

Chiropractic and Public Health: It was a Very Good Year

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You might be surprised to hear this, but with 2009 now over, I have to say it was a very good year. True, the U.S. economy has not really recovered and the chiropractic niche could still use a bailout, but there are signs of good things to come in 2010 and beyond. This was especially apparent in the increasing involvement of the chiropractic profession in mainstream public health and in the [American Public Health Association \(APHA\)](#).

We've heard for years that the APHA is the best vehicle for chiropractic integration into the public health community. It is the oldest, largest, most diverse and most influential public health association in the United States and the world. Its annual meeting and exposition is the largest gathering of public health and government officials in the world. In 2009, the APHA annual meeting took place in Philadelphia from Nov. 7-11 with an environmental theme of "Water and Public Health: The 21st-Century Challenge." Chiropractic was well-represented once again among the 12,000-plus attendees.

Opening remarks were made by APHA Executive Director Georges Benjamin, MD, and APHA President Cheryl Easley, PhD, RN. Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and Deputy Mayor and Health Commissioner Donald Schwarz, MD, also made presentations. Keynote speakers at the opening general session were Celine Cousteau, of the famous oceanographer family, and Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The closing general session featured a panel discussion by the nation's most senior federal public health policy-makers and officials of the U.S. Public Health Service.

CHCSection:
Election Results for 2010
Chair: Dr. Paul Dougherty
Chair-Elect: Dr. Joe Brimhall
Past Chair: Dr. John Stites
Secretary: Dr. Jonathon Todd Egan
Governing Council: Drs. Dana Lawrence and Mitchell Haas
Section Council: Drs. Gerald Stevens, M. Will Evans, Jason Bartlett, Rod Floyd, Bart Green and Claire Johnson
Action Board Rep: Dr. Bonnie Hillsberg
Committee Chairs:
Drs. Gerald Stevens (awards), Claire Johnson (communications), Jonathon Egan (membership), Alisa Fairweather (nominations), John Stites (program), Dana Lawrence (resolutions), and Mitchell Haas (section manual)

As is standard at APHA's annual meeting, most of the major leaders in government and health were present, including the health commissioners of several states; the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the U.S. Public Health Service; the Department of Health and Human Services; the recently appointed new U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Regina Benjamin, and other former U.S. surgeons general; various private institutes and volunteer agencies; several current and former state politicians and members of congress; college and university officials; various international, federal, state, and local health officials; and other educators, authors, researchers and dignitaries.

Two chiropractic college presidents, Dr. Joe Brimhall of [Western States Chiropractic College](#) and Dr. Mark Zeigler of [Northwestern Health Sciences University](#), attended the meeting, along with a few dozen other leaders of the chiropractic profession. Among the 1,000 sessions of 4,000 scientific and technical paper presentations covering more than 30 specialty areas of health care, the Chiropractic Health Care (CHC) section presented five educational sessions: Chiropractic Education and Public Health, Current Research in Chiropractic, Developing Integrative Approaches to Patient Care, Models of Wellness Care in Practice, and Adverse Event Reporting and UPIRTSO, and 26 papers. These were well-received by a multidisciplinary audience, and several thousand attendees visited the Chiropractic Health Care section's very professional booth among the 700 exhibit booths.

The biggest news announced again at the CHC section business meeting was the automatic enrollment of chiropractic college students into APHA (As reported in the [Nov. 18, 2009 issue of *Dynamic Chiropractic*](#): "Public Health Goes to College"). This allows integration of college classroom materials with contemporary public health resources, exposes chiropractic students to mainstream public health endeavors and inculcates a value of public health and community service to a whole generation of young chiropractors. It also gives the chiropractic profession a bigger and better voice within APHA policy-making and will increase the number of APHA governing council seats allotted to chiropractic along with a bigger working budget for the section. The bold decision by the college presidents to support this is truly a win-win for them and for the entire profession.

The publication of a major new book was also announced during this year's meeting. *Introduction to Public Health for Chiropractors* was edited by Drs. Michael Haneline and Bill Meeker, with chapters contributed by several top names in chiropractic and public health. The book is now available and can serve as a college textbook or a reference book for chiropractors.

Also during the meeting, CHC Section Awards for 2009 were announced. The "Lifetime Achievement" award was presented to Dr. Mitchell Haas. Dr. Paul Dougherty received the "Distinguished Service" award for 2009. A "Rising Star" award was given to Dr. Claire Johnson. Special awards for "Advancing Public Health & Chiropractic" were awarded to three chiropractic college presidents, Dr. John Scaringe of [Southern California University of Health Sciences](#), Dr. Frank Nicchi of [New York Chiropractic College](#) and Dr. Brimhall of WSCC, and several others.*

The 2010 APHA annual meeting will be held in Denver, Nov. 6-10 with a theme of "Social Justice: A Public Health Imperative," which is a major concern throughout the world. The 2010 Call for Abstracts has been announced, with an absolute deadline for receipt of abstracts by early February 2010.

Chiropractors, students, organizations and colleges are urged to get involved in mainstream public health using the APHA as their vehicle for entry and integration. More information can be obtained at the APHA Web site www.apha.org or the Chiropractic Health Care section of APHA Web site (www.apha.org/membergroups/sections/aphasections/chc).

**Editor's note:* Dr. Baird and Dr. Jonathon Egan, a frequent contributor to this column, also received "Advancing Public Health & Chiropractic" awards at the 2009 APHA Annual Meeting.

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