

do field dentistry in a remote rural village with very basic tools as long as I have perfect illumination every time.”

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: Managing his family and personal life, ensuring staff satisfaction, continuing his education and serving as an officer in the Air Force — all while providing top-level dental care.

FAVORITE OFFICE MUSIC: Jazz, or something acoustic. Around the office, though, he defers to his staff — which usually means soft-pop hits.

ANDREW KILLGORE

AGE: 40 WEST CHESTER, OHIO

SPECIALTY: General dentistry

NAME OF PRACTICE: Afinia Dental

EDUCATION: DMD, University of Louisville School of Dentistry

WHY HE WAS NOMINATED: In addition to seeing his own patients, Dr. Killgore provided more than \$45,000 worth of free dental care to the needy during his first two years in business. He’s passionate about international mission work and has led dental missions to the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Uganda.

INSPIRATION: Dr. Killgore was working as a sales representative for an endodontics supply company, selling root-canal equipment to dentists, when he decided to become one himself. “During sales calls, I watched dentists making a lifelong sport of their career,” he says. “They always engaged patients in a long-term, meaningful way.”

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: Watching patients suffer from pain. “No dentist can make patients 100 percent comfortable,” he says. “We tend to internalize that.”

ADVICE FOR ASPIRING DENTISTS: Innovate, experiment and look to the future. “Don’t get locked into practicing dentistry the way it’s always been done. If you’re paying attention only to the past, you won’t be able to deliver what patients are asking for.”



F. GRAHAM LOCKE

AGE: 37 NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

SPECIALTY: Endodontics

NAME OF PRACTICE: Apex Endodontics of Tennessee

EDUCATION: DDS, University of Texas; postdoctoral program in Endodontics, Boston University

WHY HE WAS NOMINATED: He’s a daredevil who is unafraid to incorporate IV sedation into his practice — all while operating with his customary uncanny precision to the beat of hip-hop music booming from his office speakers.

TOOLS HE CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT: Apex locator and microscopes.

FAVORITE ASPECT OF DENTISTRY: It’s simple: “The satisfaction of creating healthier smiles.”

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: Maintaining open communication on the job, whether the topic concerns his patients, his staff or physician referrals.

CHRIS LONG

AGE: 35 CLEBURNE, TEXAS

SPECIALTY: General dentistry

NAME OF PRACTICE: Long Family Dental

EDUCATION: DDS, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

WHY HE WAS NOMINATED: Committed to lifelong learning, Dr. Long has undertaken numerous hours of continuing education. The result? He excels at complex restorative cases and is able to stay abreast of advances in dentistry.

INSPIRATION: “I was raised to be a dentist,” says Dr. Long, whose father and brother are also practitioners. He enjoys business, science and working with people — three interests, he says, that dentistry satisfies nicely.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: Being a business owner, practice manager and clinical provider all at once. “It’s what makes dentistry unique,” Dr. Long says. “But it’s also a challenge to provide all three simultaneously.”

PRACTICE PHILOSOPHY: “Let our family care for yours.” Says Dr. Long, “Our practice treats multiple generations. We strive for 40-year relationships, not to turn over as many new patients as possible.”



ERIN LUKER MARISCAL

AGE: 33 ARNOLD, MISSOURI

SPECIALTY: General dentistry

NAME OF PRACTICE: Arnold Smiles

EDUCATION: DDS and B.A., six-year dual-degree program from the University of Missouri

WHY SHE WAS NOMINATED: Dr. Mariscal’s office is very high-energy. There’s always something spirited happening among her staff, whether they’re wearing bedazzled T-shirts or making watermelon slushies — and patients notice.

EXCITING NEW TREND: Comfortable dentistry. “The new topical anesthetics are fantastic,” Dr. Mariscal says, “but patients *really* love our massage chairs.” They also surely enjoy the office’s free Wi-Fi and the entertainment system that streams Netflix during treatment.

FAVORITE OFFICE MUSIC: Pandora’s glorious mish-mash: country Monday, classic-rock Tuesday, Pink Floyd Wednesday. . . .

ADVICE TO ASPIRING DENTISTS: “Go for it!” she enthuses, adding, “I think dentistry is a great career for women. I can have a thriving practice and still spend time with my kids.”

GORDON MCCARTHY

AGE: 36 MARIETTA, OHIO

SPECIALTY: General dentistry

NAME OF PRACTICE: McCarthy Dentistry

EDUCATION: DDS, Ohio State College of Dentistry

WHY HE WAS NOMINATED: Dr. McCarthy’s practice has mushroomed since he opened it in 2006, growing by more than 25 percent each year. (See “Early Innovator,” page 26.) His enthusiastic embrace of cutting-edge technology enables him to offer patients traditional dental care and specialized services all within the same four walls.

INSPIRATION: Since childhood, Dr. McCarthy has enjoyed working with his hands. “I’ve always been a tinkerer,” he says. “Growing up, I liked to fix cars, and dentistry fit my skills well.” Now, digital devices like his Lava COS impression machine are among his favorite toys.

FAVORITE OFFICE MUSIC: Classic rock — Led Zepelin, Eric Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

ADVICE FOR ASPIRING DENTISTS: “Every day, strive to improve your practice and reinvent something about the place.”

LATHE MILLER

AGE: 35 GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

SPECIALTY: Orthodontics

NAME OF PRACTICE: Miller Orthodontics

EDUCATION: DDS and M.S., Indiana University

WHY HE WAS NOMINATED: Dr. Miller uses the latest technology to provide cutting-edge dental care while keeping his practice rooted in sound orthodontics. (See “Aligned for Success,” page 82.) He also volunteers on the cleft-lip and palate team at Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital.

INSPIRATION: Dr. Miller, embarrassed by his crooked teeth and offset jaw line, never smiled



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