

Becoming Certified Achieves Personal Goal

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For Dr. Douglas McCarthy of Greenwood, S.C., his orthodontic career has taken him exactly where he wanted. First, an orthodontic residency in nearby Augusta, Ga. Then, the opportunity to buy an orthodontic practice in Greenwood, just 30 minutes away from his and his wife's hometowns. And, the immense satisfaction of helping a wide range of patients improve their smiles every working day.

Recently Dr. McCarthy achieved another personal goal and career milestone when he attained certification from The American Board of Orthodontics (ABO). He completed his Clinical Examination in September 2018.

"Achieving ABO certification has always been a personal goal," Dr. McCarthy said. "I owed it to myself, my patients and my residency program to demonstrate that I achieved a high level of knowledge and practice."

He had completed the Written Exam in 2008 during residency at the Medical College of Georgia. His department chairman was Dr. Eladio DeLeon, Jr., who later served as ABO president in the 2015-16 year.

"I have so much respect for Dr. DeLeon and he was a big influence on my desire to become certified," Dr. McCarthy said. "I had always intended to complete the Clinical Exam once I had enough cases accumulated. While I had been working on this for many years, I had the mentality that it was always something I could do later. With the phasing out of the traditional case presentation exam and realizing I was coming up on my 10th year in private practice, it pushed me to make certification a priority."

Dr. DeLeon praised Dr. McCarthy: "I'm extremely proud of Douglas for achieving this outstanding professional goal. I believe that achieving his ABO certification status is the ultimate gift that he can give his patients."

Dr. McCarthy attended the Preparatory Course at the AAO Annual Session in May 2018 given by the College of Diplomates of the ABO. "The Preparatory Course provided a lot of information. Dr. Daniel Rejman facilitated the course and did a great job," Dr. McCarthy noted.

"At the course, it was helpful to meet a number of other doctors who had been working toward certification but

had not completed it," he added. "Many doctors there were very excited about the new scenario-based format, and I was torn between taking the traditional case-presentation-based exam and the new exam. Ultimately, I felt encouraged to go ahead and pursue the traditional exam and worked to complete my case reports in time for the September date."



Dr. McCarthy with his wife, Mary Catherine, and their two children.

He also utilized the ABO website as a primary resource.

He added, "It required a lot of time and dedication to prepare for the September exam. I was concerned that some of my cases weren't perfect enough, but I was

encouraged by Dr. DeLeon along with my mentor Dr. Daniel Levy to continue working and present. I'm so glad I did, and it's very rewarding to know that your work can be recognized by your peers as achieving the high standard of care that the Board requires."

Practicing Close to Home

Dr. McCarthy joined the practice of Dr. Phillip McClary in 2009 immediately after residency and purchased the practice in 2012. In addition to the main office in Greenwood, McCarthy-McClary Orthodontics has satellite offices in Newberry (Dr. McCarthy's hometown), Clinton (his wife's hometown) and Greer.

"It's really fun and rewarding to treat friends and families I've known my whole life. We have great patients and treat a wide range of ages and malocclusions," Dr. McCarthy noted.

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He recalled how he connected with Dr. McClary through two people. "First, a fellow resident let me know she had met Dr. McClary and that he had a practice I'd likely be interested in. Second, my dad (Dr. Robert McCartha) is a general dentist in the area and his former partner is a close friend of Dr. McClary. I think we both recognized it was a great match and I'm so fortunate to practice with a great friend and clinician."

He continued, "Dr. McClary and I both entered our partnership with a common vision, and it has worked out very well. We also have a really talented and dedicated staff, and I'm proud for them that I have achieved ABO certification. They know certification means a lot to me and that it takes everyone working together to achieve this goal."

Dr. McCartha is an active member of the AAO and the Southern Association of Orthodontists. He has served as president of the local dental society in Greenwood County for nine years, and was recently honored with membership in the Pierre Fauchard Academy. He obtained his dental degree from the Medical University of South Carolina in addition to his orthodontic residency. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of South Carolina.

"I feel really blessed to be an orthodontist and be able to provide patients with beautiful smiles," Dr. McCartha said. "Becoming ABO certified helps me feel I am providing the best care I can."