

I'm very happy to see everyone here this evening. An evening where we celebrate our success and hard work with our loved ones.

I'd like to first thank our sponsors for joining here today, Alysson and Lucy, thank you for being here and for your continuous and generous support. Our beloved instructors, Dr. Rock, my fellow classmates, and their guests, I would like to welcome you all and I hope you have an amazing evening.

Before I get started, this event wouldn't be possible without the hard work of our grad committee in the last few months and the hard work of the executive committee over the last 2 years. It has been an absolute pleasure working with all of you and I'm very happy of the things we were able to achieve.

I'm beyond humbled to be selected as your class valedictorian. It is an honour to be standing here and delivering this speech. So thank you all for having me.

I'd like to share a personal story that only a few people here know about.

When I joined Memorial University in 2018 for undergraduate studies, I enrolled in computer science. I finished my first semester there with a 0.60 GPA and finished the year with a 1.20 GPA and was on my academic warning. Quite frankly, I felt like I had no purpose, and I struggled. I managed to graduate with a degree in biology but was never happy. When I joined the school of dental hygiene, I'll be completely honest, I was petrified, I had no expectations of what my life will look like and how everything was going to unfold.

Little did I know, it was one of the best decisions I made in my life. Because of this faculty and my instructors, I can confidently say I have found my purpose. I never said that to any of my instructors, but you have truly changed my life.

This is my story. There's 26 more of us in this venue and I can assure you, you have helped many people find their purpose, and in many ways changed their lives, so thank you our dear instructors.

Our class is special, we cried, we laughed, panicked over Axium, and somehow, we survived LA labs. We lifted each other through the

tough days when requirements felt impossible, when patients canceled at the last minute, and when we were told we have to attend school despite the snow. Whether it was debating over whose chart notes had the worst handwriting, trying to remember every part of the extraoral exam, or praying Axium wouldn't crash mid-appointment, we've all had moments where we questioned our sanity. And yet, here we are. If that doesn't scream determination, I don't know what does. What makes us special isn't just our ability to polish teeth or probe pockets, it's the way we support each other through every step. We weren't just classmates. We became a team. A weird, slightly sleep-deprived, caffeine-fueled team. But a team nonetheless.

To our instructors thank you for being the backbone of this program, and for somehow spotting a missed fulcrum from across the clinic like you had superpowers. Whether it was early morning clinic blocks, surprise quizzes, or reminding us for the hundredth time to keep our back straight during debridement, you truly stuck with us. Some of you brought us snacks, some brought us anxiety, but all of you brought us closer to being competent, confident hygienists.

So from all of us, sincerely: thank you for pushing us, guiding us, and making sure we didn't leave here without knowing the difference between maintenance and recall. You've made a lasting impact. Thanks to you, we now interpret dreams in dental codes and flinch every time someone says "competency". We may be graduating, but your voices will echo in our heads forever... especially when we forget to fulcrum.

To the guests here tonight , our families, our partners, our friends - thank you. You've been our support systems, our mock patients, our emotional punching bags during finals, and our biggest cheerleaders. You reminded us to eat, sleep (sometimes), and keep going when we felt like giving up. You listened to us talk about calculus, not the math kind, and pretended to care. For that alone, you deserve an award.

We couldn't have done this without you.

To my classmates, there's one thing I hope you take away from this that we tend to forget. We are very blessed and fortunate to be receiving an education. An education from one of the best institutes in Canada. We chose a profession of service, one where we educate,

advocate, and make real change in people's lives. It's about people. It's about connection, empathy, and being part of someone's health journey. Whether we're working in private practice, community health, education, or somewhere totally unexpected, I hope we never lose sight of why we chose this.

We didn't just gain skills we gained a voice. And now, it's our turn to use it.

As we close this chapter and head into the next, I hope we all carry forward the compassion, strength, and stubborn perseverance that got us here. We may not know exactly where we're going but we're going there as registered dental hygienists.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025. We did it!