

## *A Brief History of the White Coat*

*by Dr. Andrew I. Spielman*

Why are doctors wearing a white coat? Why not black? Why not street clothes?

Up until the 1870s, doctors wore street clothes, mostly black. Festive, somber, black was the color worn by the clergy. It was also a symbol of the sad outcome of most medical treatments, quite deadly at the time. There was a lack of understanding of the nature of disease. Black is still a symbol of somber festivity. Think about a black tie dinner ...

The white coat was introduced following the discovery of the microbial nature of infections — discoveries made by giants of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as Semmelweis, Lister, Pasteur, and Koch. It symbolized purity, cleanliness, and honesty.

However, wearing the white coat did not start in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. White togas (robes) were worn during Roman senatorial elections in the first century. As a result, individuals running for office were called “candidates” from the Latin word *Candida*, meaning white, pure, or honest.

The symbol was powerful enough for the medical profession to adopt the white coat more than 145 years ago. The ceremony to celebrate entry into the health professions with a white coat is much younger. “White coat ceremonies” started in 1993 at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons by Dr. Arnold P. Gold. Initially these ceremonies involved only medicine, but in the years since, other health professions — including dentistry — have adapted this powerful symbol.

The ceremony defines the expectations of the profession, a code of conduct of honesty. Starting today, as long as you have the right to wear it, with or without a white coat, you are a *candidate*.



# CLASS OF 2019 ADVANCED STANDING WHITE COAT CEREMONY

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2017

433 FIRST AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY

***Dear Members of the Class of 2019:***

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this afternoon's White Coat Ceremony in your honor.

We have great confidence in your potential as individuals and as a class to demonstrate clinical excellence, identify yourselves as men and women of science, and exhibit a high degree of emotional intelligence — that indefinable *something more* that people expect from a doctor.

As we celebrate your achievements, we also thank your families and friends for their continued support of your academic aspirations, and we reaffirm our commitment to be with you every step of the way as you advance toward your goal to become fine dentists.

***Sincerely,***

***Charles N. Bertolami, DDS, DMedSc  
Dean, NYU College of Dentistry***

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## THE DENTIST'S PLEDGE

*I, as a member of the dental profession, will keep this pledge and these stipulations.*

*I understand and accept that my primary responsibility is to my patients, and I shall dedicate myself to render, to the best of my ability, the highest standard of oral health care and to maintain a relationship of respect and confidence. Therefore, let all come to me safe in the knowledge that their total health and well-being are my first considerations.*

*I shall accept the responsibility that, as a professional, my competence rests on continuing the attainment of knowledge and skill in the arts and science of dentistry.*

*I acknowledge my obligation to support and sustain the honor and integrity of the profession, and to conduct myself in all endeavors such that I shall merit the respect of patients, colleagues and my community.*

*I shall faithfully observe the Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct set forth by the profession.*

*All this I pledge with pride in my commitment to the profession and the public which it serves.*

# CLASS OF 2019 ADVANCED STANDING WHITE COAT CEREMONY

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## WELCOME

***Staci Ripkey, EdD, EdM, MA***

*Assistant Dean for Student Affairs & Academic Support Services*

***Eugenia E. Mejia, PhD***

*Assistant Dean for Admissions & Enrollment Management*

## OPENING REMARKS

***Mark S. Wolff, DDS, PhD***

*Associate Dean for Predoctoral Clinical Education and for Development  
Professor & Chair, Dept. of Cariology & Comprehensive Care*

## PRESENTATION OF THE NYU COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY WHITE COAT PIN

***Olivia Nguyen, President, Class of 2019;***

*Pins Presented by Nicole Haydt, Vice President, and*

***Michelle Bowers, Secretary, Class of 2019***

## PRESENTATION OF THE WHITE COATS

***Kenneth L. Allen, DDS, MBA***

*Clinical Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Dept. of Cariology & Comprehensive Care*

***Josephine Lomangino-Cheung, DDS, MS***

*Clinical Assistant Professor, Dept. of Cariology & Comprehensive Care  
Director of Advanced Standing, D2 Aesthetics and Advanced Operative Programs*

***David Hershkowitz, DDS***

*Clinical Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Dept. of Cariology & Comprehensive Care*

## THE RECITATION OF THE DENTIST'S PLEDGE

***Josephine Lomangino-Cheung, DDS, MS***

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## HONOREES

***Kefaia Abdalkader***

***Nividita Puri***

***Bhavani Achunala***

***Natalia Rojas-Quiroga***

***Thiago Costa***

***Mousami Surapaneni***

***Leslie Fernández Bencosme***

***Miang Chneb (Christopher) Teo***

***Parneet Gill***

***Tatiya Ungphakorn***