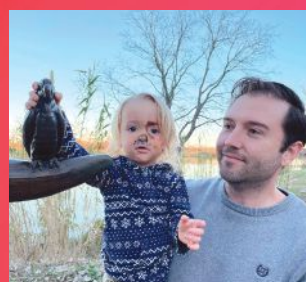
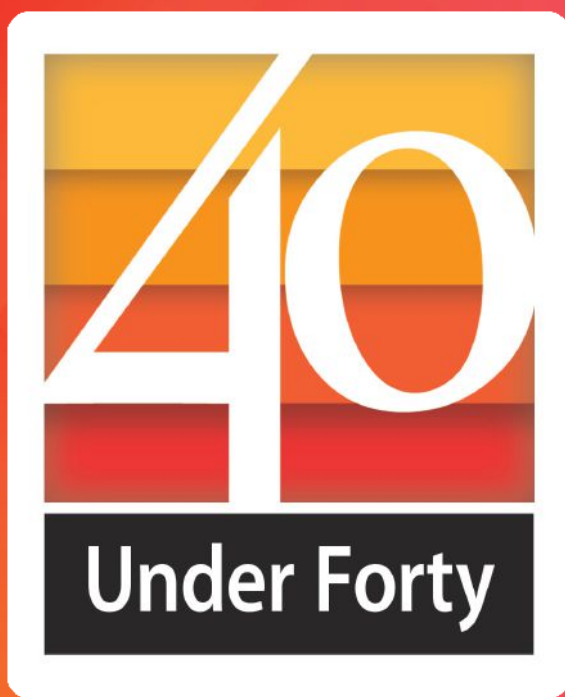


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See page 4

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We're in Great Hands

February: the month I'd usually be seeing many of you at LAB DAY Chicago. I'll miss talking with you in person, hearing about what you think of the new products at the show and sharing a beer or two at the Hyatt Big Bar!

As most of you know by now, we had originally rescheduled the show to May. However, even though effective COVID-19 vaccines are now being distributed worldwide and we know everyone is eager to meet face to face, there is still much uncertainty surrounding travel, social distancing guidelines and safety protocols. Consequently, we will not be holding LMT LAB DAY Chicago in person. This event is now scheduled to take place online: LAB DAY Online Spring 2021 will be May 10-14; we'll keep you posted with more details in the magazine, via eblasts and on LMTmag.com.

But you don't have to wait until May to have the virtual LAB DAY shopping experience; we've revamped our website to incorporate Virtual Booths, providing you with LAB DAY 24/7! This is your one-stop shopping opportunity, packed with products, technical videos and company information and ways to connect with manufacturer/supplier representatives. On page 34, you'll find a sampling of what's in the Virtual Booths right now or, better yet, visit LMTmag.com/virtualbooths directly.

While we can't see you in person, it's been a pleasure being on the phone interviewing people for our cover story, *40 Under 40*, featuring profiles of up-and-comers nominated by their peers. While many of these industry stars got their start in family laboratories, others have joined our field much more recently. In the words of one nominator, they exemplify "what it means to be a 21st century tech-

Our 40 Under 40 nominees all share a passion for our field and, as you'd expect from this generation, many share a passion for digital technology.



nician or lab owner." They all share a passion for our field and, as you'd expect from this generation, many share a passion for digital technology. Our community is in great hands and will be for a long time to come.

Kelly

P.S. And newcomers keep on coming!

I'd like to welcome the newest addition to the LMT family: Eleanor "Ellie" Smith, daughter of LMT's Sales and Marketing Director Jessica Fila.



strategies & essentials

04 Meet 40 of Our Community's Best & Brightest

26 Product Focus: Milling Machines and CAM Software

34 Explore the New Virtual Booths at LMTmag.com

35 Today's Products & Services

36 Classifieds

37 Advertiser's Index

38 Newsbriefs

On the Front Cover: LMT's 40 under 40 nominees pictured are (top row, l. to r.): Jake Huot, Jesus Romero, Josey Linskey, Jenelle Tabaković and Eric Burgio; (middle row, l. to r.): Scott James, Jim Beierle, Kaila Nakanishi and Andy Timblin; (bottom row, l. to r.): Chris Love, Jamie Rubin, Danny da Silva and Jillian Swafford.



Meet 40 of Our Community's Best & Brightest

Although the number of labs is declining, there's no shortage of newcomers to our profession. LMT profiles 40 up-and-comers who are under 40, nominated by their peers for their business savvy, digital acumen, top-notch technical skills and enthusiasm to thrive in the dental lab world. It's a celebration of those who are learning, growing and taking our industry to the next level.

Marc Dixon



Age: 37

"Marc is a 3Shape genius. There are very few technicians I'd consider to be experts but Marc is one of those people," says Minh Tran, Founder of DentalTechTips and a technician at Essex Dental Laboratory, Windsor, ON, about Marc Dixon, Owner of Decadent Laboratories in Brooklyn, NY. "I reach out to him when I can't solve a problem myself and he's always willing to share his discoveries so we can all benefit and be better technicians."

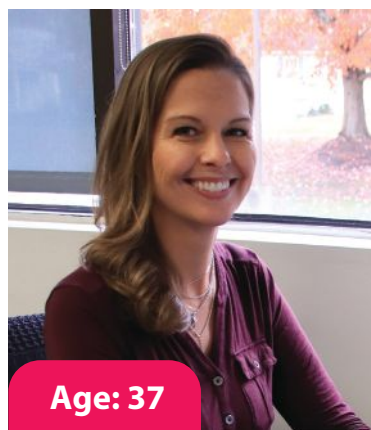
In 2014, Dixon—who was working at a small, in-house lab in Manhat-

tan—began making 3Shape tutorial videos that demonstrated his time-saving software tips and sharing them online via Facebook and YouTube along with photos of his work. As his tutorials gained popularity, he was asked to moderate the 3Shape Study Group on Facebook, answering users' questions and developing a reputation as an expert.

Eventually, even 3Shape itself took notice: in 2017 it hired Dixon as a speaker and he's now one of the company's software beta testers. Dentists also began asking him to take on their work so, although he'd never had the desire to open his own lab, he started saving money towards that goal.

In April 2019, Dixon took the plunge and leased a 300-square-foot studio in Brooklyn for his new business, Decadent Laboratories, a solo digital operation specializing in complex cases, implant-supported prosthetics and full-mouth reconstructions—all designed in, you guessed it, 3Shape. "I love being my own boss," says Dixon, who also offers private training. "I work more hours now than ever before, but I've never felt more free." ■

Megan Martin



Age: 37

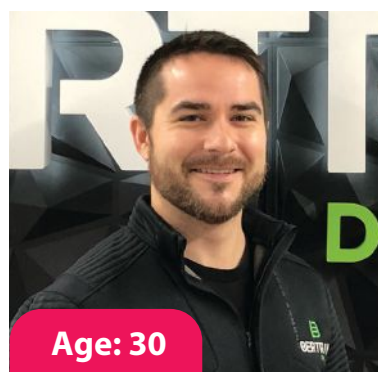
In 2001, when Megan Martin was just 18 years old, she began working at Perfect Finish Ortho Lab in Hackettstown, NJ, as a trainee in the finishing department. She immediately liked the work and, over the years, mastered every department in the lab, worked her way up to management positions and took on other special projects. She and a co-worker spent months researching 3D printers, ultimately

launching a new digital department to automate model production; today the department has nine printers and three staff members and receives 40% of its impressions digitally.

In 2019, Martin was named Vice President/General Manager, but she still helps out at the bench, bending all of the lab's fixed expanders and helping to finish cases when things are busy. "I try to lead by example as best I can," she says. "I show up every day on time, stay late when needed and like to pitch in by the team's side whenever they need me."

So what's this go-getter's next challenge? Lab ownership: Martin and current owner Phil Pelligra have a buy-sell agreement in place in which she accumulates shares of the company based on her performance goals. "Megan will be a good lab owner because she has a great work ethic and is dedicated to her craft and respected by the team," says Pelligra, who hopes to retire in four years. "She truly cares about the success of the company." ■

Andy Timblin



Age: 30

In less than six years at Bertram Dental, Neenah, WI—which has specialized in cast CoCr partials for 45 years—Andy Timblin has been instrumental in helping the laboratory convert its RPD production from analog to digital and expand its product offerings.

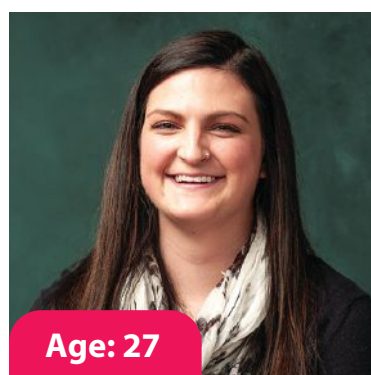
"Andy is almost closer to an engineer than a dental technician. He's diligent and through hours and hours of work, he's helped me develop the best methods for metal printing (SLM) RPDs and, more recently, surgical

guides, ortho parts and All-on-Four thimble-style cases," says Tim Bertram, Co-Owner.

Acknowledging that printing metal is more challenging than printing resin, Timblin says one of the biggest hurdles was figuring out the best settings for our SLM printers and coming up with a good all-around support strategy. "If the supports aren't sufficient, the printed parts will warp. After a lot of trial and error, we're getting great results in a faster, more efficient way," he says. "Knowing that we're using cutting-edge technology to help give the customer the best product is very rewarding."

As the digital department has grown to include six other staff members, Timblin has also taken on the responsibility of training the new team members and managing production and daily workflow issues. Looking forward, he's eager to explore even more new printing services: the laboratory has just moved into a new facility, tripling its square footage and providing ample room for more printers. ■

Hannah Kokovich



Age: 27

While Hannah Kokovich originally wanted to be a dental assistant, she ultimately studied dental laboratory technology at Columbus State in Ohio and was a member of the program's last graduating class in 2012.

"I wasn't a great student in high school but once I found what I loved doing, I excelled at it," she says. And although C&B was her least favorite subject—she planned to go into

removables—once she started working as a model technician at Image Gallery in Dublin, OH, she was intrigued by the digital technology used to fabricate crowns and eventually trained as a CAD/CAM technician and ceramist handling posterior work.

"Hannah is an amazing technical innovator," says Lonni Thompson, CDT, Owner. "She has the capability of looking at a case and methodically visualizing the end result. She then blends her knowledge of both digital and traditional techniques to fabricate an artistic, functional prosthesis on time."

And now that she's mastered posteriors, Kokovich is poised to take on her next challenge: her co-worker, Justin Gray, is training her on all aspects of anterior porcelain buildups. "While I enjoy my posterior work, it's not the same satisfaction you get with anteriors," she says. "I want to be able to give patients a brand-new smile that changes their lives." ■

LMT's 40 Under 40 coverage continues on the following pages.



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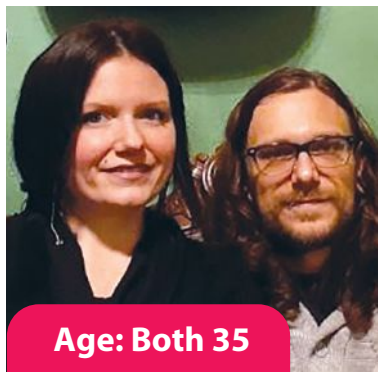
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Toni Toscano and Dan Toscano



Age: Both 35

Being in the same field as your spouse has its advantages. “It’s nice to be able to complain to Toni about work and she knows exactly what I’m talking about,” laughs Dan Toscano.

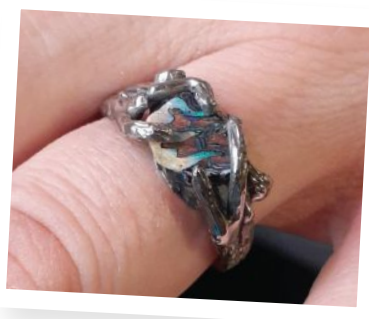
Both skilled technicians—Toni in removables and Dan in fixed, removables and implants—the couple inherited the contents of Dan’s uncle’s denture lab when he passed away in 2016. “Once we had his entire stock, it just seemed to make sense that we should open our own denture business,” says Dan.

Juggling their full-time positions and parenthood, the couple had purchased the additional items they needed to get started, and set up the lab in the basement of their Elizabeth, PA home. In 2018, they unofficially opened, only handling overflow denture work from their network of lab friends. Since they weren’t ready to give up their other jobs—Toni as a technician at Brown Dental Labora-

tory in Coraopolis, PA, and Dan as the Manager at Medgaus Dental Group in Monroeville, PA—they worked after hours and on weekends.

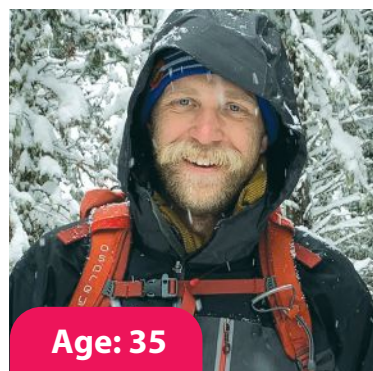
At the start of 2020, however, the couple was ready to ramp up its efforts and actively recruit additional clients. “We had just finalized our price lists, picked a name—Ferry Street Dental—and printed business cards when the pandemic hit,” says Toni. Their plans ground to a halt.

Luckily, their other jobs have kept them afloat, but they haven’t given up their entrepreneurial aspirations just yet. Says Dan, “We’re lucky in that our employers both support our dream of having our own lab and, once things settle down again, we plan to pick up right where we left off.” ■



For the couple’s nine-year anniversary in January, Dan put his laboratory skills to work creating this one-of-a-kind ring. He hand carved the ring to look like small tree branches, cast it in chrome (with the help of friend and fellow technician Nick Hayden) and set in hand cut and polished Yowah opals.

Jake Huot



Age: 35

“As a technician, I’m a machinist, an engineer, an artist—dental technology is made up of so many different professions, that’s what keeps me interested,” says Jake Huot, Manager at GCD Dental Laboratory in Colorado, a full-service lab with locations in Broomfield and Englewood, CO. “I get to produce restorations

that restore proper function and allow patients to eat healthy again.”

Huot believes in incorporating service into his life and career and strives to give back outside the laboratory as well. So, in his spare time, he volunteers to help the underserved at a youth shelter and is working to expand a health clinic in his area to offer cleanings, extractions and restorations.

In the future, Huot hopes to establish a training center to teach people in underserved populations how to operate a mill so they can go on to become CAM technicians or machinists.

“I want to help people learn a skill that can provide them with a good career and a good life,” he says. “When I was growing up, my family didn’t have a lot and there were so many people who helped me along the way; I just want to return the favor to anyone who needs it.” ■

Matt Rago



Age: 34

In 2016, Matt Rago had a big decision to make: go to dental school or accept an offer to partner with world-renowned educator Dr. Steven Olmos to create a laboratory that provides state-of-the-art TMJ and sleep appliances.

“It was never my intention to own and run a dental lab, but I felt like Dr. Olmos was offering me the opportunity of a lifetime...so I took it,” says Rago, who now co-owns Diamond Orthotic Laboratory in San Diego with Olmos. It’s the main laboratory responsible for training and certifying labs on the Olmos technique as well as appliance research and development.

Like every startup, the early days were challenging: Rago set up shop in his garage and hired two friends with no dental technology experience, training was time-consuming and the demand resulted in 20-hour workdays. Now, four years later, the lab has 25 employees and occupies a 4,500-square-foot building. It recently

Last September, the lab also hit another key goal: FDA clearance for its newly developed, 3D-printed, nylon sleep apnea appliance, the Diamond Digital Sleep Orthotic (DDSO).

streamlined its proprietary fabrication processes by investing in several CAD/CAM technologies including a \$400,000 SLS printer from EOS and other printers for model creation.

Last September, the lab also hit another key goal: FDA clearance for its newly developed, 3D-printed, nylon sleep apnea appliance, the Diamond Digital Sleep Orthotic (DDSO). And while Rago could easily rest on his success—last year the laboratory hit a sales milestone—he has no plans to slow down anytime soon. “My next goal is to finish designing our series of sleep apnea devices and continue collaborating with experts in the field to develop more durable and biocompatible materials to better suit the specific needs of every patient,” he says. ■

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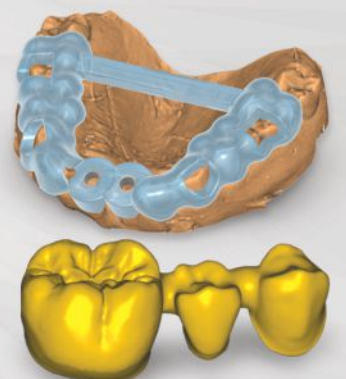
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Danny da Silva



Danny da Silva, CDT, is not a big fan of vacations. "I love what I do and having the ability to create with my hands. So, when I'm not working, I get bored," he says.

After earning his bachelor's degree in Dental Technology in South Africa, da Silva immigrated to the U.S. in 2016 and became the Production Manager at Centex Dental Lab, a

nine-person full service lab in Waco, TX. While he's involved in many aspects of production, he's happiest doing removable prosthetics, especially hybrid conversions and digital dentures.

"We've just purchased a new printer so now I'm printing the denture base and milling the teeth. I know some people are concerned about technology replacing technicians but I'm excited for the future, to see where technology takes us and how it can make our lives easier," says da Silva.

CenTex Owner Tim Frenzel welcomes da Silva's desire to expand the lab's digital offerings and praises his technical and leadership abilities. "He's a great technician and very skilled in producing prosthetics manually as well as digitally. Even while managing the production area and his usual workload, Danny finds time to train and lead the other technicians on his team," says Frenzel. ■

Mark Joon Choi

Age: 35

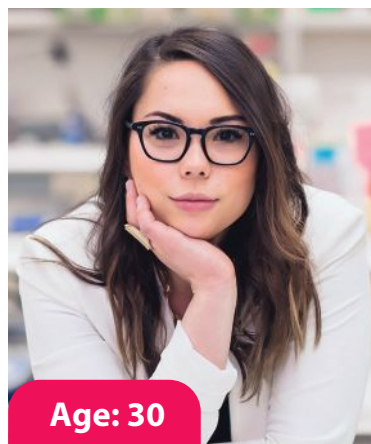
"**Esthetics, occlusion, quality** and competitive pricing are the foundations on which Mark Choi has built Infinia Dental Laboratory. He's hard working and cares tremendously about putting doctors' and patients' needs first," says Stephanie Welker, Sales Manager at the 18-person lab in Germantown, MD, which is focused on offering high-end restorative work.

Choi is passionate about being on the forefront of technology. In addition to being a member of the Dawson Academy Lab Association and Spear Study Club, he belongs to the Digital Dentistry Society (DDS), an educational and research group involved

in cutting-edge digital dentistry. "DDS is doing some very interesting research on evaluating CT scans and using AI to design crowns and we're providing data for that research," says Choi, who founded the lab in 2015. In fact, one of his long-term goals is to grow large enough to establish an R&D arm of the laboratory.

One way he plans to achieve that growth is to continue offering what he calls solutions-based service. Choi spends about 80% of his time chair-side, assisting with denture conversions, treatment planning and shade taking. "This service bridges the gap between our customers and our technicians in the lab. I love seeing our restorations in the mouth, seeing patients happy and knowing that we're meeting their expectations," says Choi. ■

Kaila Nakanishi, CDT



Kaila Nakanishi, CDT, never planned to join the family business, Nakanishi Dental Lab in Bellevue, WA. She went to college for interior design and, after graduating, came home and helped out in the front office at the lab while she looked for full-time work.

After joining a local design firm, she continued to work at the lab, which was short-staffed at the time, getting in at 3am and working until 10am, before starting her day at the design company. But after one of the lab managers encouraged her to try

stain and glaze, a department where she could really use her creative skills and understanding of color theory, Kaila was hooked. "Something just stuck and I became a total tooth geek," she says. Not long after, she began working at the lab full time.

A CDT in Ceramics just like her father, Dave, the lab's current President, and her late grandfather, H. Ray, the Founder of the lab, Nakanishi manages the digital side of the business, researching new products and materials, and occasionally jumping on the bench to help out with anything from pouring up a model to assembling a digital denture. She works alongside her sister, Megan, Director of Operations, and the two will eventually become co-owners when their father retires. "I handle the technical aspects of the lab and Megan handles the business side," she says. "I like to say that she's the head and I'm the hands."

Now with the lab for seven years, Kaila has no regrets in giving up her design career to pursue a life in the family business. "I love this industry; it's such a collaborative community," she says. "It's always changing: every day is something different and I love the challenge." ■

Jamie Rubin, RG



"**My biggest takeaway** from art school was learning how to translate what I'm seeing to my hands; I'm doing the same now, mimicking nature, but it's functional," says Jamie Rubin, RG.

After earning her fine arts degree, Rubin's intended career as a sculptor took a turn toward dental technology at the suggestion of her mother and brother, both dentists. At 28, she enrolled at New York City College of Technology (NYCCT). "I instantly

fell in love; I was 'all in' and absorbed everything I could," says Rubin, who earned multiple honors and awards during her studies.

Following graduation, she was offered the opportunity to launch CAD/CAM technology at an in-house practice (SDNY Dental in New York, NY where she still works today as a technician and Digital Dentistry Supervisor), but NYCCT wasn't done with her yet.

Just two years later, she accepted an adjunct lecturer position starting in Spring 2020. "That was the hardest semester our program ever faced due to the COVID pandemic and Jamie was very effective and a great team player, coordinating instruction with other faculty," says Renata Budny, MDT, CDT, FNGS, TE, Associate Professor. "She has accomplished so much in such a short time and is knowledgeable, adaptable and passionate about our profession."

Lucky for her students, she's passionate about teaching, too. "I love fueling the curiosity and enthusiasm of my students, especially when I can spot someone getting truly excited about the material," she says. "Teachers have done that for me and to now pass it along to others is very rewarding." ■

I love fueling the curiosity and enthusiasm of my students...

~ Jamie Rubin, RG, NYCCT and SDNY Dental

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Michel Sousanieh



Age: 29

Michel Sousanieh graduated first in his class from dental technology school in Syria and then, following in his father's footsteps, enrolled in dental school. However, after only two years, conflict in his home country led to a move to the U.S. where he joined the dental lab industry and has thrived.

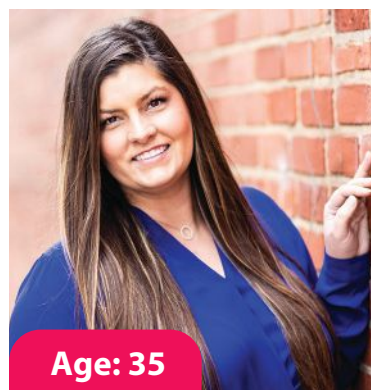
After working in a high-end lab

in Florida for five years and becoming proficient in CAD/CAM technology, Sousanieh brought his talents to Golden Ceramic Dental Lab (GCDL) in Prospect Heights, IL. Now with the lab for two years, Sousanieh manages the C&B and implant department, handling complex cases and quality control.

Voracious for knowledge, Sousanieh also takes continuing education courses whenever he can to expand his skillset and mentor new technicians. "Michel is a true expert in multiple platforms of CAD/CAM technology and is also an incredible manager," says Cydney Topaz, Director of Business Development at GCDL. "He supports his staff by consistently teaching them and helping them grow in different areas."

While he would like to go back to dental school at some point in the future, for now he's happy to have a role in a successful business. "The lab is expanding and I want to be a part of helping us grow even more," Sousanieh says. ■

Jillian Swafford



Age: 35

"I'm not a shy or nervous lady by any means," laughs Jillian Swafford. In fact, two-and-a-half years ago, she attended her first Dentsply Sirona inLab Summit and walked right up to Norbert Ulmer, the company's Director of Marketing at the time, and asked if she could sit at his lunch table. There, she told him her tale of taking a leap of faith, leaving her job as a manager of a dental practice and starting a lab—two-person Oaks Dental Designs in Pikeville, TN—all by herself, without any lab experience but with a supportive husband, invaluable lab mentors "and a lot of prayers," she notes.

"I also mentioned to him that, in one year, I wanted to be sharing my story at one of these events," Swafford says, who is now an experienced CAD/CAM technician. Her prediction was correct and, since then, she has become a frequent lecturer for Dentsply Sirona, sharing her start-up

My philosophy has always been to encourage people. That's the ultimate mark I want to leave...

~ Jillian Swafford,
Oaks Dental Designs

story and business acumen in order to motivate other technicians.

A strong believer in the power of positive thinking, she sends weekly "Monday Mindset" emails to 600 of her customers, peers and friends with updates on her lab and motivational messages to get their week off to a good start. "I started sending them during the pandemic because I wanted to help shift people's thinking from survival mode to a more positive frame of mind," says Swafford.

She also co-founded a private, women-only Facebook group, Ladies of the Mill, with Christina Heaslip, where members can ask questions and share techniques. They've also had meet-and-greets at industry events, giving Swafford the chance to connect with women from all over the country. "It's become such an incredible, supportive community," she says. "My philosophy has always been to encourage people. That's the ultimate mark I want to leave on the industry." ■



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Eric Burgio



Age: 33

"As a younger tech right out of school, I was probably annoying because I pushed to learn every possible thing," says Eric Burgio, who graduated from a high school dental technology program and started at a small lab doing pickups and model work.

He eventually found his calling at a larger operation in Connecticut heavy into CAD/CAM. Although he had "book knowledge" but not a lot of bench experience, he found the transition to digital an easy one and he excelled, having the opportunity to work on complex implant cases

for dental schools at Tufts, Boston University and the University of Connecticut.

Within a few years, the manufacturing community took notice and, at 24, he had three different offers, ultimately choosing a position with Biomet (now Zimmer Biomet) and earning the accolade of Global Customer Service Rep of the Year during his first year. That position was one of a few during his career that got him to step away from the bench, but the lure of hands-on fabrication has always drawn him back.

"Sure, the lab environment can be high-stress but I enjoy the sense of pride from creating what's basically functional artwork," says Burgio, who joined Paramount Dental Studio, Huntington Beach, CA last spring. He's now regarded for his expertise with implant planning, guided surgery and model-less immediate load cases.

He's also known for his "bench-side" manner. "I've worked with Eric on a few cases for my dentist-customers and he's a savvy technician who communicates in a customer-focused way that endears him to the whole community," says Straumann's Ben Thompson, Dental Surgical Technology Consultant. "We all do better work for patients because of him." ■

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Julia Valentino



Age: 32

In college, Julia Valentino studied organic chemistry, but she found her true passion in the dental lab industry.

After working for a few years as a model technician in a small lab, she was ready to spread her wings. "I was

intrigued by the dental lab world and wanted to diversify my skills," says Valentino. She began apprenticing at a larger, full-service lab, where she learned all facets of CAD/CAM technology and became PTC-certified in anatomy and morphology. After her apprenticeship, she stayed on to help manage the lab's digital workflow and train new employees.

Two years ago, she brought her problem-solving skills, tech savvy and gnathological style to her current role as a CAD/CAM Technician at Dental Atelier in Park Ridge, IL, a 10-person laboratory where she works on full-mouth reconstructions and implants. "I'm on the cutting edge of dental technology working with the latest digital technology," says Valentino. "I believe I'm contributing to a larger purpose by not just making the dentist happy, but by improving the well-being of our patients." ■

Jenelle Tabaković



Age: 33

Some of Jenelle Tabaković's earliest memories are from spending time in the lab in her grandmother's basement, owned by her mother and uncle and, previously, her grandfather. "I remember drawing mustaches on technicians in LMT magazine," she recalls with a laugh.

As a teenager, she became genuinely interested in the work itself and got a job working with her uncle at the centralized laboratory for a chain of clinics. She soaked up all she could, often staying after hours so her uncle could teach her more. She was hooked and moved on to other laboratories, wanting to learn every phase of removable fabrication, but soon hit a roadblock: she had made herself so valuable as a waxer, she was denied the opportunity to learn setups.

At the urging of her husband, Jas-

...I get to see patients' faces light up when their new denture is delivered; it's life-changing for them.

~ Jenelle Tabaković,
Aspen Dental

min, she joined Aspen Dental in January 2019; he also worked there and assured her she would get the training she desired. Sure enough, after a short time, she was given the opportunity to learn setups from an experienced technician: her husband.

Now a talented technician with a flair for high-end, esthetic dentures, Tabaković creates her own custom-colored waxes to replicate the colors of gingiva for wax try-ins. She also fuels her passion with an active Instagram page—with more than 21,000 followers—illustrating her beautiful work (find her @jtlabqueen) and also shares it on the Technicians Gallery at LMTmag.com.

She continues to be driven by her love of the work and now works at Aspen's Goshen, IN location. "Here, I get to see patients' faces light up when their new denture is delivered; it's life-changing for them," she says. ■

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Jeffrey Tobon, CDT



Age: 32

The son of a lab owner and a 2008 graduate of NYCCT's Restorative Dentistry program, Jeffrey Tobon, CDT, always had a passion for digital dentistry. After working for various laboratories throughout the New York metro area, Tobon decided to start his own business, DesignLab Dental in Westbury, NY, offering CAD design services to labs and dentists.

While troubleshooting technical issues for his clients, Tobon recognized a need for more CAD/CAM-based training. His initial foray into continuing education was to offer

small, once-a-month classes on CAD design for technicians and dentists in his lab.

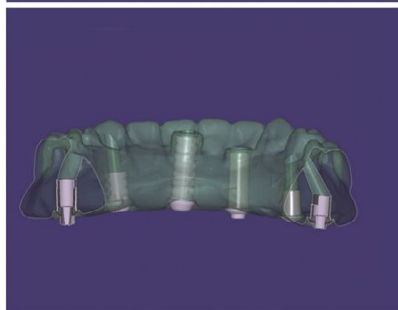
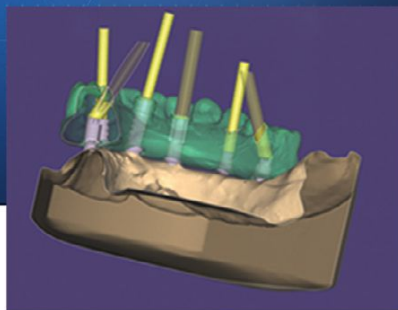
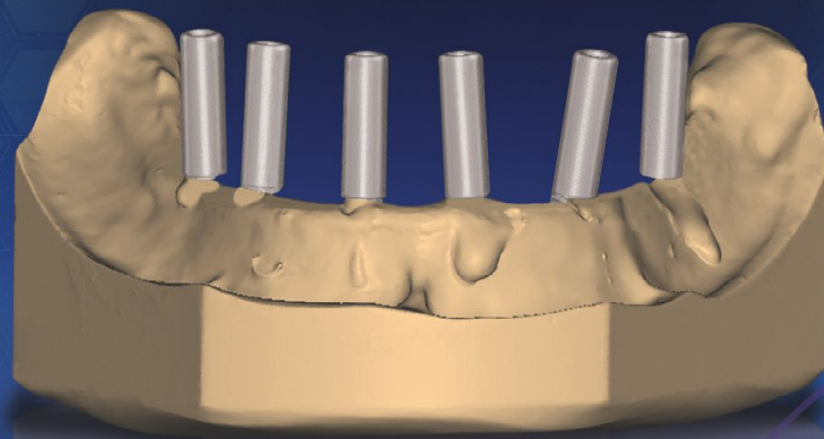
Building on that concept and its success, he teamed up with friend Sander Polanco, MDT, Owner, FMR Prosthetic Center, Staten Island, NY, to start Digital Dental Craftsmen, a membership-based, online platform that offers CAD/CAM-specific education. The two spent a year building the website and enlisting industry friends from around the world to help teach the courses.

There are two membership options—one free, one paid—and since the launch in 2018, the platform has taken off. There are now 70 instructors and 6,500 technician- and dentist-members taking advantage of pre-recorded, on-demand and live CAD/CAM-specific courses ranging from 3Shape design fundamentals to full-mouth rehabilitation.

"I'm proud to be able to offer education to fellow industry members and we're constantly developing, finding new ways to enhance our courses," says Tobon, noting they recently added a virtual reality component to boost interactivity and the user experience. ■

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Jim Beierle



Age: 37

When Jim Beierle purchased Valley Orthodontic Laboratory from his father, Udo, four years ago, he knew his priority was growing the business. He was watching digital technology transform C&B but there wasn't a big impact on orthodontics quite yet.

Less than six months later, a sales representative walked into the laboratory and showed him a nightguard printed on an EnvisionTEC printer; Beierle knew this was his opportunity. "A light bulb went off in my head and I dove in headfirst—investing \$100,000 in new computers, a scan-

ner and printer, software and licenses—and became one of the first in our area to have the technology," says Beierle, President of the Snohomish, WA, laboratory.

He only printed 14 nightguards the first month; however, as more orthodontists purchased intraoral scanning systems, the service grew and the equipment paid for itself in the first year. Since then, he's expanded into diagnostic setups and clear aligners and even bought out a nearby lab, doubling the size of his staff from three to six.

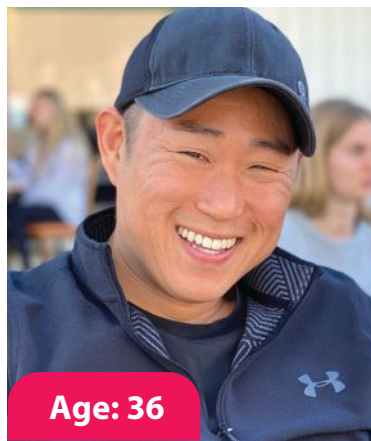
Being an early adopter has made him a trusted adviser to clients and other orthodontic lab owners going digital. It's also presented some unique opportunities, including co-designing a patented nightguard, the Owen Splint, with Dr. Brandon Owen, and opened doors to working with doctors from around the country and at universities who have helped him expand his knowledge on the clinical side.

"I love getting perspectives from all of these dentists and discussing ways we can push our limits with more technology," he says. "And my father totally encourages this direction—although he's glad he doesn't have to learn it!" ■

A light bulb went off in my head and I dove in headfirst—investing \$100,000 in new computers, a scanner and printer, software and licenses—and became one of the first in our area to have the technology.

~ Jim Beierle, Valley Orthodontic Laboratory

Philip Kim



Age: 36

Philip Kim earned his MBA in 2014 and has put it to good use. In 2013, while in grad school, he co-founded K2 Dental Arts, a digital lab in Charlottesville, VA, and, after honing his expertise there, applied those skills to Paramount Dental Studio, his father's lab in Huntington Beach, CA, becoming CEO in 2014.

At Paramount Dental Studio, he brought in more digital technology, increased efficiencies and focused on word-of-mouth marketing, expanding the lab from a 40-person operation to

[Kim is] the master of efficiency, a business genius and clinical savant.

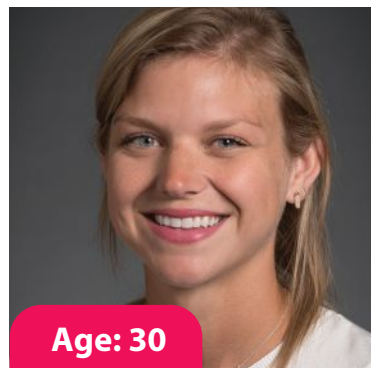
~ Ares Manos, Co-Owner of K2 Dental Arts

one with a nationwide presence and more than 200 employees. Now, 80% of the lab's work is digital and it's one of the largest processors of iTero scans in the country.

"Paramount processes tens of thousands of cases every month and Philip is responsible for troubleshooting the most difficult issues. He's the master of efficiency, a business genius and clinical savant," says Ares Manos, another Co-Owner of K2 Dental Arts.

Now Kim does double-duty, operating two labs on opposite sides of the country—a task that's become even harder now that he has one-year-old triplets. "Fortunately, I have built two companies with really great, really smart people around me," he says. ■

Josey Linskey



Age: 30

"Not only is Josey Linskey an extremely talented denture technician, she's an all-around multi-tasking champion," says Lyndsey Comiso, Office Manager at Aesthetic Oral Arts, a 10-person full-service lab in Livingston, MT. Case in point: Linskey joined the lab in August 2019 to build a removable department from the ground up, but once she saw a need to better market the lab and its services, she took on that responsibility, too.

Now the lab's unofficial marketing director, Linskey sends out weekly email blasts; updates the website (she

taught herself simple coding); designs monthly postcards in Photoshop using skills she picked up in art school; sends out thank you gifts to clients upon completion of a big case; and posts about twice a week on several social media platforms, often using case photos taken by Tyler Funk, the lab's CAD/CAM manager.

Her strategies are working: she's increased the lab's social media followers from "almost zero" to 1,400 on Facebook and 750 on Instagram, gained about 25 regular denture clients, and boosted business and referrals for the C&B department. At the same time, Linskey continues to be a one-woman show in the denture department, fabricating all of the lab's removable work, doing chairside conversions and introducing new services, like digital dentures, nightguards and splints on the lab's new Carbon printer.

"It's been a lot of hours but I love my work and I'm very passionate about this industry," says Linskey. "I've been so lucky to have this opportunity; I want to be at the top of my specialty and AOA to be the best quality lab in the U.S." ■

...[Linskey has] increased the lab's social media followers from "almost zero" to 1,400 on Facebook and 750 on Instagram, gained about 25 regular denture clients, and boosted business and referrals for the C&B department.

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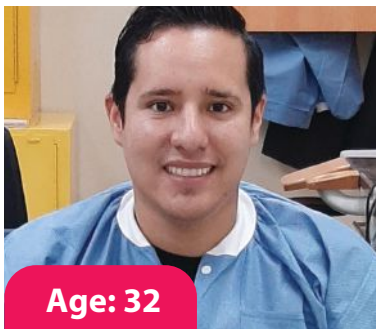
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Jeremy DeLeon



Age: 32

In 2015, Jeremy DeLeon was working as a dental assistant at the Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas in San Antonio—a non-profit that provides dental and medical services to the underserved—when he became fascinated by the on-site dental lab. So when a position opened up in the model room, he made a career switch. “I enjoyed my job as a DA,” says DeLeon, “but this was a way to give back to my community even more: by actually

helping to make smiles for patients.”

After two years, he moved up to the removables department where he sought out learning opportunities on a daily basis. “From baseplates to small setups, I practiced with whatever I could get my hands on,” he says.

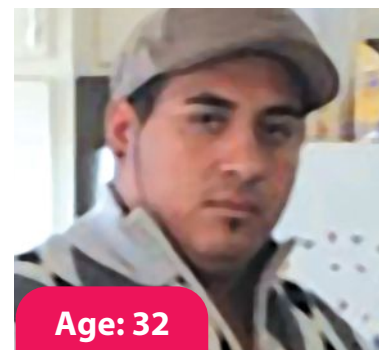
Perry Spindler, CDT, Laboratory Manager, says DeLeon has a natural talent for laboratory work. “In addition to having 10 years of experience as a dental assistant, Jeremy picks things up really quickly,” he says. “He

attends CE courses each year, then immediately applies what he’s learned and teaches everyone else, too.”

His talents are earning him company-wide accolades: over the last three years his work has received a 99% approval rating from the Ministries’ dentists and, in 2019, DeLeon was one of 10 employees out of 500 nominated for the company’s Ambassador Academy, a leadership development program that trains team members to become stronger advocates for the underserved.

“The knowledge Jeremy has acquired in his short time as a laboratory technician and his attention to detail far surpass what I see in many seasoned technicians,” says Spindler. “I could see him running this lab one day.” ■

Wilmer Martinez



Age: 32

Following in his family’s footsteps, Wilmer Martinez, CDT, opened his removable prosthetics lab, Smile-Bright Dental Laboratory, in Santa Ana, CA, two years ago. His father and two uncles own laboratories in Honduras, where he grew up and in which he started working at seven years old. “They taught me the important role dental technicians play, how the patients are depending on us to create a smile customized just for them and how to be a perfectionist,” he says.

Believing that happy, talented employees are the key to having a successful business, Martinez enjoys mentoring his three technicians and sharing his passion for his work. “This is what I love to do and as the saying goes, if you love what you do, you will always look forward to going to work,” he says.

While he acknowledges the competitive nature of the southern California market, he’s confident he can continue to grow his business, including adding more staff members and a C&B department. “There’s a lot of competition but the sun shines for everyone,” he says. ■

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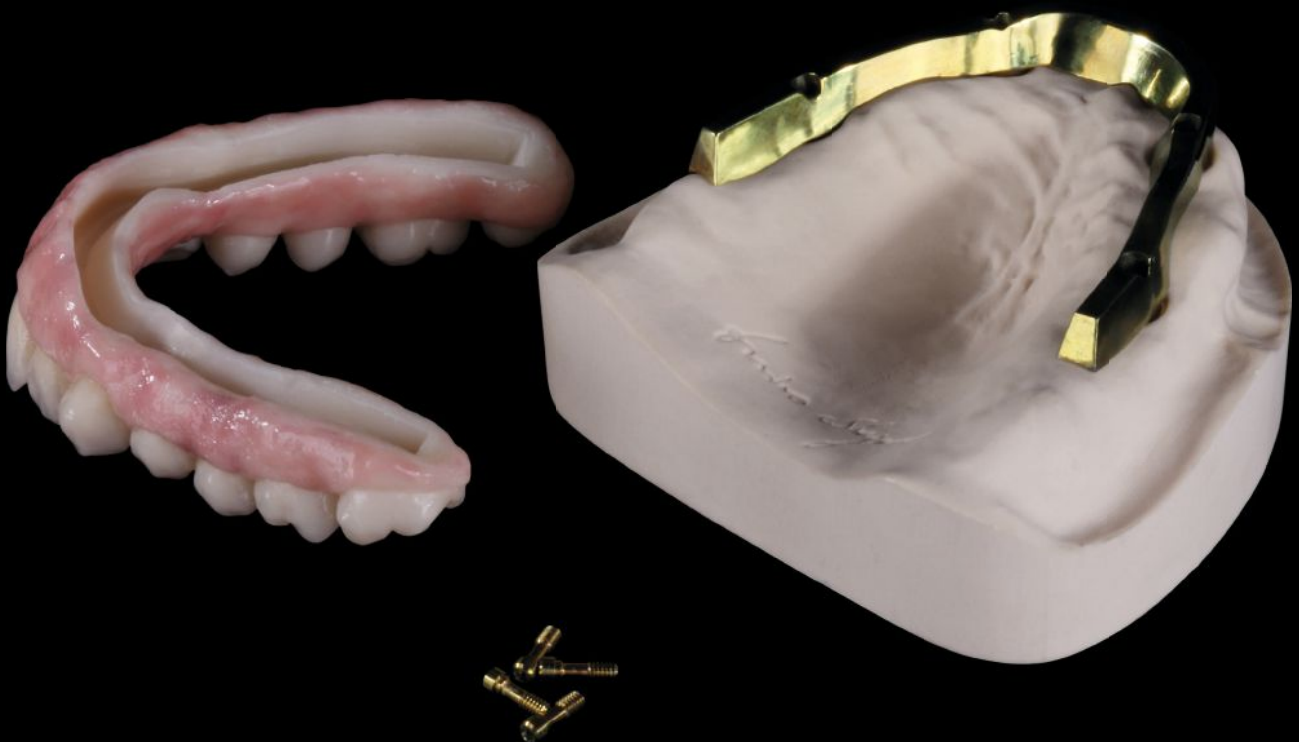


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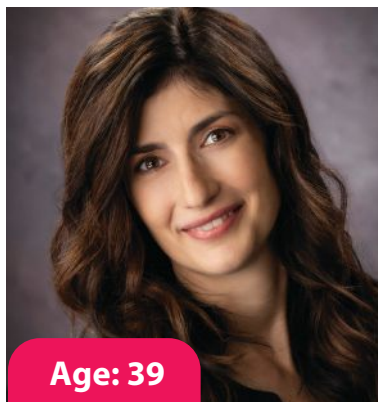
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Nicole Jackson, CDT



Age: 39

Last summer, Nicole Jackson, CDT, got the golden opportunity to become the full-time Lead Instructor at Milwaukee Area Technical College Dental Technology Program, the very same one-year technical diploma program she had graduated from 18 years earlier.

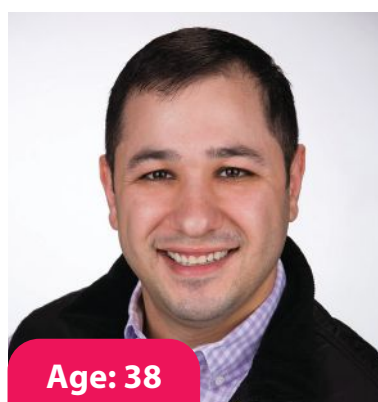
Formerly a lead technician and operations manager at Nik Dental in Pewaukee, WI, Jackson is passionate about continuing education and jumped at the chance to share her enthusiasm with the next generation

of dental technicians.

Despite not having any teaching experience, she felt right at home the minute she walked into the classroom, which is setup exactly like a lab. Though there was an established curriculum, Jackson put her own spin on things: “To inspire more engagement, I put a lot of my personality into my delivery, injecting the lectures with my own individual experiences in the laboratory,” she says. She also established connections with local labs so students can shadow laboratory personnel during breaks as well as explore future job opportunities.

In her down time, Jackson is continually developing her own skills with the goal of bringing her experience back into the classroom. A CDT since 2009, she is a 2020 recipient of the FDLT Spear Education Grant, has a certificate in Dental Laboratory Management from NADL University’s Business Management program and was recently appointed to the NADL JDT/Communications Advisory Board. “I’m always looking for ways to go to the next level, and continue the journey with education and learning,” she says. ■

Aram Torosian, MDC



Age: 38

“Aram Torosian is one of the most talented technicians I know, regardless of age,” says Josh Polansky, MDC, Owner of Niche Dental Studio and one of Torosian’s former classmates in the Masters in Dental Ceramics program at the UCLA School of Dentistry’s Center for Esthetic Dental Design when it was headed by Dr. Ed McLaren.

Torosian credits that program as well as completing UCLA’s implantology program and earning an associate’s degree in dental technology from Los Angeles City College as valuable stepping stones to reaching his career goals. For instance, through McLaren, he met and got a job with the renowned Dr. Gerard Chiche, Director of the Ronald Goldstein Center for Esthetic and Implant Dentistry, a prosthodontic residency

Aram Torosian is one of the most talented technicians I know, regardless of age.

~ Josh Polansky, MDC,
Owner, Niche Dental Studio

program at the College of Dental Medicine, Augusta University in Georgia.

As Laboratory Supervisor, Torosian worked hand-in-hand with Chiche, staff clinicians and the residents. “Chiche and his staff supported the goals I had to improve my skills. I added a photography studio and started lecturing to residents, teaching them everything I had learned from McLaren’s program about photography, dental technology, morphology and esthetic dentistry.”

After almost a decade at the Center, he decided it was time for his next career move: starting his own lab as well as moving back to Los Angeles to be closer to family. He opened Aram Torosian Dental Studio with his wife, Marina Torosian, at the end of 2020, with a focus on high-end, esthetic, anterior work and complex cases. “My goal is to be a true partner to my dentist-customers who have high standards and appreciate the collaborative approach to dentistry,” says Torosian. ■

Erik Niederhauser



Age: 32

Two years ago, Erik Niederhauser, was at a crossroads: he had left his job managing a milling center and was considering returning to his native Switzerland, where he studied and received his certification in dental technology. Then he got a phone call from a former dentist-client that changed everything. “He wasn’t happy with his current lab and wanted to see what I was up to. In the span of the week, three more former dentist-clients also reached out and I realized it was time I started my own business,” he says.

With that, Pink Dental Laboratory, located in Dulles, VA, was born. The name is inspired by Niederhauser’s technique of building pink porcelain to simulate the gingiva on

I put everything into my work. When I do go home, I end up scrolling through social media looking at teeth!

~ Erik Niederhauser, Owner,
Pink Dental Laboratory

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Initially, Niederhauser limited his services to this technique and staining and glazing arches that dentists milled chairside. However, once he started posting photos of his work on Instagram, his client base doubled from four to eight so he decided to purchase a mill and expand his services to fabricate milled arches from start to finish.

His one-man operation is a busy one: in fact, Niederhauser has a waiting list of potential clients and often works 15-hour days to keep up with demand. Luckily, he doesn’t mind the long hours. “I put everything into my work,” he says. “When I do go home, I end up scrolling through social media looking at teeth!” ■

Scott James



Age: 36

A previous career in graphic design and large-format printing had equipped Scott James with an eye for color and detail and even some computer design experience, but when he first saw coDiagnostiX® implant planning software, he was blown away by its level of sophistication. That’s where he knew he’d focus his energies when, in 2017, he and his wife, Randi, decided to continue her family’s lab—Renstrom Dental Lab, Vadnais Heights, MN—into the third generation.

That year, James took every free moment to absorb all he could; it wasn’t unusual to find him watching

Marc Dixon’s 3Shape videos on YouTube while on the elliptical or catching up on the 3Shape study group Facebook page after the kids were in bed (see Marc Dixon’s profile on page 4).

In addition, one of the lab’s dentist-accounts, Dr. Ryan Yakowicz, took him under his wing, teaching him everything from how to read a CT scan to the philosophy behind implant placement. He and Dr. Yakowicz also attended more than 80 hours of clinical education together in one year, focused on occlusion and comprehensive treatment planning. “Being the husband who came into his wife’s family business, I was hungry to learn all I could, earn the staff’s respect and be truly useful at the lab,” he says.

“Useful” might be an understatement, given both his incredible work ethic and expertise in diagnostic wax-ups and implant treatment planning. His ongoing commitment to education has also led to contacts with high-end dentists who often end up as customers.

“What I learn from these dentists at courses or study clubs, I can take back to our existing clients and really be a resource,” says James. “This fits right in with my father-in-law’s philosophy: we don’t just make teeth, we provide a complete service to our dentists, no matter what that might be.” ■

Chad Fischer



Age: 30

With a degree in electronic media/film and doing freelance work on inde-

pendent films, television shows and sporting events, Chad Fischer had his dream career. He was also working part time in the model room at his father's six-person, C&B lab, Dental Arts Laboratory in Edgewood, KY, when, five years ago, he was dealt a major blow: a malignant cancer diagnosis.

Since he needed flexibility for his medical treatment, he began working exclusively at the laboratory. A self-proclaimed "tech nerd," he was drawn to the digital side of the business. "I learned quickly that I had a real knack for CAD design and I fell in love," says Fischer, who taught himself everything on 3Shape design software by watching YouTube videos and attending weekend seminars.

While Fischer had the tech savvy,

he turned to the lab's ceramist, Mike Silver, for an education in dental technology, including anatomy, function and esthetics. "I'd show Mike my crown designs and he'd offer feedback on what I could do differently to make it more lifelike," says Fischer.

Now four years in remission, Fischer handles the entire digital side of the lab, designing and milling and maintaining the equipment. He's also put his tech skills into the lab's marketing and internal operations, creating a website, upgrading its accounting software, getting them on the cloud and providing IT support. "Chad is a multi-dimensional talent," says Michael Bourne, Director of Sales. "He really is the future of Dental Arts Laboratory." ■

Jesus Romero



Age: 32

Jesus Romero started his marketing career promoting minor league baseball teams and then the San Diego Padres. A lifelong baseball enthusiast, it was a dream job but also one that required 100-hour weeks, leaving little time for his wife and young daughter.

Five years ago, he joined his father's lab and, despite being a full-fledged novice in dental technology, one might say he's hit it out of the park. In that time, he's helped the lab become 100% digital, eliminated the model department, added a printing department and quadrupled the lab's sales. "I'm astounded at how quickly he has learned the business and how to market our services," says Bill Atkission, his father and Owner of Bella Vita Dental Designs, a five-person lab in Arden, NC.

Romero's marketing strategies have been largely focused on relationship building, providing education via study clubs and lunch 'n learns and being a resource to dentist-clients, all of whom are CEREC doctors. "We've positioned ourselves as CEREC experts, helping to troubleshoot technical issues and helping the transition to go completely digital. Our target market is cases CEREC doctors don't want to do or can't do with their chairside system," says Romero, who is Director of Marketing and Business Development and now part owner.

While he misses the glamour of baseball, he relishes the challenge of growing the laboratory and contributing to its success; plus, he loves the freedom and the work/life balance he's gained. "I've been working since I was 13 years old, mostly on weekends. Now I have a four-day workweek, can go to church on Sundays, be involved with my community and spend more time with my family, those are the things that are most important to me," he says. ■

Chris Love



Age: 32

"Chris Love epitomizes what a 21st century technician should be," says Conrad Rensburg, Absolute

Dental Services, Durham, NC.

That's high praise, but Love has earned it during his eight-year career at the laboratory, which has included spearheading Absolute's transition to digital dentures, developing related workflows and making the most of his analytical nature.

"I enjoy that each case is slightly different and requires you to think it through, sometimes even having to think way outside the box," says Love, Digital Removables Manager. "We started doing digital dentures for clients who were open to the idea and, once we got a few under our belt, we tweaked the design process until the final product matched our high-end expectations."

To get other clients on board, he stressed the strength and esthetics and advantages like archiving files, one-appointment deliveries and the ease of using a patient's existing denture as a reference. As a result, about 80% of the lab's full dentures are now done digitally—a stat that Rensburg says would be closer to 40% if it wasn't for Love's efforts.

It's likely it was Love's relationship building—just as much as the product—that helped grow the department. "I'm on the phone with clients all day and they have my cell phone number for after hours," says Love. "They know if there's a problem, it will get fixed; we share the same goal of making the patient happy." ■

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Age: 37

A. Chase Ellis, CDT

With 12 years of experience under his belt, Chase Ellis' latest venture is heading up the implant laboratory at Revive Dental and Implant Center in Charleston, WV. Just opened in March 2020 by Dr. Chad Boustany, a prosthodontist, the Center specializes in All-on-Four implant cases and provides all of the surgical, restorative and laboratory services under one roof.

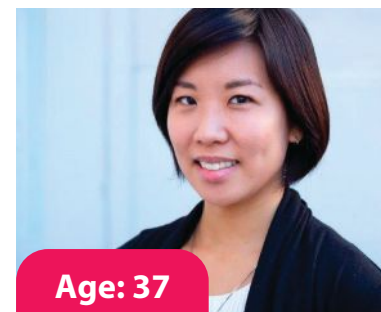
The sole dental technician at the Center, Ellis is building the lab from the ground up. The position gives him the chance to use both his technical expertise and business savvy, an opportunity he welcomes. "I enjoy both the business and technical aspects of dentistry and using all of my skills to operate a successful laboratory," says Ellis, who is a CDT.

In addition to handling the laboratory's finances, inventory control and equipment purchases, Ellis works

hand in hand with Dr. Boustany on all facets of each case, from initial treatment plan to the final restoration. They pride themselves on meeting the patient's needs, esthetically, functionally and financially.

"It's very rewarding to work directly with patients and see my work in the mouth and their smiles post treatment," says Ellis. "I believe our collaborative approach is the way all dentistry should be practiced." ■

Julia Izumi, RDT



Age: 37

After working at the bench at Shanto Dental Ceramics Ltd., Vancouver, BC, for more than a decade, Julia Izumi took a two-year hiatus to be a stay-at-home mom. When she returned a year ago, she did so with gusto, stepping into a new role as Production Supervisor at the 25-person lab.

While the shift from bench to manager can sometimes be challenging, Izumi credits the smooth transition to her "street cred." "I had an established rapport and trust with the staff members, having worked elbow to elbow with them for years. I try to take a soft approach to management, focusing on collaboration and sharing our knowledge," she says.

Now she's applying her years of experience to team building, a critical element for a happy and healthy company culture. In addition, Izumi keeps a close eye on ensuring the lab's production flows smoothly, while QC'ing cases, exploring new materials, implementing new workflows, and treatment planning cases with doctors. Recently, she's helped the lab add a Removable Department and other new services, such as digital dentures and clear aligners.

"It's hard to find technical leaders who are open to learning about the business side of the industry and how to transform the lab as it scales to different levels and adds services. Julia has taken a leadership role in seeking to understand how the lab of the future should look and operate. We are building the next-generation lab with the next-generation leadership," says Donald Park, President and CEO, Smile Innovations Group Inc., which purchased the lab in 2018, and has since acquired multiple labs across Canada. ■

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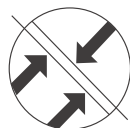
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Age: 34

Charles Banh

"I'm a technology guy. I get excited about experimenting with new software, pushing the envelope and finally getting it to the point where it works effectively," says Charles Banh. He applied his love of technology at Anatomage and Biomet 3i where he gained extensive knowledge of implants, cone beam CT and guided surgery before joining Ceramics West

Dental Lab in Portland, OR, owned by his wife's family, in 2016.

As the head of the 10-person lab's implant department, he's responsible for overseeing production and developing the lab's new niche market: full-arch implant cases. He divides his time equally between assisting chairside with treatment planning and surgeries and working at the bench. "I get to experience the best of both worlds: the rewards of interacting directly with patients and the satisfac-

tion and craftsmanship of fabricating complex, full-arch cases," says Banh.

He's also established new innovative workflows for the lab. For example, he created a method of using an intraoral scanner for anterior implants that's faster for the surgeon, eliminates the guesswork regarding the emergence profile and renders an accurate-fitting crown that supports the tissue. He's also developed a patent-pending surgical guide design for hybrid cases.

Ambitious by nature, Banh is also the laboratory's representative in three Spear Study Clubs; his latest clinical poster at the 2020 Academy of Osseointegration won the Student Foundation Award; and he's just completed the denturism program at the American Denturist College in Eugene, OR, where he will take his licensing exams soon. "I'll be using my degree to provide more comprehensive chairside support for removable cases as well as hybrid conversions to better serve both the surgeon and the restoring doctor," he says. ■

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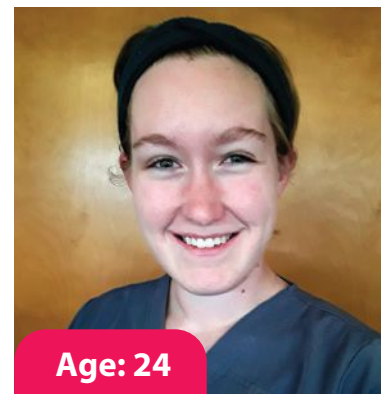
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Amelia Watson



Age: 24

In June 2016, Amelia Watson met her future boss, Clemont Adams, at a Jiu-Jitsu gym. He needed help in the model department of his eight-person lab, Rayven Dental Lab, Grand Junction, CO, and so began her career in dental technology.

She's quickly evolved into a talented, all-around technician and is now focused on fabricating complete dentures and partials. "I love being a technician in this small lab because the culture allows you to be close with coworkers and you're in charge of the quality of your own work," says Watson. A lover of all things sparkly, she also designed her own line of glitter dentures that the lab markets as a "party denture."

Looking forward, Watson is eager to earn her CDT in removables in June. Her plan is to focus more on anatomy and enhance her skills to the point where she can work on fixed, high-end restorative cases. "I intend to be in this field long-term," she says. "We're giving people smiles which mean so much to them. We're making them happy and that makes me happy, too." ■

Basil Callahan, CDT



Age: 33

"Basil is a natural leader, a great problem solver who works with our team members to get the best product and consistency from them," says Reed Nunnally, Owner, Derby Dental Lab, Louisville, KY. "We've had many technicians and leaders over the years and I would put him right at the top of my list."

Callahan honed his leadership skills during his four-year stint in the Marine Corps, which included an eight-month tour in Iraq, where he patrolled the Jordan/Syrian border to prevent violence and drug trafficking, trained the Iraqi police force and even delivered much-needed food and supplies to orphanages.

Once he left the Corps, he began working at a large laboratory as a prep auxiliary technician and found the work fueled his passion for helping

Basil is a great example of what the next generation of technicians in our industry can be.

~Reed Nunnally, Owner,
Derby Dental Laboratory

people, the same value that made him enlist. "I was basically a glorified janitor, but the lab really piqued my interest because we were making custom appliances and improving patients' lives," he says.

In 2015, he joined Derby Dental Lab, making his mark by incorporating new digital techniques and processes into the denture department—helping it grow from eight technicians to 22—and becoming one of the first technicians in the state to earn his CDT in Implants. "Another manager joked that since I didn't have much experience in implants I wouldn't be able to do it. My reply: 'Oh, yeah? Watch me,'" says Callahan, who studied after hours for months in order to pass.

Last year, Callahan was promoted to Operations Manager and, as Nunnally puts it, "Basil is a great example of what the next generation of technicians in our industry can be." ■

Ermin Velic, MDT



Age: 38

Starting at the age of 10, Ermin Velic, MDT, watched his home in Bosnia turn into a fiery war zone. "When that's your childhood, you learn what life is really about," says Velic, Owner of Velic Dental Arts Studio, Wethersfield, CT. "You don't fret about losing a client or business being down during COVID."

Velic immigrated to the United States at 15. Although life was safer, it was difficult since his family didn't

speak English. He worked tirelessly in school, learning to speak the language in just three months and gradually perfected it.

Since he had an artistic bent, he took the advice of a friend and attended the dental technology program at a nearby high school, eventually landing a job as a model and die technician. Once the owner saw he had talent, he allowed Velic to dabble in ceramics and Velic stayed for hours after work practicing his techniques.

What helped him realize his full potential was attending the ASMDT program at New York University, where he elevated his skills and learned to confidently communicate with dentists. A year after completing the program, he opened his own business and has steadily invested in digital technology to stay on the cutting edge.

"Here in America, it's true you can have everything you wish for, but you have to work hard," says Velic. "Nothing was easy but I've achieved what I set out to do." ■



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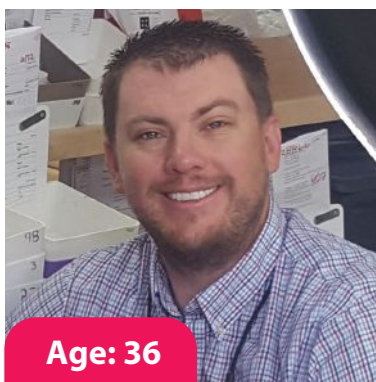
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Edward Peay



Age: 36

One Friday night about 10 years ago, Edward Peay got a call from the general manager of Utah Valley Dental Lab—where he had been doing ceramics for a few years—asking if he would lead the lab's new digital

department. Starting Monday.

Since the lab had only been doing some zirconia copings on a desktop mill, Peay was essentially charged with building a comprehensive digital department from the ground up. "Initially I was nervous, especially with only a few days' notice," says Peay, Digital Manager of the Lindon, UT lab. "But I jumped in and researched what we needed to purchase and learned to design full contour. Knowing the struggles of stacking porcelain and understanding occlusion and contour really gave me an advantage in digital design."

That experience kicked off his ongoing passion for exploring new technology. "I love the challenge of learning a new system and troubleshooting issues, whether it's new

printers or digital dentures or our move towards model-less crowns," he says.

Today, he leads a department of 10 people—along with several others who pitch in part-time—and is lauded for his patience as a trainer, especially with technicians who aren't as tech-savvy. That's quite an accomplishment for the guy who, as a brand-new manager, found training to be the most difficult aspect of the job.

"Some technicians have difficulty transitioning to digital so I often have them mill their designs in wax so they can physically see the result," he says. "I've learned that every individual has his own way of learning; they may even have to mess up a few times and then build on what they learn each day." ■

Adriane Alfonso

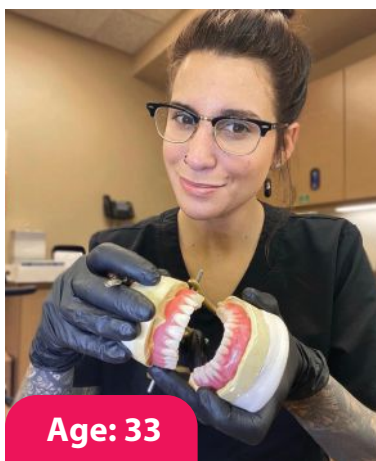


Age: 37

Adriane Alfonso spent his summers working as a model technician at his uncle's lab in Honolulu, HI. In 2009, he bought the business and set out to create his vision for a cutting-edge digital operation. Today, five-person Esthetic Dental Designs has five mills, two 3D printers and receives nearly three-quarters of its cases via an intraoral workflow.

Alfonso is also a KOL for multiple digital dental companies, which has helped him establish a reputation as an expert and create strong connections with his dentists-clients. "I've been able to help our dentists navigate digital dentistry and many relationships have blossomed by being an educator and advocate for CAD/CAM technology," he says.

Mackenzie Mayer



Age: 33

Having a reputation for going above and beyond expectations to give patients the care they deserve, Mackenzie Mayer manages the in-house lab at Excellence in Dentistry in Gurnee, IL, and is passionate about fabricating dentures. "I love the creativity and freedom of my work. It's my responsibility to do things the right way but also my own way with a creative twist. My per-

Just from [Mackenzie's] photographs alone, there is no doubt that her denture work is way above average. She has great attention to detail and is really on top of the denture game.

~ Jay Work, Martin Dental

sonality always shows in my work," Mayer says.

She's a self-described "super tooth nerd" and shares photos of all of her work on social media and now has over 56K followers on Instagram (@toothfairynz). "Just from her photographs alone, there is no doubt that her denture work is way above average. She has great attention to detail and is really on top of the denture game," says Jay Work, Martin Dental, Quakertown, PA. She's also an avid collector of dental-related clothing, jewelry, art and vintage products and

has several tooth-related tattoos.

Currently, Mayer and one of her best friends, Jenelle Tabakovic (see profile on page 12), are in the process of starting a new business to sell their own line of dental merchandise including stickers, shirts, artwork and custom-colored dental wax that Tabakovic makes by hand and, down the road, opening an all-female laboratory. "A woman-owned business speaks to me. I've always admired the power of women and what we can accomplish despite any obstacles we face in society," says Mayer. ■

Olesea Sylvain-Galusca



Age: 33

"Olesea's passion, curiosity, thirst for knowledge and the drive to succeed in all she does is highly admirable;

she's a great, compassionate leader," says Renata Budny, MDT, CDT, FNGS, Associate Professor, Department of Restorative Dentistry, New York City College of Technology (NYCCT).

Coming to the U.S. on a student visa from Moldova specifically to attend NYCCT's program, Sylvain-Galusca took her studies by storm, jumping at every opportunity to be involved in special projects and earning many awards and accolades, including the first-ever Vincent Alleluia Technician Award from the Northeastern Gnathological Society.

She now puts all of that energy into her part-time adjunct lecturer position at NYCCT as well as her role as head of the digital department at Advanced Dentistry of Scarsdale, NY, a multidisciplinary practice with prostho-

dontists, periodontists and orthodontists on staff. At its in-house lab, she enjoys working closely with surgeons on implant planning, consulting with the dentists in the practice on digital processes and materials, and the opportunity to work directly with patients and get them excited about the technology.

"When I do esthetic consultations, for example, we sit in front of the computer and discuss tooth shape, length and the patient's overall expectations and I show them the proposed design right in the 3Shape software," says Sylvain-Galusca. "A lot of them will get excited and ask to take photos to show their friends. I think this technology is a powerful means of communication with the patient and makes it easy to engage them in a follow-up visit." ■

I've been able to help our dentists navigate digital dentistry and many relationships have blossomed by being an educator and advocate for CAD/CAM technology.

~ Adriane Alfonso, Esthetic Dental Designs

Another key to his success: his relationships with his employees and his efforts to provide a good work-life balance. For instance, Alfonso recently analyzed their production and recognized they could do the same amount of work in four days rather than five. "Our staff members are quite versatile so we've shifted tasks around to maximize everyone's ability and time management," he says. "We're able to be equally productive and now have Wednesdays off while keeping salaries the same. I don't want any of us to be a slave to the bench." ■



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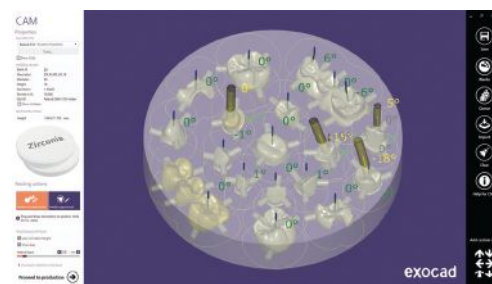
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Dental Softworks Software

Available from PRIMOTEC, **DENTAL SOFTWORKS** GMBH is a robust CAM software that can power most milling machines. The user-friendly interface makes learning the software simple and the software calculates jobs quickly. It's capable of milling all types of restorations including crowns, bridges, implants, bars, bite splints, dentures and more. Contact info: 866-643-3129, 203-682-6429, info@primotecusa.com, primotecusa.com



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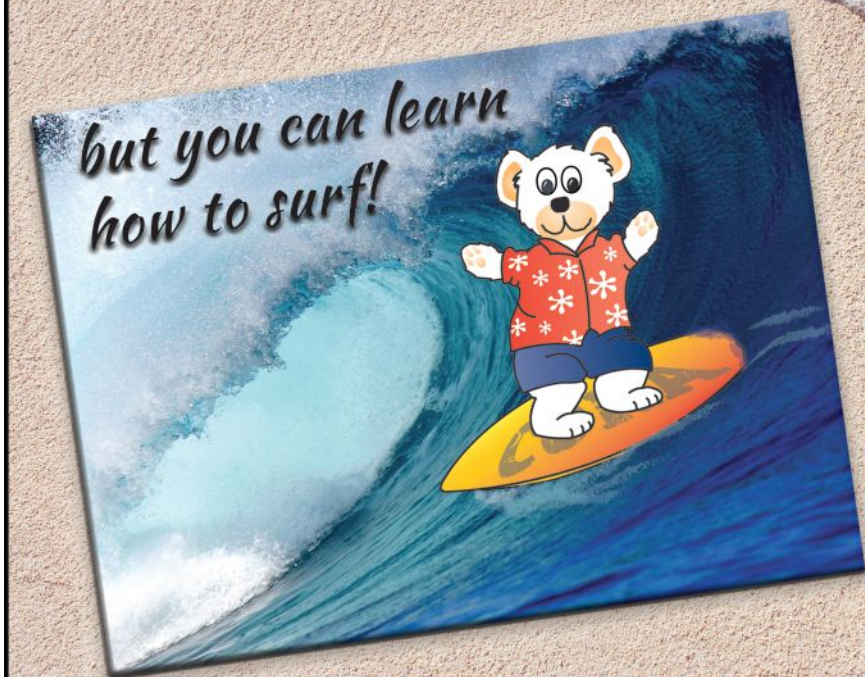
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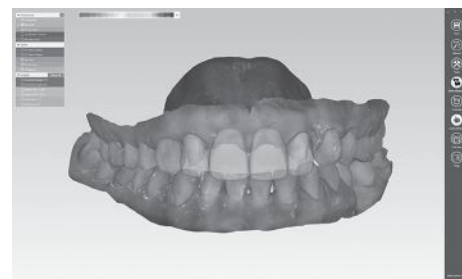
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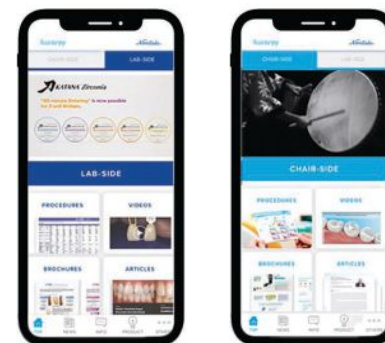
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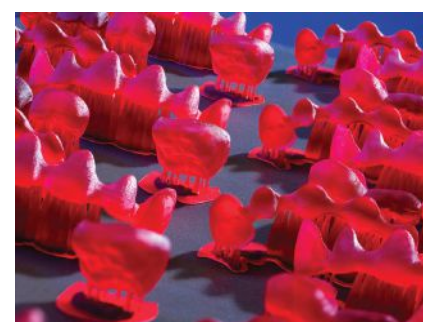
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FOR SALE
Stratasys Eden260VS Dental Advantage 3D printer for sale. Asking \$26,500; includes shipping (U.S. only). Please contact office@aolabs.com for more details/photos.

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Thinking of closing or downsizing your lab? We will evaluate your equipment, pay on the spot or list on eBay, or both. Details available at samschagrindental.com. Call 713-256-8869 or email schagrini1@aol.com.

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UniDent Laboratories is a high-end laboratory specializing in implant restorations. We are looking for experienced, quality-oriented technicians to join our team.

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- CAD/CAM designer with at least three years of implant abutment and crown design experience using 3Shape, CDT preferred
 - 3D printing technician
 - Zirconia finisher/grinder
 - Plaster/model room technician

Email resume to rahsua@unidentalab.com.
411 Airport Blvd., Burlingame, CA, 94010

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DENTURE TECHNICIAN
BENSALEM, PA

Schaefflen Dental Lab is seeking an experienced removable technician needed for set up and finishing in our small production lab in Bucks County, PA. Compensation is based on experience. We offer a four-day work week (40 hours) and a comprehensive benefits package including paid time off, and health insurance. Send your resume to gsmith@schaefflen.com for consideration.

LAB TECHNICIANS
TEMPE, AZ

Exceptional Dental Arts is a high-quality, full service dental laboratory. We are looking for experienced technicians for ceramics, full contour wax, CAD/CAM scan and design, wax/metal finishing, models, removables, setups, full/partial dentures and processing/finishing. We offer excellent pay and benefits including medical, dental and vision insurance, and we are open to discussing relocation compensation, as well as travel expenses for the interview. Call Camille at 480-656-9639 or send your resume to Camille@exceptionaldentalarts.com.

EXPERIENCED TECHNICIANS
ATLANTA, GA

New Image Dental Laboratory, located 10 minutes south of the Atlanta airport, is looking for technicians experienced in dentures, crown and bridge and ceramics; all applicants should have a minimum of five years of experience. We offer excellent compensation and benefits. Please email your resume to fashley@newimagedl.com or fax it to 770-960-1758.

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Dani Dental Studio, a full service lab in Tempe, is looking for Technicians in all phases of lab technology. 5 years' experience is required. Competitive wages and benefits package. Relocation assistance.

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ALBUQUERQUE, NM

C&B lab is looking for a technician for digital scanning, software design, milling and sintering. Porcelain staining experience a plus. Benefits offered. Possible starting/signing bonus. Contact Julia at 505-898-1976.

CERAMIST NEEDED

Aesthetic Oral Arts has an immediate opportunity for an Anterior Cosmetic Ceramist with at least 10 years of experience. Required qualifications: detail-oriented; 10 quality units/day; anterior smile design experience; full understanding of dental anatomy and functions; skilled in layering, shaping and shading porcelain, zirconia and e.max. Email resume, photos of work and cover letter to office@aoralabs.com.

DENTURE TECHNICIAN
NEEDED

Our small full-service lab on the east end of Long Island is looking for a full-time midlevel denture tech. Applicants must have six-eight years of experience in dentures. Please send applications to denturetech10@gmail.com.

EXPERIENCED
TECHNICIANS NEEDED

High-end dental lab needs experienced technicians in model department, metal department, opaque and foil, e.max, posterior crowns of all material types, and a ceramist skilled in the feldspathic technique capable of handling full mouth reconstruction. Email resume to boccabelladental@yahoo.com or call 310-439-1695.

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DISPLAY ADVERTISING INDEX

3DBioCAD	28
Alien Milling Technologies	27
Argen Corp.	5
Astron Dental Corp.....	19
Atlanta Dental Supply.....	8
Aurident.....	7
Bonner Metals.....	12
Candulor AG.....	30
Cora Refining	32
Dentaurum USA, Inc.....	16
Dentsply Sirona.....	Front Cover
Dentsply Sirona.....	25
EasyRx.....	6
Haus Milling Center	11
HeyGears	15
Ivoclar Vivadent, Inc.	Cover 2
Keystone Industries	Cover 3
Kuraray America, Inc.....	33
Maxx Digm, Inc.....	10
Meisinger USA	21
Preat	13
Prodways Tech	18
Rite Smile Dental Lab.....	14
Roland DGA Corp.	23
Shenzhen Upcera Dental Technology Co., Ltd.	20
Straumann Group	9
Up3D Tech Co., Ltd.	29
vhf camfacture AG	31
Whip Mix Corp.....	22
Zahn Dental, a Div. of Henry Schein, Inc.	Back Cover
Zhermack, Inc.	10
Zirkonzahn USA, Inc.	17 A/B



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Aspen Integrating 3Shape Digital Products at Nearly 900 Locations

Aspen Dental Management, Inc. (ADMI) is partnering with 3Shape to accelerate the digital transformation of its nearly 900 Aspen Dental locations nationwide. The deal includes the TRIOS 4 intraoral scanner, 3Shape Dental System software and a suite of apps to enhance the patient experience. The distribution and implementation of the full 3Shape TRIOS suite to Aspen Dental practices will

be managed by Henry Schein Dental.

“Leaning into new and emerging tools and technology is a critical part of not only delivering comprehensive, quality care to patients, but creating an end-to-end digital workflow within the dental practice for the dentists we support,” says Dr. Arwinder Judge, Chief Clinical Officer, ADMI. For more information, visit aspental.com. ■

Ivoclar Vivadent Hires New Chief Marketing Officer

Ivoclar Vivadent welcomes Patric Frank as Chief Marketing Officer. Frank is responsible for all global business units and planning and implementing the company’s global marketing strategy. He joined the company in 2019 as Co-CEO of Kapanu, an Ivoclar Vivadent subsidiary and previously held sales and marketing roles at Salomon, Sonos and Logitech. ■



Keystone Industries Expands Footprint in 3D Printing Market

As part of their ongoing collaboration, Keystone Industries and Henkel have developed KeyModel Ultra, a modeling resin formulated for rapid printing and post curing. “As model printing for clear aligners is the number-one application in dental, our teams developed a material that offers an integrated release agent, making vacuum-formed aligners easier to remove than with other materials and improving the workflow,” says Doug Statham, Senior Director of Digital Materials at Keystone.

Keystone has also joined forces with Nexa3D, making all of Keystone KeyPrint® 3D printing resins available for Nexa3D’s ultrafast

NXE 400 3D printers worldwide. Under this agreement, both companies will combine their expertise and capabilities to deliver 3D printing solutions to the dental market.

“We’re thrilled to tailor our entire portfolio of KeyPrint resins for Nexa3D, a company that’s fast emerging as an additive polymer market leader,” says Keystone Industries President, Dental Group Ira Rosenau. “During our extensive internal optimization and validation testing, we confirmed that the NXE 400 produces outstanding quality prints at high volumes, making it an ideal additive manufacturing partner for the dental industry.” Visit dental.keystoneindustries.com. ■

Abutment Direct to Distribute Amann Girrbach’s Full Line in Canada

Abutment Direct, Inc. is now distributing Amann Girrbach’s full product line in Canada, including its zirconia, CAD/CAM equipment and core and model management products. “We’re very excited to partner with Abutment Direct based on their knowledge and

expertise in the dental field, as well as their dedication and sense of urgency when it comes to the customer,” says Ramon Flores, National Sales Manager for Amann Girrbach North America. For more information, visit abutmentdirect.com. ■

Straumann to Distribute Medit Scanner

Straumann Group and Medit have expanded their scanner distribution partnership to include Medit’s i500 intraoral scanner, which will be integrated into Straumann’s prosthetic and clear aligner workflow solutions, including ClearCorrect. Cases created and uploaded through Medit’s Medit Link communication platform can now be easily accessed by Straumann’s CAD/CAM, surgical and treatment software. For more information, visit medit.com or Straumann.us. ■

Editor’s Note: Due to the pandemic, many industry events and tradeshow are being canceled, postponed or converted to online experiences. Please refer to LMTmag.com/events for the latest details. ■

Zahn Dental Now Offering DESS® Implant Products

Zahn Dental is now distributing DESS Dental Smart Solutions products, manufactured by Spain-based Terrats Medfical, S.L. The DESS product line includes analogs, screws, hybrid bases, solutions for angled screw channels, multi-unit abutments for screw-retained restorations and digital workflow components compatible with leading implant manufacturer brands.

“The DESS portfolio of prosthetic

components can help laboratory technicians produce premium restorations with reliable and durable prosthetic materials, further amplifying Zahn’s ability to deliver end-to-end solutions, and helping our customers’ implant businesses thrive,” says Rita Acquafredda, President, Global Laboratory Business, Zahn Dental.

For more information, visit zahn-dental.com/dess. ■

Strut Your Stuff in Candulor’s 2021 KunstZahnWerk Competition

Registration is open for Candulor’s 2021 KunstZahnWerk competition, featuring a case “for true dental technician heroes.” This year, participants fabricate an upper and lower full denture based on a detailed model analysis and the dynamic occlusion concept; they must also include video, photo and/or written documentation of the case. Candulor provides matching maxilla and mandible plaster casts, physiognomic bite index, score sheet and denture teeth; the finished prosthetics must be submitted on Candulor or Condylator articulators. Judged by Peter Lerch, Jürg Stuck and Max Bosshart, the cases that place in the top three earn €1,500, €1,000 and



€500 respectively. The award ceremony will be held online; date to be announced. To participate, register no later than April 30 at candulor.com or by calling +41 44 805 90 36. ■

BonaDent Offers Nearly \$500,000 in Pandemic Relief to Employees, Local Community

In an effort to support its team during the difficult COVID-19 pandemic, BonaDent Laboratories gave each employee a “holiday relief payment” in advance of the Christmas holiday. Full-time employees received \$1,000 and 25 part-time employees received \$500.

“This is our way of giving back to our employees, showing our gratitude for their ongoing dedication and making their own holidays a bit brighter. BonaDent is as much a workplace as it is a lifestyle—our people tend to stick around for a long time and are passionate about what they do. In return, we’re very grateful to be there for them during this difficult time,” says Bruce Bonafiglia, CEO and President of the lab, headquartered in Seneca Falls, NY.

When the pandemic first hit, the

company assisted furloughed employees by covering their health, dental and vision insurance. To ensure no employee felt financially strained, all employees received a \$2,000 retention bonus after the dentistry shutdown lifted, as well as a \$100 gift card, two days of additional paid time off and three days of early holiday pay. Free boxed lunches were also given out to employees with school-aged children at home.

BonaDent’s generosity also extended to its local community. In addition to pivoting its CAD/CAM department operations to manufacturing PPE face shields—the company donated 7,000 to frontline workers—it also donated over \$200,000 to local organizations, including a nursing home, health foundation, ambulance group and school district. ■

Dentsply Sirona Acquires Direct-to-Consumer Clear Aligner Company

Last month, Dentsply Sirona purchased Byte, a direct-to-consumer clear aligner company targeting patients with mild to moderate orthodontic needs.

“We have been pleased with the growth of our SureSmile® clear

aligner business, and we are confident that adding the innovative platform of Byte adds scale for us in the important clear aligner market,” says Don Casey, CEO of Dentsply Sirona. For more information, visit dentsplysirona.com. ■

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