

Member Profile

BRAD CUMMINGS

New Non-Profit Groups Seeks to Widen Availability of Custom Fitted Mouthguards



The Smile for Good Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded by Brad Cummings DDS, a clinical assistant professor the Oklahoma University (OU) College of Dentistry and a member of the Academy for Sports Dentistry since 2020. The mission of the foundation, under the name Grill Guard, is “to provide a connection between communities through sports, activities, gear, and events starting with sports mouthguards.” Essentially it is a vehicle for participating dentists to organize efforts to provide high quality professionally fabricated custom fitted mouthguards at no cost to athletes chosen by that dentist.

Dr. Cummings is a 2016 graduate of Loma Linda University School of Dentistry and his interest in sports dentistry and mouthguards came as a result of a significant basketball injury he

sustained in a recreational basketball game as a dental student. He researched mouthguards and came to realize that the availability of custom fitted mouthguards, and the dentists who supplied them, was not what it should be. In addition, he realized that the average cost of professionally made mouthguards was high enough to also limit their usage. He decided to try to enlist the dental community in a way that would make protection more available to a greater number of players.

Dentists can participate in this way: a dentist contacts Brad through the website at grillguard.org to become a sponsoring dentist. The dentist will then pay an amount at a per mouthguard rate which will cover the number of players they expect to supply. That dentist is then a “sponsoring dentist”. The dentist then obtains athlete images (stone casts, durable impressions or in the near future digital scans) which are supplied to a specific laboratory (IronJaw Custom Mouthguards, of Memphis Tennessee) for fabrication of pressure laminated custom mouthguards. These are then shipped back to the dentist for delivery. Each mouthguard has the Grill Guard logo, but the sponsoring dentist can add personal practice logos to the case which is included.

The main stipulation to participate is that all mouthguards must be given to the players free of charge. Sponsoring dentists can use this activity in lieu of, or in addition to marketing, self-promotion, or community service. Dentists spend much time and money trying to make the public aware of good dental practices as

continued on page 6

New Non-Profit Groups Seeks to Widen Availability of Custom Fitted Mouthguards - *continued from page 5*

well as trying to advertise themselves and their businesses. It is felt that by providing free mouthguards, sponsoring dentists can publicize themselves while offering their community a valuable and free service.

If a dentist does not feel that they can afford to pay to become a sponsoring dentist but know of a group of athletes who truly would benefit from free mouthguards, they can petition the foundation and request that the guards be covered by a special fund that is available for charitable efforts. This is not an infinite source of money and that is why each request of this sort is individually scrutinized for its own individual worth.

Many members of the Academy for Sports Dentistry already supply their athletes in their own ways, but this is an outstanding effort to try to bring new dentists into sports dentistry who might otherwise never had thought of the need for custom fitted mouthguards or did not feel that they could provide them. Dr Cummings and the Foundation does provide training on how to fabricate an excellent impression and subsequently how to deliver the final product. Hopefully more dentists realize how they can help and how to offer excellent dental protection for many more athletes.

For more information go to: <https://grillguard.org>.

