Our annual profile of some of the industry’s top orthodontists.
Celebrating the Power of the Positive

This year, Orthodontic Products launched an annual program to spotlight deserving orthodontists. Before we started our latest endeavor, we polled our readers and asked if you might be interested either in appearing in the Best of 2011 or in nominating a colleague who you found deserving of recognition. Many of you responded positively, and here are the results of your positivity.

We received nominations from orthodontists, their staffs, their referring dentists, and other colleagues. Nominators from across the country (and, indeed, from around the world) sent us short profiles that explained what makes each nominee exceptional among his or her peers. Unlike so much that happens on the Internet, ours was not an anonymous process dominated by negativity. Our goal was to have as many members of the orthodontic community as possible proudly point out the strength of their profession.

In the following pages you will see names of those who run one small practice and those who juggle many locations; you will recognize long-established orthodontists who have bonded and debonded several generations in the same location; and you will be introduced to younger orthodontists who have brought notable excitement and enthusiasm to their new calling. Some of these orthodontists came to the profession through a family connection; others were motivated by a love of science or the desire to interact with dozens of different people each day.

Their business plans and treatment techniques may differ, but everyone listed here shares one common thread: the desire to serve their patients and their communities—to be not just another item on a teenager’s to-do list, but a memorably positive part of the lives of the families they treat.

Christopher Piehler, Editor
Orthodontic Products

Disclaimer: Each orthodontist uses different techniques based on training and experience. Any implied claims herein are not intended to create an unjustified expectation about results that can be achieved or that one approach may be better than another.

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David Caggiano, DMD, MS, followed a unique path to the orthodontic profession. As the son of an engineer, Caggiano excelled at math and science, and eventually entered engineering school. “I loved engineering, but near the end of my schooling, I really thought about the quality of life and what I wanted to do, career-wise,” Caggiano says. “I realized that I wanted to work more with people and less with machines.”

In addition to his talents as an engineer, Caggiano also had a creative side that could not be suppressed. He had spent years studying art, focusing on sketching and charcoal drawings. Finding a career that satisfied both his love of science and his willingness to be creative was an objective for Caggiano. “For me, dentistry was a good mixture of engineering and art,” he explains. “And, it satisfied my desire to work with people. It was really a no-brainer.”

After receiving a Bachelor’s of Science degree in engineering, a minor in applied mathematics, and a Master’s of Science degree in biomedical engineering at New Jersey Institute of Technology, Caggiano worked as an engineer for 2 years before enrolling in the dentistry program at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). It was there that he received his Doctorate of Medical Dentistry degree in 2001. After 7 years’ experience as a general dentist, Caggiano received his specialty certificate in orthodontics, also from UMDNJ.

GETTING STARTED

In 2008, Caggiano began working with a colleague who owned an orthodontic practice in Parsippany, NJ. The practice was a relatively busy operation, offering treatment for patients throughout Northern New Jersey. When Caggiano came on board, he agreed to take over the business in 1 year upon the retirement of the existing orthodontist.

At his Parsippany, NJ, practice, Caggiano says, “We build a relationship with each patient so that they are more like friends by the end of the treatment.”

After the agreed-upon year, Caggiano became owner of the Parsippany practice. He embraced the opportunity to apply his diverse education and experience in building a stellar operation. “If the previous owner were to come here today, she would be shocked because it’s changed so much,” he says. “The previous orthodontist applied her efforts in other areas compared to me. She built a great practice and had a great personality, but the environment was different than how I run my practice today.”

To set the right tone for his business, Caggiano made a couple of quick and effective changes in the very beginning of his ownership. First, he established a focus on customer service and quality. “In our area of the country, life is very fast-paced and the stress level is very high,” he notes. “Therefore, we try to build a patient-centered practice. We build a relationship with each patient so that they are more like friends by the end of the treatment.”

As Caggiano explains, the focus on customer care starts with his team members. “Every day I get compliments from patients or their parents about my team,” he says. “The eight team members who work with me are patient-centric. They’re kind, understanding, and helpful with regard to any concerns or questions the patients may have.”

For Caggiano, having a talented and friendly staff is essential for a successful practice. “Unfortunately, customer service is sometimes taken for granted in the New York and New Jersey area,” he says. “But not at our practice. We do little things to make the experience fun and to let our patients know we care.”

At Caggiano Orthodontics, letting patients know they are cared about means celebrating their achievements. As Caggiano explains, the practice sends greeting cards to patients for special occasions such as weddings, graduations, or for a new birth in the family. “One of my favorite aspects of my job is the ability to build relationships
with patients," Caggiano says. "I enjoy seeing them on a regular basis and learning about who they are."

TECH SAVVY
From the beginning, Caggiano wanted to practice orthodontics in his own unique way. "I approach orthodontics with the mind of an engineer," he says. "For me, it's like a puzzle, figuring out how to most efficiently make the teeth fit together."

Most often, Caggiano solves challenging orthodontic puzzles with the help of modern technology. Since taking over the practice in 2009, Caggiano has implemented numerous technologies that have advanced the capabilities of his business.

"There are very few patients in my practice who don’t receive computerized treatment," Caggiano notes. "We utilize state-of-the-art orthodontic technologies designed to provide amazing aesthetic results."

Patients of Caggiano Orthodontics are treated with technologies such as OrthoCAD iQ, Insignia, Invisalign invisible braces, lingual Incognito braces, Damon System self-ligating brackets, ceramic braces, and traditional metal braces for children, teens, and adults. Caggiano says, "I’m also an advocate for the Cadent iOC technology, which creates a digital impression. We scan a patient's mouth digitally for a more accurate impression of the mouth." From this digital scan, the teeth are aligned using software to simulate precisely how the teeth will look when treatment is completed. Using the OrthoCAD iQ technology, a computer-guided laser places the braces in the precise position on each tooth, which will shorten treatment and provide a more reliable outcome.

Like any successful orthodontist, Caggiano has a wide range of expertise when it comes to treating patients, and using advanced technology makes his areas of expertise even vaster. "We really excel when it comes to the difficult cases," Caggiano says. "Much of our success in this aspect is because I work with general dentists in the area to coordinate difficult treatment plans for patients. I don’t treat every patient in the same way," he adds. "With my engineering background, I often work with general dentists to develop unique treatment plans for every patient."

According to Caggiano, technologies such as the types used in his practice have dramatically changed the orthodontic profession. "Patients today have grown up with computers, the Internet, iPads, and smartphones. Therefore, when they see modern technology used in a setting such as orthodontics, they embrace it," he explains. "I believe that in the next several years, technology is going to advance in ways that will continue to revolutionize the profession. It’s going to be very exciting."

In order to stay ahead of the technology curve, Caggiano does his best to stay informed about orthodontics with the steadfast approach of a data-hungry engineer. He devotes much of his spare time to furthering his education through reading as well as attending conferences, continuing education courses, and study clubs.

Currently, Caggiano is a member of the Western Essex Dental Association Study Club, the Grassroots Study Club, and the Bear Brook Study Club. He also is an active member of the American Dental Association, the New Jersey Dental Association, the Morris County Dental Society, the American Association of Orthodontists, the Mid-Atlantic Association of Orthodontists, the New Jersey Association of Orthodontics, and the Academy of General Dentistry. Additionally, he is an attending orthodontist on the dental staff of Morristown Memorial Hospital to teach orthodontics to the dental residents.

GROWING STRONG
In the 2 years since Caggiano took over as owner of his practice, he has introduced a number of revolutionary elements that have clicked with patients. "The best compliment I hear from parents who were here before, during, and after the transition is how modern the practice has become and how the customer service has become more accommodating," he says.

Change happened at Caggiano Orthodontics from the inside out, all while the doctor and his staff were conscious of the need to stay focused on the patients. "There’s never a seamless transition, but we’ve made it as seamless as possible," he adds. "We’ve had great success so far incorporating all the computerized technology into the daily functions of the practice."

The care he took to enhance the practice has paid off. According to Caggiano, the business has grown substantially over the past 2 years. As a result, plans are in the works for expansion. "We’re growing and we’re growing fast, which is very fortunate," Caggiano says. "Our success is directly related to our ability to do the right thing. I care about people. I care about what I do, and I care that I do the job in the right way. As a result, we have a successful practice with a great staff and fantastic patients."

Lori Sichtermann is a contributing writer for Orthodontic Products.

Practice Profile
Name: Caggiano Orthodontics
Location: Parsippany, NJ
Specialty: Orthodontics
Patients per day: 70–90
Starts per year: 525
Years in private practice: 3
Days in private practice per week: 4
Web site: MorrisCountyBraces.com
A Positive Practice

Mastroianni Orthodontics makes a point of giving back to the community

BY LORI SICHTERMANN

For Jeffrey Mastroianni, DMD, orthodontics is about making a positive impact. He became intrigued by the profession at a young age, under the influence of his family. “I have three uncles who are dentists, and I grew up watching them,” Mastroianni recalls. “I picked up on the fact that they liked what they did for a living, they had a nice lifestyle, and they were happy.”

Mastroianni attended dental school at Southern Illinois University and finished his orthodontic training at St Louis University in 2000. In 2003, Mastroianni opened his first office in Glen Carbon, Ill, and 2 years later he opened his second practice in nearby Swansea, Ill.

It has been 10 years since Mastroianni began practicing orthodontics, and for him, every day is a chance to inspire his patients. “The coolest part of it for me is taking someone who isn’t proud of his or her smile and completely flipping that person around into someone who is always smiling,” he explains. When the patient sees the end result, it’s just an amazing moment. We’ve had patients cry when they see their teeth or do a cartwheel down the hallway. It’s a very rewarding profession, and I enjoy everything about it.”

SPREADING THE WORD

Just as Mastroianni was influenced by mentors to consider the joys of the dental profession, he dedicates much of his time to being a role model for the next generation of potential orthodontists. As Mastroianni explains, he and his staff regularly travel to area middle schools and discuss the importance of dental hygiene with the students. “They’re such a great audience because they’re at the age where they’re curious and interested,” Mastroianni says. “We teach them about regular dental topics—brushing, oral hygiene, flossing, and tooth decay—and we also sprinkle in information about avoiding tobacco products and eating healthily. And, of course, we discuss some orthodontic information as well.”

Mastroianni is an avid sharer of information about his profession. Prior to opening his second practice, he taught orthodontics at Southern Illinois University for 2 years. “It was another way to give back,” Mastroianni says. “After you go through all the schooling and all your professors help you, it’s a good way to help the students and help them understand how to deliver orthodontic care.”

According to Mastroianni, the decision to teach orthodontics at the college level is based on a desire to prepare students for life beyond dental school. “Orthodontics is probably the least covered subject in dental school,” he explains. “My goal in teaching was to take the dental students’ knowledge and bring it up a level so that when they go into private practice, they would have the additional skills to better help their patients.”

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

For 10 years, Mastroianni has found success as an orthodontist and an owner of two practices. That success is based on his areas of expertise. As Mastroianni explains, he is trained in TMD care for patients who suffer from jaw pain. “Patients who suffer from TMD want straight teeth, but they also have serious jaw issues,” he explains. “As an orthodontist, I can’t just jump in and not address the TMD. Therefore, I work to accommodate the jaw during treatment.”

The other area of expertise that is emphasized at Mastroianni Orthodontics is kindness. As Mastroianni explains, he and his staff are adamant about making patients feel comfortable and well taken care of. “We do a lot of work with special-needs children, and we make the kids feel very welcome,” he says. “In every single case, we’ve seen incredible improvement in these kids with regard to their comfort level every time they visit the office. I really credit my warm and caring staff. I have a great team.”

Mastroianni Orthodontics extends the kindness factor beyond office visits. As the doctor explains, the practice has become known as a supportive member of the community. For example, Mastroianni Orthodontics has donated more than $400,000 worth of free orthodontic services in an effort to raise funds for area schools. “Not only do we offer free orthodontic services, but we sponsor sports teams and help out with every kind of fund-raiser that kids come in and ask us to support,” Mastroianni says. “I really like to give back. I just can’t accept this job and all that it’s given me and not do something for our community.”

Lori Sichtermann is a contributing writer for Orthodontic Products.

Practice Profile

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Location: Glen Carbon, Ill; and Swansea, Ill
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Starts per year: 400
Years in private practice: 10
Days in private practice per week: 4
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Or do you know someone who should? Watch your inbox for our nomination announcement coming this fall!