

## Announcing the ACC Technique Consortium

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Some time around 1977, Dr. J.R. Campbell, then president of the ACA Council on Technique, suggested that proper study and concern for the subluxation could provide a focal point for overcoming divisiveness within the chiropractic profession. Although it took a few years, this imaginative thought finally led to the first Conference on Technique Fundamentals, on October 7-9, 1983, hosted by Dr. Carl Cleveland, Jr. at Cleveland Chiropractic College, Los Angeles.

Then council president Herbert I. Magee and secretary Ted Shrader invited representatives from most of the CCE-accredited colleges, and also Drs. Scott Haldeman and L. John Faye as consultants. Apparently the first day of the first meeting was a bit rough, with ICA and ACA people splitting off into private discussion groups. However, things went much better the second day, with the appointment of several subcommittees and an agreement to name the group the "Intercollegiate Panel of Advisors" to the ACA Council on Technique. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Following that first meeting in 1983, these intercollegiate conferences convened twice yearly. The participants have included heads of chiropractic college technique departments, other technique instructors, field doctors, ACA officers, invited speakers, and special consultants from time to time. These meetings marked a watershed event for the chiropractic profession by demonstrating that ideological issues can be successfully pushed aside when dedicated clinicians understand the need for professional unity and seize the opportunity to advance the entire profession in the area of chiropractic technique.

The panel of advisors met for the last time ever from September 11-13, 1997, in Lombard, Illinois, hosted by the National College of Chiropractic. Although this meeting could have been called the 29th Intercollegiate Conference on Technique of the Panel of Advisors to the ACA Council on Technique, during the course of this meeting the college representatives formally announced the birth of a new organization that supersedes the panel: the Association of Chiropractic Colleges Technique Consortium. The Lombard gathering, therefore, marked the first meeting of this new association. The transitioning formalized a process that had been under discussion for approximately two years, during which time the panel conducted two of its meetings in conjunction with the Association of Chiropractic Colleges (ACC).

Dr. Goodman, current president of the ACC, and a special invited guest for the Lombard meeting, described for the group what the advantages would be of affiliating more closely with the ACC. This latter creates a venue for all individuals involved in chiropractic education to have a voice and collectively relate to one another. Although the ACC started out as a collection of largely polarized college presidents, it has evolved (under the pressure of the need for leadership and a cohesive voice for chiropractic education) into an organization that speaks in a common voice on issues pertinent to the scope and practice of chiropractic. Although the presidents remain autonomous and retain their unique identities, they all have a role to play in addressing the educational needs of the entire

profession. A set of guidelines has been constructed for the use of any group that would like to meet under the ACC umbrella. It is within these guidelines that the former panel representatives seek formal recognition as a body of the ACC.

The following individuals were nominated and unanimously approved as provisional officers of the ACC Technique Consortium (provisional in that the consortium has not yet received formal recognition from the ACC):

Ron Williams (NCC) -- chairperson  
Hunter Mollin (NYCC) -- vice chairperson  
Carol Claus (CCC, LA) -- secretary

Dr. Ted Shrader, who more than anyone else conceived and nurtured the panel over the years, was gracious enough to attend the Lombard meeting at his own expense, making it clear that he has the same high expectations of the new grouping as he did of its predecessor, especially in the area of evaluating chiropractic technique. Dr. Ralph Filson, who remains president of the ACA Council on Technique, also has the honor of having attended both the first and last meetings of the panel on technique, and has given much to that organization over the years.

When I became the secretary-treasurer of the Council on Technique a few years ago, I inherited several boxes of records. Browsing among them, I found a placard bearing the following cogent quotation attributed to my former Palmer West colleague Hank Kontz, who passed away not long after:

"The ultimate purpose of the Panel of Advisors of the Technique Council in the consensus process should be to develop a mechanism to evaluate any chiropractic procedure as to efficacy and appropriateness, as it relates to given conditions and circumstances." (Dr. Henry Kontz, September, 1991)

Certainly the panel grappled toward that goal over its many years of existence, never really reaching a firm internal consensus on precisely what it means to "evaluate chiropractic technique," and therefore on what type of mechanism should be used toward that end. No doubt the ACC Technique Consortium will continue that discussion, albeit with a greater emphasis on the educational issues related to the technique question. Every college, after all, must decide not only how to teach technique, but what techniques to teach, which requires an ongoing process of technique evaluation. This fact, more than any other, will guarantee the historical continuity of the panel and the technique consortium.

The panel of advisors played a seminal role not only in evaluating chiropractic technique, but in demonstrating the feasibility of ongoing intercollegiate collaboration, especially in such a potentially divisive area (I have described its accomplishments in detail elsewhere).<sup>1-3</sup> It seems especially fitting that the panel, having served its historical role and having become so deeply rooted as an intercollegiate organization, be reborn under the auspices of the Association of Chiropractic Colleges, the profession's most important intercollegiate organization at this time. The ACC Technique Consortium, now mandated to become the profession's leading think tank in the area of chiropractic technique, may one day find itself acting in an advisory capacity to the ACA Council on Technique, which continues to exist as a completely separate organization with its own officers.

The ACA Council on Technique and its panel of advisors were able to conduct their business over the years thanks to the financial support of several sponsoring organizations and individuals, including the chiropractic colleges; the American Chiropractic Association; the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research; the National Chiropractic Mutual Insurance Company; the Association of

Chiropractic Colleges; and the dues paying members of the ACA Council on Technique. The college presidents and their staff have not only financially supported council activities, but have made their college facilities available for meetings, including luncheons and evening banquets, where some of the best discussions invariably take place.

The current ACA Council on Technique officers (Ralph Filson -- president; Michael Schneider -- vice president; myself -- secretary) would like to thank all these groups and individuals.

### *References*

1. Cooperstein R. Council on technique. Journal of the American Chiropractic Association July 1996:37-38, 61.
2. Cooperstein R, Schneider M. Assessment of chiropractic techniques and procedures. Topics in Clinical Chiropractic 1996;3(1):44-51.
3. Cooperstein R. On hybrid vigor and creative disaccord: the panel of advisors to the ACA council on technique. Dynamic Chiropractic June 19, 1995:14, 20.

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