

Connecticut General Assembly
Appropriations Committee Public Hearing

Testimony of: Hamza Qadri

School of Dental Medicine, Class of 2024

To whom it may concern,

My name is Hamza Qadri and I am a first year dental student here at UConn Dental. I would first like to start off by thanking the General Assembly's past and continued support. Being the voice of the dental class through my position as the Dental Vice President for the Medical-Dental Student Government, I felt as though it is my obligation to represent my colleagues and this institution. I am a double Husky, earning my Bachelor of Science in biology last year in May and now here I am at UConn Health as I am pursuing my dream to become a clinician. My elder sister was also a Husky, she received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, and my elder brother is currently a student in the School of Business as he plans to receive his MBA.

I was born in Karachi, Pakistan and early in my childhood my parents made the decision to migrate to the United States. When we migrated to Stamford, CT, my father was the breadwinner as he worked tirelessly to financially support the household, and my amazing mother was a homemaker who nurtured my siblings and me to become the best versions of ourselves in every single aspect of our lives. Attending the University of Connecticut for undergrad, and now UConn Dental for professional school, these opportunities allowed my parents dreams to come into fruition. They sacrificed everything they had for my education, and this wonderful institution has supported me as I continue on my journey to provide the best care to my future patients.

During my undergraduate career at Storrs, UConn allowed me to make unforgettable memories that I will forever cherish. During those four years, I became a man who helps others before helping myself, just as my parents taught me. I have only been at UConn Dental for barely six months, but I have matured immensely in such little time. I am grateful for my dental and medical school professors, who push my wonderful colleagues and me day in and day out. To be quite honest, the biomedical curriculum challenges me mentally and emotionally. But being a student here is a privilege and an honor that very few people in the world have, and every day I am thankful to be here.

This past year, as everyone who hasn't been living under a rock knows, has been an extremely difficult and challenging year. Due Covid-19 our lives have completely changed, probably forever. However, it is now more than ever that I am proud to say that I am part of the healthcare community. When I first started at UConn Dental in August 2020, I was a bit skeptical about online learning. How was I supposed to become a doctor through my laptop? Despite my initial skepticism about virtual learning, and now that I am more than half way done with my first year, I can say that UConn has done a wonderful job in adapting their curriculum so our education is not compromised. From our dense physiology classes where we learn about the human body systems and diseases, to our anatomy labs, all the way to our dental classes, I feel as though my education is up to par and even better than those students that came before me. The faculty at UConn Health has done an exceptional job in preparing us for our future roles as healthcare professionals.

After receiving my DMD, I hope to complete a residency in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and I aspire to continue working in Connecticut to return the favor to the state that has granted me immense favors. This institution is continuing to fulfill my dreams beyond my imaginations. I hope that you continue to support UConn Health, so that dreamers like myself and everyone that I interact with at this incredible institution continue dreaming high as we serve the residents of Connecticut.

Thank you for taking the time to hear from my colleagues and me.

Best,

Hamza Qadri