

“Anything in life worth having is worth working for.”

Emily Smajda has kept that quote from Andrew Carnegie in the back of her mind while pursuing the journey in dentistry. “If you are truly passionate about dentistry, it takes a lot of dedication and hard work. However, the pay off is, by far, worth the effort. There is nothing more rewarding than entering a career field and knowing that it is exactly what you should be doing with your life, states Emily.

Emily is a dental hygiene student at Kellogg Community College, she graduated from Escanaba High School in 2009 and went on to attend Michigan State University with the intent of applying to dental school. After three semesters, she decided to switch to dental hygiene and felt it was a better fit at the time.

”I am very pleased with my decision to pursue dental hygiene. I absolutely love my school and the profession. Dental hygiene is such a fun and exciting career field that is constantly evolving. I love the patient interaction in clinic and enjoy helping others learn how to better their oral health habits. Taking radiographs and impressions are among my favorite things I have learned”, states Emily.

Smajda serves on the American Dental Hygiene Student Association as treasurer. They have done a number of Oral-B fundraisers and participated in the March of Dimes walks to raise money for premature babies. After graduation she is planning on staying involved in the organization.

Her plans for the future include practicing dental hygiene while finishing up her pre-requisites for dental school. The long-term plan is to complete dental school.

Her advise to anyone pursuing a dental career is to make sure you are in love with it, join a club or a student organization involving dentistry. She participated in MSU’s Pre-Dental Club, which help foster her passion for the profession.

“I love the field of dentistry because it is such a personable field of health. You see patients regularly and build relationships with them and want to help them help themselves. Dentistry is not solely about visible aesthetics of the mouth; it correlates with the whole realm of human medicine and health.

It interlinks all the other systems in the body; good oral health contributes to good overall health. It just fascinates me how it is constantly evolving and changing.”

”I would like to thank the Michigan Dental Association Foundation and the Robert Mitus Scholarship Program for this honor. I am extremely grateful for this scholarship and have used it to reduce the cost of tuition. It is reassuring to be recognized for such an honor because it reminds me that hard work pays off!”