

BIZfact

\$51,710

Median annual wage
of Long Island's 230
fashion designers

Source: New York State
Labor Department

EXPO SET FOR BLACK BUSINESS OWNERS

The Long Island African American Business Expo seeks to do more than boost trade among attendees, an official said.

"It is also a way to increase African-American employment through growth of companies," said Phil Andrews, president of the Long Island African American Chamber of Commerce Inc.

The chamber will host the expo, its first, at Nassau Community College's College Center Building in Garden City from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday.

Entrepreneurs and business executives can network, promote their products and services, and find resources to support and expand their enterprises, according to the chamber.

More than 40 product and service vendors from various industries, including health care, insurance, finance, graphic design and energy, are registered to attend the expo.

"And it sort of acts like a black directory, too. People get a lot of services [at expos], and throughout the year they can use those services," Andrews said.

Most of the vendors registered for the expo are black-owned businesses, but that is not a requirement to participate.

Expo tickets are \$10 each, but 75 free tickets are being offered on a first-come, first-served basis in advance online at Eventbrite.com and at the door. Further information is available at liaacc.org. — **TORY N. PARRISH**

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Dental group growing

Dental365 adding
three LI practices
to its area network

BY DAVID REICH-HALE
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Dental365, a Long Island-based dentist group, is taking over three practices in the next month, as it expands throughout the region.

The network, which will be up to 12 offices on Long Island by the end of March, is the brainchild of Dr. Scott Asnis, a dentist in Bellmore.

He launched the company, headquartered in New Hyde Park, 3½ years ago.

"We take the stresses and concerns like HR, payroll, supplies and dealing with insurance companies and take care of it for them," said Asnis, chief executive at Dental365. "The dentists are able to focus on their clinical work. That's what dentists want to do."

Asnis said Dental365 sometimes pays to take over independent practices. In other cases no money changes hands. The dentists and their support staff at the acquired practices become Dental365 employees.

The company expects to have 65 dentists employed and 300 total employees on staff by next month. That includes employees in New York City, where Dental365 has seven offices, Asnis said.

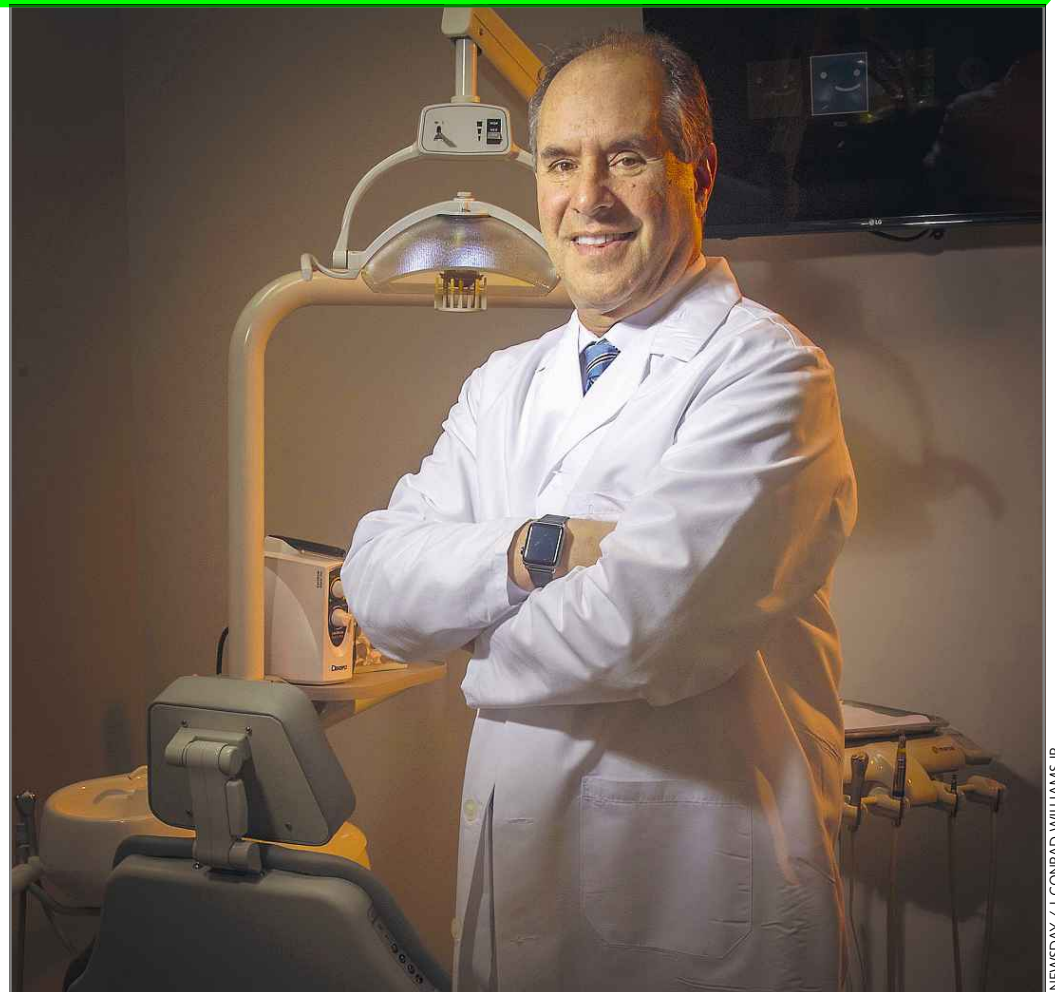
Asnis said Dental365 is also targeting practices in northern New Jersey and Connecticut.

"The expansion will be natural, geographically," he said. "Areas such as Stamford make sense for us."

Dr. Michael Fleischer, a dentist in Bellmore, sold his practice to Dental365 in January 2017 after 27 years as an independent. He had run the practice with his wife, who retired.

"It's been terrific, because it's freed me up to offer more of my hours to care for my patients," Fleischer said. "Prior to making this move, I was the chief cook and bottle washer. I spent Saturday night doing payroll, and I don't love doing accounting."

Fleischer added that by being part of a larger group, he works more closely with specialists such as oral surgeons.



NEWSDAY / J. CONRAD WILLIAMS JR.

AT A GLANCE

- **COMPANY:** Dental365, New Hyde Park
- **FOUNDED:** 2014
- **CEO:** Dr. Scott Asnis
- **NUMBER OF PRACTICES:** 19
- **EMPLOYEES:** 300

"We are part of the same company," he said.

The number of dentists who have decided to give up their independence and join group practices has grown, but it remains a small percentage of dental offices, said Dr. Mark Feldman, executive director of the New York State Dental Association in Albany.

The state organization has about 12,000 members. Feldman said about 90 percent of the group's active members are in independent practices.

"But a few years ago it was about 97 percent independent, so there is certainly a trend toward dentists' joining a larger practice," Feldman said. "Being

part of something that's more streamlined can be enticing. For example, a group practice can share resources, so one or two people can handle the entire insurance process for many dentists."

Feldman added that in a area such as Long Island, "it's a nice place to live but an expensive place to practice, so every bit helps."

But he also said merging a practice isn't for everyone.

"Obviously, the ability to care for people and restore good health are prime considerations, but dentists have historically liked the concept of running their own practice and the independence that provides," Feldman said.

Other medical professions have merged at a faster rate than dentists, according to a Physician Practice Benchmark study that used American Medical Association data. About 47 percent of practicing physicians owned their practice in 2016, down from 53 percent in 2012.

Dr. Scott Asnis, who began Dental365, says it takes business stress off dentists.

Many physicians have sold their practices to large health systems. The number of hospital-employed physicians rose 48 percent to 141,000 between 2012 and 2015, according to a Physicians Advocacy Institute survey compiled by Avalere Health, a Washington-based health care consultant.

The large health systems aren't acquiring dentist practices as aggressively, said Dr. Dave Preble, senior vice president of the American Dental Association's Practice Institute.

"Hospitals are driving this," he said. "Physicians are usually affiliated with a hospital. Dentists are not."

Northwell Health, Mount Sinai, NYU Langone and Catholic Health Services have all expanded their reach by adding physicians outside of the traditional hospital network.