

News in Brief

Editorial Staff

Colorado DC Off to Afghanistan

For the second time, Joshua Eldridge, DC, CCSP, a sergeant in the U.S. Army, has been called to the Middle East to serve his country. Dr. Eldridge, a Military Integrator/Maintainer with the 321st Military Intelligence Battalion, will be securing data and communications conduits in and around the military compounds at an undisclosed location in Afghanistan.

Dr Eldridge, a 2002 graduate of [National University of Health Sciences](#) who enlisted that same year, spend his first tour of duty in Iraq (2004-2005) with the 3rd Infantry Division and worked with the troop medical clinic in Baghdad. In that role, he was one of the first chiropractors to treat soldiers in combat situations.

"I joined the military during the beginning stages of the Afghan war," he said. "And I am very excited that I will get to serve on this front and to help secure a free and democratic Afghanistan. I am also looking forward to treating the troops in my unit and those units with whom we interact. Chiropractic is a much-needed addition to the military and I hope that I am able to add to the freedom of others by treating soldiers."

To follow Dr. Eldridge's tour overseas, review his blog at www.chiropracticepro.com/journeyblog.

Legislative Advocacy Front and Center in Illinois

The [Illinois Chiropractic Society](#) (ICS) has been busy this year, to say the least; just look at these four ICS-promoted legislative initiatives recently signed into law by Illinois Governor Pat Quinn:

- *Public Act 96-0618* gives chiropractic physicians explicit statutory authority to "delegate tasks or duties to licensed or unlicensed personnel when the tasks or duties fall within the scope of practice, as well as the education, training or experience, of the delegating physicians, and within the context of a physician-patient relationship." A licensed health care professional must be on-site to provide assistance with any such tasks/duties.
- *Public Act 96-0367* enables school boards to accept "sick notes" written by chiropractic physicians, restoring their authority to certify student and teacher sick leave.
- *Public Act 96-0455* adds a chiropractic physician to the Illinois Board of Health and gives the board a leadership role in advising the director of the Illinois Department of Health in meeting needs assessment, statewide health objectives, policy development, and assurance of access to necessary services.
- *Public Act 96-0353* gives chiropractic physicians the same level of access to patients in assisted-living facilities as medical doctors and doctors of osteopathy.

"The ICS had an incredibly successful year this legislative season," said Dr. Monica Schnack, president of the ICS. "It is very gratifying to see the years of hard work by the ICS staff and our

membership rewarded with these significant changes."

First Graduates of National's Master of Science Program Receive Their Diplomas

The first 14 graduates of [National University of Health Sciences'](#) Master of Science in Advanced Clinical Practice (MSACP) degree program were honored during the university's commencement ceremonies in late August. The postgraduate degree program gives doctors of chiropractic wide-scope exposure to advanced clinical study including pharmacology, neurology, clinical nutrition, advanced diagnostic imaging and research.

"The master of science degree in advanced clinical practice is designed to produce top-caliber physicians with advanced academic and clinical credentials," said Dr. James Winterstein, NUHS president. "These are individuals who will be well-prepared as academic leaders in the chiropractic profession, as well as physicians who can bring an unparalleled depth of knowledge to the 'whole health healing' art of chiropractic medicine."

The two-year, 36-credit-hour program incorporates weekend and distance learning and features noted faculty such as Drs. David Seaman, Rand Swenson and Alex Vasquez. To learn more about the MSACP program, contact the university's Lincoln College of Postprofessional, Graduate and Continuing Education at 1-630-889-6622.

Drug Company Receives Largest Fine in History

Pfizer Inc., the pharmaceutical giant responsible for bringing such medications as Viagra, Zoloft and Lipitor to the market, has been fined \$2.3 billion by federal prosecutors for illegal marketing activities that included providing vacations and other perks to doctors as incentives for prescribing their products.

"[Doctors] were entertained with golf, massage and other activities," said Mike Loucks, U.S. attorney for the state of Massachusetts, in an Associated Press article.

Federal prosecutors also said that Pfizer marketed several drugs for "off label" purposes, meaning the medications, such as the painkiller Bextram, were promoted as a viable treatment option for conditions for which the drug had not been approved; and that the company even sent doctors information regarding dosage for these unapproved uses.

The \$2.3 billion fine includes a \$1.2 billion criminal fine, the largest ever levied in a U.S. criminal case; \$1 billion in civil penalties; and a \$100 million criminal forfeiture. Pfizer apparently continued its illegal activities even as it was negotiating deals on prior misconduct.

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