

Smiling Faces

2016-17 EDITION

For the Good
of the Grin

ECCO Community Dental Clinic

Support for
Our Smiles

The MUSC College of Dental Medicine



Camera Ready? Meet Your Dentist Here!

Matthew Barefoot, DDS, MD
Barefoot Oral & Facial Surgery

Kari Ryan, DMD
Kari Ryan Dentistry



Training, Community Service and Research

The MUSC College of Dental Medicine

AND JUST LIKE THAT, THE dental profession is en vogue. Earlier this year, dentist was ranked No. 2 in *U.S. News & World Report's* 100 Best Jobs of 2016. (Orthodontist finished first.) It's a far cry from the pop culture depictions of dentists as idiosyncratic sub-doctors, and the

attitude couldn't come at a better time as studies continue to show a direct link between oral health and overall health.

In the Lowcountry – indeed, in all of South Carolina – no institution has done more to advance dentistry over the past five decades than the Medical University of South Carolina's James B. Edwards College of Dental Medicine, which mints more than 70 new dentists each year, the majority of whom hail from the Palmetto State and embark on careers here.

One of those students is Rob Painter, a 27-year-old Greenville native who completed his doctor of Dental Medicine in May and is set to join a Charleston-area dental group this summer.

What would draw an obviously talented young man – more than 1,000 applicants vied for just 71 spots in Painter's class – to a profession that perhaps isn't viewed as the most glamorous in the medical world?

"I wanted to find the way that I could do the most

good both in terms of treating patients effectively and being in a field that was attractive to me," Dr. Painter said. "I view dentistry as a craft. It's a combination of art and surgery, and I love working with my hands. It made sense as the best way to put my passion and talent to use."

That explanation mirrors the sentiments of Dr. Tariq Javed, the College of Dental Medicine's dean of academic

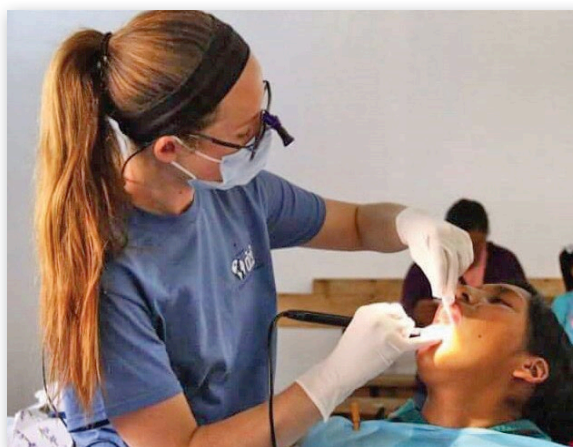
and student affairs, who identified training, community service and research as three tenets of the college's mission.

"We are producing dentists who are competent but also have a heart," said Dr. Javed. "I believe we've been very successful. Our faculty and staff are pre-eminent. And our clinical facilities are very modern, very up-to-date. That's thanks to the state, MUSC, our alumni and benefactors."



Photos courtesy of the College of Dental Medicine.

Above: Dr. Rob Painter discusses options with a patient. Below: No institution has done more to advance dentistry in the Lowcountry than MUSC's College of Dental Medicine.



NEW FRONTIERS

Based largely on a visceral combination of overheard grouching and personal pain, it's believed that most people view trips to the dentist as a necessary evil at best, in some cases to be avoided until oral maladies at last become truly unbearable.

The truth is that dental care is a critical part of good health and that tooth decay is the most prevalent chronic disease among both children and adults – despite being imminently preventable.



Some of traditional dentistry's invasiveness and inconvenience – barriers for many people – may be on the wane with the continued emergence of digital dentistry, where high-tech methods are used in lieu of traditional techniques for restorations, surgical guides, implants and more. For patients, that often means both better outcomes and less time in the dentist's chair.

An example: Visual scanning is taking the place of cumbersome dental impression molds. Today intraoral scanners easily capture pictures and videos of a patient's entire mouth or even a single tooth. That information can be used to quickly and accurately create models for prosthetics such as bridges and crowns. In the case of the latter, patients can now have a crown installed the same day, instead of spending weeks with a temporary version.

"The digital aspect is one of the strong suits of our education," Dr. Painter said.

A FINAL HURDLE

Ongoing technological advancements are impressive and undoubtedly a boon for the general populace. Still, pockets of so-called dental health professional shortage areas remain. (That is, locales in which there is only one dentist for every 5,000 people.)

In South Carolina almost 80 such areas exist.

Dr. Javed said providing adequate care in such typically rural areas of the state is a complex proposition.

"Dentistry requires a facility outfitted with sophisticated dental equipment," he said. "That requires more resources and financial responsibility. It's like having an operating room: a surgeon can't do what he or she does without equipment. But if I live in a smaller town, that doesn't mean my care doesn't count."

Dr. Amy Martin, associate professor at the College of Dental Medicine, helps lead the Medical Oral Expanded Care (MORE Care) Collaborative, a statewide effort aimed at helping rural primary care doctors bridge treatment for dental conditions. In its first year, the program has benefited more than 10,000 children.

"Americans' health should not suffer because they live in rural areas," Dr. Martin wrote in a co-signed editorial that appeared in *The Post and Courier* this spring.

It's an issue that Dr. Javed and the college continue to monitor closely. In fact, a federal grant received through MUSC has helped fund MORE Care.

"Our students are sensitive to all people's needs," said Dr. Javed, who serves as a consultant to dental schools in the Middle East and Pakistan. "Especially the underserved." 🦷

ABOUT THE COVER

We teeth take on a lot – just think about it for a second. From your 8 a.m. coffee to your midnight snack, we're working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Some teeth stay with you for the majority of your life. Others, like me, only stay for a few short years before we're wiggled or wrangled out and placed under a pillow in hopes that we'll be replaced with a few dollars.

I got lucky, as I was swooped up from beneath a

sweet little girl's pillow by an exquisite fairy with glistening wings and a wide grin, revealing two sets of perfectly pearly white teeth. She flew with me through the balmy Lowcountry air and dropped me off at my new home, Coastal Kids Dental & Braces, in Charleston, South Carolina. That is where my adventure truly began. Sure, I adored those few years filled with the excitement of ice cream in the summer and hot chocolate in the winter until finally being laid to rest under the pillow. But here was my chance to see the world.

I decided to embrace my new home in the dentist office. I observed the dentists as they worked tirelessly on perfecting everyone's smiles. I watched the children bounding through the door and sliding into the reclining chair, their excitement showing the gaps their baby teeth had left behind. I entertained them and befriended them all.

Then one day recently, I was extracted from my home for a mysterious adventure. I was put in a car trunk, excitement and anxiety washing over me. This time there was no winged enchantress to reassure me I was going somewhere marvelous. We arrived at a building where I met Dr. Matthew Barefoot and Dr. Kari Ryan. We stood beneath the lights inside Jenn Cady's photography studio, and I finally had my moment to shine. I couldn't believe I was the lucky tooth to grace the cover of *Smiling Faces*.

I hope you are as excited to read the dental section as I was to model for it. And remember to love your teeth, because we love you back.

Sincerely,
Mr. Tooth





JUMPING FOR JOY BECAUSE WE'VE PUT A SMILE ON YOUR FACE!



Voted 4 years in a row "Best Dentist Mount Pleasant"

Schedule your appointment today and see what sets us apart! Complimentary initial exam and x-rays for the first 15 new patients when you bring in this offer.



Pick up a copy of the Pleasant Family Dentistry magazine at any East Cooper CVS store



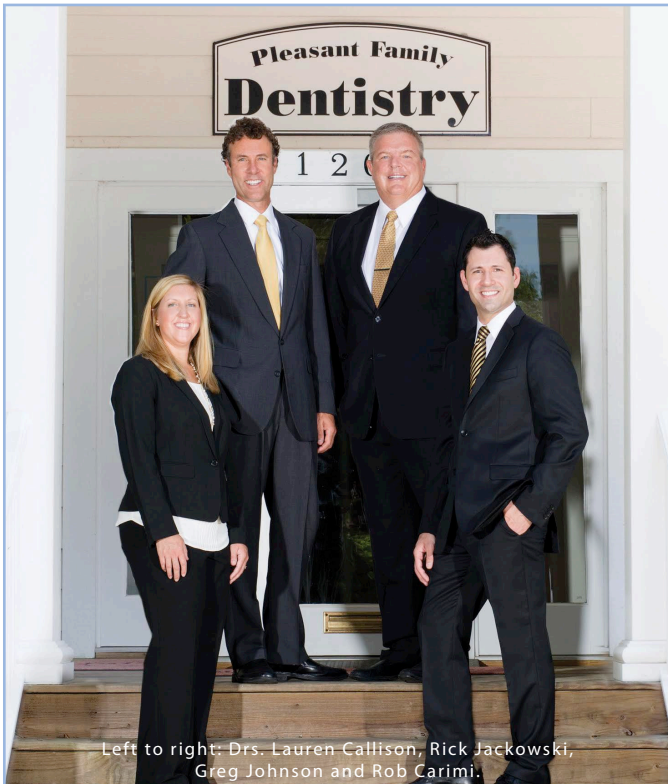
Call Today! 843-654-4679

No insurance? No problem!
Ask how you can save with our
In-Office Savings Plan.

Evening and
Saturday
appointments
available.

www.PleasantFamilyDentistry.com

(843) 654-4679 | 1204 Two Island Court | Mount Pleasant, SC (off IOP Connector)



Left to right: Drs. Lauren Callison, Rick Jackowski, Greg Johnson and Rob Carimi.

Photo courtesy of Pleasant Family Dentistry.

DR. RICK JACKOWSKI
DR. GREG JOHNSON
DR. ROB CARIMI
DR. LAUREN CALLISON

Pleasant Family Dentistry

1204 Two Island Court

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

843-881-8881

www.pleasantfamilydentistry.com

ance concerning a child's oral care habits.

"It is important that parents monitor the time their children spend brushing and flossing and make sure they are eating a healthy diet with minimal processed sugars and acidic foods that damage the enamel," Dr. Johnson said.

As individuals continue to age, they usually face dental issues such as declining gum health.

"Many periodontal problems are preventable," explained Dr. Richard Jackowski, who added that it is necessary to have plaque and calculus removed at least every six months since brushing and flossing alone aren't enough to maintain optimal oral health.

"Seeing the hygienist for polishing and plaque removal, occasional sealants and X-rays to detect cavities or bone loss are all routine procedures that benefit patients throughout their lifetime," Dr. Jackowski continued.

"Dentistry starts with good oral hygiene, a good diet and good habits from a young age," Dr. Lauren Callison pointed out.

Pleasant Family Dentistry incorporates the latest in dental technology to make sure its patients are getting the best out of each checkup.

"Digital X-rays use only a fraction of radiation that old film radiographs used, and their diagnostic quality is superb," explained Dr. Johnson. "We also have cone beam technology that can take 3D pictures of our patients' anatomy. Crowns and bridges can be done in one visit with CEREC technology, which saves patients time and travel."

For patients who fear the dentist's office, Pleasant Family Dentistry offers both IV and oral sedation in addition to laughing gas to make the visit easier.

"Routine checkups are important," Dr. Johnson concluded. "Any oral disease is more easily treated if it is caught early. Patients run the possibility of pain and losing teeth if they do not have regular dental care. Most dental disease is not painful until it gets to a point where permanent damage is done." 🦷

Most people know that there are significant health benefits to regular dental visits, but many fail to keep up with their semiannual preventive care appointments. Why? Lack of time and fear of the dentist are two major reasons.

The team at Pleasant Family Dentistry acknowledges these concerns and strives to alleviate them to give their patients the best dental experience possible.

BY STACY E. DOMINGO

"Our office is open nights and Saturdays to accommodate even the busiest of our patients' schedules. We want to be available when it is most convenient for them," Dr. Greg Johnson explained. "And we know that a large percentage of the population fears the dentist, so we offer a complimentary comfort menu with items such as warm blankets, massage chairs and hand moisturizing treatments to make our patients comfortable and relaxed."

All the dentists at Pleasant Family Dentistry emphasize the benefits of regular dental visits and that taking a proactive approach to oral health can prevent many future issues.

Routine dental visits should begin as early as 2 to 3 years old. A dentist can identify possible congenital issues and begin preventive care at this time. Around age 6, the dentist can identify orthodontic issues and provide guid-



Water's Edge Dentistry

Excellence in Cosmetic, Restorative & Family Dentistry



!! Such a professional and caring staff!
They go out of their way to make my experience pleasant.
I am so happy with my smile now that I have completed my
Invisalign treatment and whitening. I would not trust my dental
care to anyone but Dr. Dahlkemper and her staff! !!

- Sheryll J, Patient



Committed to giving you
the smile you deserve:

Family/General Dentistry • Cosmetic
Dentistry • TMJ - Clenching/Grinding •
Sleep Apnea & Snoring • Invisalign
Braces • Anxiety-Free Dentistry •
Botox/Dermal Fillers • Teeth Whitening

WatersEdgeSC.com / 843.884.6166

1203 Two Island Court, #101, Mount Pleasant, SC 29466
(just off the Isle of Palms Connector)





Photo by Jenn Cady.

DR. NICOLE DAHLKEMPER

Water's Edge Family Dentistry

1203 Two Island Court, Suite 101

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

843-884-6166

www.watersedgesc.com

For Mount Pleasant dentist Dr. Nicole Dahlkemper, helping others is her top priority. She does so in her practice, Water's Edge Family Dentistry, in the community and beyond.

Dr. Dahlkemper and her team ensure that every patient who walks into their practice is treated like a member of the family. Water's Edge Dentistry offers a full array of dental services to improve the health of your mouth and the beauty of your smile. Services range from routine cleanings to full mouth restoration and everything in between. Dr. Dahlkemper provides TMJ therapy with the most advanced nonsurgical techniques and even treats sleep apnea and snoring.

BY ANNE HARRIS

For Dr. Dahlkemper, the love of helping others doesn't stop in her exam room. She volunteers her time at the local East Cooper Community Outreach Dental Clinic and also travels to various countries abroad to provide dental care. She has been to the Dominican Republic and Ecuador and most recently returned from Peru on a mission trip with Dental Community Fellowship, where her group provided more than 900 dental services in a week.

Hard work is nothing new for Dr. Dahlkemper. She consistently graduated at the top of her class in undergraduate and dental school and was one of the youngest dentists in the nation to receive a fellowship from

the prestigious Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. She was recently awarded a fellowship with the Pierre Fauchard Academy – an international group that recognizes leaders for their contributions to the field of dentistry and to their community.

Yet another thing that sets Dr. Dahlkemper apart from others in her field is her advanced education in treating sleep apnea and snoring. After doing a thorough examination of sleep studies, individual patients' anatomy, jaw and muscles, Dr. Dahlkemper uses a physiological approach to customize an appliance to help patients.

She makes an easy-to-use and comfortable device called MicrO2, which safely alleviates snoring and symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea. If patients have been diagnosed with sleep apnea or if they snore, the MicrO2 lower jaw advancement device helps them wake up with a better sense of rest and the energy they need to enjoy the day.

Specially trained dentists such as Dr. Dahlkemper play a key role in screening for obstructive sleep apnea. Then, partnering with medical doctors, the MicrO2 is provided to treat those suffering from this disorder.

In her spare time, Dr. Dahlkemper loves the outdoors and can be found enjoying activities such as yoga, kayaking and spending time with dogs Kirby, Sully and Ditka. On her trip to Peru, she was especially excited to visit Machu Picchu and climb to the top of Huayna Picchu Mountain.

But it is her love of this community and helping those closest to home that mean the most to her.

"I can't think of a community I would rather be in. My patients are truly wonderful people who make my job more fun. How could I not love having a business here?" she asked. 🌿



BAREFOOT

ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY

1203 Two Island Ct., Suite 102 | Mount Pleasant, SC 29466 | office@barefootoralsurgery.com

www.barefootoralsurgery.com



Dr. Matthew Barefoot, DDS, MD

Confidence.

To smile again.

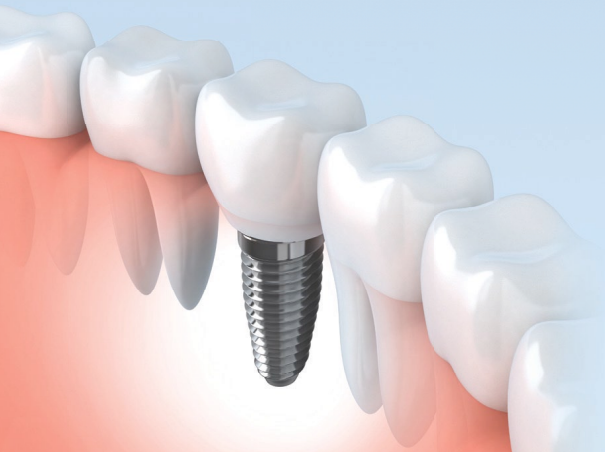
WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART
DENTAL IMPLANTS

Replace missing teeth

Improve your smile

Eliminate discomfort

Eat the foods you love



CALL NOW!

FREE Consultation
and Evaluation.

843-849-5188



DR. MATTHEW BAREFOOT

Barefoot Oral & Facial Surgery

1203 Two Island Court, Suite 102

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

843-849-5188

www.barefootoralsurgery.com



Photo by Jenn Cady.

Most people don't look forward to walking into an oral surgeon's office, probably because it is likely that they are experiencing a problem that is causing them pain or discomfort. Fortunately for the patients who choose to visit Barefoot Oral & Facial Surgery, they will literally leave with a smile on their face.

Since opening his Mount Pleasant practice in January 2015, Dr. Matthew Barefoot and his team have made it their mission to put the focus on patient comfort. A small practice by design, Dr. Barefoot spends extra time getting to know his patients by name, explaining procedures and managing expectations.

Raised in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Dr. Barefoot completed his undergraduate studies magna cum laude at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. He was drawn to oral surgery because it uses a combination of dental and medical techniques. He received his doctorate in Dental Surgery degree summa cum laude from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. While at the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry, he became a member of the Omicron Kappa Upsilon Honor Society. He then earned his medical degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Following a general surgery internship and state-of-the-art

training in anesthesia, he completed his Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery residency at UAB.

A diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Dr. Barefoot continues to obtain advanced training in various aspects of oral and maxillofacial surgery.

Dr. Barefoot and his team manage a wide variety of problems relating to the mouth, teeth and facial regions. He practices a full scope of oral and maxillofacial surgery, with expertise ranging from dental implant surgery and wisdom tooth removal to corrective jaw surgery. This also includes techniques designed to rebuild bone structure with minimal surgical intervention and optimal patient comfort.

Dr. Barefoot also can diagnose and treat facial pain, facial injuries and fractures.

For Dr. Barefoot, it's the follow-up visits with his patients that are the best part of every day. So often he hears how much relief and satisfaction they feel, how smooth the recovery was, how happy they are to have teeth they may have lost – just how much better their quality of life is after a procedure.

When he isn't helping others with their smiles, Dr. Barefoot brings a smile to his own face spending time with his wife, Michele, and son, Lachlan, exploring all that the Lowcountry has to offer. 🍷



GARNER FAMILY DENTISTRY, LLC.
we love to see you smile

From preventative hygiene services and gentle restorative procedures to the latest in cosmetic dentistry, trust in 21 years of experience.

- Bonding
- Cosmetic Contouring
- Crowns and Bridges
- Cosmetic Fillings
- Implants
- Veneers
- Zoom Whitening
- Sealants
- Extractions
- Scaling and Root Planing
- Dentures
- Cosmetic Dentistry
- Jaw/TMJ
- Oral health screenings

Cynthia Garner, DDS

Garner Family Dentistry, LLC
 1059 Chuck Dawley Blvd. Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
843.884.6002
 Mon-Thurs 8-5
cynthiagarnerdentistry.com



A Concept by Jenn Cady



Update your image for only **\$99**

YOUR BEST HEADSHOT.COM
 Visual Branding Expert

A photo service that will come to your business or visit our private studio.
 We deliver high quality and professional results fast. Look Your Best today

843-606-0451



Susan Matthews, Realtor® Carolina One and QVC On-Air Home Decor Guest
 I never liked having professional photos taken but Jenn Cady made it a blast. The finished product was exactly what I wanted. And she taught me how to pose for future photo ops!



Michele Hensel
 Marketing Manager/Weight Loss Consultant
 Lowcountry Plastic Surgery Center

Jenn Cady is one of the most talented photographers I have ever met! She has a way of not only showing OUTER beauty but bringing out the inner beauty in everyone she shoots. She not only does an AMAZING job BUT she is very affordable as well. She has a package to fit anyones wallet.



Photo by Jenn Cady.

DR. CYNTHIA GARNER

Garner Family Dentistry

1059 Chuck Dawley Blvd.

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

843-884-6002

www.garnerfamilydentistry.com

Even after practicing dentistry for 20 years, Dr. Cynthia Garner still sees every patient who walks in her doors at Garner Family Dentistry as a special individual. No matter what the age, it's important to Dr. Garner and her team that each person's needs are considered and an individualized treatment plan is developed.

For Dr. Garner, dentistry isn't just a career choice but a passion. She enjoys helping others feel good about themselves and views this goal as a true team effort with her staff. She knows there is no substitute for experience. Her staff averages 20 years of experience, from cleaning teeth using the latest technology to solving insurance issues for patients.

"I'm very fortunate to have an amazing and talented staff. They're great with kids and great with all our patients. We have fun together doing great dentistry. We try to make it a great experience for all of our patients. Above all, we love to see our patients smile," Dr. Garner said.

Great smiles are something Dr. Garner works hard to help her patients achieve. She advises parents to start working on good dental hygiene with their children at a young age.

"Brush with them. Floss their teeth when they're younger, because it's hard for kids to floss," she said. "And if your kids don't like to brush, have them do dry brush-

ing. Get a little baby toothbrush and let them get used to putting it in their mouth. Make it part of their daily schedule. The best advice of all is being a good example to them by taking care of yourself."

Dr. Garner works hard on her own making sure she is up to date on the latest procedures and techniques in dentistry. Following graduation from dental school, she was selected for an intensive residency program at Temple University, where she earned an advanced degree in General Dentistry.

"Each year, I devote 100 hours of advanced education to improve my expertise and learn the latest techniques and materials available for dentistry," she said. "Annually, I attend Dr. Frank Spear's hands-on workshops in Scottsdale, Arizona, for advanced techniques in Dental Occlusion and Cosmetic Dentistry, taught by some of the finest dentists in the United States. I am also a member of the Seattle Study Club, a professional association of dentists who advance dental excellence."

When not working on her career, Dr. Garner can be found spending time with her husband, two teenage girls and 9-year-old lab, Buster, at their home on Daniel Island.

Dr. Garner feels grateful to be doing something she loves every day.

"Dentistry is a rewarding career with many opportunities to make a difference in people's lives. I am very fortunate to work with such a great staff and care for so many wonderful patients. It is such a privilege having the trust of our patient families," she concluded. 🦷

“Kari Ryan Denistry is AMAZING!! The quality of care and thoroughness is hands down what makes her practice stand out!! Thanks again for a GREAT experience.”

“What more can be said than a five-star rating. The staff are always smiling and friendly while their dental skills are unmatched. So glad that I found them.”



Dr. Kari Ryan and Dr. Kristi Dillard

815 Lowcountry Blvd • Mount Pleasant, SC 29464

(843) 881-1638

drkariryan@mtpleasantdentist.com

www.mtpleasantdentist.com



Anderson Dentistry

A Commitment to Excellence...

FAMILY & AESTHETIC RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY

Dental Treatments

Fillings | Crowns | Implants | Bridges | Root Canals
Extractions | Sealants | Dentures
Scaling and Root Planing

Cosmetic Treatments

Bonding | Porcelain Veneers
Teeth Whitening | Clear Braces



We are conveniently
located near the Ravenel
Bridge in Mt. Pleasant.

317 Wingo Way, Ste. 301, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
843-884-2021 | www.anderson-dentistry.com

Call us to
schedule an
appointment today!



Drs. Kari Ryan and Kristi Dillard

DR. KARI RYAN DR. KRISTI DILLARD

Kari Ryan Dentistry

815 Lowcountry Blvd.

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

843-881-1638

www.mtpleasantdentist.com

Photo by Jenn Cady.

The Charleston area is known for having some of the best physicians in the country, but, unbeknown to many, it is also home to exceptional dentists. Drs. Kari Ryan and Kristi Dillard are among them. They have integrated innovative dental technologies into their practice in order to give their

BY CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR COLE

patients the best dental experience possible. According to Dr. Ryan, it is the “ease and convenience of these new dental technologies that have led to our high levels of overall patient satisfaction.”

As patients have consistently noted on websites such as healthgrades.com, new, painless and convenient dental technologies contributed to their satisfaction with Drs. Ryan and Dillard and their overall dental experience as well. In fact, the two local dentists have repeatedly earned five out of five stars from their patients.

Dr. Ryan explained how three technologies – digital radiographs, CEREC crowns and the intraoral camera – help their patients with their overall dental health.

“The digital radiograph allows Dr. Dillard and I to produce crystal-clear images of a patient’s mouth instantaneously on a digital monitor that is placed next to the patient’s chair. The amount of information on this radiograph is so detailed that we can catch dental issues very early in order to provide the most conservative dental

work possible,” she pointed out.

Finding dental issues early on is obviously the best way to eliminate major problems.

The CEREC CAD/CAM technology is used to fix broken or weakened teeth with crowns that match the rest of the patient’s teeth.

“At our office, our CEREC unit allows Dr. Dillard and I to take digital impressions of our patients’ teeth, design a crown on the computer and make the crown in-office while the patient is in the chair, either relaxing or having other dental work done,” Dr. Ryan explained.

The CEREC technology gives Drs. Ryan and Dillard the option to “design the patient’s crown, stain it, glaze it and fire it in the oven to produce, in a matter of minutes, a personalized crown.” As a result, patients don’t have to wait several days or longer for the crown to come back from a lab, and they don’t have to schedule a follow-up appointment or worry about a temporary crown falling out.

Dr. Ryan said the intraoral camera is an exceptional technological tool.

“The camera allows us to take detailed photos of our patients’ teeth and then view together or print the photos so they can see exactly what we see. It is a great tool to aid with diagnosis and to educate our patients regarding their oral health,” she said. “The doctor and patient can study a patient’s smile line, tooth shade, shape and more to determine what will look best for their individual smile.”



Easing Pain

The ECCO Dental Clinic

THEY COME FROM MOUNT Pleasant, but they also make the trek from the outer reaches of East Cooper: McClellanville, Cainhoy, Cordesville, Huger and elsewhere. They often come in pain, both physical and emotional, arriving near penniless with nowhere else to go.

And when they arrive at the East Cooper Community Outreach Dental Clinic, Dr. Michael Cuenin, along with a dedicated staff and a combination of more than 50 dental students and volunteer professionals, is ready and willing to help ease their pain – free of charge.

BY DANIEL BROCK

ECCO, and the dental services it offers, were born out of the devastation of Hurricane Hugo, when the entire Carolina coast was aching. The first dental clinic was housed in a hot, creaky, uncomfortable trailer.

“I still remember dipping X-rays,” said Leslie White, an experienced and highly regarded dental assistant who volunteered at the clinic in the 1990s and has been its manager since 2009.

The trailer is history, and today the floors are covered in porcelain tile provided by a donor. The equipment is essentially state-of-the-art, including a panoramic X-ray machine.

“It looks like any other dentist office you would walk into,” Dr. Cuenin said.

A periodontist by specialty, Dr. Cuenin spent 30 years in the Army. At one time in charge of the Europe Regional Dental Command, he retired as a full colonel. When he arrived at ECCO in 2011, the veteran quickly received new marching orders.

“Leslie told me to get to work,” Dr. Cuenin remembered.

In addition to his efforts at ECCO, Dr. Cuenin is a part-time instructor at the James B. Edwards College of Dental Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina, which not only facilitates lines of communication for the clinic but also allows him to keep an eye on ECCO patients who are referred to the university. One such case was a woman who until recently had an undiscovered tumor in her jawbone.

Among the services offered at ECCO are East Cooper Smiles, a daytime clinic for ECCO clients; an evening emergency extraction clinic for South Carolina residents;

and My Sister’s Smile, a comprehensive dental program for victims of domestic abuse, as well as those recovering from drug and alcohol addictions.

At the same time, ECCO provides invaluable real-world experience for fourth-year students and residents.

“Word has gotten around at the College of Dental Medicine,” Dr. Cuenin said. “This has become a very popular destination.”

There is certainly no shortage of patients. More than 2,300 of them were seen last year, and that work translated into more than \$800,000 in free dental care. To be eligible for services at the clinic, patients can’t make more than twice the poverty level, can’t carry dental insurance and can’t have Medicaid benefits that include dental coverage.

“These are people who can’t go anywhere else,” Dr. Cuenin said.

In many cases, dental deficiencies play a detrimental role in other parts of their lives, impacting everything from heart health to job prospects. Across the board, clinic staffers speak passionately about a full mouth/body health connection and about striving to not only address medical issues but also to change underlying behaviors.

“We try to look at the whole person,” said Dr. Cuenin, who along with White, hygienist Gina Davies and receptionist Quionna Denmark, makes up the clinic’s core staff.

The patients and their problems hit close to home for White, a Mount Pleasant native and Wando High School graduate, who last year received the South Carolina Dental Association’s Special Recognition Award for her work at ECCO.

“In private practice, you deal with patients who were brought up understanding they needed to go to the dentist, and they appreciate the care,” said White. “But here you have many people who live in poverty and go a long time with toothaches and other issues. And they’re surprised that someone cares enough to work on their teeth at no cost.”

For Dr. Cuenin, the transition from decayed teeth to bright smiles – and bright futures – is a source of deep satisfaction.

“I think that’s why a lot of people are drawn to dentistry: You can see something through from start to finish,” he said. “It’s kind of fun.”



Photo courtesy of Dr. Matt Dillard.

Drs. Donald Phillips and Matt Dillard.

If you're looking for an oral surgeon, look no further than Dr. Matt Dillard and Dr. Donald Phillips of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery of the Lowcountry.

They provide a wide range of services. Both Dr. Dillard and Dr. Phillips work with comprehensive surgical issues surrounding the mouth, including wisdom teeth, dental implants, bone grafting and corrective jaw surgery.

Dr. Phillips pointed out that he wishes more people knew about the amazing things they can do to replace missing teeth.

Dental implants have come a long way in a relatively short amount of time, and new technologies such as their dental CT scanner have made the whole process more consistent in achieving excellent results.

Both dentists attended MUSC and then underwent training at acclaimed four-year residency programs in oral and maxillofacial surgery. After their training, they both entered the U.S. Navy.

"We followed very similar career paths and enjoyed our time serving in the Navy. We both ended up back in Charleston with our families," Dr. Dillard explained.

Originally from Spartanburg, Dr. Dillard began private practice in 2006 after returning to Charleston from active duty with the Navy. When Dr. Phillips was assigned to the naval clinic in Charleston a couple years ago, he and

DR. MATT DILLARD DR. DONALD PHILLIPS

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of the Lowcountry

767 Johnnie Dodds Blvd.

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

843-881-3111

www.lowcountryoralsurgery.com

2270 Ashley Crossing Drive, Suite 175

Charleston, South Carolina

843-410-5766

www.lowcountryoralsurgery.com

Dr. Dillard discussed the possibility of working together long-term.

"For me it was a unique opportunity to work with someone I knew and trusted. Donald has tremendous experience, strong ethics and takes a lot of pride in what he does," Dr. Dillard said. "Both of us came from smaller towns and had fathers who were dentists and understand the importance of treating the patient as a person. We have different personalities but our professional philosophies match."

Dr. Phillips joined the practice full-time last summer, allowing them to open up their newest office in Mount Pleasant. They see patients from all over the Lowcountry in their three offices.

Dr. Phillips earned his bachelor of science at Wofford College but realized after visiting many dental practices that he wanted to be a part of the dental field because "dentists are able to do a lot of things to improve peoples lives." After completing dental school at MUSC, he went on to train at the Medical College of Virginia in oral and maxillofacial surgery.

When asked what they believe makes their practice different from others around the Lowcountry, Dr. Phillips said, "I wouldn't necessarily say different because what we're striving to do is set a standard for what we think oral surgery practices should be. We practice under the auspices of excellent care and communication with patients and referring dentists."

The main thing that Dr. Dillard and Dr. Phillips want their patients to experience is personalized care and outstanding results. They want everyone who comes through their door to have a great experience.

"We try to make the process as comfortable as possible, from paperwork and insurance to the procedures themselves. We have a great staff who are passionate about what they do," said Dr. Dillard. "For us, it's all about doing what's best for our patients." 🦷

12

NUMBER OF CARS OWNED IN A LIFETIME

5

NUMBER OF HOMES OWNED IN A LIFETIME

1

NUMBER OF SMILES OWNED IN A LIFETIME

Dr. Amanda Seay

DENTISTRY REDEFINED

CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR
KOIS CENTER
at WORLD RENOWNED

INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED
ONE OF 366
AACD ACCREDITED DENTISTS

NATIONALLY RANKED
TOP 25 WOMEN
in DENTISTRY

*PHOTOGRAPHY BY DR. AMANDA SEAY

**YOU ONLY GET ONE SMILE.
INVEST IN IT WISELY.**

3404 SALTERBECK STREET
No. 202
MOUNT PLEASANT, SC 29466

INQUIRES: 843.375.0395

WWW.AMANDASEAY.NET