

Kuwait, 2003, prior
to the start of
Operation Iraqi Freedom

Medical providers from
the 101st Airborne
Division, 3rd Brigade
Combat Team, 626
Forward Support
Battalion, C Company
Dr. Randy is in the back
row, fourth from left



A LIFE OF SERVICE

DR. RANDY WEINSEL ON DENTISTRY, DUTY, AND WHAT COMES NEXT

When Dr. Randy Weinschel introduces himself, he keeps it straightforward. “I’m a board-certified pediatric dentist,” he says. But behind that modest introduction lies a career shaped by service—to patients, to fellow providers, and to his country. From the front lines of Iraq to the operating rooms of Phoenix Children’s Hospital, and now to a pediatric dental residency and through business and practice coaching, Weinschel has continuously redirected his experience toward helping others succeed.

From Dental School to the Front Lines

Dr. Randy (as he prefers to be called) earned his dental degree from Northwestern University in 2001—part of the final graduating class before the school shuttered its dental program. After graduation, he served in the U.S. Army for three years as a general dentist, including a yearlong deployment in Iraq from 2003 to 2004.

Serving as a dentist in a war zone was never part of his original plan. “I never anticipated that I would be a dentist in a war zone,” he says. “I happened to join the Army a little before 9/11, and then everything changed.”

His deployment to Iraq proved to be one of the most formative chapters of his life. “It was probably one of the most difficult years of my life, if not the most difficult year,” he says. The experience tested him in every way—mentally, emotionally, and physically. But it also clarified what he was capable of enduring and the kind of leader he could become.

“It really gave me insight into serving something much greater than myself,” he says. “You learn that with perseverance and persistence, you can survive and get through hard times. That’s something I’ve carried with me back into private practice and leadership.”

Discovering His Passion for Pediatrics

Weinschel’s interest in pediatric dentistry began before his military service. As a dental student, he completed an externship in Colorado, where he provided care for the children of migrant farm workers. “We worked in a clinic that only treated kids,” he recalls. “Coming out of dental school, I already knew that was my interest.”

His time in the Army only deepened that conviction. “As tough and brave as the soldiers were, in the dental chair they were just big kids,” he says with a smile. “That really confirmed for me that pediatric dentistry was where I wanted to be.”

After completing his military service, he was accepted into a pediatric dental residency program at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. There, he specialized further, gaining valuable experience in treating children with complex needs, including cleft lip and palate. It was an intense clinical environment





that required precision, patience, and teamwork—skills that would serve him well in the years ahead.

Building a Practice—and a Community—in Arizona

In 2007, Dr. Randy and his wife relocated to Arizona. After working for an existing pediatric dental practice, he partnered with a colleague to open a new one. For 17 years, he led and grew the business—treating patients, building a team, and developing systems to support both.

“I really enjoyed running the practice,” he says. “But what I found most fulfilling was developing our team as individuals and professionals.”

Over time, his clinical background led him to Phoenix Children’s Hospital, where he became the Section Chief for dentistry and oral surgery. He also served on the Barrow Craniofacial Team—an interdisciplinary group that treats children with congenital facial abnormalities and complex oral health needs.

“It started because there was a need in the community,” he says. “Coming out of residency, I had the experience and training in cleft lip and palate. So I started treating those patients at Phoenix Children’s, and over time, I was chosen to take on a leadership role there.”

He adds, “We ended up seeing a lot of patients with craniofacial abnormalities in our private practice, too. That work helped us build trust and relationships with other physicians and specialists throughout the hospital.”

When asked what made the craniofacial work so rewarding, Weinshel points to teamwork. “A lot of these children are seen by multiple specialties. Everyone has to be aligned. The clinical challenges are real, but it’s the coordination—making sure things happen in the right order—that’s critical. That’s where communication and leadership really matter.”

From Practice Owner to Mentor

After nearly two decades in private practice, Dr. Randy made the decision to step away. While the move was influenced in part by personal health considerations, it also reflected a growing desire to spend more time mentoring others and creating sustainable systems for success.

“I worked really hard over the years, and I loved what I did,” he says. “But I realized I wanted to focus more on coaching—on pouring into people and helping them grow.”

Today, he serves as a part-time faculty member in the pediatric dental residency program affiliated with NYU

Langone. There, he works directly with residents, offering clinical instruction and professional guidance.

"It's a continuation of what I've always loved—helping people grow," he says. "Only now, I get to do that with the residents."

Launching Aspire Optimal Solutions

Alongside his teaching role, Dr. Randy launched his own consulting company—Aspire Optimal Solutions—which offers coaching and strategic guidance to dental practices and small businesses.

His consulting work draws directly from his experience as a practice owner, Army officer, and hospital leader. "The best part of owning a practice was the leadership piece," he says. "Now, I get to focus on that full time—helping others build strong teams, design better systems, and deliver consistent patient care."

His consulting model centers on:

- Intentional leadership & team culture
- Systems and operational efficiency
- Patient experience
- Strategic growth

"These things are universal," he says. "They apply to pediatric practices, general practices—even non-dental businesses."

What makes his approach different, he says, is the intentionality. "A lot of consultants offer one-size-fits-all solutions. I don't believe in that. I evaluate what a practice is already doing well, and then I help them tighten up the areas that need support."

He's also careful about who he works with. "I'm not trying to take on every client in the area. I want to work with people who are ready to improve and open to growth."

Defining Leadership

Leadership comes up often when Dr. Randy talks. It's not about authority—it's about influence.

"Leadership, to me, has nothing to do with titles," he says. "It's about getting people to buy into a vision and then helping them work toward that vision together. It's about building trust."

His leadership style is shaped by both his military service and private-sector experience. He believes in being hands-on, honest, and consistent. "Clients describe me as meticulous and intentional," he says. "I like to take big ideas and help people turn them into actionable plans."

That's where he sees the real value in consulting. "A lot of people know what they want to do. They just need someone to help them build the path to get there."

Outside of Dentistry

On the personal side, Dr. Randy lives in Phoenix with his wife and two teenage children. He enjoys following their activities and spending time with his family, and traveling. He likes to read, stays active by running, and participating in Krav Maga.

Words for the Profession

As the conversation turns toward the future of dentistry, Dr. Randy doesn't shy away from the challenges the profession is facing. "The economics of practice ownership are more difficult now—lower insurance reimbursements, higher costs, more consolidation. It's not easy."

But he's quick to refocus on what really matters. "Many of us went into dentistry to genuinely help people," he says. "That hasn't changed. That still matters."

And in that context, he sees AzDA and similar organizations playing a critical role. "Associations help us stay grounded. They remind us why we started this in the first place."

He closes with a simple message for his colleagues: "At the end of the day, do the right thing by the patient every time. Everything else will take care of itself."

You can find more about Dr. Randy and the services he offers at aspireoptimalsolutions.com ■



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