

# The Salinas *Californian*

Saturday-Sunday, July 22-23, 2006

## Dentist at home in Salinas



PROVIDED PHOTO

Dr. Karla Aldape is seen in her south Salinas office on San Jose Street.

*Aldape moved  
to area in 1993*

By **MONA SLOAN**  
For The Salinas Californian

As a dentist and a mother, Dr. Karla Aldape knows the importance of teaching proper

oral health care at a young age.

Early in 2005, Aldape, who runs a dental practice in south Salinas, began visiting local elementary schools whose students are primarily migrant.

"We not only perform check-ups at these clinics, but focus on educating students in order to establish a lifetime of good oral health," Aldape said.

### DETAILS

Karla Aldape, DDS, Family Dental Group, 258 San Jose St., Salinas. Phone: 759-0700.

The personable young dentist said she lists any issues that might be of concern for the child, but more often than not, gives a clean bill of oral health.

"If there are any problems or concerns, I will schedule a follow-up consultation with the patient and their parents," she said. "If not for these types of clinics, some children might not seek a dental check-up until they have a problem or are in pain."

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## DENTIST/ Class valedictorian

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Originally from Monterrey, Mexico, Aldape said she dreamed from childhood of becoming a dentist.

"I've wanted a career in dentistry for as long as I can remember," she said.

Her parents, however, had a different idea: They wanted her to become a doctor.

"In my heart I knew what I wanted and finally convinced them," Aldape said.

Motivated by her enthusiasm for her career choice, she finished a five-year college education in 3½ years, she said, earning the honor of valedictorian of her graduating class at the dental school of Universidad Autonoma De Nuevo in Mexico. In 1994 she passed the California State Dental Boards, which was no easy feat as she first had to master English.

In 1993, she moved with her husband, Javier, a Chicago native, to Monterey County

*'I've wanted a career in dentistry for as long as I can remember.'*

— Karla Aldape, Salinas dentist

and eventually settled in Salinas.

"We came to this area because my husband, who is a financial analyst with Fresh Express, received a job transfer," Aldape said. "I have been so happy living here. The food, the people, the climate, it's been a wonderful experience."

Aldape's patients also appear to be glad she made the move: In 2005, they voted her "best dentist" in The Salinas Californian's Readers Choice Awards.

Aldape also makes health segments for Univision 67 Spanish-language television.

While filming a commercial for her dental practice several years ago, Aldape said, she struck up a conversation with the station's news director, Fidel Soto, who suggested the idea of including dental health awareness in Univision's one- to two-minute health segments, which air every Tuesday.

Aldape made what would become the first of a series of segments targeting dental health. She said she researches and writes them herself.

"I share with the audience not only warning signs to look for, but also products that can help them with a healthy oral routine," she said. "The mouth can indicate signs of all kinds of different health problems, like heart disease, stroke, or cancer. If it's caught in time the patient can be fine. That's why these dental health segments are so important to me. I'm reaching so many people."