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Dental Profession Proves Strong Bond For Grubbs Family

No proof exists that the dental profession is hereditary, but it certainly runs in the Grubbs' family. Dr. Lewis Grubbs, a Jackson dentist, is the father of three children who have chosen careers in dental health.

Lewis and his wife, Chyrl, couldn't be prouder of sons Dr.

Clay Grubbs, a Jackson dentist; Lee Grubbs, a second-year dental student in the School of Dentistry; and daughter, Mary Elizabeth Grubbs, a second-year dental hygiene student at UMC.

"I never pushed them," Lewis said. "But once they decided this was what they wanted to do, I was 110 percent behind them."

Clay, Lee and Mary Elizabeth agree the attraction to the dental field was a direct result of their father.

"We saw that he had great relationships with his patients," Lee said. "And he got to spend time with family as well. It truly was an ideal lifestyle."

Mary Elizabeth said it was important that her father was present at her after-school activities.

"He had an 8-to-5 job and that meant he could go to school functions," she said.

Clay also enjoyed growing up in a dental family, and like his father, he makes sure he spends time with his wife and child. He also enjoys, as his father does, having the personal relationships with his patients.

The children followed in their father's footsteps, according to Chyrl, because they saw that their father loved his profession.



(UMC photo by Jay Ferchaud)

Bright smiles come naturally for the Grubbs family, from left, Lee, Mary Elizabeth, Lewis, and Clay.

“He loves his job. It says so much for someone to enjoy going to work every day,” she said.

“I enjoy this profession because I work with people, and I help people,” Lewis said. “The hours are very regulated, and you make a decent living at it. I was pretty much available for the children’s sports and after-school activities, and I didn’t work weekends.”

Lewis said he always thought about becoming a dentist, but did not fulfill his dream until he graduated from Mississippi State University with a business degree.

“I had a football scholarship to Mississippi State,” he said. “I basically didn’t have any interest in anything but football. When I graduated with a degree in business and started working, I realized that was what I didn’t want to do.”

Chyrl remembers clearly the day Lewis told her he wanted to go back to school.

“We bought a house one week I found out I was pregnant the next week, and Lewis walked in a week later and told me he wanted to be a dentist,” she said. “I said, ‘Well, if you want to be one, you better do it now and don’t waste any more time.’”

A 1983 graduate of the School of Dentistry, Lewis said it’s interesting that his children are going through some of the same things he went through as a student.

“I’m extremely proud of them,” he said. “Never in my wildest dreams did I think they would do this.”

Although Chyrl said she sometimes feels left out with all the dental talk, she is grateful her children are so successful.

And it is no secret that the Grubbs family is close knit, with all living within blocks of each other in the Belhaven area of Jackson.

“I had a wonderful mother and father who believed in strong family ties,” Chyrl said. “For me personally, my children will always be my children. I’ve gained two daughter-in-laws and a grandchild and I absolutely love them.

“No one is there for you like your family, and we feel very loved by our children. We are very proud they have chosen this profession.”

What makes it even more of a blessing for Chyrl and Lewis is the role UMC has played throughout their lives, especially when it comes to son, Clay.

UMC took care of Clay when he was diagnosed with leukemia when he was 21 months old.

“Watching Clay go full circle has been extremely joyful,” Chyrl said.

Lewis said he doesn’t know what the future holds but he would love to work with all of his children.

“Actually Clay and I worked together for four months, and then he went out on his own because he had a great opportunity he couldn’t pass up,” he said. “At some point, I’d like to maybe do something with them.”

-Jenny Woodruff (1-1-07)

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