

Testimony of: Eric Ress
School of Dental Medicine, Class of 2020

Good morning, my name is Eric Ress and I am proud to say I am a Hebron, Connecticut native currently enrolled as a fourth year student at the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine. For the past three and a half years I've walked through the same hospital doors where I was born 29 years ago. I would like to first thank the General Assembly for your continued support and I hope that this support can endure for the foreseeable future.

Growing up in Hebron I always had aspirations to end up at UConn for professional school. Despite having moved around for college and work I wanted to retain my CT residency status and come back to a state that has given me so much. I can say with certainty that what drew me to UConn was the sense of family and support I first noticed during my interview back in the fall of 2015. On interview day the support and enthusiasm the faculty demonstrated not only made me feel at home, but made my decision to accept my offer of admission an easy one.

On our first day of orientation our Dean of Students made sure to introduce herself to our entire class and personally addressed each one of us by name. This was the first of many instances where the faculty fostered a welcoming learning environment and took a personal interest in getting to know us students. Our small class size allows faculty to interact with us on a very personal level and this has been one of my favorite aspects of being a UConn student.

Students at my institution are encouraged to pursue areas of interest including research, extracurricular activities, and volunteering. After my first year of school I received a generous stipend while conducting summer research on a rare genetic bone disorder with one of the dental school clinical/research faculty. In addition to summer research, I've been encouraged to pursue positions in various student organizations including the UConn chapter of the American Student Dental Association. I also have been able to volunteer at the Special Olympics State Games where students and faculty provided oral hygiene instruction, screenings, and mouth guard fabrication.

As I wait eagerly to see where I will end up for residency in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery I aspire to return to Connecticut upon completion of this endeavor to give back to a state that has given me so much. The contribution and investment made by the state of Connecticut to New England's only public dental school is greatly appreciated by students and faculty alike. I take great pride in being a UConn dental student and our mission statement sums it up nicely: "The School of Dental Medicine aims to benefit the people of the state of Connecticut..." At the end of the day my own personal aspirations still revolve around my goal to best treat my patients. As someone who sees myself returning to Connecticut upon completing residency I want nothing more than to see this school continually succeed and provide top notch care for the people of our state. Your continued support goes a long way and I am proud to be a Husky. Thank you very much for your time.

Best Regards,
Eric Ress