



Hardly a month goes by without a request from a reader for a list of the best dentists in Hawai'i. At long last, we are answering those requests.

We publish both a best doctors and a best lawyers list, drawn from national sources. With best dentists, we were forced to generate our own list.

Who better to ask, we reasoned, than dentists themselves? There may be nearly 1,000 dentists practicing in Hawai'i. We managed to capture 883 of them in a database, and sent

best

dentists in hawai'i

Survey by the staff of HONOLULU Magazine, with assistance from Caryn Yu, Dawn Sakamoto, Bert Oshiro, Brita De Olden, Janice Kekoa and Michael Keany.

all of them a mailer, with the following question:

If a close friend or family member needed a Hawai'i dentist in this specialty, and you yourself could not treat them, who would you recommend?

We then listed general dentistry and the seven dental specialties our readers were most likely to need. Other specialties, such as oral and maxillofacial pathology or public health dentistry, don't tend to have private patients (although since public health dentistry is so important, we interviewed Dr. Mark Greer, head of dentistry for the state Dept. of Health, on page 24).

Although there were a few complaints from the profession, we got a remarkable response, 231 replies. That's a return rate of more than 26 percent, an extraordinary return for a direct mail piece. Hawai'i's dentists shared their knowledge with us, and we are pleased to share their recommendations with our readers.

Tammy Chang-Motooka

orthodontics

✓ Tammy Chang-Motooka's part-time college job inspired her choice of profession. She worked for Honolulu orthodontist Dr. Steven Sue and loved the job so much that after graduating from the University of Hawai'i, she went off to Kansas City to study dentistry at the University of Missouri, then to a residency at Northwestern in Chicago. Her husband, Randall Motooka, is also a Honolulu dentist. "We have separate practices, it's the key to our marriage," she says with a laugh.

Eight years ago, Chang-Motooka

bought the practice of Peter George, dentist and Olympic weightlifter. "What I learned from him was to stay on top of technology. He kept learning and getting better until the day he retired."

"I really like what I do," she says. "Orthodontists change people's lives by giving them new smiles." Her patients range in age from 4 to 77, with about half of them adults. "Whether it's adults or kids, orthodonture is a happy specialty. The best moment is when the braces come off and the patients see the result. We celebrate and give them a gift."



JIMMY FORREST