

Em-*BRA*CE-ing Green

By Jamie Lober

Dr. Alana Saxe is committed to reducing her carbon footprint, *one patient at a time*

Makeup & Hair: Rain Andreani & Junior Renteria

Photographer: Michael Wayne Photography

Summerlin Orthodontist Dr. Alana Saxe is on a mission. She wants to "straighten up the world one smile at a time." Her true passion, of course, is oral health but Dr. Saxe is also working to protect and preserve our planet. "I made a pledge a couple of years ago to simplify and get healthy. Now I'm applying that notion to all aspects of life," said Saxe.

Much like aligning teeth, big changes start with small adjustments. Saxe kicked off her own clean earth campaign at square one, designing an environmentally-green office which truly sets Saxe Orthodontics apart from the pack. Her loft-style boutique practice features energy-efficient window shades and a LED video wall. The floors and countertops are made from recycled material and the walls are covered in earth-friendly paint. Six-second hand dryers are set up in the restrooms and a reverse osmosis faucet was installed instead of a water cooler.

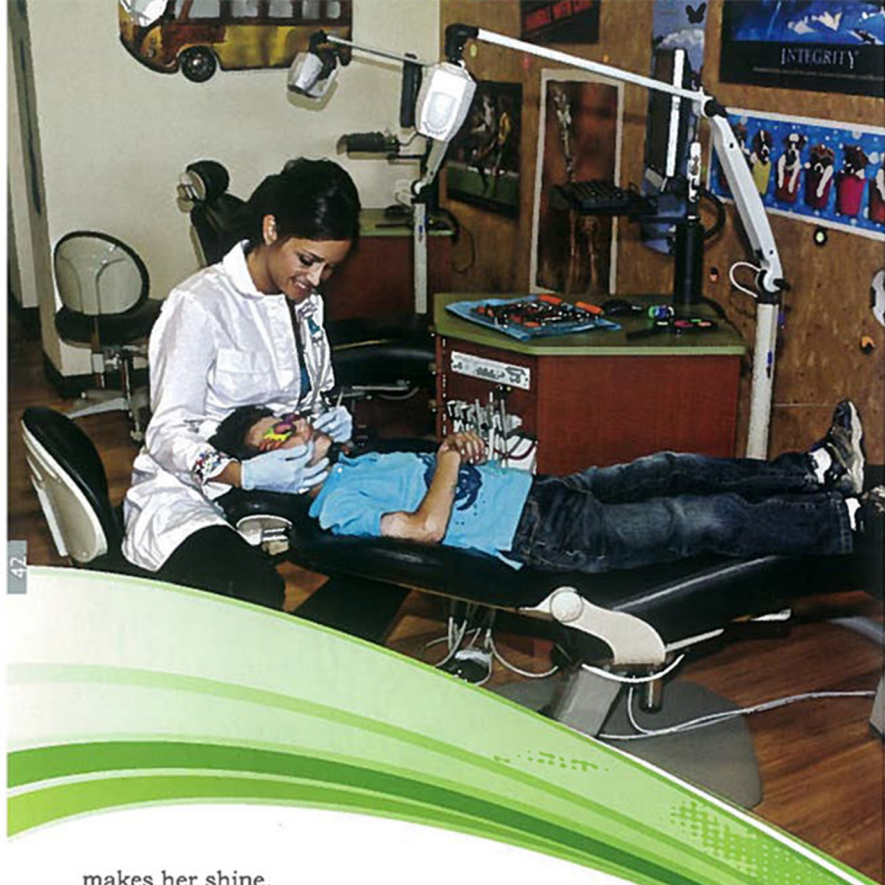
This commitment to reduce, reuse and recycle doesn't end there. The entire Saxe Orthodontics staff is equally eco-con-

scious.

The women use organic gauze and hand soap, digital radiographs, internet insurance claims and all necessary printing is done on recycled paper, just to name a few.

Dr. Saxe sees it as a positive step for the planet and the future of her patients, the vast majority of whom are smack dab in the middle of those brutal formative years. "I get kids when they are starting to hit puberty. Their bodies are changing, brain is going 100 miles an hour and they are trying to find their niche in the world. I seize that moment and try to focus on aspects that build their self-esteem," says Saxe. Her sincerity and belief that every child is special and amazing





makes her shine.

"I take the time to point that out to them so they see it," emphasizes Saxe.

The down-to-earth dental expert recently created a special program to teach good brushing habits to local first and second graders. It's called Brush Monkey. "I drive out to public schools and demonstrate proper brushing techniques by dressing up the students as teeth and gums, then bringing out a huge toothbrush. The kids love it! Each student goes home with a stuffed monkey complete with a toothbrush and timer so they can be sure to brush for at least two minutes." Brush Monkey has become so popular among teachers Dr. Saxe can barely keep up with demand. She also funds the program herself, a huge relief to the financially-strapped school district.

These contributions to the community started long before Saxe became an orthodontist. She worked for several years as a registered nurse at UMC's Intensive Care Burn Unit and volunteered at burn camps to help patients, especially children, cope with and embrace their life-changing injuries. When the UNLV School of Dentistry opened, Saxe saw it as a golden opportunity to further utilize her diagnostic abilities and dexterity. "It was a personality fit for me as well. I always got along great with kids and I loved the idea of transforming smiles and building self-esteem, confidence to

last a lifetime," says Saxe.

So how does a 'crusader for a cleaner world and gorgeous grins' blow off steam? Simple. She slides into her sneakers and hits the street for a good run. Staying fit is one of Saxe's hobbies. "I like personal challenges because it gives me a goal to reach at my own pace," says Saxe. Her latest goal is a triathlon. She considers training a great way to stay connected. "The secret really is community. I meet new people and look forward to seeing them. It inspires me to keep going," comments Saxe.

And keep going, she must! With three small children, a husband and orthodontic practice, Saxe has become a multi-tasker extraordinaire moving at the speed of light on occasion, yet slowing down to savor the special moments with her family. "Every year to celebrate Earth Day, I take my kids to the nursery to pick out flowers to plant in their own terracotta pots on our patio. It's a blast to plant and water together, plus they get a chance to create something beautiful and watch it grow," a sentiment you could say not only underscores Dr. Saxe's chosen profession, but her overall outlook on life. ♦

