

## **ODHA STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROFILE – LINDA DA SILVA**

### **SCHOOL: Niagara College**



#### **What made you want to become a dental hygienist?**

It has been a dream of mine to work in the oral health field since I was a toddler! Not only did I have fun attending my dental appointments, but I had someone I looked up to. My father's dental hygienist Donna would always let me watch the whole appointment and she made sure to answer all my questions. I watched her practice for years and years, I really do attribute a lot of my interest in oral health to her. I do wish I could tell her all about my time in the dental hygiene program, I'm sure she would have been so thrilled to see that curious little girl grow up to become an RDH!

#### **What type of practice setting do you hope to work in?**

I envision myself working with underserved populations, particularly those with disabilities. At Niagara College, we partner with a local organization known as Bethesda, a non-profit that encourages people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live their best lives. We got partnered with children in the organization and I realized I really enjoy helping make the dental experience a fun one. The typical step by step appointment plan doesn't work all the time for these clients, and I enjoyed that opportunity to find what worked best for them. I have been toying with the idea of opening my own mobile clinic, targeting people who are unable to be in a dental environment due to fear or overstimulation or physical ability. I want to build trust with those clients, ensuring they are comfortable and well taken care of.

#### **How will you celebrate your graduation?**

I'll finish classes in mid-August and our graduation is likely in October. Personally, I plan on taking a breath. I've been in post-secondary school for 8 years straight out of high school, so I would love to take a break from studying and working. Maybe I'll take a little trip somewhere in Canada! I also have some concerts and events lined up, so I am excited to just relax for a moment before beginning my career.

#### **What do you think dental hygiene students should know about their free student membership?**

During my time as an ODHA student ambassador, I have seen how truly supportive the ODHA is to their members, especially the students. The ODHA is there for you the moment you begin your journey as an RDH, from day one of your education. Take advantage of all their offerings - from discounts to insurance, memberships to resources. Everything they offer is invaluable and it is all right at your fingertips! It really helped me out, and I am so glad to continue to have them by my side as I begin my career as an RDH.

For more information on the ODHA student ambassador program, visit

<https://odha.on.ca/students/student-ambassador-program/>

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