

BUSINESSES MAKE HOBOKEN WORK

PHOTOS BY ALYSSA BREDIN

LUCAS DENTAL ASSOCIATES

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Dr. Robin Lucas opened Lucas Dental Associates at 232 Bloomfield St. in 2000 and now has been putting beautiful smiles on the faces of Hobokenites for more than 15 years.

According to Lucas, Hoboken citizens have a wide range of dental needs.

"In Hoboken, it's a mixed bag of people, but there are a lot of young professionals who take their appearance seriously," she says. "We have a range of cosmetic needs that come through the door, and we definitely meet them. It can be as simple as Invisalign for people who want to straighten their teeth, or a chipped tooth, we meet all needs."

Like many of her patients, Dr. Lucas is a young professional and entrepreneur. With such a high demand in a small city, she has now opened a second office, Blooming Smiles Pediatric Dentistry, at 200 Bloomfield in order to better serve the community.

"We grow as needed," she says. "I believe that it's important for you to do what you do well before you consider growing because it's not about quantity; it's about quality. You have to maintain that delicate balance."

Lucas understands that maintaining that balance is key. With more than 20 years of experience in dentistry, she has found ways to help her patients overcome fear of going to the dentist.

"One of the things I like to do is take baby steps instead of jumping in knee deep," Lucas says. "Some people need to build trust, so they can see that it is all really in their head. So I like to start with something simple and easy. I give people the time they need to help get over their anxiety."

Lucas knows the various extremes of dentophobia and tries to provide the most comfortable environment for all her patients. She allows patients to listen to music on their earbuds, offers a massage chair to help them relax, and streams TV shows on Hulu to distract them.

"It's my name on the door, and it's my nature," Lucas says. "I'm a people person. It's not a stretch for me to relate and communicate with people."

Now with two fully staffed locations, Lucas provides the quickest, simplest, and most comfortable experience for her patients. Technological advancements such as digital X-rays, intraoral cameras, and preview photos of proposed smile enhancements show



DR. ROBIN LUCAS

patients exactly what is happening inside their mouths in real time.

Paying It Forward

Lucas believes in giving back to the community. Through the non-profit organization TRUE Mentors, she has created an internship program for high school students who have an interest in dentistry and want to earn school credits.

On the first Friday of February, Lucas holds an annual outreach program for children called Give Kids a Smile. She opens her office to children for free dentistry and to

see what the office is like. The outreach program has had an impact on the children, and on her.

"Over the years, we've found out that a lot of kids who are taking advantage of the program, it's their first dental encounter," Lucas says. "And a lot of times we see them return later, and for me that's fulfilling."

Says Lucas: "The goal is to accommodate people and give them what they came in for to the best of our abilities, and I definitely do feel like we do accomplish that most of the time." — Mario A. Martinez