

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community College Dental Hygiene Program Prepares Students to Earn \$80,000 Per Year

FREE INFORMATION SESSION SEPTEMBER 19



West Los Angeles College is one of only two community colleges in California authorized to offer a Bachelor's degree in Dental Hygiene. While the award-winning Associate degree program has existed at West for decades, the Bachelor's program is fairly new and just graduated its first class in Spring 2017. Those graduates will enter a field that is both in-demand and pays \$81,000 per year on average in Los Angeles. A free information session about the program will be held Tuesday, September 19 at 4:00 pm. More information can be

found at www.WLAC.edu/Health-Sciences.

Referring to the relative low cost of earning the degree at West, Professor and hygienist Lisa Kamibayashi said, "I know some of my classmates who are still paying student loans after 25 years." Kamibayashi is a USC alumnae. Currently, at her alma matter, students pay \$122,000 to prepare to become dental hygienists – and that is just tuition. At West, the cost is about 84% less - just \$20,000 and that includes necessary equipment and scrubs. Many students qualify for financial aid.

In addition to a training facility comparable to local universities, West is particularly proud that they are making this opportunity available to a very diverse group of students. The cost of programs at career colleges and universities has been a major obstacle for many low income and minority students. "Dental Hygiene has been known for blond females and a few Asians maybe, but if you look at our class of 2019, there's different ethnicities, males, a range of age groups, and different economic backgrounds," said Kamibayashi.

"We regularly get calls from dental offices interested in recruiting our students. But just independently, our graduates typically find positions very quickly," said Carmen Dones, Dean of Health Sciences.

West also offers an Associate degree program in dental assisting which is an entry-level position in a dental office. In fact, high school students can start the program while they are still seniors so that upon graduation, they are qualified to work in a dental office and/or to complete the Associate or Bachelor's degree at West.

West Los Angeles College is an ACJCC accredited community college north of the Westfield Culver City mall on Overland near Jefferson with panoramic views of the Westside.

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