



Jennifer Mayhew, Amherstburg, Ontario

I would like to nominate Jen Mayhew of Embrace Dental Hygiene. She is an extremely passionate professional and lives and breathes her approach to whole health and preventive care. As a very timid person at the beginning of her career, when opening her own independent practice back in 2017, she was required to step out of her comfort zone to network in her community to communicate and truly explain her business and her “why.” Why choose Embrace Dental Hygiene? Why an independent dental hygienist? Over the past four years, she has invested so much and has truly established so much respect and a real sense of community with her clients. People come to her for advice about their family’s oral health concerns. They truly trust her and that is an exceptional skill. She is amazing at what she does and is extremely knowledgeable about how to care for yourself from the inside out. She has also established great relationships with dental professionals in her community to ensure a collaborative approach to care. She has had to make a tremendous sacrifice financially to establish her business. At times, she still struggles to make ends meet. She continues to build to create a stable and steady income. With that sacrifice, she is also a mother to two young girls, which adds to the struggle to dedicate sufficient time and energy as an entrepreneur. She recently attended a conference on integrative health in Nashville at her own expense—her own investment into her knowledge. Despite the financial challenges, Jen feels it is important and is dedicated to increasing her knowledge, consistently maintaining memberships in associations, attending education sessions, workshops, and courses and investing in new ways to help educate and work with her patients on their overall wellness. She contributes to the community by attending community events, donating her time and her services or offering monetary support when possible. She collaborates with Healthy Smiles, Welcome Wagon, Gift from the Heart, environmental programs, community events, and more. She has exceptional relationships with other health practitioners and is dedicated to sharing services, helping to communicate all ways to learn about wellness, and supporting small businesses in her community where possible. She is always looking for new ways to support her patients. She feels strongly about a natural approach to care and shares her knowledge and resources on natural care products ongoing. In addition to her in-person consultations and care during

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her patients' visits, she invests so much time in one-on-one patient correspondence and support, her website, blog, strong social media presence and social media activity, and also communicates through a monthly newsletter and attendance at local events. Like many during the COVID-19 pandemic, Jen's business was just beginning to grow and truly become stable, and she was beginning to see some light and enjoy some real benefits from all her years of dedication. This time is really scary to her, to lose that momentum, with mostly debt and not much of a financial foundation. She was just beginning to feel like Embrace Dental Hygiene was starting to be known in her community. Her bookings were consistent and made far in advance, which all had to be cancelled, hopefully to be rescheduled... She was just starting to take a breath of gratefulness and feel that her efforts are being recognized, hopeful that the time she has taken from her family has been worth the sacrifices as a mom and entrepreneur. Her hope is that the cost of this pandemic will not damage her efforts. Despite her fears, she remains connected with her community. While unable to treat patients during this time, she donated masks and gloves to the community hospital in support of its pandemic and emergency preparedness. She also offered complimentary contactless delivery of oral health care products for her patients, even taking her little girls on the delivery route. And she continues to think of ways to be there, offering online support until the time when she can rebook her patients in her chair. Overall, regardless of present times, she deserves this recognition. Being an independent dental hygienist is a challenge in a small community for a multitude of reasons and she "embraces" the role every day.

She has grown her independent practice while also being a mom and a wife. She is passionate about health teaching for her clients. She never rushes with her care, she promotes many natural products, and is always available to answer questions and share her knowledge. As a small business owner, she continues to be available to her clients despite this challenging time with COVID-19.

