
Dr. U. Volunteer Dentist Louisiana

Louisiana

Local Hero: Dr. U.

Dr. U. has been in practice since 1984, first in New Orleans and then in Metairie. For many of these years he has also been the board chair of Louisiana's DDS program. "I was recruited by the coordinator, who was a personal friend," he recalls. "She was very persuasive." Now Dr. U. is also extremely persuasive on behalf of the organization. "These people really need something," he says. "It's an easy thing for any dentist to do and it changes their lives. You take a patient who is very self-conscious and has low self esteem, and you fix them up. They're not thinking about their teeth all the time, so they smile. It's really heartwarming." Dr. U.'s most recent DDS patient suffers from a mild bi-polar disorder. "We're doing orthodontics, five crowns and a partial denture," he says enthusiastically. "We're not finished yet, and she's just smiling all the time." As the state DDS chair, Dr. U. helps to define the issues and serves as a liaison with the Louisiana Dental Association and other organizations. In the wake of Katrina, it can be difficult for dentists to fit in volunteer work. Nevertheless, Dr. U. says, "Louisiana dentists have really stepped up to the plate. In spite of all the devastation around us, we are on track to volunteering the biggest amount of dentistry ever!"