



Dr. Julian Stewart

Franklin Dental & Braces, Forest Park, Ga.

A Happy Change of Course

As a young undergraduate student at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Ala., Dr. Julian Stewart initially planned to go to medical school and become a physician. A visit from a single guest speaker caused him to change course completely.

It was a regular Friday meeting of the university's science club, and a general dentist came to talk with the group. He described his practice, his lifestyle, and the work he did every day. Dr. Stewart realized he could have a fulfilling and meaningful professional life working with his hands and helping others, and good work-life balance at the same time.

"I listened to him talk about his life and his career, and it was like a lightbulb went off in my head," said Dr. Stewart, who practices at Franklin Dental & Braces in Forest Park, Ga. "I wanted to be a dentist."

Rich Culture at HBCU

As a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) student, Dr. Stewart said he enjoyed the rich culture, legacy, and camaraderie at Oakwood University. He knew he wanted to go to an HBCU again for dental school, so he applied to Howard University College of Dentistry.

"As I was deciding between schools, I leaned more toward black institutions based on my experiences and my interviews," Dr. Stewart said. "The faculty looked like me, the students looked like me, and it was a very caring and close environment — that is what led me to choose Howard."

I think it's important for these kids to have someone come in and work with them so they can see, 'There's someone who looks like me and he's an orthodontist. I can do that one day, too!'

A Mission to Serve

The dental school's mission centers on serving the underserved, so many of the first patients Dr. Stewart worked with as he learned his profession came from low-income communities. After graduating, he was drawn to Benevis because it was a natural fit with his training and his passion for serving others.

"At Benevis, their mission is basically the same, to service the underserved," Dr. Stewart said. "The mission lined up with how I had been practicing, what I believe in, and the people who I want to serve."

Working at Benevis allows him to help improve access to high-quality dental care for all. Dr. Stewart also values the opportunity to be a role model and an inspiration for his patients and other young people in the communities where he works.

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Having a Focus

"That is a real focal point for me," he said. "I think it's important for these kids to have someone come in and work with them so they can see, 'There's someone who looks like me and he's an orthodontist. I can do that one day, too!'"

During more than seven years in practice with Benevis, Dr. Stewart said he has seen numerous patients come in for their first dental visit shy and ashamed of how they look. It happens a lot with both children and adults. They'll have low self-esteem and tell him they don't like to smile. When he asks why, they confess it's because they don't like their teeth.

"So much of our self-confidence is connected to dental health and the way our teeth look," Dr. Stewart said. "We're able to go from that to finishing treatment when they have more self-esteem, they feel good about smiling, and their teeth look amazing. It makes such a difference in their confidence and how they carry themselves. That is why I do what I do."



About Franklin

Franklin Dental & Braces is one of Georgia's leaders in Medicaid and affordable dental care for children and their families. Supported by Benevis, Franklin Dental's nine locations serves over 70,000 children on Medicaid annually. Franklin Dental and its doctors are committed to improving lives by providing high-quality dental care in a fun, compassionate environment. To learn more about Franklin Dental, visit FranklinDentalGroup.com.



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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