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At work

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Dr. Cameron Craven; Plastic surgeon, Westlake Dermatology & Cosmetic Surgery

Dr. Cameron Craven studied plastic and reconstructive surgery at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. During his training, he gained extensive experience in all aspects of plastic surgery, including cosmetic surgery, hand and microvascular surgery, reconstructive surgery, burns, trauma and surgery for congenital abnormalities. Craven joined Westlake Dermatology & Cosmetic Surgery in the fall of last year. A native of Austin, Craven was in Houston prior to joining the practice.

Q: What made you decide to focus on plastic surgery?

A: It's one of the things I decided early on in my residency. I really liked how reconstructive surgery helped people. It was one procedure in particular that cemented the idea in my mind. I was involved in a 21-hour-long reconstructive microvascular reconstructive surgery.

Q: How long have you been practicing?

A: Seven years.

Q: What's your philosophy behind plastic surgery?

A: My philosophy is that I want to create a natural look. I want to bring the inner beauty out within each patient.

I generally start by discussing what's bothering them and what their goals are.

Q: Have you ever turned someone down?

A: Yes. Some patients have expectations that aren't realistic or aren't in line with creating a natural look. I've turned them down because they'd be better off in the long run if they didn't have realistic expectations.

Q: What's your top request?

A: Breast augmentation has become the No. 1 most-requested procedure since approval of the new silicone gel. We also get lots of requests for contours, liposuction and rejuvenation.

Q: Is there a certain age group that requests one thing over the other?



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A: It depends on the procedure. I've noticed clients that request rejuvenation tend to be in the 40-plus age category.

Those requesting liposuction and augmentations generally tend to be between the ages of 20 and 40.

Q: What do you like the most about your job?

A: I like the fact that every day is different. Each patient brings a different opportunity or challenge, and I really enjoy that.

One of the things I realized early on in my career is that I liked the way people reacted after getting reconstructive surgery. It really brought out the best in people. So there are a lot of personal benefits to reconstructive and plastic surgery.

Q: How is working at Westlake Dermatology & Cosmetic Surgery different from having your own practice?

A: This is very similar to having my own practice. It's certainly different from being in an academic institution.

It's great being here because I'm able to bounce ideas off Dr. [Gregory Nikolaidis, one of the founders of Westlake Dermatology]. After all, some procedures do overlap, so there's a lot of interchange of ideas. We can provide an entire package of services for the patients, particularly in cases of skin cancer. We used to have to send skin cancer patients off-site for reconstructive services, but we're now able to provide everything under one roof.

Q: How did you get introduced to Westlake Dermatology & Cosmetic Surgery?

A: I did quite a bit of research prior to coming here and thought this was the ideal setting. I got the opportunity to make this practice my own.

Q: What made you decide to come to Austin from Houston?

A: I grew up in Austin. And it's just such a wonderful city.

Q: What sort of pro bono work do you do?

A: Right now, I'm involved in the Rose Ribbon Foundation, which provides free reconstructive surgery to post-cancer patients who can't afford it.

I've also been evaluating other nonprofits, including Operation Smile, an organization that provides reconstructive surgery to children with facial deformities.

Q: Do you see yourself doing this in the long run?

A: Yes, I do. I love what I do.

Q: What do you do on your time off?

A: Right now, lots of wedding planning [Craven is set to get married next month].

But other than that, golf, boating, traveling.