

Palmer College President Dr. Donald Kern Announces Retirement

Concluding a career that has spanned more than 50 years, Donald P. Kern, DC, PhC, [president of the Davenport campus](#) of Palmer College of Chiropractic, has announced that he will retire effective Dec. 31, 2010.

"I've certainly been blessed to serve Palmer College for so long, especially having worked under both B.J. and David Palmer," said Dr. Kern. "Dr. Dave was my hero and role model. I hope that he would be proud of my service to The Fountainhead."

Dr. Kern announced his retirement plans to [Chancellor Dennis Marchiori](#), DC, PhD, and the Palmer College Board of Trustees during the board's Nov. 4-6 meeting in San Jose, Calif., near the college's west campus. Dr. Marchiori will announce a leadership succession plan for the Davenport campus prior to Dr. Kern's departure at the end of December.

Following his retirement, Dr. Kern intends to stay connected with the college he has proudly served for more than five decades by participating in various alumni activities, assisting with fundraising opportunities and working with students.

"The biggest joy and satisfaction of my career has been the opportunity to help more than 28,000 Palmer students learn how to identify and correct subluxations," said Dr. Kern. "That has been, is and always will be the true purpose of Palmer College of Chiropractic."

"For so many years, Dr. Kern has been a constant in my life," said Vickie Palmer, great-granddaughter of D.D. Palmer, the founder of chiropractic, and former chair of the Palmer Board of Trustees. "He has been a mentor, a leader, a colleague and, most certainly, a true friend; not only to me, but to his alma mater."

"I have the highest respect for Dr. Kern's quiet strength and his commitment to Palmer College," said Dr. Marchiori. "Throughout my time as a student, faculty member and administrator, I have always admired him for his focus on the students and their learning experiences."

A 1958 graduate of Palmer College, Dr. Kern went on to earn his Doctorate of Chiropractic Philosophy in 1959. His professional career with Palmer began in 1960 when he joined the B.J. Palmer Clinic staff. He served as a faculty clinician until 1976 and also held the post of clinic director from 1965 to 1970.

Dr. Kern went on to hold numerous administrative positions at Palmer over the next 40 years including director of admissions, vice president for student affairs, chairman of the Technique Department and president of the college from 1988 to 1994. After returning to full-time teaching in the Technique Department in 1994, Dr. Kern was named senior campus administrator at Palmer College's Florida campus upon its opening in 2002. In 2004, he was named interim president of Palmer's Davenport and Florida campuses. Following that interim period, Dr. Kern once again focused his full efforts on the Davenport campus in 2005 when he was named president for an [unprecedented second time](#).

"I hope my tenure as President will be remembered for starting the President's Club and helping to craft the Palmer Tenets," he said. "Our endowment has grown from about \$6 million in 1987 to around \$30 million today. The one thing that will guarantee the perpetuity of this institution is a strong endowment fund."

Five generations of the Kern family have graduated from Palmer College with Dr. Kern as part of the third generation.

"My grandfather, Clyde G. Kern ('21), and my father, Donald O. Kern ('23), were both Palmer graduates, as well as my older brothers, Raymond T. ('50) and James O. ('52), so I was introduced to The Fountainhead early on," said Dr. Kern. "I decided on a career in chiropractic as a teenager and it was a natural choice to come to Palmer."

That passion has been passed on to his children and grandchildren. Dr. Kern and his wife of 53 years, Nancy, are parents of three children: Gregory Kern, DC (Davenport '84), Jeffrey Kern and Karen Onken, DC (Davenport '97). Dr. Greg's son, Zachary, represents the fifth generation as a 2007 graduate of the Davenport campus.

Source: Palmer College of Chiropractic