Jessica Shamberger, a second dental student and vice president of the Student Research Group, recently participated in the 57th Annual American Dental Association (ADA) and DENTSPLY International Student Clinician Research Program held in Denver, Colorado. This juried competition encourages research participation, promotes student membership in the ADA, and introduces students to professional society activities.

She described her experience at the conference as enlightening. “I really got a chance to see what is being done in research at other schools where some of the students have been doing research for years, it lets you know how far you can go in the future. I also enjoyed seeing some of the people of the SCADA committee because they were once in our shoes and it lets me know potentially what I could do in the future.” Shamberger described there being dozens of people to network with and was inspired by the conference. Shamberger stated “the guest speaker was Malala and it was very inspirational. As women, sometimes we don’t think about how lucky and privileged we are and how far we have come. Malala’s presentation truly impacted me.”

Shamberger competed with her poster on "Experience with Dental Emergency Department Visits.” Shamberger described presenting as being different from the conferences she had presented at previously. They were first judged privately and then participated in campfires. The campfires consisted of the participants presenting their research to conference attendees. Shamberger expressed her enjoyment at being able to present and converse, “it was really cool that Dean Chadwick was there while I was presenting at the campfire. To have the head of our school come and hear me present was amazing. Knowing I have that support is great.”

Taking the experiences from the conference has given Shamberger motivation for continuing in the future with her research. “In the near future I want to continue with research and broaden and expand the study I am working on now. In our Student Research Group, we try to get students to participate in research, but I feel it will be important for me even after graduation.”