

Ten Under 10

Since 2005, the JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS DENTAL SOCIETY, in conjunction with the MDS Standing Committee on the New Dentist, has been shining a spotlight on the “Ten Under 10”—10 MDS member dentists who have been in the profession for 10 years or less. On the following pages, you will meet the 2011 Ten Under 10 honorees and learn more about their thoughts on organized dentistry, the challenges they faced when they first left dental school—and continue to face today—and the ability to maintain a work-life balance, among other topics.

To qualify for selection for the Ten Under 10, dentists must have graduated from dental school in the past 10 years, be current MDS members, and have made a significant contribution to the profession, their community, or organized dentistry—or all of the above. A call for nominations was sent to MDS member dentists in the fall and solicited on the MDS website and *Membership Matters* newsletter. Nominations were reviewed and final selections were chosen by the MDS Standing Committee on the New Dentist in December.

Congratulations to the 2011 Ten Under 10—the future of organized dentistry.

Mark Doherty Jr., DMD



Current Residence: Taunton
Hometown: Lakeville
Office Locations: New Bedford, Swansea,
and Raynham
Specialty: Endodontics
Dental Education: University of Pennsylvania
School of Dental Medicine and Boston University
Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine

What do you like about being a dentist?

There are several things I like about dentistry. In my family, I am carrying on a tradition that gives me a great sense of pride. My great-great-grandfather (Martin Conroy) was a dentist in Ireland and my great-grandfather (James Conroy Sr.) was one of the first dentists in the Taunton area. My great uncle (James Conroy Jr.), father (Mark Doherty Sr.), and cousin (William Conroy) are also dentists. In addition, I love interacting with patients, diagnosing disease, and eradicating oral infection and pain.

What's the biggest challenge you've faced in your career thus far?

As with most new practitioners, the biggest challenge for me was becoming efficient. It, of course, took time, but with practice and good mentoring, it eventually clicked.

You're an associate in an endodontic practice, but you also devote a good amount of your time to serving patients at the Taunton Oral Health Center (TOHC). What inspired you to decide to split your practice time this way?

At Southcoast Endodontics, I am scheduled to work four days a week. I love what I do and really wanted to work more.

After about a year of working in private practice, my father asked me if I would like to work for him at the TOHC one to two days a week. He explained to me that there was a huge demand for endodontics for the uninsured, underinsured, and children under 21 who were from the Department of Youth Services

detention centers and the Department of Social Services. As I began working on these kids, I thought to myself, "What could be worse than being in a detention center with a toothache?" I felt bad for these kids because they were not getting the treatment they needed, and I felt like it was my duty to do it. I clicked with the majority of these kids from the start. They were my inspiration.

How is your approach different in treating patients at your private practice versus the health center?

There really is no difference between treating the two. The way I view it is, people are people and we all have different personalities. Some of the kids who come to the TOHC have had some tough times, and consequently, may put up more of a front and be more outspoken. However, if you recognize what they have gone through and figure out how to connect with them, barriers can be broken and treatment can go smoothly.

When you're not working, what do you do with your free time?

I like to work hard, but I like to play even harder. With my free time, I like to travel with my beautiful wife and three children. I am also very committed to martial arts, working out, snowmobiling in Maine, and sportfishing. ■