

Crown 9U



Teamwork and quality control made this technician team a winner. *From l. to r.:* Curtis Henrichs, CDT; Richard Robinson; Candice Turcotte; and J. Scott Ellis, CDT.

Technician team: Curtis Henrichs, CDT, model work and final quality control; Richard Robinson, die trim and metal finishing; Gaynell Gerard, CDT, waxer; Candice Turcotte, opaque; and J. Scott Ellis, CDT, porcelain buildup and finish

Laboratory: Western Dental Arts, Inc., an 18-person C&B laboratory in Billings, Montana, owned by Teri and Curtis Henrichs.

All for one: Teamwork is a big part of what makes Western Dental Arts a

successful laboratory. “If one person doesn’t do his job correctly, the end result is never good,” says co-owner Curtis Henrichs. With that in mind, all technicians perform a quality check on the crown before passing it on to the next department. In addition, several technicians have over 20 years of industry experience and team members rely on each other’s expertise. “Having that vast knowledge to draw from has always been one of our strengths, especially when a difficult case comes in,” he says.

The *Crown Challenge* helped bring

the team even closer together. “It was exciting and fun,” he says. “We were all laughing and enjoying ourselves. We always knew we did good work and this is proof!” However, it was a bittersweet experience, since the laboratory lost Gaynell Gerard, the waxer on the *Crown Challenge* case, to cancer in August.

The 60/40 plan: “Montana isn’t very heavily populated; the entire state consists of less than one-million people,” says Curtis. “As a result, there aren’t that many doctors to choose from.” To keep business booming, the Henrichses implement a 60/40 business plan: Montana doctors make up 60% of their clients, while the other 40% come from out-of-state. The theory being that if the local economy is down, the out-of-state clients carry the lab through. Until recently, those clients have come to the lab via word-of-mouth referrals. Even though Curtis feels this is the best approach, they recently decided to implement a direct-mail marketing campaign to grow their client base even further.

Chance encounter: Curtis and Teri used to work for different laboratories and met when Teri came into Curtis’s lab to borrow supplies. They have been married for six years and, together, opened Western Dental Arts five years ago. **LMT**



This crown is in the finals because of its good contours, well-adapted fit and nice glaze technique. Our judges also give it high scores in the fit and marginal integrity categories.