



From left: Drs. Astrid Monsalve-Smith,

NEWS / PROFESSION

Chiropractors Reach Out to Their Community

Editorial Staff

Connecticut-based DRS Chiropractic LLC joined the Avon Foundation in the fight against breast cancer at the annual Avon Walk for Breast Cancer, held Oct. 1-2, 2005, in New York City. Three doctors of chiropractic from the Norwalk clinic (David Rich, DC; Leigh Damkohler, DC; and Astrid Monsalve-Smith, DC) donated services to the walk, coordinated outreach in Connecticut, and brought awareness to Fairfield County residents. More than 2,700 people participated in this year's walk, which raised \$7 million for breast cancer research and assistance for families undergoing treatment.



From left: Drs. Astrid Monsalve-Smith, Leigh Damkohler, and David Rich at this year's Avon Walk for Breast Cancer in New York City.

The chiropractors treated walkers in need of care at The Wellness Village, located within Randall's Island, a 480-acre park situated near the Triborough Bridge. The village provided lodging arrangements for the evening, along with food, chiropractic care, massage therapy and entertainment. The village had hundreds of volunteers; according to Dr. Rich, it was truly was an amazing site to see so many dedicated individuals for such a worthy cause.

Prior to the race, each walker was required to obtain at least \$1,800 in donations to help ensure the event would be a success. The participants completed a marked 39.3-mile course (the equivalent of a marathon and a half) over two days. The DCs treated about 400 walkers from noon to 9 p.m. the first day; Dr. Rich estimated that about half of the patients had never seen a chiropractor before. The professional services he and others provided included chiropractic, physical therapy, massage therapy, podiatric medicine, and medical services.

Dr. Rich said the most common complaints encountered were mechanical low back pain, followed by lower extremity muscular complaints, particularly involving the hip flexors. Most of the walkers carried supplies in backpacks, and there were a large number of upper back complaints, accompanied by thoracic and cervical complaints. After being triaged and filling out paperwork, most of the walkers were adjusted and had myofascial work. Dr. Rich said a large number of walkers told the chiropractors they felt re-energized to walk the second half of the event the next day. "That personally gave me a great boost of energy and allowed me to treat for eight hours straight, with few interruptions," he said.

One of the walkers they treated was Dorothy Baudry, who came from nearby Queens, N.Y. "After raising money and walking a marathon, it was both inspiring and uplifting to see all the volunteers supporting the walkers, especially at The Wellness Village," said Dorothy. "The chiropractic therapy was instrumental in allowing me to continue with the walk the next day. The chiropractor thanked me for walking, which truly made me feel appreciated and that I made a difference."

Prior to this year's Avon Walk, Dr. Rich and his team also performed outreach services at the Norwalk Oyster Festival in Connecticut in early September, promoting the event and receiving donations on behalf of the Avon Foundation. They plan to volunteer again next year and increase the number of participating chiropractors.

The 2006 host cities for the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer are Washington D.C., San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Denver and Charlotte, N.C. For more information about the 2006 Avon Walk for Breast Cancer and how you can volunteer your chiropractic services, visit www.avonwalk.org.

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