honored and excited to receive this award. Betty Anne, who this award is named after, was a certified dental assistant and a dental hygienist, as am I. She put education on the top of her priority list, just as I do,” McKeon said.

McKeon has been a part of the dental assisting landscape for many years, beginning her career as an



Jennifer McKeon

Courtesy

“on-the-job” trained dental assistant before becoming a certified dental assistant in 1998. She has called QCC “home” for some time, first attending as a student then part-time instructor, before becoming a full-time faculty member.

“I have a long history with the College that started when I was in high school and took an English class at QCC. This enabled me to earn college credit and graduate high school early,” she said.

Fast forward to 2001 when she received her Associate’s degree in Dental Hygiene from QCC. In 2002, she began a career educating students part-time at the College where she earned her degree; becoming a full-time faculty member in 2010.

“There were so many professors who molded my life at QCC that I felt honored to become full-time faculty,” she added. “The two things that I was passionate about came together. I wanted to give back all that was given to me at QCC, and I could do that by teaching and coordinating the dental assisting program. I could never have asked for a more perfect position at the perfect college.”

Amy Booth, professor of Dental Hygiene was one of McKeon’s former professors and today is her colleague and friend.

“I am so proud of my ‘student.’ Jenn has been a great support and we work very well together. In addition to her knowledge of dental assisting, she is humorous and genuine,” Booth said.

McKeon is the co-director of the Kid Seal program and works with QCC and the Worcester Public Schools to help promote dental health in area youths. When she is not working with students, Ms. McKeon is the presiding chair and room coordinator at Yankee Dental Congress, as well as the president elect. This year she will also be appointed president of the Massachusetts Dental Assistants Association (MDAA).

“Jenn embodies our dental program and is an amazing role model for our students,” said Pat Schmohl, dean of the School of Healthcare. “She is so deserving of this award.”

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