

Jessica Shamberger Presents on Emergency Dental Care
at Hinman Student Research Symposium
by Christine Evangelista

Third-year student Jessica Shamberger had the privilege of attending the Hinman Student Research Symposium in Memphis, Tennessee, in November 2017. This experience was awarded to her when her research titled “Experience with Dental Emergency Department Visits” won the poster competition during the ECU School of Dental Medicine’s Annual Celebration of Research and Scholarship in 2016. Jessica described the experience of being invited to the symposium as an honor since only one student represents the dental school.

The Hinman Student Research Symposium is a three day event filled with oral and poster presentations given by dental students from across North America, who have been selected by their dental schools.

The symposium opened with a dinner announcing the dental schools and the students as well as providing a history of the symposium. Three scientific sessions took place on the second day. During Scientific Session II, students presented posters to guests, judges, and other students. The other two scientific sessions consisted of oral presentations.

Jessica was particularly interested in the oral presentations given by other dental students. “During the oral presentations, dental students and residents had the opportunity to present their research in an allotted amount of time to the group. It allowed for the participants to pay closer attention to the topic, and it allowed the participants to learn about other research,” she said. “I can see myself doing an oral presentation in the future.”

Jessica began conducting research prior to starting dental school through the ECU Division of Health Sciences Summer Research Scholars Program. The program allowed her to do the research and present at national conferences such as the American Dental Association Annual Meeting in 2016, and later, the Hinman Student Research Symposium in 2017.

Her research focuses on the impact the School of Dental Medicine makes on reducing the number of people who go to hospital emergency departments for dental related issues. Her interest in this area began after she graduated from college and worked at a hospital emergency department in Aberdeen, N.C., as well as an urgent care center in Greensboro, N.C.

“In these two settings, I noticed that several patients were seeking care for dental related issues, which is why this study is very special to me,” Jessica said.

Currently, her research shows that the dental school’s emergency clinic is having a positive impact on decreasing visits to the local emergency department. She plans to expand her research to determine if the dental services offered at the school’s community service learning center in Ahoskie, N.C., is impacting the local hospital emergency department.

Jessica is the secretary of the dental school's Student Research Group as well as the community service liaison for the Student Chapter of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry.