

Celebrating 50 Years in Chiropractic

Editorial Staff

Carl S. Cleveland Jr. was born to the chiropractic profession. His chiropractic heritage dates back to his maternal grandmother, Dr. Sylvia Ashworth, one of the first women chiropractors in the United States. His parents, Drs. Carl and Ruth Cleveland, founded Cleveland Chiropractic College in Kansas City in 1922 when Carl Jr. was four-years old. Twenty years later, Carl Jr. would graduate from the college founded by his parents.

When CCKC was chartered in 1922, the Chiropractic Practice Act, which legalized chiropractic, was still five years away. As a child, Carl Jr. fretted that his parents would be arrested for practicing chiropractic. He relates: "My instructions were if I should come home from school and my parents would be in jail, I was to go next door and a neighbor would take care of me."

But Dr. Cleveland Sr. was not one to shy away from the battles of legalizing chiropractic. He testified in court as an expert witness on chiropractic, and once took the attention-getting approach of hiring a brass band to play outside a jail which had detained chiropractors for applying their profession.

Looking back on those early days, Dr. Cleveland Jr. said, "It's a wonder my father wasn't arrested."

Discrimination against chiropractic was not the only obstacle to overcome. Not able to get a loan for the college as a non-profit corporation, Dr. Cleveland Sr. was forced to put the college building in his own name. But despite the October 1929 stock market crash and the Depression, Dr. Cleveland Sr. and his school survived. By the late 1930s, the mortgage on the building would be paid off.

After graduating from high school, Dr. Cleveland Jr. went to the University of Nebraska to study physiology.

In 1939, Dr. Cleveland married Mildred Allison, who later followed the family's chiropractic tradition by becoming a D.C. Their son, Dr. Carl S. Cleveland III, born in 1946, continued this tradition by graduating from CCKC in 1978, and went on to become a third-generation college president (CCCLA and CCKC).

War Years

When the U.S. entered World War II, over half of CCKC's 40 students were drafted into the military. Dr. Cleveland Jr. said, "The war took 11 of our students one month, 13 the next month and nine the next month. My father and I, and Dr. Vera Sweet taught all the classes, day and night." Mildred made her contribution as the college's receptionist.

When the war ended, the Clevelands sought to expand their base of chiropractic education to the West coast. In 1950, Dr. Cleveland Sr. and the board of trustees took over the leadership of Ratledge College in Los Angeles, and Cleveland Chiropractic College of Los Angeles (CCCLA) was chartered. It was also during the 1950s that Dr. Cleveland Jr. started touring as a lecturer. He was a panelist for two years on a Kansas City call-in radio program, "Nightbeat," and during the same

time period (1951-1954) he hosted a half-hour television program, "So You May Know," which explained chiropractic principles and presented patient interviews.

In the 1960s, Dr. Cleveland Jr., and Dr. Jim Parker, founder of the Parker College of Chiropractic, embarked upon a worldwide chiropractic lecture tour. "The major outcome of the world lecture tour was international awareness of the Cleveland Colleges," said Dr. Cleveland Jr. "I know we never had any students from Australia until I gave lectures on that continent. A few months later, we had six or eight Australians enrolled."

Dr. Cleveland Jr. became president of CCCLA in 1982, following the 1981 death of his father. Carl Sr. had the distinction of being the only person to serve as president of a chiropractic college for more than 50 years.

In February of this year, Dr. Cleveland Jr. became chancellor of the Cleveland Colleges multi-campus system. He spends the majority of his time at CCCLA focusing on external and alumni relations, as well as development and institutional advancement for both campuses. When he can, he finds time to teach a couple of philosophy courses, and he consults student interns with special clinic cases.

But Dr. Cleveland says that his real love is not administration, nor is it teaching -- instead it is the joy of seeing patients regain their health through chiropractic care. "My biggest sense of pride is seeing patients getting well in the clinic," he said. "I've seen deaf people made able to hear and paralyzed people able to walk. I've seen it time and time again."

Today as chancellor of the Cleveland Chiropractic Colleges, Dr. Cleveland, Jr. can look back on a rewarding chiropractic career that has included working with B.J. Palmer, seeing the chiropractic profession mature and strengthen its position, traveling worldwide to spread the principles and philosophy of chiropractic, and serving as a chiropractic college administrator for more than 45 years.

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