

The Giant Shift You Didn't See Coming in Chiropractic

Editorial Staff

Editor's note: The following is an exclusive interview with the founder and CEO of [Women Chiropractors](#), Cyndy Shaft Toll, DC; and WC President Rosemary Batanjski, DC.

Why do women chiropractors need their own group and why did you form a nonprofit? We have been asked this question many times. Women have been an important part of our profession since Mabel Palmer's time and even earlier.

Over the past few decades, we have seen an increase in female enrollment in all professions including chiropractic, engineering, etc. Currently, higher-education institutions are reporting female enrollment at approximately 50 percent, and chiropractic is no different.

Just like other professions, women have struggled to find balance in both personal life and professional life. When we formed the private Facebook page as a form of "support," in less than a year it went viral. Based on the rapid growth and metrics we were seeing on Facebook, it was evident that the need for this group was paramount.

Currently, more than 6,200 women chiropractors communicate monthly via Facebook, which has attracted the attention of Facebook administrators. Women Chiropractors has become the largest and most engaging chiropractic group on Facebook to date.

Our nonprofit organization was formed shortly thereafter to remedy the concerns and struggles women are facing in our profession, and to reduce the attrition rate in our profession. We are learning that close to 50 percent of female DCs leave the profession after only five years of practice.

What is your goal as a nonprofit organization? Women Chiropractors is a nonprofit launched from a collective dream of female chiropractors around the world. We are most excited about helping women chiropractors across the globe to achieve their purpose and goals in life.

Our organization offers education, financial support and resources that empower all women chiropractors in technique, philosophy, human resources and business, and to find balance in their personal lives. Our mission is to create compassionate, confident, courageous and charitable chiropractors internationally.

How is this going to help our profession as whole, not just women? Every day, our global mastermind / support group is helping women find balance, solve issues together, and properly educate and inform one another on every aspect of the chiropractic profession, be it personal or professional. This "group think tank," as well as experts at each other's fingertips, leads to increased clinical care and patient value across the profession.

We see growth in these women, we see partnerships / associateships performing and becoming

more successful, and have restored faith that this is the greatest profession in the world.

Unequivocally, we can state without reservation we have had many choose to stay in the profession and become more confident and successful. We saw a need for a program for women who have been sidelined from practice due to illness, pregnancy, life circumstances, tragedy and financial hardship.

We created a pilot program in November 2017 with five women chiropractors from Canada and the U.S., and worked intensively with them for seven months. We saw firsthand the power of mentorship, and from that point we decided to launch officially our Re-Entry Program in January 2019, as well as our Mentorship Program that will be announced soon.

Why are all chiropractors having a hard time finding associates? We are asked this question all the time and many of our own board members struggle to find quality associates as well – so we decided to do something about it. We decided to get some answers.

We launched the first-ever survey of women chiropractors only in June 2017 (six-month time frame) and 11 percent of our membership responded. Surprisingly, we found women are choosing to open their own practices because they *think* the grass is greener on the other side.

In interviewing many of these women, we found that students are hearing horror stories about associateships: low pay, that they are glorified chiropractic assistants, etc., which made them want to do it on their own. Sadly, 30 percent of these women in solo practice report taking home less than \$50,000 per year.

We as a profession and doctors who are thinking of retiring need to come up with better, innovative solutions for the new doctors coming out of school so associateships are a win-win for all.

With student loans and cost of living at an all-time high, we as a profession need to re-evaluate and embrace these new graduates / associates, and value their contributions to our practices as we phase out. This will result in more successful practices, thriving relationships, and the ability both to give back to our profession and sell our practices when the time comes. We are committed to raising the level of our profession across the board through our initiatives.

How do you intend on spreading your message and developing these initiatives? With the help of our generous sponsors and the paid membership, our goal is to collaborate with the chiropractic colleges, state associations and other chiropractic organizations in creating and developing quality programs and initiatives.

By joining forces with these institutions, we can show our new students and our profession that our sole purpose is to strengthen and empower young chiropractors, male or female, in the years to come.

Tell us about your upcoming convention this fall? This is the first time in chiropractic history that women chiropractors are being united at an event created solely for women DCs and taught by women. Our incredible sponsors have donated more than \$50,000 in giveaways.

We will be making "her-story" Oct. 12-14, 2018 in Orlando, Fla., at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center. For complete details, please visit www.wdcconvention.com.

