

Dear Citizens of Sumter,

Our staff here at Epps Orthodontics believe we should be chosen as Sumter's small business of the year for many reasons. The first reason is, we believe that in order to create growth within a community on a macro level, you must start on a micro level. You can pour an endless amount of money into the community, but if the populous is not happy or ready to be involved, then no level of investment will help it. We as a company know how important it is to love yourself. Yes, we realize no one is perfect, but we want to allow people the opportunity to at least have a smile they can love. This love for themselves will follow through to their daily lives and improve their self-image and other daily interactions. Our belief in this is so strong that our Sumter office's fees have not changed since Dr. Epps acquired the practice over nine years ago. As a result, our treatment costs are set up with low monthly fees with no down payments. As for the people of Sumter, their belief in our great prices and quality is so sincere that there are over 800 active patients coming to our office now. This is nowhere near the +10,000 people who have successfully finished their treatment. Dr. Epps has also remained unphazed as a new challenge has arisen due to mail order braces led by unqualified people claiming they can straighten patient's teeth for half the price in half the time. It is entirely untrue and unsafe. Even with this hurdle, you can see from the numbers that people of all backgrounds have the same opportunity to have quality work done on their teeth; creating a strong base for Sumter's economic growth. Plus, our lower prices allow for an increase in consumer spending creating a healthy economic growth.

The second reason we believe we should be picked is due to the extensive macroeconomic impact we have in Sumter. Sumter is no longer the small southern town that it used to be. It has grown exponentially within the last 20 years. As a result, we have acquired people from all over and sent citizens afar as ambassadors from our great town, citizens of which we have played a role in bettering the lives of. We as a company believe no matter how far you decide to venture away, people from all over will see the great citizens we are producing. Dr. Epps is very proud of his role in helping build these great people. He is also proud of the support he puts into the military and the town that produces the great people of our future. To start, since active duty personnel do not receive any orthodontic benefits, Epps Orthodontics offers them a discount of over \$500 off their treatment. We also donate over \$2200 annually to Shaw Air Force Base for their growing Boo Bash, Freedom Bash and Military Appreciation Picnics. We regularly provide toothbrushes and toothpaste

kits to the base for overseas deployments. As for the town of Sumter, Dr. Epps has invested his donations in a way that helps create a strong foundation for the people of Sumter. Annually he donates \$5,000 to the Sumter Opera House. This donation helps the Opera House give children the opportunity to experience performing arts and bring performances to the citizens of Sumter. Epps Orthodontics has also created a new 5k run in partnership with the Sumter SPCA that has already raised more than \$12,000 in the last two years since its creation. The SPCA gets to keep all funds generated in order to help our furry friends of Sumter. Epps Orthodontics also donates \$750 a year to the chamber's Porches of Sumter event, which brings our community together to admire our beautiful historic district. Additionally, he gives \$650 a year to the Chamber of Commerce who seeks to promote an ideal environment for our fellow businesses of Sumter and has been doing so since he acquired the practice. Epps Orthodontics also donates hygiene kits to churches for their members to distribute to adults in need and their members when traveling for mission trips. We are a big believer in allowing children the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. A couple of years back we made a \$10,000 donation to the YMCA, annually we sponsor five sports teams within Sumter and we recently started donating to the Crestwood High School choir. We believe these extracurricular activities give children the opportunity to express themselves in ways that are sometimes not achievable in school. Another issue we feel strongly about and donate towards is sex trafficking. This is an issue that has no regional boundaries and has shown an alarming growth in South Carolina. As Employees for him, we also participate in events that he is unable to attend. For example, one of our staff members represents our office as a member of the Tuomey Foundation Festival of Trees committee and the Children's Business Fair committee through the Chamber of Commerce. Overall, Epps Orthodontics donates immensely into the area of Sumter despite this not being our only practice location.

The third reason we believe we should be chosen for small business of the year is that we promote sustainability. Sustainability is more than just recycling; it is development that meets the needs of the present without jeopardizing the needs of the future. After acquiring the practice, Dr. Epps' made a 10-year goal to become more sustainable in order to have a company that is clean running and leaves a minimal ecological footprint. We do that by using digital molds and x-rays, using sustainable cleaning products and using sterilizable equipment; 99% of which is made in the U.S.A, coincidentally cutting down on the emissions created from shipping. We made this transition to digital molds and x-rays since the old x-ray sheets you see are not solely paper, they contain small amounts of silver. When

serving as many patients as we do, this can create a tremendous ecological footprint. The same goes for the frequent cleaning of our office and the supplies used within it, the use of strong commercial chemicals can be bad for the environment. We were able to find cleaning solutions that meet the required sanitation guidelines while again, minimizing the ecological footprint we make. We also purchased equipment that can be sanitized to reduce the amount of wasted material. Just imagine how much how much we could shrink our ecological footprint as a community if other small business would do the same!

All of the above are exceptional reasons why Epps Orthodontics should be chosen as small business of the year. Our focus on micro growth evolving into macro growth will create a strong base for our community to build on. Last but not least, the people of Sumter have already chosen him and his well-trained staff as the best Orthodontist in Sumter. This is why he had to hire four additional employees on top of the original eight he had in order to keep up with the growth of patients who want him as their orthodontist.

Sincere and Best Regards  
Epps Orthodontics