



Shadowing and Assisting a General Dentist



Manuel Martin

College Park Scholars – Science & Global Change Program

Neurobiology and Physiology

mmarti21@terpmail.umd.edu

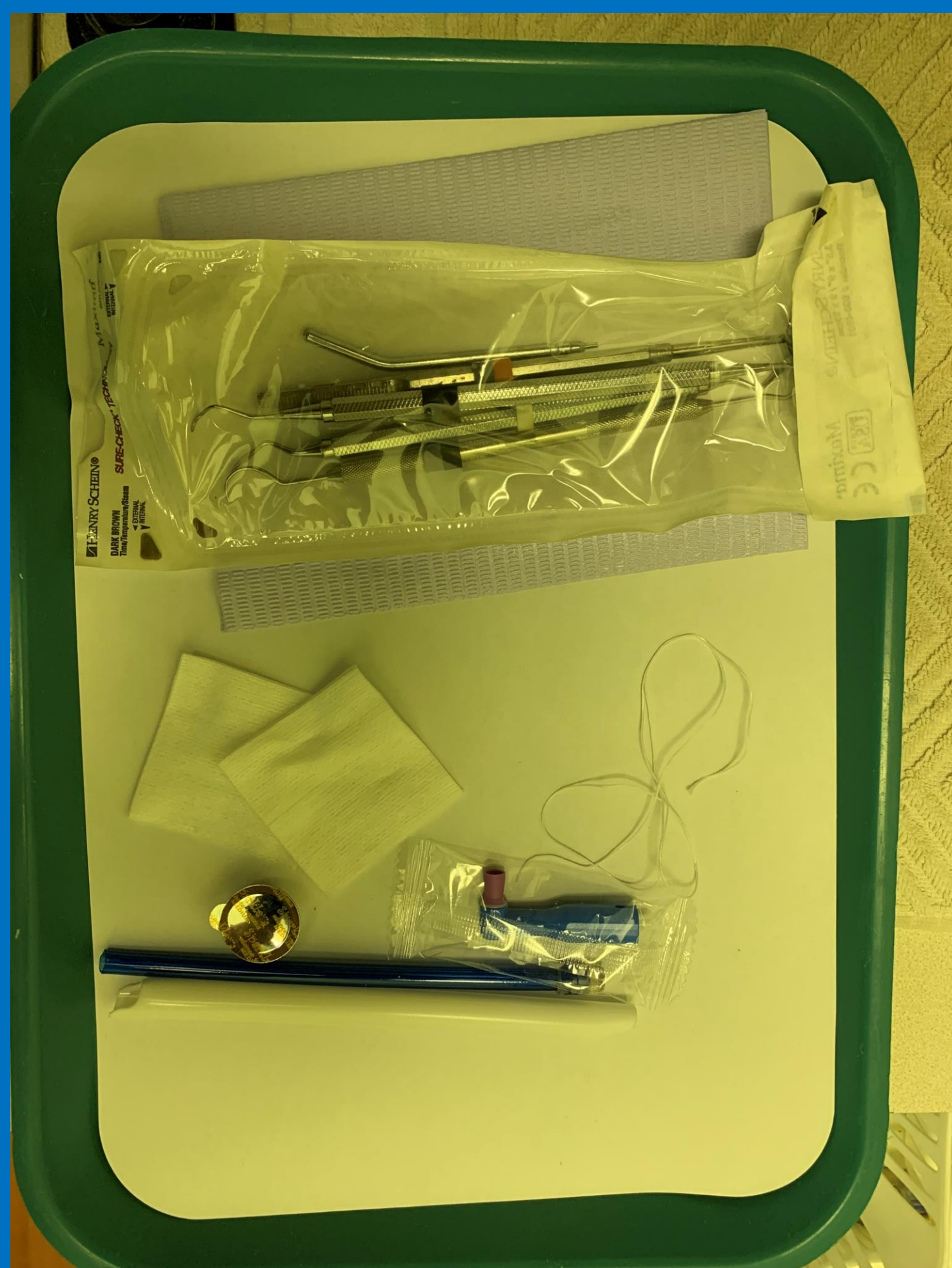
College Park Scholars Academic Showcase, May 6, 2022

Introduction

I am interested in going to Dental school after undergrad, so I spent the previous summer learning about what a general dentist does daily. I observed a dentist perform procedures and got some hands-on experience assisting and using some of the tools they use.

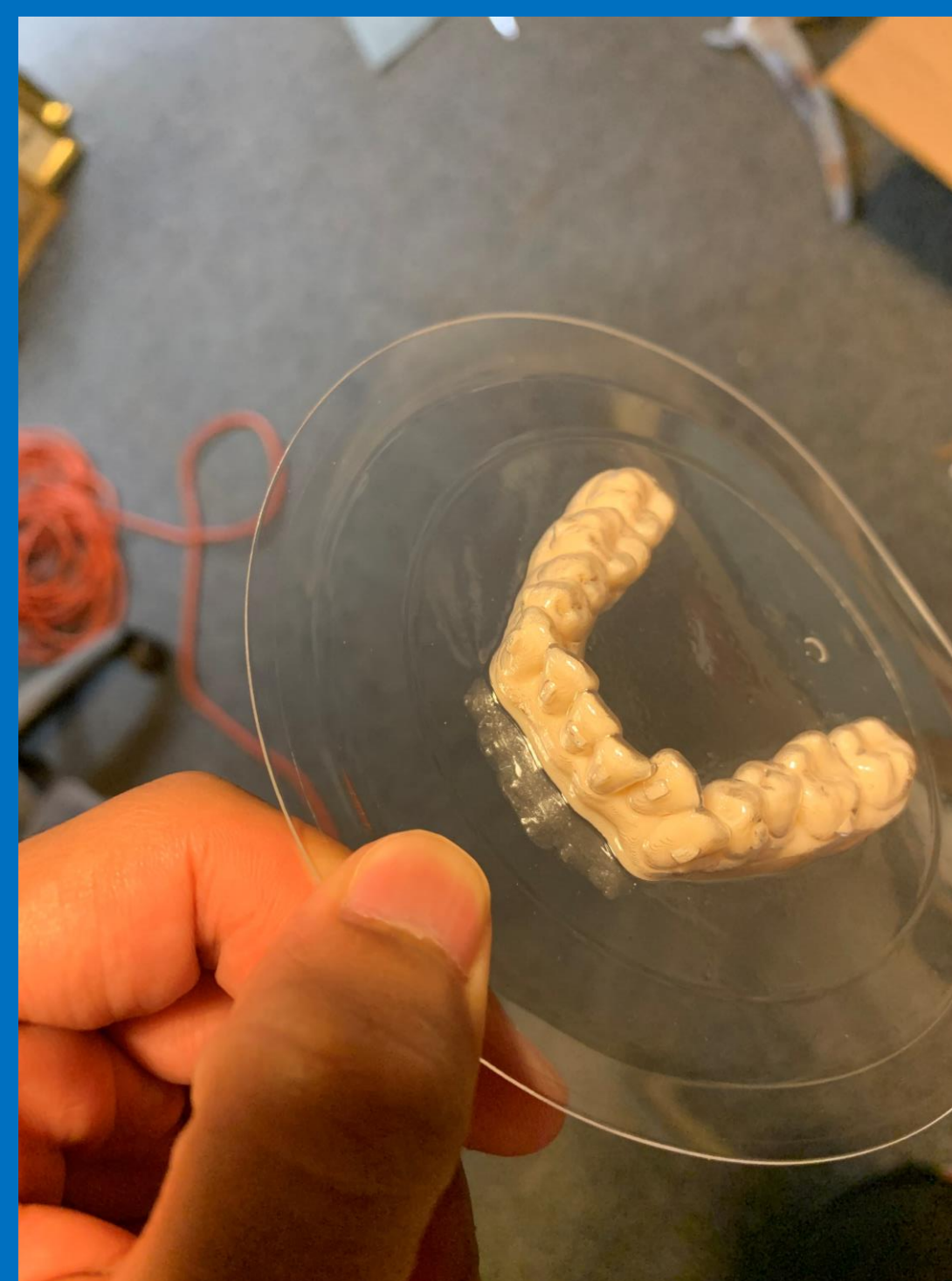
Activities:

At the dental office I watched all the procedures and served as the dental assistant for many of them by working the suction and handing the dentist the tools he needed. After procedures I would clean and sterilize the instruments that were just used as well as prepare new trays for upcoming patients. I learned how to make digital molds of the mouth using a scanner and learned how to and made Invisalign trays.



This is a typical tray used for a simple cleaning that a patient would typically get every six months.

Something not included in this picture is the ultrasonic scaler which would be used in the “deeper” cleaning where dental tartar, or calculus would be removed.



This is an Invisalign tray that I made. First the patient's mouth was scanned and turned into a digital mold that was then 3-D printed. The plastic was then heated, and vacuum sealed onto the mold and finally cut out.

Impact:

I learned that there is so much more to general dentistry that I had initially thought. This experience also reinforced my interest in the field of dentistry, and I am even more interested in going to dental school. I really enjoyed learning about dentistry and interacting with all the patients.

Future Work:

I enjoyed this experience a lot, so I am eager do assisting again. I would also be interested in shadowing some specialties in dentistry as well as other general dental practices. I am interested in seeing how other places and doctors run their practices and help their patients.

Site Information:

Main Street Dental

414 Main St., Laurel, MD 20707

Dr. Nilesh Kansagra D.M.D

Main Street Dental’s mission is to get patients out of pain, educate patients to prevent further damage, provide affordable dentistry, build patient’s confidence, and build long term relationships with patients.

Issues Confronting Site:

Due to COVID-19 we had to limit to seeing only one patient at a time. This was especially difficult when patients had emergencies and had to come in without appointments made much earlier in advance.



These are the tools used to clean and sterilize used dental instruments. On the left is the ultrasonic cleaner which cleans off any dirt/blood on the tools. The autoclave on the right heats the tools up to a very high temperature to kill off any remaining bacteria and sterilize the tools.

Acknowledgments:

Thank you Dr. Holtz and Dr. Merck for supporting us through our first two years of college. Thank you Dr. Kansagra and the rest of the staff at Main Street Dental for giving me the opportunity to learn about dentistry.



SCIENCE AND GLOBAL CHANGE

