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### laboratory of the month

## Lab Owner Makes the Most of Chairside Niche

Becky Tyre, Associate Editor

When Massoudah Faiz opened her C&B laboratory a decade ago, she made working chairside a core part of her business model. “Previously when I worked at other labs, I saw frequent remakes due to lapses in communication or details getting lost in the translation of a written prescription,” explains Faiz, who emigrated from Afghanistan in 1989 and graduated from Gwinnett Technical College’s dental technology program in 1996. “For the few cases we were able to work on directly with the dentist and patient, I saw firsthand the value of working chairside, the decrease in remakes and increase in client satisfaction.”

Currently, her two-person lab in Atlanta services five regular customers and she works chairside for 70% of her cases. Her dentist-clients schedule consultation visits for complex cases so she’s in the office for the appointment; she meets with the patient to take shades and photos and to discuss his expectations for the restoration. These meetings can take 15 minutes for a single anterior crown or an hour for a more difficult case where she goes over multiple treatment options. She

fabricates the restoration at her lab and once it’s completed, she’s in the office the day of the seating to make any last-minute adjustments, such as toning down a shade, reshaping a restoration, or adding or taking away material.

“To truly customize and create an ideal restoration, I believe I need to be chairside, working as a team with the dentist; my doctors share this same philosophy,” she says. “At the beginning of the case, we plan it methodically and, since we’re all on the same page throughout the process, we get great results.”

Initially, she built her business on referrals but to market her niche and reach for a higher caliber of clientele, she worked with a video production company to create a video for her website. They interviewed her on camera about her skills and chairside philosophy, edited the footage down to a two-minute video, and then she posted it to her website and Facebook page.

“I wanted to explain to potential clients, in my own words, what it is that I do and how I’m different from other labs. I wanted them to see that it’s just me and not a

large company,” says Faiz, who notes she has connected with one new client as a result of the video and hopes to continue growing her laboratory by adding one or two more technicians.

As an Afghani woman, Faiz appreciates the success and opportunities she has in the U.S. “I come from a country where women are still so oppressed. It’s great to have the freedom to own my own business,” she explains. “I love what I do because I get to be part of transforming people’s smiles and that gives me job satisfaction I can’t get from anything else.” 

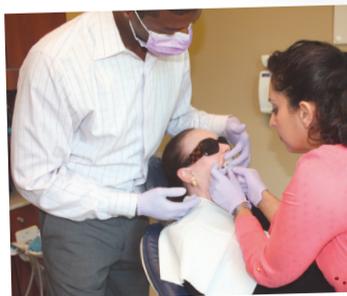


Massoudah Faiz completed this case last year with Dr. Charlie Cooper for his accreditation in the AACD. Tooth #9 was replaced with an implant using e.max material with a zirconia custom-milled abutment.



To hone her skills, Faiz takes AACD courses and has gotten heavily involved with digital photography. “I invested in a professional camera and it’s become a great tool. To do good work, you need the right information. I can’t have the patient with me all the time, so it’s vital to have accurate pictures,” she says.

Faiz (center) attends a patient consultation at Dr. Jeff Ballard’s office. The patient was interested in getting veneers and the dental team is explaining her options using a sample waxup model.



Faiz and Dr. Didier Guillaume look at a patient’s teeth to determine color and figure out the best material choice. Faiz rents space in the office suite next to Dr. Guillaume’s prosthodontics office. The location is within five miles of all her current clients, allowing her to leave the lab during the day to make chairside appointments.

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Visit [www.LMTmag.com/articles/chairside\\_niche](http://www.LMTmag.com/articles/chairside_niche) to see Faiz’s marketing video!