

3 Influential Dental Hygienists Who Followed Their Passion

By The Dental Hygiene Chronicles on Friday, March 6, 2020

The Dental Hygiene Chronicles is proud to spotlight 3 more influential dental hygienists who continue to make significant strides in all aspects of their careers.

You will notice a common denominator among these extraordinary dental hygienists, and that is they are all driven by their passions and love for dental hygiene.

I think you will agree, these influential dental hygienists continue to grow and share because they are passionate.

“I think that in order to be successful, women have to figure out what they’re passionate about first. No matter what you aspire to, you’ve got to love what you do in order to be successful at it.”

Michelle Obama

Kathryn Gilliam, BA, RDH, FAAOSH



Kathryn Gilliam, BA, RDH, FAAOSH, is a published author, consultant, international speaker, and practicing oral wellness practitioner. She is laser-focused on empowering dental hygienists and dentists to elevate

their identities as oral wellness specialists who powerfully impact the lives and health of their patients.

Kathryn is an international speaker and a key opinion leader for MicrobeLinkDx, Care Credit, OraPharma, ACT Dental, CloSYS and Stella Life Vega Oral Care Products. Kathryn also serves as a Dentsply Sirona Preventive Ambassador. Kathryn has published multiple articles and continuing education courses in leading dental journals and serves as a faculty member and dental hygiene specialty coach for the Productive Dentist Academy.

Kathryn absolutely loves teaching. Her continuing education courses enlighten, entertain, and inspire her audiences. They are full of practical information that her attendees can immediately integrate into their practices. “I want other healthcare practitioners to be as excited about their careers as I am about mine. I absolutely love what I do and I don’t want anyone to feel burned out or unmotivated. It’s an honor that people come to us for care, and we should deliver that care at the highest level possible.” Kathryn’s topics extend from teaching the foundational principles of the oral – systemic connections and how to address inflammation in practice, to the early detection and prevention of oral and oropharyngeal cancers, to the screening for airway and sleep problems in children and adults, to recognition of oral signs of celiac disease, and to high-level communication skills. “When you want to affect change, as I do, it’s a blessing to be given the opportunity to educate and to speak to your colleagues from the stage. I don’t take that privilege lightly.”

Kathryn has been on the front lines of the early detection of oral and oropharyngeal cancer throughout her career. Kathryn serves as the Director of Education for Oral Cancer Cause and serves on the Dental Hygiene Advisory Board of the Oral Cancer Foundation. Kathryn is an honors graduate of the University of Nebraska and The University of Texas Health Science Center Dental Branch. Kathryn values lifelong

learning. She devours every dental book she can and typically pursues hundreds of hours of continuing education every year.

A pivotal moment in Kathryn's life was when father, Phillip Kamish, DMD, an internationally acclaimed practitioner, took her hands in his upon her graduation from dental hygiene school and said, "You have healing hands, just like mine." This blessing and charge has been her standard ever since.

Even after over 30 years as a dental hygienist, Kathryn still loves and is passionate about her career as a dental hygienist and she feels her purpose is to love her patients back to health. Kathryn's purpose in lecturing, speaking and writing is to inspire other healthcare professionals to love their patients at a higher level, as well, thereby creating a ripple effect, and extending her reach to care for even more patients than she could do alone.



Kathryn Gilliam, BA, RDH, FAAOSH

Kathryn Gilliam, BA, RDH, FAAOSH, is a regular contributing author to Today's RDH and many other publications. Kathryn is a proponent of incorporating the latest scientific research on the multiple oral – systemic links into practical clinical protocols. She is a well-recognized speaker, dental practice consultant, and practicing clinician. Kathryn can be reached for comments or questions at Kathryn@PerioLinks.com.