

Contribute to a Healthier Future for Chiropractic

Kent Greenawalt

We want the United National Public Relations Campaign to hit the ground running. The Parker Las Vegas seminars in January marked the official kickoff of the campaign and we have a lot of work ahead of us in 2005. Each and every one of us has a responsibility to ensure that the future of chiropractic will be healthy. This campaign has the potential for great rewards: greater numbers of patients in chiropractic offices, more people interested in becoming chiropractors, and increased respect for our profession. In order for us to achieve these results, we need your commitment and financial support.

The United States has become an increasingly health-conscious nation. Concern about the growing rates of obesity and diseases that could be prevented, and outrage over the cost of prescription drugs and their safety, make this the perfect time to introduce chiropractic to the public. The American people deserve to know about the advantages of chiropractic - that it is natural, drug-free, relatively inexpensive, noninvasive, and very effective. The public is ready to hear the message of chiropractic, and our profession could lead the way to a healthier nation.

The goal of the United National Public Relations Campaign is to get the public to make an appointment to see a chiropractor. For us to reach this goal, we need your money and support. We need to trust the experts at the public relations firms (Manifest Communications in Toronto and Edelman in Chicago) to achieve our goal of more chiropractic patients.

One of the most recent campaigns was called the Alliance for Chiropractic Progress. The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) and the International Chiropractors Association (ICA) made a joint effort to advertise in national publications. They had a large advisory board made up of members from each group. It was difficult to decide what to talk about, and even more difficult to decide how the ads should look and what they should say. I sat in meetings in which they would argue about the structure of a sentence for 25 minutes. If we want the United National Public Relations Campaign to work, we can't do what we have done in the past.

The Campaign for Chiropractic cannot reach its goals without the support of individual chiropractors. Passion and commitment get things accomplished. Fighting with each other and complaining does not accomplish anything or help the profession. We want everyone in the chiropractic community committed to a better future for our profession.

Your financial support is critical to the success of the campaign. Our goal is to get everyone on board and contributing financially to help make sure that the campaign is successful. We should have an annual budget of seven figures. A seven-figure budget is actually just a drop in the bucket in today's world. We can't even begin to think of advertising yet, because we don't have enough money. So, at this point, we have to rely on positive public relations.

In the beginning, Foot Levelers provided 100 percent of the campaign's funding. Soon, we will begin fundraising by contacting institutions and companies within chiropractic to secure major funds. We're going to go to some companies and say, "We want a million dollars." And we're going

to go to other companies and ask for \$250,000. We want the vendors and organizations to make a five-year commitment, because we need to plan for this campaign to last years into the future. This campaign is not a one-time event; it is a continuous long-term flow of positive PR about chiropractic.

We want every DC in America to be a part of this campaign, and we are recommending that they do this by pledging \$100 a month on their credit card. Some individuals will want to contribute substantial amounts of money. We have a 501(c)(3), the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress, so the contributions will be fully tax-deductible. Think of this donation as just a normal cost of business, like paying the phone bill. Donating to the Campaign for Chiropractic is a better investment than a Yellow Pages ad. Remember, the goal of the campaign is to bring more patients into your office. And we'll be able to reach more people than any individual effort could. Donating to this campaign needs to become part of everyone's budget. If you're a vendor, a chiropractor, a student, etc., as long as you have a stake in the chiropractic profession, you should contribute and help make this campaign successful.

Can you imagine how much money Pfizer spends on advertising for Viagra? Drug companies can afford to spend billions on advertising. We are relying on PR to get positive stories about chiropractic out there in the media. With time, we would like to evolve from 100 percent public relations to a blend of advertising and PR. Right now, we are small fish in a big pond, but if we don't take the first step, how are we going to get anywhere?

We want to get the ball rolling on fundraising. The campaign is moving forward, but we need your help. We have broad-based support from companies, organizations, associations and individuals. And we want everyone to get on board and support the Campaign for Chiropractic. The money you donate will go toward helping educate the public about chiropractic.

One part of the PR campaign will focus on the national media. This is the big-name, "wow" part of the campaign. The other vital part is the grassroots campaign. If local chiropractors want to promote chiropractic in their area, we want to provide them with materials they can give to their local radio or television station. The national part of the campaign may not be able to reach everyone, so we want chiropractors to be able to spread the message in their hometowns.

The Congress of Chiropractic State Associations (COCSA) has agreed to be a part of this campaign, and we will use them to get to the state associations. They are very interested and want to do the right thing. We'll encourage all the state associations to become partners and to participate at the state level.

The thing that is really going to make this campaign work is the broad support of the profession. If we want to take chiropractic to a new level, we need the support of everyone - the doctors, the students, the organizations, the colleges, and the vendors. If everyone is committed to the campaign, we will have the resources we need to reach the public and encourage people to see a chiropractor. Together, we can build a profession that is stronger than it has ever been. We will make this work!

If you'd like to be one of the first to send a donation to the campaign:

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