



Bringing New York Skin Technology to Brentwood

MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO GET BIG CITY QUALITY SKIN CARE WITHOUT LEAVING TOWN



I was attracted to the Health Care Industry when I was young. I was motivated to get the best grades possible because I knew that superior grades would be required for enrollment in a top-notch medical school. I maintained a high GPA and during high school took as many as five advanced placement classes each semester.

I graduated from Ohio's Parma High School in the class of '83 and enrolled as a pre-medical student at Baylor University. Academics were high. Following graduation, I was accepted at the Baylor University College of Medicine. While serving at a VA hospital on the first of 15 rotations, I realized that my patients had a lot of issues with skin blemishes. I developed an intense desire to understand how to diagnose and treat them, so I took my second rotation in skin cancer, which helped set the course of my life. It introduced me to Mohs Micrographic Surgery (MMS), which is a precise surgical technique that treats skin cancers by progressively removing thin layers of cancer cells without damaging the associated cancer-free tissue. The process was named for Dr. Frederic E. Mohs, who had developed his technique in 1938 while still a medical student at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

Even though Mohs surgery has very high cure rates and is effective at conserving healthy tissues, traditional surgeons failed to embrace the method because of their discomfort with skin pathology and the required laboratory techniques. Once dermatologists became acquainted with Mohs surgery, however, they quickly embraced the technique.

Beginning in the mid-70s, Mohs surgery training programs were set up across the

United States. Dr. Leonard Goldberg, one of the founding fathers of the Mohs technology, conducted the training at Baylor, where I attended. I became associated with Dr. Goldberg when I began my second rotation. I was only 23 years old and the youngest medical student he had ever trained. He was attracted by my passion to learn everything and my "get things done right" attitude. The encounter with Dr. Goldberg turned out to be a pivotal career point.

My status as a medical practitioner was also elevated through learning the principles of facial reconstruction from this master surgeon. Dr. Goldberg was an artist; human skin was his medium, and he performed some amazing surgeries.

I moved to the next level of mastery in my chosen profession when I served a three-year residency at New York City's Columbia University Department of Dermatology. It was an academically rigorous experience because we were required to master the contents of more than 6,000 pages of dense text contained in two massive works. One of them, *Rook's Textbook of Dermatology*, which was named for the dermatologist who wrote it, is bound in four massive volumes and contains more than 5,000 images. We were not only required to read every page, but when I encountered a patient with a particular disease, I would reread the appropriate pages and make a connection between the real patient and the text describing his/her condition.

Three of us were doing residency together, and we served a vast patient base associated with five different Manhattan locations, covering the entire socio-economic-ethnic spectrum. Dermatology education is about

volume; we would see as many as 50 patients a day. We tend to be visual learners, so the opportunity of seeing so many patients — diagnosing them, treating them, and observing the outcome — provided a necessary complement to reading about their skin issues. The three of us were assigned a separate pager for each of the five locations, which often created chaotic situations. However, finding ways to deal with the chaos was itself a wonderful learning experience.

Since 1999, when I opened Balfour Dermatology & Day Spa, I have brought my passion, experience, and mastery of leading edge technologies to bear on serving the skin care needs of residents in East County. I continue to forge ahead in mastering new technologies and procedures as they become available. For example, I was an early-adopter of the Superficial RadioTherapy (SRT) product, and the first professional in the area to offer it to my patients. SRT moves past Mohs for many patients by directing ultra-precise low energy voltage beams in order to safely, painlessly, and effectively eliminate cancer cells.

I make it my aim to see that residents of East County with skin care issues can be as well served as people living in New York — or in any large city in the country or the world.

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