Among Family
by Chelsea Knorr, Associate Editor, Dentaltown Magazine

Drs. Kara Lembo and Lindsay Montgomery are sisters, 16 months apart, and owners of Lembo-Montgomery Cosmetic and Family Dentistry in Mooresville, North Carolina. They may be a practice in a small town, but these doctors have built a big-family feel.

How and why did you get into dentistry? What inspired your decision?

Lembo and Montgomery: Our choice of profession and passion for dentistry came through our parents. Dr. John J. Scherer, our father, has owned a dental practice in Northern Michigan for the last 36 years. And our mother is a hygienist in the family practice. Together, they both gave us the inspiration to truly make a difference. We had the opportunity to work alongside our parents at the family practice where we discovered how dentistry can offer a variety of services to people.

What steps did you take to start a practice from scratch?

Lembo and Montgomery: First we needed to find the right location that offered growth in the community and would allow both of us to provide a variety of services for all ages. Once we found our office space, we contacted Henry Schein and they designed our office. One of the great aspects of Henry Schein is it has a 3D computerization imaging of your office design. It also recommended what contracting company to use to build out the office design. Schein helped us with a contact at Pelton & Crane to design our chairs and cabinetry products. The project took four months to complete and we had a wonderful experience with everyone who was involved. We opened February 7, 2011.

What is your practice philosophy?

Lembo and Montgomery: To provide quality dental care in a state-of-the-art environment with careful attention to detail and personal respect to the people of our community. Also, we encourage our patients to be educated about the benefits of dentistry. This can improve their self-image and self-worth.

You two are sisters. Why did you decide to open a practice together?

Lembo and Montgomery: We decided to open a practice together simply because we are sisters who enjoy what we do and we believe in and trust one another. There is no sibling rivalry at all. We
Office Highlights

Bonding Agents
- GLUMA Comfort Bond and Desensitizer from Heraeus

Burs
- Komet S-Diamonds
- NeoDiamond Carbide Burs
- Meisinger Carbide Burs

Cements
- 3M ESPE RelyX Unicem 2 Automix and RelyX Luting Cement
- Calibra Dual-cured Resin Cement
- Inverse Resin Cement for Veneers

Implants
- BTI
- Straumann

Impression Material
- Aquasil PVS and Aquasil Digital

Infection Control
- Autoclave M11
- Hydrim
- KaVo Quattrocare
- Statim M3

Patient Financing
- CareCredit

Restorative
- 3M ESPE Filtek Supreme Ultra
- Embrace for Pit and Fissure Sealants
- Surefil Flow

Technology
- BIOLASE iLase Diode Laser
- CAESY Patient Education
- Canon Intra-oral Camera
- Dentrix Software G4
- Dexis Digital X-ray Sensor and Software
- Elements Obturation Unit
- Kavo Handpieces
- Smile Design
- Sybron Endo Rotary NiTi Twisted Files
- Symmetry IQ Peizon
- VELscope Vx Oral Cancer Screening Device

Whitening
- Ultradent Opalescence In-office and Take-home Kit

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Practice Location: Mooresville, North Carolina
Practice Size: Nine Operatories
Staff: One Hygienist, Two Dental Assistants, Two Financial Coordinators
Web site: www.mooresville-dentist.com
are very close in our relationship as sisters and as business partners. We want each other to succeed and the best way to do so is to help each other.

Dr. Montgomery, you have a military background. What did you do in the Navy?

Montgomery: I was in the U.S. Navy for five years as a general dentist at the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina. During my service, I was deployed overseas in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005, providing dental care to military personal and coalition forces. My experience as a general dentist in the U.S. Navy was rewarding since I was able to provide dental services to men and women in the Armed Forces ensuring they're in good oral health before deploying to combat. I was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for my efforts.

And Dr. Lembo, you had a practice before the Mooresville location. What did you learn from the first one? What did you do differently when you opened the second time around?

Lembo: I had a successful family dental practice for five years in Detroit, Michigan, prior to moving to...
North Carolina. I learned how to be a businesswoman on my own, along with practicing dentistry. I wore many hats when I owned that practice and took on many responsibilities myself. The second time around when I joined my sister in starting a practice, I was not alone. I got to share the responsibility with someone else and interact with a colleague who was doing what I love to do.

What is a typical day in your practice like?

Lembo and Montgomery: The office is open five days a week. The open office concept helps people feel welcomed and comforted as they walk in, and the cool colors and curved arches give a sense of calmness. We want patients to have their minds at ease, to feel like they’re home.

Treatment varies from day to day – restorative, cosmetic or recalls for all ages. We have families come in together for treatment at the same time, and then the next hour their friends come in to be treated. We definitely have a community feel to our practice. Treating all our patients like they are part of our family is what makes our practice different.

Female dentists are still the minority. What’s it like to be a woman in dentistry?

Lembo and Montgomery: We are very grateful, as women dentists, to offer top-quality care, enjoy our family life and be a part of an outstanding profession. We love what we do, and together we are enjoying what we have built.

What is your biggest source of new patients?

Lembo and Montgomery: Word-of-mouth referrals and our Web site. We market through advertising, sponsor sports teams and community service.

What is the competition like in your area?

Lembo: The other general dentists have been very welcoming and encouraging. The area we are located in, Lake Norman, which is 30 miles north of Charlotte, North Carolina, is where small businesses help support other small businesses. Businesses grow beside one another and each wants the others to succeed.

Montgomery: It is very comforting, this area brings a sense of closeness, togetherness and a feeling of being at home no matter where you grew up originally.

How has the economy affected your practice?

Lembo and Montgomery: The economy has affected our practice when insurance coverage for the patient has changed either because of job loss or a new employer changes the dental

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insurance plan. We strive to provide customer service and treat patients well, not allowing the economy to be a negative factor to our success.

We think the biggest problem in dentistry right now is insurance coverage. Patients’ insurance coverage hasn’t changed in the last few decades regarding the maximum amount they are allowed to use per year. Insurance companies are dictating what to cover and how much. Some patients must put treatment on hold because of finances.

What is your favorite part about dentistry?

Lembo and Montgomery: We love all the services for patients to achieve beautiful and healthy smiles. This can be a combination of services such as restorative, cosmetic, implants, removable, bonding or simply whitening to give confidence.

Tell me about you and your families:

Lembo: My husband, Joe, of 11 years and I have two children – Joey who is four years old, and Isabel who is two. I enjoy outdoor activities, traveling and family.

Montgomery: Darran, whom I’ve been married to for five years works at the Marine Corps Engineering School at Camp Lejeune as a training analyst. We enjoy the outdoors, particularly the warm weather of the Carolinas.

Both doctors cite family as a priority, and conclude their families extend far past their children and spouses. Walk into Lembo-Montgomery Cosmetic and Family Dentistry and you’ll be among family.

### Drs. Lembo and Montgomery’s Top Five

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<tr>
<th>Dentrix</th>
<th>Velscope Vx</th>
<th>3M ESPE Filtek Supreme Ultra</th>
<th>Dexis Digital X-rays</th>
<th>KaVo Master Series GENTLEsilence Handpieces</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When did you start using it?</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2011</td>
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<td>Why can you not work without it?</td>
<td>Allows our office to go paperless. More efficient with practice production and time management.</td>
<td>The non-invasive device is easy to use to detect oral cancer diseases in early stages. Patients do not have to rinse first.</td>
<td>Easy to use and polishable. Love the results.</td>
<td>Size is comfortable to patients, visual tool to discuss with patients and good contrast.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When do you use it?</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>On all new patients, recall patients and at-risk patients.</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Daily</td>
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<td>How do you market it to patients?</td>
<td>Each treatment room has a computer so patients can see its usage.</td>
<td>By educating patients and with signage in our office.</td>
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<td>What would you change about it?</td>
<td>To be able to send messages through the software and have more color codes available to use for procedures.</td>
<td>To be able to take an image to show patients what we are looking for.</td>
<td>The cartridge carrier would be in a smaller size.</td>
<td>Sensors would be cordless.</td>
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