

dental**town**

March 2015

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Women **in Dentistry**

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Dr. Joyce Bassett Q&A



Dr. Joyce Bassett practices comprehensive restorative and aesthetic dentistry in Scottsdale, Arizona. She is an Accredited Fellow of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry and will be the first female president of the AACD in May. Dr. Bassett is an adjunct professor at the Arizona School of Dentistry, where she has taught the aesthetic continuum. She is a national lecturer, published author and is a member of the editorial board of several peer-reviewed publications.

What drew you to dentistry?

My father, who was a dentist, wanted me to become a physician. When he applied to medical school, he did not get accepted. His second choice was dentistry. He wanted for me what he did not get for himself. But I did not want to be a physician. I wanted to get married and have four children and felt that the on-call responsibility of a physician would be too much. I felt a dental business model would be more compatible with my lifestyle choice. (But it didn't quite work out that way, the married with four kids part.)

Tell me the story of your dental career.

I started college at 16 and dental school at 19. I graduated from the Ohio State University at the age of 23 and started my own practice. I remember the first month I produced \$29,000, and I thought, "Oh my God, I'm rich!" I grew to dislike dentistry and at the age of 27, wanted to quit. I met Dr. Rich Cohen, who suggested additional continuing education: occlusion, TMD and full mouth reconstruction classes from Kois and Dawson.

Then cosmetics classes came on the scene in the early 1990s and I enrolled at Case Western and Baylor. I started lecturing and began the journey to get my accreditation with the AACD, which took me many attempts before passing. They called me Dr. Susan Lucci since I was the annual presenter at the conference and never received the award. When I finally gained accreditation, I started my journey to fellowship and became a student at the Kois Center to better understand function and occlusion.

Are there any other AACD fellows in Phoenix?

I'm the only one in the state of Arizona that is a Fellow and also a member of both the American Academy of Esthetic Dentistry and the American Society of Dental Aesthetics.

What keeps you going?

I have so many tasks to accomplish. It fuels me to complete everything in front of me. The patient's satisfaction at the finish of cases invigorates me. What keeps me going at the podium is when women approach me at the end of my presentation and say, "How did you get here? I want to be like you. Tell me what to do."

I know that when they see a woman at the podium it motivates them and they strive for more. What keeps me motivated in the AACD is the knowledge that this organization is the preeminent source for continuing education for dentists to follow a pathway to success in cosmetic dentistry. The AACD and the Kois Center cultivate excellence in education for dentists.

Who are some of your mentors?

John Kois (founder of The Kois Center, a training institute in Seattle). There is no comparison.

What are your favorite sources of learning?

AACD, the Kois Center, the AAED, the American Academy of Restorative Dentistry, and the American Academy of Fixed Prosthodontics.

What do you enjoy most in dentistry?

Patients, the surgical procedures, the artistry of smile design, final outcomes, and the satisfaction of a case well executed.

How do you find balance in your life?

I exercise every day, first thing in the morning. That's my time. Then I accomplish tasks that I despise, immediately following my workout, so they are completed. This allows me to focus on the rest of the day with ease.

Once I get to the office, I only perform patient care, which is a pleasure. I shut out the rest of the world and focus.



What do you enjoy outside of dentistry?

Sports, hanging out with friends, relationships, hiking Camelback Mountain, skiing, riding my bike.

How do you hold yourself to high standards without creating unrealistic expectations?

I presented at the Kois Symposium on failures, using my accreditation journey and mentor exam failures as background for this talk. I also use this presentation to open my lecture in my full-day classes, telling how to avoid negative self-talk and instead focusing on changing strategies to find solutions.

What is the best decision you made for your career?

I didn't listen to my dad when he wanted me to become a physician.

Would you have done anything differently as you look back on your career?

No, you can't go backwards, so every decision that you made was proper in that moment.

What words of advice do you have for dental students today?

Dental school education is just the beginning of a lifetime of learning. Build on this base and never think you have "made it." When you do . . . your learning ends and you won't improve from that moment forward. Continue to educate yourself with lectures and hands-on programs. Be a CE junkie. You can never stop learning.

What do you consider your greatest accomplishment to be outside of dentistry?

The mentoring I perform for everyone in my path. I was not blessed to have children of my own, but I have demonstrated the village concept by rearing many children and students. I feel I can influence the lives of many, by my example. ■

Ladies Choice Favorite Products

Every dentist has their favorite products and instruments that give them increased confidence and help the day pass with ease. Below, see some favorites from three of our four Q&A participants.

Dr. Lee Ann Brady

Nikon D7100 camera, mirrors and retractors from PhotoMed

Heraeus Kulzer Venus composite

Ivoclar Vivadent's OptraGate dental dams

Septocaine anesthetic

Kuraray Clearfil SE Bond

Dr. Natalie Peterson

Greater Curve bands Contour amalgam (Kerr)

Scotchbond universal adhesive (3M ESPE)

GrandioSO resin (VOCO)

Exafast impression material (GC America)

Dr. Joyce Bassett

Kerr SonicFill

Imprint 4 3M ESPE

DentMat NV soft-tissue laser

Philips Zoom whitening system

Bisco All-Bond Universal, and TheraCal