

“You’ve got to follow your passion. You’ve got to figure out what it is you love—who you really are. And have the courage to do that. I believe that the only courage anybody ever needs is the courage to follow your own dream.”

Oprah Winfrey

Editorial

Dealing with life's challenges...I was happy to be invited to be part of the YDW family one year ago and participate actively in both issues of the AIM as member of the editorial board. It is a pleasure to welcome you here in the name of my colleagues from all over the world.



I decided to tell you about my new/old life in the US. It has almost been a year since I decided to leave the old continent, Europe, and moved to the US. Why? Because I wanted to try something different than the European Way and at the same time explore the American dental education system. After the wonderful experience inside the European Dental Students' Association, I knew that only an international city, where different cultures meet and blend together, would meet my expectations. That being said, I was lucky to be accepted at New York University College of Dentistry to continue my education. Moving to the "Big Apple" with no friends and ready (or not?!) to accept a new challenge was just the start. Step by step, I started to get used to the city, achieve the university's requirements and make new friends from all over the world, feeling comfortable again. Still, the trip was not over. I felt that I could be more challenged by the research education possibilities offered by the system, and the city has too many

temptations that won't let me focus on my education—the purpose of my "trip" to the US. So, the story goes on and after my interview at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine—one of the top dental schools in the world, I gladly accepted the idea to continue my education and start a new life again, this time in Boston.

It's been just a little more than a month since I am discovering a new, different type of city. The demanding program, missing my friends are currently the new challenges I am facing, still I know that every beginning is difficult and only going through tough moments will make the later results worth it. That being said, I encourage you to try the "American experience"!

Thank you all for reading my story and Julianne for giving me the opportunity to share it!

Sincerely,

Irina Dragan, Boston, MA.