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Rationale and method for securing an elite dental laboratory workforce

Dentistry has an opportunity of choice. While there exists numerous dental assisting and hygiene programs at colleges across the country, the dental technology teaching institutions are decreasing, numerically, nationally. Some thought leaders are basing the future of dentistry on digital utilization of technology to fabricate dental appliances. There are pitfalls to this approach. The educated dental technology workforce needs to grow, sufficiently, in order to meet the needs of baby boomers retiring into their major tooth loss years. To offset a supply crisis in treatment of edentulous and partially edentulous patients a workforce of licensed mid-level providers must also be trained and enabled to help dentistry, in partnership, meet the needs of this growing segment of the population. While digital fabrication of removable appliances is a benefit for some support casework, analogue processing is the artistic alternative to promote Prosthetic Privacy demanded by perspicacious baby boomer consumers demanding the best in removable appliances. The conventional processing methods provide jobs and careers for many thousands of talented individuals in a dignified medical field. Ostensibly, not all candidates in training will become licensed denture therapists (denturists), a more attractive career model will, most assuredly, attract many to the rewarding field of dental technology. Dental offices and dental laboratories will accept and welcome these denture technicians with open arms and bench chairs waiting. Axiomatically, there will be a renaissance of dental technology teaching institutions, some concentrating on premium removable prosthetics.

Biography

Michael graduated from Michigan State University College of Natural Science with Honors in 1975 Bachelor of Science degree Zoology. In 1977 he completed studies at the Michigan School of Dental Technology, Mt. Clemens, Michigan. He earned his CDT at National Board of Certification in 1989 in Complete Dentures. He owns and operates Smile Right Dental Labs since 1997 and has managed labs and denture departments at regional and nationally owned laboratory groups. Outside sales and dentist client representation adds to his experience. He has taught dental technology at the community college level. As a field instructor for the Geneva Dental Institute of Beverly Hills, CA, Michael was able to assist many dentists and dental technicians to learn the European Method of denture construction.

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