

QCC's Dental Assisting Program highlighted during Dental Assistant Recognition Week

WORCESTER — During the week of March 7, the American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA) will recognize the invaluable contributions these healthcare workers make to quality dental care through Dental Assistant Recognition Week,[™] held each year on the first full week on March.

Quinsigamond Community College's Dental Assisting Certificate program has become an important part of the education landscape in Massachusetts and dental assistants who graduate from the College are making important contributions to the region.

"We are continually getting calls from dentists in the area looking for quality assistants," said Professor of Dental Assisting/Hygiene, Jennifer McKeon. "This demonstrates the value that is placed on graduates from QCC's program."

As the only program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation in Worcester, students who come from QCC's program often have job offers before they graduate, according to Ms.

McKeon.

"Our students can take their Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) exam in the last few weeks of the program so they are credentialed with Dental Assisting National Board and are a certified dental assistant when they graduate," she added.

The one-year Dental Assisting Certificate program prepares graduates to perform a wide range of patient care duties in the dental office that includes hands-on education in digital radiography, as well as taking part in the College's state-of-the-art dental materials lab. Lab equipment such as CAD/CAM technology; digital cameras, a milling machine that can make crowns; a high-tech scanner; staining unit and oven, and other cutting-edge dental equipment help students become proficient on equipment they might one day work within a dental office.

Students also have the opportunity to experience different avenues of dentistry while in the program, by being placed in different offices, such as an

oral surgeon's office and an orthodontist's office.

Additionally, students who complete the program will be prepared to continue their studies at the Associate's degree level in such disciplines as allied dental services or dental hygiene.

"We have a bridge program that allows two students every year from the dental assisting program to bridge into the dental hygiene program and bypass the waitlist. Student must have all the admission requirements for the dental hygiene program to qualify to bypass the waitlist," Ms. McKeon said.

According to the state's Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, the number of Massachusetts dental assistant jobs is projected to grow by 12.5 percent over a 10-year period ending in 2022.

To learn more, visit www.QCC.edu. For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.