

# NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Yakima Medical-Dental Clinic Welcomes UW School of Dentistry RIDE Student**

**SPOKANE, WA** - Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic's Yakima Medical-Dental Clinic welcomes Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) candidate, Cameron Hart, a native of Morton, WA, and a fourth-year student in the University of Washington School of Dentistry's (UWSOD) Regional Initiatives in Dental Education (RIDE) program. As part of the RIDE program, he will be training at the clinic for five-months. During this time, Hart will help the clinic increase dental patient capacity while he trains to become one of the next generation of rural oral health care providers.

Across the state, rural areas have fewer dental providers and, as a result, residents have less access to dental care. The RIDE program prepares dentists for practice in rural and underserved areas of Washington, by training students in a specially focused track of the DDS curriculum. RIDE students spend their first year of dental school at Eastern Washington University in Spokane, WA, and complete two clinical rotations at Community Health Centers in Central or Eastern Washington. By immersing students in rural and underserved communities, and providing extensive clinical training, RIDE equips students to meet the unique challenges of practicing in more remote regions. Since its inception in 2009, over 80-percent of RIDE DDS graduates have returned to work in rural and underserved communities. With the support of local organizations like Yakima Medical-Dental Clinic, RIDE prepares dentists to work in communities that need it most.

"Getting more oral healthcare providers into rural and underserved areas is key to improving the overall health of our communities," said Dr. Frank Roberts, Director of the University of Washington's RIDE Program. "Time and time again, we see that the quality of a person's overall health is strongly connected to the quality of their oral health. And good oral health depends on access to regular care from a trained oral health professional."

Hart completed his second year clinical rotation in Yakima in 2021 and is excited to return for his five-month senior dental rotation. He is from Morton, WA, and is on track to graduate the UWSOD in June 2024. He has received multiple accolades for his exceptional patient care services at UWSOD and the following scholarships/awards: James and Joyce Oats Scholarship for demonstrated clinical excellence with metallic restorations, 1951 Legacy Endowed Student Scholarship, and the

Washington State Dental Association Presidential Scholarship for demonstrated academic achievement, professional leadership, and community involvement. He plans to serve the rural population of Sandpoint, Idaho following graduation.

Yakima-Medical Dental Clinic is a part of the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic organization, one of the largest community health centers in the Pacific Northwest. Yakima Medical-Dental Clinic has been serving the diverse population of Yakima for over 40 years, providing a wide range of medical and dental services to the local community.

[More information about the UW RIDE program can be found by using this link.](#)

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*Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic is one of the Pacific Northwest's largest community health centers, providing medical, dental, behavioral health and social services to more than 195,000 people a year. With more than 50 unique service locations across Oregon (Clatsop, Marion, Multnomah, Umatilla, and Yamhill counties) and Washington (Benton, Franklin, Spokane, Walla Walla, and Yakima counties), we deliver affordable, comprehensive primary care for underserved populations in our communities. We also extend our network of care through our mobile health units and virtual visit technology, bringing essential care to our more remote patients. Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic employs over 1,800 staff in addition to our medical and dental residents, administrative fellows, students, and volunteers. All of whom are dedicated to bringing quality care to those in our communities who need it most. Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization recognized by HRSA, The Joint Commission, and The National Committee for Quality Assurance for our accomplishments in community health care. For more information, please visit [yfwc.com/press](http://yfwc.com/press). Newsletter sign up at [yfwc.com/newsletter](http://yfwc.com/newsletter).*