



## HELLEN HUANG

It was a typical Tuesday afternoon on October 11. I ambled into the 171 classroom and found an empty seat at the front row. I pulled out my laptop and ready to take notes. Yet this 'Dental Anatomy' lecture was different. It was not about the biological, physiological, or anatomical aspect of teeth; it was an inspirational and disheartening talk about a devastating disease that has been long neglected. My eyes fixed at the orange lecture slide "Noma: A Disease of Poverty." As a first-year dental student, we often take for granted the privilege we have—a home, a family, education, food, sanitation, and health. We get headaches for getting up early, we get stressed for exams, and we get frustrated for waiting in line for coffee. Yet in other parts of the world, people sleep with empty stomachs. Despite the devastating impact noma has on people's quality and quantity of lives, not many people heard of noma. In my heart, I knew this must change. I would like to thank Dr. Rosenbloom for inviting me to join the team and I am honored and excited to collaborate with peers to raise public awareness, improve understanding, and make a lasting change.