

Board Seeks to Save Penn. College of Chiropractic

TAKES ACTION TO PROTECT STUDENTS

Editorial Staff

This exclusive interview with Pennsylvania College of Chiropractic Board of Director's Chairman Jerry Tishman, DC, reveals what may be the school's final chapter.

"DC": Dr. Tishman would you give us an overview of what's been happening with the college over the past year and where you see it headed?

Dr. Tishman: The college has taken a course to begin a "teach-out" program. The college is not closing, but in the best interests of the students we felt it was necessary to begin a teach-out. The teach-out is for the upper trimester students. We will teach them until graduation, and the lower trimesters will transfer to another chiropractic school.

"DC": What has brought the college to this point?

Dr. Tishman: The biggest problem has been the issue of accreditation. That has been the biggest downfall. The school was successful, we had many students, and then because of being denied accreditation by CCE -- this is, of course, the major set back to the college.

"DC": So that we can be very clear and so that we can give a degree of comfort for the concerns of the students, can you tell us at what levels you will be teaching out?

Dr. Tishman: From the third trimester up we will be teaching out the students, and then the lower trimester students -- everybody's been notified -- will be able to transfer to the college of their choice.

"DC": Will the college be recommending a particular college to transfer to?

Dr. Tishman: There are several colleges that have been invited to participate and speak to the students to present what they can offer.

"DC": This will be effective when?

Dr. Tishman: This is something that has begun as of yesterday (December 19, 1994).

"DC": Can you explain how the current accreditation for the college is affected? Will those students who are part of the teach-out be graduating under accredited status?

Dr. Tishman: I'm not sure what the status is. The status sometimes goes state by state. So I don't have the answer for that. If they were to transfer to an accredited school, I'm not sure how it would be looked upon.

"DC": So the students need to contact the board in the state(s) where they expect to practice, and make decisions accordingly.

Dr. Tishman: Yes, because there is no definitive answer on it.

"DC": Over the past year, were there times when you anticipated the college could continue without a teach-out?

Dr. Tishman: Yes, we did, and we were prepared and we still are. The real focus of the story today is not the negative side. We're not closing the school. What we're doing is protecting the students and making sure we're doing the right thing by them. We're also looking for help to continue and have the school survive. That is how I was hoping you would be able to help us.

"DC": If you were to make an appeal today, what kind of help would you be looking for and what kind of organizations would you be looking to?

Dr. Tishman: What we're looking for is somebody, an organization, to help us save the college. We're going into our 100th anniversary, with the Centennial next year, and there is no reason for the college to die. It is in a tremendous area; the college has been in business 17 or 18 years; we have 500 plus alumni out there -- successful chiropractors, leaders in their communities, qualified - - and now all of a sudden our institution isn't qualified to graduate and teach chiropractors, and it's sad. I mean it's not like we started three years ago. We have over 500 graduates out there who are successful, ethical, honest practicing chiropractors, and it's sad.

"DC": If someone wants to help, who should they contact?

Dr. Tishman: They should contact myself and I would be happy to discuss it with them. We need individuals or organizations to help keep the school alive. There is a new direction on the board. We want to continue and carry out the chiropractic program. The largest organization, the Pennsylvania Chiropractic Society, endorses the survival of the college. I just heard from their second vice president, who happens to be a board member, and their board of directors endorsed our survival.

"DC": Can the upper trimester students be assured that the college will continue the teach-out?

Dr. Tishman: Yes, the college has taken the necessary steps with the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The plan is set to begin a teach-out and to make sure that every student graduates.

"DC": Through that time we can only hope that there will be individuals or organizations that will contact you and provide a way to save the college.

Dr. Tishman: Absolutely. I mean it's a sad thing if the school should not exist anymore.

The Pennsylvania College Board of Trustees has made a difficult decision, but they've made it with the students' welfare foremost in mind.

If you have any interest in working with Dr. Tishman and the board to save the college, you may contact him at (407) 487-7200. The future of PCC is now up to the profession .

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