

TEN UNDER

10

For the third consecutive year, the JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS DENTAL SOCIETY, in conjunction with the MDS Standing Committee on the New Dentist, is shining the spotlight on 10 member dentists who have been in the profession for 10 years or less—“The Ten Under 10.”

The honorees were surveyed about the many different and sometimes challenging aspects of the profession that the new dentist faces on a daily basis. These dentists have generously shared their experiences on everything from how to balance work and family, to the importance of gaining patients’—and colleagues’—trust, to the importance of staying involved in organized dentistry.

Congratulations to this year’s Ten Under 10—the future of professional dentistry.

To qualify for selection as a Ten Under 10, dentists must have graduated from dental school in the past 10 years and have made a significant contribution to the profession, their community, or organized dentistry. A call for nominations was sent to MDS member dentists in September (nominees are required to be current MDS members), and nominations were reviewed and final selections were chosen by the MDS Standing Committee on the New Dentist in December.



Lokesh Suri, DMD, MS

RESIDENCE: Boston
OFFICE LOCATION: Boston
SPECIALTY: Orthodontics
EDUCATION: Tufts University
School of Dental Medicine; All
India Institute of Medical Sciences,
New Delhi, India (Certificate in
Prosthodontics)

Why did you choose dentistry as a career?

I always had a fascination for the arts and dabbled in oils as a youngster. I made a few portraits and found that trying to paint the teeth was the hardest part (and remains the most difficult for me even today). That was probably when I started to observe people's teeth. During my high school years, I spent a summer working at my uncle's multispecialty dental practice. I was exposed to everything from carving wax set-ups for dentures and try-ins to orthodontic adjustments and retainers. Each procedure was like a painting or piece of art in progress. The dexterity and detail that dentistry requires really appealed to me—it was the perfect mix of art and science.

What was the biggest challenge/obstacle you experienced when you began your professional career?

Time management. The challenge for me each day is to create my own time machine and handle activities that would squeeze 48 hours into 24 hours. Sometimes I succeed, and sometimes I do not.

What has been the biggest reward, professionally, personally, or both, that you have experienced since you left dental school?

If it were not for orthodontics I would not have met my wife, who is a fellow orthodontist. So that is the biggest reward personally. Professionally, the greatest reward has been gaining the gratitude and respect of the patients I treat.

What advice would you give to a student graduating from dental school this year?

My advice would be threefold: First, read contracts carefully and ensure that you reap the benefits of your education. Second, do not just draw on current knowledge; contribute to it so that you can evolve professionally. Then, share that knowledge with students and peers. Finally, commit to propelling the profession forward by being involved in a sphere of your choice—teaching, dental politics, or a very high-quality practice.

How do you balance your professional and personal lives?

Remember the time machine!

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I see myself in private practice working with newer techniques. By that time, nanotechnology will probably have found routine applications in dentistry. I also see myself in academia with students and some very significant research under way. ■