

1997's Chiropractic Philanthropists of the Year

OVER \$10 MILLION DONATED BACK TO CHIROPRACTIC

Editorial Staff

Webster's Dictionary defines a philanthropist as "one who expresses a desire to help mankind as shown by the giving of gifts to charitable or humanitarian institutions." If one had to find an example a philanthropy, one would be hard-pressed to come up with three better choices than this year's recipients of Dynamic Chiropractic's Chiropractic Philanthropist of the Year awards.

NCMIC: Half a Century of Giving Back to the Profession

Founded by a group of prominent chiropractors in 1946, the National Chiropractic Mutual Insurance Company (NCMIC) was created in order to have a malpractice insurance company that would offer a high level of financial stability and chiropractic expertise to their fellow practitioners. NCMIC was created at a time when no other insurance carriers would cover DCs.

Now, just over 50 years later, NCMIC has established itself as one of the nation's leaders in the insurance field, earning an "A-" rating from A.M. Best Company and an "A+" rating from Standard and Poor's for their ability to pay insurance claims. But one of their greatest strengths has come in the area of financial contributions to advance the nature of the chiropractic profession.

Over the past five years, NCMIC has provided significant financial support to such groups as the American Spinal Research Fund, the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research (FCER), various state and national chiropractic associations, and Kentuckiana Children's Center, as well as many chiropractic colleges. In all, NCMIC has contributed almost \$4 million to the chiropractic profession since 1993.

A majority of that money has gone toward the much-needed area of chiropractic research. NCMIC has donated nearly \$3 million to help fund numerous research initiatives which have produced significant advances for the profession. Among these was the famous RAND study, which played a major part in the AHCPR's conclusion that spinal manipulation be a first choice of professional treatment for acute low back problems. Other studies funded by NCMIC have revealed valuable information regarding chiropractic's role in the treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome; childhood asthma; hypertension; and chronic otitis media.

Most of the rest of NCMIC's donations have gone toward enhancing the profession on a global scale and social studies about the future of chiropractic. For example, NCMIC contributed more than \$300,000 toward celebrating the Chiropractic Centennial in 1995, and the organization has already donated \$10,000 for the chiropractic bicentennial in 2095.

Greenawalts Put Chiropractic's Best "Foot" Forward

Another organization that has helped promote the chiropractic profession with its generosity is Foot Levelers Inc. Since its inception in 1952, Foot Levelers has helped to promote and endorse chiropractic through its dedication to wellness of the whole body.

The brainchild behind Foot Levelers is Monte Greenawalt, DC. Dr. Monte is the developer of the

Foot Levelers system of measuring and molding orthotics for chiropractors to provide to their patients. Although Monte is no longer involved in the day-to-day activities of Foot Levelers, his son Kent is at the helm.

Under their guidance, the Greenawalts have turned Foot Levelers into much more than just a supplier of chiropractic products. The organization tries to support chiropractic at all levels, contributing approximately \$3.5 million to help advance the status of the profession. Foot Levelers has donated millions of dollars to the chiropractic colleges to help build libraries, expand campus grounds, construct new buildings and offer scholarships to chiropractic students.

The chiropractic colleges haven't been the only beneficiaries of Foot Levelers' donations. The organization has also pushed forth the area of chiropractic research, contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars for research grants, positions and valuable studies. State and national chiropractic associations have also received financial support, and Foot Levelers has helped fund numerous special projects and national public relations campaigns to help spread the word about chiropractic to the general public.

In addition, Foot Levelers uses a program with the chiropractic colleges whereby they provide all items in the company's product line -- orthotics, pillows, rehabilitation equipment, etc. -- at an 80% discount, in addition to paying all of the freight charges incurred. Such a program has saved the chiropractic schools approximately \$500,000.

William Harris, DC - Making His Donations Multiply

As much as large corporations and organizations have helped to further the cause of chiropractic research and fund raising, one must not forget that the contributions made by individual chiropractors are no less remarkable. A case in point is Dr. William Harris of Alpharetta, Georgia.

A 1938 graduate of the Palmer School of Chiropractic, Dr. Harris has contributed to the lives of innumerable chiropractors over the years, helping contribute to the practice success of many. Dr. Harris is best known for his efforts as a practice consultant, helping DCs understand the business side of running a chiropractic practice.

But Bill Harris also understood the concept of giving back. From the very beginning of his career, Dr. Harris set aside a portion of his earnings to go back to the profession. Because this was his own hard-earned money, Dr. Harris donated this money only when it would be well-used. In most cases, he offered his donations as a "matching fund". This encouraged other DCs to donate what they could, usually doubling the initial donation.

The best example of this is the Chiropractic Centennial's documentary, "From Simple Beginnings". Dr. Harris donated \$300,000 to the effort, but required the chiropractic profession to match it with \$500,000. To insure that DCs understood the value of the documentary, Dr. Harris personally made the plea to the profession in Dynamic Chiropractic and at each preview of the documentary.

Not only did Dr. Harris help provide the needed \$500,000; he raised far more than that. He helped raise enough money, in fact, to re-televising a 30-minute version on numerous television stations across the country. It is this type of individual effort that has earned Dr. Harris such praise from the chiropractic profession.

How You Can Help

The millions of dollars these gentlemen have donated to help forward chiropractic over the years may seem like a formidable amount, but the drive that they have started has only begun. There is

an ancient Chinese proverb, which says that "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Imagine if every chiropractor in the U.S. -- more than 50,000 -- were to begin their journey of advancing the profession by contributing just \$200 a year.

Simple math says that \$200 multiplied by 50,000 would equal \$10 million. That's ten million dollars a year -- every year -- that could be used to conduct valuable research, renovate campuses, offer scholarships, and help raise public awareness about chiropractic. In numbers, there is strength. Why not start your journey today?

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