

New dental hygiene clinic puts a smile on students, staff and clients

The dental hygiene program at Johnson County

Community College has a distinguished history of education dating to 1972, service to the community at its JCCC clinic and outreach sites, and 100 percent employment in an occupation that continues to be in demand.

Opening in the fall 2009 semester, a 6,293-square-foot dental hygiene clinic corrects what is known in the dental world as “overcrowding.” Located on the second floor of the southeast corner of the Science Building, the expanded dental hygiene clinic allows for an increased enrollment of students from 26 to 30 starting fall 2009, room for more patient chairs and equipment, greater space for charts and student computer work, new locker rooms and an ADA-compliant darkroom for students.

Impressive? Yes. So is the cosmetic re-do.

Walking into the new 16-chair operatory on a summer day is like entering a treehouse. Windows on three sides give a vista of green trees, sure to prove calming for patients with dental-chair jitters.

The previous dental clinic had 13 chairs divided into two areas. The new open area has 16 chairs, with every two sharing an X-ray machine. This is a real advantage to patients who before had to move to an X-ray station, sign up for an X-ray and wait their turn. The new clinic adds nine more X-ray machines.

A much larger records room will allow space for students to make patient appointments, complete paperwork and use computers to research information like patients’ medications.

Another big change is a centrally located dispensary for used supplies and a separate room for sterilization, decreasing the chance for contamination and accessible from two sides.

JCCC has always kept up with dental hygiene technology. Students use digital X-rays, ultrasonic scalers, panoramic full-mouth X-rays and an intra-oral camera/video that can be projected on a computer screen. Digital recordings can be printed and placed in the patients’ charts or e-mailed to a dentist or dental school for further consultation.



On the first day in the new clinic, dental hygiene professor Polly Pope checks the work of second-year student Tonya Ramsey.



Margaret LoGiudice, director, dental hygiene, stands in the new dental clinic, opening in the fall 2009 semester. A 3,341-square-foot addition to the dental hygiene clinic and remodeled faculty offices across the hall corrects what is known in the dental world as "overcrowding."

Previously, the clinic only had three X-ray machines. There is now a lab space where first-year students can practice with an X-ray machine while the other units are in use for patients. The clinic keeps a darkroom for training on film X-rays, still in use by some dentist offices.

While JCCC's dental hygiene program is equipped with the latest technology, Margaret LoGiudice, director, dental hygiene, says it is students' education in treatment protocol that puts them at the front of the line for employment.

"Our students are experienced and

confident in evidence-based treatment protocol because of the education they receive here," LoGiudice said.

A second precept that has not changed with advanced technology is teaching students to educate patients about managing their own oral health care.

JCCC's dental hygiene program adheres to a philosophy of volunteerism with students, staff and alumni giving their time to underinsured and uninsured adults and children at community sites and in Las Pintas, Mexico. In spring 2009 the dental hygiene program received the first-ever Faculty Award

for Leadership in Service Learning awarded to an entire program.

The new addition adds 3,341 square feet to the clinic. A dedication for the new dental hygiene clinic will be from 2-4 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18, in the clinic, 201 Science building.

For more information about JCCC's dental hygiene clinic, call 913-469-3808. **Im**