



# MILITARY DOCTOR

Serving our Country

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One Dentist's Way of Giving Back

**WORDS ANGELA BROOCKERD  
PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED**

Dr. Michelle Olson, originally from Stoughton, Wisconsin, wanted to serve her country as a way to give back for all of the opportunities she had been given in her life. She applied to the health professions scholarship program while in dental school at the University of Minnesota, and after being accepted, she was immediately commissioned into the Army. Upon completion of dental school, she served 4 years on active duty from 2006- 2010. Her first assignment was in Fort Lewis, Washington where she completed a one year advanced education in general dentistry program, which allowed her to work with experienced and talented mentors. After achievement of this continued training, she was stationed in Grafenwoehr, Germany. During her time in Germany, she made close friendships with those she served with and describes those bonds formed as a tight-knit family.

"You tend to form very close relationships and very quickly. Whether it is stateside, overseas or in a deployed environment, you depend on each other in ways you don't in civilian life. Many times you start out alone, not knowing a single person, and you quickly become family and depend on each other in so many ways."



Dr. Olson was deployed to Iraq in May of 2008 to July of 2009 with the 464th Medical Corp. Her unit was in charge of dental clinics scattered across the southern half of Iraq, in which she was designated as the Officer in Charge at Taji Dental Clinic. She completed the remainder of her active duty service in Germany. Throughout her time in the Army, she was privileged to be surrounded by seasoned dentists who were ready and willing to share their knowledge.

"All of my experiences in the Army helped me to become a better dentist and gave me an abundance of experiences that I wouldn't have had otherwise. In addition, I was able to live in Germany and travel all over Europe, which was an experience that I would only have had from being in the Army."

After completing her four years of active duty, Dr. Olson spent her first year in Virginia Beach, and finally settled in Kansas City in 2011. Transitioning back to civilian life was definitely an adjustment for her, because not only was she acclimating back to American culture, but she also had to establish new business connections within her profession and establish new friendships.

"I was starting over again in a new location, but didn't have the same support network that was available when I was in the Army, so it was more challenging."

In the summer of 2015, she married her husband, Angel, whom she met in 2008 while deployed in Iraq. Angel served 20 years in the Navy and retired in 2014.

Dr. Olson went on to start her own dental practice in 2014, Quivira Park Family Dentistry, located in Overland Park.

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"This was a big step for me, and I feel my time in the Army helped prepare me for this. I've never been afraid to take on challenges or step into the unknown."



The dedication, work ethic and attention to detail that is required in the military are all strengths that make Dr. Olson successful in her practice today. Dr. Olson is known for her conservative approach to dentistry but is meticulous with her work, making sure it is done right the first

time. Her patients describe her as full of integrity and trust-worthy. Dr. Olson is an excellent role-model for this next generation of girls who want to aspire to be all that they dream to be.

To learn more about Dr. Olson, visit [www.quiviraparkdental.com](http://www.quiviraparkdental.com).

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