

First Impressions: Four pediatric dentists given Wisconsin's top small business award from SBA

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"They expand to six clinics – creating jobs and increased access to dental care for rural children."

WAUSAU WI – A tough economy hasn't deterred four pediatric dentists from growing six dental clinics that provide state-of-the art care for children in rural communities located in central and northern Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Small Business Association (SBA) took notice of the accomplishments and awarded Drs. Thomas Turner, Corey Brimacombe, Carl Hash, and Joshua Spiegl with First Impressions Pediatric Dentistry, Orthodontic and Oral/Maxiofacial Surgery Services in Wausau, the "Small Business Persons of the Year" award to be held in Washington, D.C. in May.

"We are honoring their achievements and spirit of entrepreneurship, innovation and determination, says SBA Administrator Karen Mills. "It is this spirit that continues to drive economic recovery, economic growth and job creation."

"This is a wonderful honor and speaks to the dedication of our 9 dentists and 73 employees who give their best to provide quality dental care to children every day. We will accept the award in May on behalf of our entire team," says Dr. Carl Hash. "We've come a long way since opening First Impressions."

Dr. Turner joined the practice in 1998, Dr. Brimacombe in 2003 and Dr. Spiegl in 2006. In 2000, the business opened a clinic in Rhinelander, and again expanded by opening an office in Stevens Point in 2005. Further growth of the business occurred in 2010 with the opening of a second area clinic in the Village of Weston and a new location in Medford. Their sixth facility opened in Shawano in the summer of 2011.

"We utilized the SBA 504 loan financing program to construct three buildings and equipment acquisitions allowing us to service more patients in the rural areas of north central Wisconsin. The loan also allowed us to broaden the diversity of patients seeking specialty care," says Dr. Turner. "Research and our own experience show there is a real need for dental care in rural communities. Expansion has allowed us to fill that need."

First Impressions is the largest provider of Pediatric dentistry services to Medicaid recipients. "As we've grown we remain committed to the Medicaid population in qualified market areas of Wausau and Rhinelander," says Dr. Brimacombe. "First Impressions succeeded in qualifying for and completing a New Market Tax Credit Financing Program (NMTC). In the future, we hope to participate further in the 504 programs, with additional NMTC markets as well as the newly formed 504 debt-refinancing program."

First Impressions is one of 50 state winners that qualify for the U.S. Small Business Person(s) of the Year award. The national SBA winner will be announced in Washington D.C. at the U.S. Small Business Administration's celebration of Small Business Week, May 20-22. Free live webcasting will be available at the National Small Business Week website – <http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com>.