

2020 SUCCESS STORY

BOWMAN



NORTH DAKOTA
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PRAIRIE DENTAL

BOWMAN -- Not every business success story comes from a start-up that was developed from the ground up, and Dr. Jennifer Sarsland's story is a perfect example of that.

Jennifer Sarsland was born and raised in Bowman, ND, and attended the University of Mary in Bismarck to obtain her bachelor's degree in business. After graduation she worked in the insurance industry for a few years until she realized that insurance was not what she was meant to do.

Shortly after coming to this realization, Dr. Sarsland enrolled at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Dentistry in Lincoln, NE, to pursue dentistry. She received her Doctor of Dental Surgery in May of 2011 and packed her bags to move back to her hometown.

She was offered a position to work with Dr. Kelly, a well-established and trusted dental practice in the Bowman area. When asked what she likes best about becoming a dentist, Dr. Sarsland explained, "As a dentist, I get to enjoy helping our patients with their dental needs and working hard to make the dentist a place they don't dread!"



Within a few short months, she found herself in a position to become joint partners with Dr. Kelly and Prairie Dental was established. Soon after the partnership was finalized, Dr. Sarsland realized that they were outgrowing their current location that they leased from West River Clinic.

Luckily for Jennifer, as she was searching for potential new locations the hospital announced that they would be building a new hospital and clinic. Dr. Sarsland immediately jumped on this idea and started meeting with the hospital CEO to see if they had made any plans for the clinic portion of the building that they would be leaving behind.

In 2016, Jennifer was able to successfully come to an agreement with the hospital to secure the old clinic for the relocation of their dental office. Dr. Sarsland recognized that there would be an extensive amount of renovation needed to get the new space up and running properly. She explained, "I wanted to update the location to be more modern, have more space, and be handicap accessible for our clients." Renovations started in the spring of 2017 and thanks to the great work by local contractors, the dental practice moved into its new home in October 2017.

After visiting with her lender about the financing needed for the renovations, Jennifer reached out to the ND SBDC for assistance. She was connected with Laura Weber at the Bowman SBDC



photo credit: Karly Scheffer

Center, who was not only able to help Jennifer understand her interest buy-down options, but also helped her to create pro formas for her new business location so she could fully understand the monetary impact the relocation and renovation would have on their financials.

“Laura and the ND SBDC team were able to help me fill out all the required paperwork for the buy-down program and get approved for it. I would recommend the ND SBDC services to other aspiring entrepreneurs, as it has been able to help me financially so I was able to expand and better serve my community,” Jennifer stated.

The renovation has allowed Prairie Dental to increase their patient volume and work more efficiently thanks to the additional space. They have even been able to add more employees to their staff to help take care of their increase in patients.

When asking Jennifer what was the key to her success she explained, “The fact that Dr. Kelly had a very well-known and respected dental practice and that I was willing to come in and learn from his success were big factors. Dr. Kelly was also willing to make changes to help our practice have space and technology to allow us to grow.”

Jennifer is also thankful for their Patterson Dental representative, Luke Trapp. “He has been a great team member and has pushed me to always look for ways to improve.”

“I also attribute my success to our wonderful employees. We feel we have the best team. They are hardworking, loyal, and make work fun!”

In addition, credits the help and support of her family along the way.



Dr. Sarsland and her family

photo credit: Ryanna Turbillve

