

ODHA STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROFILE – MELENA SUPPA

SCHOOL: George Brown Polytechnic



What made you want to become a dental hygienist?

I first became interested in dental hygiene back in high school when I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do with my future. I knew I wanted to pursue something in health care, and as I explored different paths, dental hygiene stood out to me. I was drawn to the idea of working in a clean, professional environment while also helping people feel more confident and happy with their smiles.

As I progressed through the program, I realized the role was even more meaningful than I initially thought. As registered dental hygienists, we go beyond aesthetics - we play a key role in prevention and education. We help clients understand how to care for their oral health, work to prevent disease, and perform screenings that can detect early signs of serious conditions like oral cancer. That combination of patient care, education, and long-term impact is what really solidified my passion for this field.

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

Now that I've graduated, I see myself working in a general dental practice where I can build strong, long-term relationships with clients and support their ongoing care. I value the continuity of seeing clients over time and helping them improve their oral health through education and prevention.

I'm especially drawn to client-centred practices that prioritize education and create a comfortable, positive environment. I'm also interested in wellness-focused dental hygiene clinics that take a more holistic and preventative approach to care, and I'm excited to continue growing my skills in a supportive team environment.

How will you celebrate your graduation?

To celebrate my graduation, I'm planning to enjoy the summer by spending more time outdoors, going on vacation, and taking my dachshund out for walks.

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

I think dental hygiene students should understand that their ODHA membership is a valuable resource that supports them as they transition into their careers. ODHA also plays an important role in advocacy, representing dental hygienists at a provincial level and working to advance the profession.

As students, it's important to take advantage of networking opportunities, mentorship, and the tools available to help transition into practice. Overall, being engaged with ODHA early on can really help set the foundation for a successful and informed career.

For more information on the ODHA student ambassador program, visit
<https://odha.on.ca/students/student-ambassador-program/>
