

## **DCs in D.C. for Chiropractic and Public Health**

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The 135<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Exposition of the American Public Health Association (APHA) was held Nov. 3-7, 2007, in Washington, D.C. The theme of this year's meeting, "Politics, Policy & Public Health," fit nicely with the venue and helped to recall that all decisions about public health are ultimately made in a political context, often by politicians.

The APHA meeting is the largest annual public health gathering in the world. In 2007, the 14,100 leaders of public health and government who attended this meeting set an all-time attendance record. The APHA continues to be the leader in public health and lives up to its billing as the "oldest, largest, most influential and most diverse public health organization in the world." Importantly, the chiropractic profession is a part of the APHA and respected as a full partner having equity and parity with all the other health professions under the wide APHA umbrella.

A large number of diversified topics were covered with more than 4,000 papers presented in 1,000-plus scientific sessions. The 2007 APHA program was a very comprehensive collection of oral presentations, roundtable workshops, poster sessions, institutes and panel discussions, all designed to enhance knowledge and exchange information about public health. Highlights included new research on HIV screening, pandemic influenza, neonatal genetic screening, food safety and school bullying. Hundreds more sessions dealt with a full range of other pressing public health issues.

As is customary at the meeting, most of the major leaders in government and health were present, including the health commissioners of several states; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); OSHA; NIOSH; the U.S. Public Health Service; the Department of Health and Human Services; other officials from WHO, PAHO, and HRSA; a former U.S. Surgeon General; various private institutes and voluntary agencies; several current and former elected state politicians and members of Congress; several college and university presidents, deans, program directors, and department heads; various international, federal, state and local health officials; and other educators, authors, researchers and dignitaries.

The keynote speakers at the Opening General Session on Sunday, Nov. 4 were Julie Gerberding, MD, MPH, director of the CDC, and Laurie Garrett, Senior Fellow for Global Health at the Council on Foreign Relations, who shared their respective visions on the importance of public health. The Closing General Session on late Wednesday after-noon was to feature champion cyclist Lance Armstrong speaking as one of the major advocates for cancer survivors. However, due to a scheduling problem, Sanjay Gupta, MD, practicing neurosurgeon and award-winning journalist with CNN, gave the closing presentation.

The chiropractic profession was very well-represented by these chiropractic associations which had formal representation at the APHA Annual Meeting: American Chiropractic Association (ACA), Association of Chiropractic Colleges (ACC), World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) and California Chiropractic Association (CCA).

The following chiropractic colleges were formally represented by their administrators, faculty,

clinicians, researchers, designates and students:

- Cleveland Chiropractic College
- Life Chiropractic College
- National University of Health Sciences
- New York College of Chiropractic
- Northwestern Health Sciences University
- Palmer College of Chiropractic
- Palmer-West College of Chiropractic
- Parker College of Chiropractic
- Southern California University of Health Sciences
- University of Bridgeport Chiropractic College
- Western States College of Chiropractic

For the 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, chiropractic was included among the 900 sessions of 4,000 scientific and technical paper presentations that covered more than 30 specialty areas of health care. This year, there were four program sessions sponsored by the Chiropractic Health Care section of APHA dedicated exclusively to chiropractic issues. These included some 18 paper presentations prepared by 40 co-authors. Two other papers by chiropractic authors were also presented in separate sessions.

Chiropractic session titles and moderators were: #3016.0 Educating for the Future - John Stites, DC, DACBR; #3108.0 Expanding the Evidence Base: Status of Current Research - Christine Choate, DC, PhD; #3205.0 Improving Health Care through Integrative Approaches - Mitchell Haas, DC, MA; and #3308.0 Wellness in Education and Practice - M. Willard Evans, DC, PhD, CHES.

The Chiropractic Health Care section of APHA also announced its new elected and appointed officers for 2008:

- Chair: Elaine Cooperstein, DC
- Chair-elect: John Stites, DC, DACBR
- Secretary: Alisa Fairweather, MPH
- Section Council: Joseph Brimhall, DC; Maria Hondras, DC, MPH; Jonathon Todd Egan, DC, MPH; Lori Byrd Spencer, BA; Gerald Stevens, DC, MS, MPH; M. Will Evans, DC, MA, PhD
- Governing Council: Paul Dougherty, DC, and Mitchell Haas, DC, MA
- Committee Chairs: Gerald Stevens, DC, MS (awards); Jonathon Egan, DC, MPH (membership); Elaine Cooperstein, DC and Alisa Fairweather, MPH (nominations); John Stites, DC, DACBR (program); John Pammer, Jr., DC, DACBR (communications); Paul Dougherty, DC (resolutions); Mitchell Haas, DC, MA (section manual); and Bonnie Hillsberg, DC, MHA, MS (action board rep).

#### APHA 136<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – 2008

The 2008 annual meeting will be held in San Diego from Oct. 25-29, 2008. The theme of the meeting will stress international health - "Public Health Without Borders." The 2008 Call for Abstracts will be announced to various chiropractic media, organizations, researchers and other sources by Dr. John Stites of Palmer Chiropractic College. The absolute deadline for receipt of abstracts is Feb. 4, 2008. Abstract submissions must be submitted online beginning Dec. 17, 2007 via the APHA Web site at [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org). Paper presenters must be members of the APHA and registered for the annual meeting.

Doctors of chiropractic are urged to join the APHA and participate by attending the annual meeting this year in San Diego. APHA membership and participation helps assure chiropractic's rightful

place in the American health care system. Membership information can be obtained from Dr. Jonathon Egan ([j.t.egan@gmail.com](mailto:j.t.egan@gmail.com)) or on the APHA Web site.

### Challenge to New Doctors: Unite With APHA

By Kristen Bentson, DC, and Scott Bentson, MS, DC

Envision yourself seated in a well-appointed board room amidst the presidents of chiropractic colleges, prominent researchers and political leaders for a meeting where issues such as education, research and professional advancement are explored by the experts. Picture an event where chiropractors, medical professionals, nurses, acupuncturists, midwives and health care workers from every facet of patient care gather to further the cause of health and wellness. This was our experience at the 2007 American Public Health Association's 135<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting held in Washington, D.C., in November.

As we reflected on our time at the meeting, we wondered why more young doctors of chiropractic were not in attendance. This was the perfect opportunity to present ideas, have your voice heard, and work alongside the profession's greatest minds. As we see it, membership in the APHA is both a privilege and a professional responsibility. As doctors of chiropractic, we need to recognize the importance of promoting chiropractic under the banner of public health and integrating chiropractic into mainstream public health activities.

Spending time in the nation's capitol reminded us of the great leaders of our country who tirelessly pursued a vision and achieved their goal. We were similarly impressed by the team of leaders who promote chiropractic health care in this interdisciplinary environment. Over the course of a few days, we were challenged to think critically, to actively implement evidence-based strategies in patient care, and to work toward becoming leaders in the field. As the next generation of chiropractors, we must look for ways to build on the accomplishments of the great men and women of our profession in order to secure our position in the public health arena. We urge our colleagues to unite within the APHA as we work together for the good of our patients and as well as profession.

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