

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

by Krista Houstoun, Associate Editor, *Dentaltown Magazine*

Their fathers were dentists. They are both dentists. Their son is a senior dental student. One thing you can say about the Stiles family is that dentistry has a grip on them. Graduating from the same dental class at Georgetown University, Drs. Dennis and Marie Stiles went on to tie the knot and open a practice together. While some couples would loath working with their partner, the Stiles prefer it. Read on to learn about their patient-centered, Maryland-based practice, and how they make living and working together work.

Dentistry runs in your family—is that what inspired your career decision? Tell us a little about the influence of both of your fathers.

Dr. Dennis: Both of our dads were dentists and they were very positive role models for us. They were very encouraging as we started out in private practice. My dad practiced in Amherst, Massachusetts, a college town, and developed a great reputation in our community. He was known for restorative rehabilitation and crown and bridge.

OFFICE HIGHLIGHTS

Name: Drs. Dennis and Marie Stiles

Practice Name: Stiles Dentistry Office

Graduate From: Both in the same class at Georgetown University School of Dentistry, 1986

Practice Location: In the Kentlands, Gaithersburg, Maryland

Practice Size: 1,850 patients active

Staff: Four full-time team members and two interns

Website: www.stilesdentistry.com

Bonding Agents

- OptiBond FL - Kerr

Burs

- Brasseler

Cements

- Z-Prime - BISCO
- Multilink (for e.max crowns) - Ivoclar Vivadent
- GC Fuji (for PFM and gold crowns) - GC America
- Variolink Veneer (for veneers) - Ivoclar Vivadent

Implants

- Nobel Biocare
- Keystone
- Zimmer

Impression Materials:

- DryZ (for control of bleeding) - Parkell
- Imprint 3 Penta Putty and Regular Body Wash - 3M

Anesthetics:

- Onset - OnPharma
- Topical Gel PFG - Steven's Pharmacy
- DentalVibe
- Septocaine - Septodont
- Articaine
- Lidocane (when using Onset)





I remember visiting his dental lab and watching him discuss cases with his favorite laboratory technician.

Dr. Marie: I worked many summers in my dad's office and always enjoyed watching my dad interact with his patients. His practice was in Washington, D.C., and he had many wonderful patients who, to this day, still tell me how much they loved him. Both of our dads have passed away.

How is your practice laid out? What is the workflow like? Describe a typical day.

Dr. Stiles: We have four operatories, two of which are hygiene rooms and two that are doctor rooms. We work from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Typically, we pre-block our longer procedures in the morning and see new patients or do minor procedures in the afternoon.

What is your practice philosophy?

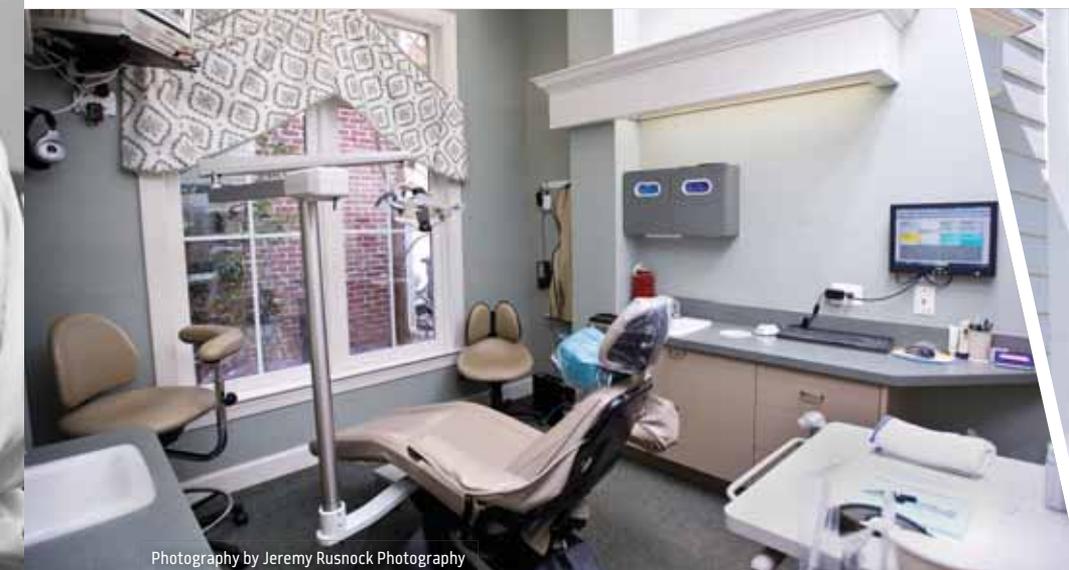
Dr. Stiles: Our purpose is to provide the highest quality of dental care to adults and children in a friendly, caring, professional environment with emphasis on prevention, patient education and high ethical standards, so as to help patients have optimal oral health and happy lives.

You two are married—tell us about your business partnership. What is it like being married, living and working together?

Dr. Dennis: My wife and I are partners for life, and she is the boss.

Dr. Marie: I married a very smart man! We do share responsibilities and offer different services. For example I do all of the Invisalign care and IV sedation cases. Dennis is typically doing the implant, sleep apnea, TMD and the smile design cases. We both share in the operative and crown and bridge therapy.

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Photography by Jeremy Rusnock Photography



Patient Financing

- CareCredit

Sleep Apnea

- SomnoMed
- Tap III Elite – Glidewell Dental

Restoratives

- Theracal LC (liner) - BISCO

- GC Fuji IX GP Fast (for glass ionomer base) - GC America

- Esthet-X – Dentsply

- Heliomolar (for posterior composite restoration) - Ivoclar Vivadent

- Composite Wetting Resin – Ultradent

Technology

- Eaglesoft 17

Provisionals

- Calset Warmer (to heat composite for temps) – AdDent, Inc.

- Sil-Tech Putty (for indexes) - Ivoclar Vivadent

- Protemp (for making crown and bridge temps) - 3M

- Mach-SLO Die Silicone (for indirect models and acrylic temps using Jet acrylic) - Parkell

Dr. Dennis: We feel lucky to be able to share our practice together as a married couple. What works for us is that we have a great deal of respect for each other and we share the responsibility of the practice together. For example, I like to do the accounting, marketing and goal planning, and Marie likes working with team growth and development and practice systems. When we are in the office at the same time patients often feel like they are receiving more attention. The advantages of being business partners are: sharing in problem solving and strategic planning, sharing leadership roles, sharing in team member development, traveling and attending professional meetings.

As a married couple we can still disconnect from work and enjoy an evening walk with our dog Samson on the C&O canal, not think about the office, and be present for each other.

What do you do to set your practice apart from others?

Dr. Marie: We have developed a reputation for being a practice that is very patient-centered and relationship driven. Patients often remark on how we take the time to listen, understand their goals, and most importantly, care for their well-being. I would say that our purple cow¹ is consistent customer service, an organized office and a place where patients leave feeling better about themselves.

We both have served and continue to serve in leadership roles in our community and our church. Actively participating in our community is one of our core values and we are always looking for ways to give back. For example, our office co-sponsors a local road race and a summer music festival.

I see your office offers sedation dentistry. Has that been advantageous for you?

Dr. Dennis: Yes, it brings people in the office who would typically avoid going to the dentist due to fear. Dr. Marie does the work-up and coordinates the level of sedation appropriate for the patient. The satisfaction that we receive as a result of treating seda-

tion patients is huge and very significant. It has changed the way we do many of our procedures because we are always looking for better ways to help all of our patients have a good experience.

You have two pre-dental interns at your office—how has that been beneficial?

Dr. Marie: We have been very fortunate to enjoy the opportunity to mentor and have interns work in our practice. I would encourage any dental office to consider inviting college students to intern in your office. It is a good way to give back to your profession as well as teach values to future dentists who will be serving patients in the future.

What are your favorite marketing techniques?

Dr. Dennis: We think social media is the best way to build a brand and we have been fortunate to work with a company that helps us manage our brand on the internet. Sesame Communications in Seattle, Washington, has been working with us for the last five years. They developed our website and blog, started a Facebook page and a Twitter account, set up a YouTube portal and currently manage our SEO. Many people are referred to us by other patients, or they may find us by searching on the internet (typically a Google search). We have established a positive online presence that guides patients to our website and then to the office.

You are active Townies on Dentaltown.com. How did you learn about Dentaltown?

Dr. Dennis: The wealth of information and dialog on the web site is phenomenal and noteworthy. What we like the most is all of the current information and resources that are available on the website. We think of Dentaltown.com as the Mashable.com for dentistry. The Dentaltown community is always positive and upbeat and makes you feel great about being a dentist.

What has Dentaltown.com done for your professional life? What is your favorite feature?

Dr. Dennis: The daily cases presented give us new perspectives and in many ways is like a virtual study club. The conversations about the cases are always interesting as well. You can learn

1. Purple Cow: Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable. Seth Godin. 2013. Portfolio.



a great deal by reading others comments. The webcasts are great, too. They are packed full of relevant information. I often refer students I teach to the site to review the webcasts. As for favorite feature, I like the blogs because they have quick answers and give more resources to evaluate an area of interest.

What do you think is the biggest problem dentists face today?

Dr. Dennis: I believe one of our greatest challenges in dentistry will be the shortage of qualified dental technologists. As we do more advanced prosthetic procedures the demand for a trained and qualified dental technologist will rise. In our world one of the best relationships we have is with our local lab (Pratt Dental Lab). John Pratt has always had a philosophy that his job is to make the dentist and the patient successful. The 25-year relationship that we have had has made us better dentists as a result of our teamwork.

What is the greatest advancement of change you have seen during your tenure as a dentist?

Dr. Marie: By far the accuracy and detail that you can achieve with digital scanning in dentistry. We have been working with the

iTero scanner for three years now and have found it to be a very accurate way to take virtual impressions for crown and bridgework and for our Invisalign patient work-ups.

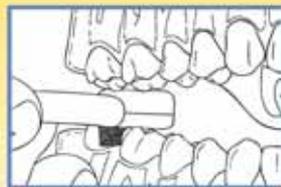
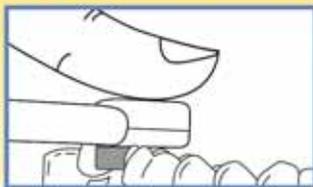
Looking ahead, what would you like to see dentistry do in terms of the way it operates as a profession in the next five to 10 years?

Dr. Dennis: I believe that dentistry as a profession needs to continue to be aware of how significant the private practice can be in the lives of the people that it serves. Patients can get lost in larger health-care settings and there is a real need to preserve the trust that patients have with their dentists. It will be important that dentistry protect that trust by not allowing our profession to become a health-care commodity. There is great purpose and significance in what we do to enhance and transform the lives of the people that we serve. The personalized attention that can be achieved in a private practice fosters patient loyalty and long-term relationships. Dentistry and its leaders should constantly be aware and protect the integrity of the brand of trust that we uniquely have with our patients.

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Who are some of your mentors?

Dr. Dennis: Bill Jennings, DDS, who was my prosthodontic professor from Georgetown University; my father, Dr. Dennis H. Stiles; my father in law, Dr. Pasquale Tigani; Dr. Richard Toth, a local retired prosthodontist from Virginia; Dr. Peter Dawson; Dr. Bill Blatchford of Blatchford Solutions; Dr. Denny Byrne; Mr. James Moyer, my executive coach.

Dr. Marie: My father, Dr. Pasquale Tigani; Dr. Bill Blatchford of Blatchford Solutions and Dr. Irwin Becker, former director of education for the Pankey Institute.

What are your favorite procedures?

Dr. Dennis: Anterior dentistry, restoring implants, sleep apnea cases.

Dr. Marie: Helping patients feel comfortable through sedation dentistry and Invisalign.

Describe your most successful or rewarding experience in your professional life.

Dr. Dennis: Of course, there are many individual cases where we have impacted people’s lives by changing their smile or improving their health and wellbeing. Also, we have both been part time faculty at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry since 2009. Teaching has been very rewarding and energizing. It’s always a pleasure to interact with the students who are so excited about our profession and so eager to learn. It’s also a joy to interact with the other faculty members and collaborate on the latest trends in our profession.

What do you like to do when you are not working?

Dr. Dennis: We both enjoy being with our three grown kids: Elizabeth, 28, a social media manager for the Weddingwire.com, Andrew, 26, a senior dental student at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (he will be a third-generation dentist), and JP, 22, a digital media and film specialist in LA. My personal hobbies are photography, landscape and outdoor work, and yoga.

Dr. Marie: And mine are walking, spending time with our new dog, Samson, traveling, reading and cooking. ■

DRs. STILES’ TOP PRODUCTS

	iTero Scanner	DentalVibe	Isolite	Planmeca Promax 2D S3 X-Ray Unit:
When did you start using it?	2011	2012	2009	2012
Why can't you practice without it?	Accuracy of the models allows for great fitting restorations and the quality of patient experience is phenomenal.	The DentalVibe has made injections painless and we love the feedback that we get from our patients.	It frees up our assistant and helps the patient to be more relaxed during treatment.	The accuracy that we have been seeing with this unit has been excellent. It is very user-friendly and our patients appreciate not having intra-oral PA radiographs. We also use the unit to take bite wing X-rays.
When do you use this?	Typically for 1-3 unit crown and bridge cases. We are now scanning all of our invisalign patient cases.	For local anesthetic injections.	All operative quadrant dentistry, cementing crowns, scaling and root planning, sealants, and when placing implant restorations.	For 95 percent of all of our X-ray imaging.
How do you market this to your patients?	We introduce the service when discussing treatment and many times other patients in the office hear the unit when they are in the office for other services. We have also highlighted this on our blog.	Our blog and internally.	We discuss the comfort and proper isolation benefits to the patient.	We discuss the very low radiation and excellent accuracy and no probes intra-orally. And we have discussed the technology on our blog.