

2009 CityBusiness Health Care Heroes

Drs. Frank DellaCroce and Scott Sullivan bring an individual appreciation for the aesthetic to their joint practice at the Center for Restorative Breast Surgery.

Sullivan's distaste for the staid appearance of traditional doctors offices blends with DellaCroce's appreciation of women's maternal qualities and natural anatomy, leading to a spa-like setting where patients enjoy aesthetically pleasing results.

"I still can't stand going into a doctor's office and it's like a bus station. It's so impersonal, sitting on chairs and everyone staring at each other," said Sullivan, who as a child battling recurring bronchitis dreaded physicians in white coats and hospitals that smelled of rubbing alcohol.

"I appreciate the artistry that is a woman's body," DellaCroce said. "To see that lost, harmed or hurt through surgical treatment, for me, is tragic."

The two bring years of innovation and experience to their joint practice dedicated to reconstructing the breasts of women facing mastectomies in fighting cancer.

They are noted for the sensitivity they display in preserving the female form in the nipple-sparing mastectomy procedure they pioneered, avoiding implants by using fat from the patient's body and leaving as little scarring as possible. Sullivan said they replace breast tissue with similar tissue from such parts of the body as the stomach, preserving a lifelike result and also considering the appearance of the site from which tissue is taken.

"It's changing their life, retaining their femininity," Sullivan said. "What they are most afraid of is being deformed."

More than half their patients are from outside Louisiana and the United States.

"It's almost to the point that patients don't want to leave the doctor's office," Sullivan said. "We've had patients who, after going to the hotel (after recovery) decided to spend the day at the hospital."

— *Diana Chandler*

