



Dr. Jane Whang

Regional Director of Clinical, East Region

 COLUMBIA | COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE

Helping Around the World

Dr. Jane Whang's volunteer work spans two decades and two careers providing much-needed services around the globe. She's volunteered in countries throughout Africa and Asia, including China, Nepal, and Thailand. This summer, Dr. Whang will travel to San Cristobal for her first mission trip to Mexico.

She started volunteering as a teacher, before shifting course to dentistry. Dr. Whang often is the only dentist on the mission trips, where she treats as many as 40 to 50 patients a day. The need is so great in the communities she visits, that long lines typically form hours before the clinical team has even arrived.

"Most of the time, we're doing emergency care to get the patients out of pain," she said. "They're in so much pain, but they don't have access to care or the money to pay for it. When you help them, they're so grateful and appreciative."

A Non-Traditional Path

Dr. Whang took a non-traditional path to dentistry, led by her desire to help people and provide that kind of hands-on care. When she was younger, she dreamed of being a teacher. She first became interested in the medical field as an

undergraduate at Barnard College, but decided to pursue her long-time goal instead. She earned her M.A. in Elementary Education from Columbia University and taught 8th grade science in New York City for four years. Soon, however, her interest in medicine inspired her to return to school.

Seeing the Results of Her Work

"I knew I didn't want a traditional career in medicine," Dr. Whang recalled. "I was pondering different paths and dentistry came up. I was interested in the hands-on aspect to it. I liked that you could clearly see the final results and know when you've made a difference for your patient."

She went on to get her D.D.S. from Columbia University College of Dental Medicine. While it was a somewhat circuitous path, Dr. Whang said she is glad to have had the experience teaching. "I

really think it was a blessing because it's allowed me to be a different kind of dentist and it led me to Benevis because it aligned with my desire to work with children," she said.

After graduation, Dr. Whang joined a private practice. While she enjoyed the clinical work, she felt something was missing. A volunteer job in a neighboring state compelled her to take her career in a different direction.

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(Continued)

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Joining Benevis

Dr. Whang joined Benevis in 2009 as an Associate Dentist working in the Washington, D.C. area. The company's mission to provide access to care for underserved communities was right in line with the volunteer work she was so passionate about and had been doing for years. At first, she wasn't interested in going into management, but her manager and mentor saw potential in her. Now, Dr. Whang serves as Benevis' Regional Director of Clinical for the East Region and strives



to inspire young dentists in the same way.

"She challenged me and supported me, and I'm so thankful for her," Dr. Whang said. "She recognized

things in me that I didn't recognize in myself. I want to grow and mentor young dentists to challenge themselves in different ways so they can really do their best."

As a Dental Services Organization (DSO), Benevis provides Dr. Whang the flexibility to continue her volunteer work abroad. Unfortunately, she sees some of the same problems here in the U.S. as on her mission trips. She still recalls helping to

open a new Benevis practice several years ago in an underserved area of Salisbury, Md. Nearly every patient who came in had rampant tooth decay.

Making an Impact

"It was a bit overwhelming and kind of sad," Dr. Whang said. "But now when I go back there, I see the same patients who have been coming to us for years and they are cavity free. You really know that we've made an impact in the community."

In addition to helping individual patients, it's fulfilling to know they have learned better dental care, she added. When they pass that knowledge along to their children, generations will benefit from better oral health.

"Oftentimes when I go on these mission trips, I'm doing the same things that I do here, but it gives you a renewed affirmation of what you do," Dr. Whang said. "I just realize, wow, God led me to a profession that really allows me to make a difference. I'm really thankful for that."



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About Benevis

Since 2002, Benevis has provided dental practice management services to over 150+ supported offices across 15 states. With a network of 45 different brands, we provide care to more than 620,000 patients each year. Eighty-five percent of those patients are enrolled in state Medicaid programs. Benevis is dedicated to improving lives and communities by providing high-quality dental care in a fun, compassionate environment.

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