



Contact:
Natalie Judd
natalie@bigvoicecomm.com
203-605-9515

American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) Responds to CNN Money Article on Dental Hygiene Profession

CNN Money wrote an [article](#) on Monday, April 24, 2017 positioning the dental hygiene profession as a “fast-track to the middle class.” Is this truly the case? While we are pleased to see the dental hygiene profession receive national attention and dental hygienists acknowledged for the important role they play in the lives of their patients every day, it is important to address the inaccuracies in this article.

Unfortunately, the reporter minimizes the academic and clinical education rigor of the 335 accredited dental hygiene programs in the United States. Dental hygienists, as licensed health care providers, are required to complete a comprehensive written national examination and a state or regional clinical examination as a requirement for state licensure. While the article depicted the two-year associate’s degree as the requirement for becoming a dental hygienist, it often takes an additional year, or more, to complete the pre-requisite coursework required to apply to dental hygiene educational programs. The average entry-level dental hygiene education program is 84 credits, or about three academic years, in duration. In addition, it is challenging for dental hygienists to find full-time employment and the benefits associated with such positions.

Depicting the dental hygiene profession as a “fast track job” is inaccurate and may mislead future applicants who are interested in the dental hygiene profession. Dental hygienists are committed to improving the health of their patients and we agree with the quote in the article that says, “It’s the greatest feeling when you make a difference for people.” The American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA) will continue building relationships with reporters so that they highlight the facts about the dental hygiene profession and educate them on the rigorous standards that define our profession now and in the future.

###