

Inspiring the Future of the Profession

Mark Wade, Student Chair, Foundation for Chiropractic Progress

I am a senior chiropractic student at Cleveland Chiropractic College - Kansas City. For the past 14 months, I have had the privilege of serving as the national student chair of the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress (FCP). I can tell you that without a doubt, students on every campus are excited about the potential of the foundation's positive press campaign and what it can mean to our futures.

Although many of us were not even born during the historic 15-year [Wilk v. AMA anti-trust legal battle](#) that found the AMA and 1,900 local and county medical societies liable in 1987 for a boycott whose purpose was to "contain and eliminate" the profession, we know that they succeeded in damaging the reputation of our profession. Students are inspired that our profession has come together to organize a national public-relations campaign to get that reputation back, for all the right reasons.

The truth about the safety and effectiveness of chiropractic needs to be shared far and wide. We are all aware of the current efforts to disparage chiropractic care, including the recent actions of one insurance company on the East Coast that no longer covers cervical adjustments for the perceived misrepresented risks. As students, we understand that there are still battles to be fought against ignorance and bias.

Setting Each Goal Higher Than the Last

The Foundation for Chiropractic Progress can boast that every single dollar raised for its positive branding campaign goes directly toward educating the public, thanks to the generosity of Kent Greenawalt, who covers the foundation's entire overhead. Under the direction of an experienced public-relations agency, the FCP distributes positive messages via public service announcements on television and radio, print ads in newspapers and magazines, press releases and advertorials, and through Internet sources. The foundation just completed a PSA with the [Washington Redskins cheerleaders](#) and their chiropractor.

In 2009, the foundation successfully reached its goal of 500 million positive messages for chiropractic (according to standard advertising industry measurements), and as of late 2010, was on target to exceed 1 billion positive messages. This is the first time in history that has ever been accomplished. The foundation's new goal is to distribute 1 billion positive messages *each and every month*. This is entirely possible, but it will require the support of more members of our profession. Every DC and student has to be impressed with these accomplishments. Let me list my top 10; any of which could be number one:

Top 10 FCP Accomplishments

10. From late October 2009 to February 2010 in position to purchase almost a million dollars of advertising buys in *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Politico* and *Roll Call*, raising the profile of the profession during the critical period of the national health reform debate.

9. Monthly press releases and advertorials all year long on chiropractic's role in the Winter Olympics, at the Super Bowl, with all NFL teams, for pregnant mothers, for prevention and healthy living advice, etc.

8. In all newspaper and magazine ads, in every press release and on all PSAs, the foundation's consumer Web site, www.yes2chiropractic.com, is prominently mentioned, directing potential patients toward its accurate, positive information.

7. Having all the professionally done marketing materials available for contributors, including all ads made into full-color posters for internal marketing, increasing the positive message in local markets.

6. Funding the distribution of the highly acclaimed booklet *Chiropractic Research and Practice: State of the Art*, by Dr. Daniel Redwood. This is an impressive summary of the current research validating chiropractic care.

5. Having football great Jerry Rice, recently inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, continuing his role as a chiropractic spokesperson. He has been re-signed for 2011.

4. Having retired Brigadier General Becky Halstead doing TV and radio interviews all across the country touting her dramatic recovery from chronic pain under chiropractic care. Her schedule has been extensive, visiting chiropractic colleges and speaking at state and national meetings. Gen. Halstead is the first woman to graduate from West Point and rise to the rank of general. She commanded over 25,000 troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Her presentations for chiropractic are remarkably powerful. [Brig. Gen. Halstead received the our [2010 Person of the Year Award](#) for her ongoing efforts in support of chiropractic. Read "Sharing the Chiropractic Message Coast to Coast" in the Dec. 16, 2010 issue.]

3. Commissioning [the Mercer Report](#) ["Do Chiropractic Physician Services for Treatment of Low Back and Neck Pain Improve the Value of Health Benefit Plans?"] and its significant findings from two authors with stellar reputations - Arnold Milstein, MD, now at Stanford, and Niteesh Choudhry MD, PhD, of Harvard.

2. Taking the Mercer Report to business and industry with a relationship with the [Center for Health Value Innovations](#) (CHVI) a not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing better business performance. CHVI reviewed the Mercer data and concluded that chiropractic intervention is an area with a very large economic upside.

1. Getting the chiropractic community - including all colleges, both national associations, almost every state association, and many vendors - together behind one mission: positive press for chiropractic.

All this and much more can be found at www.f4cp.com. You can also find the names of all contributors. Like so many other chiropractic students, I have been inspired by the actions of the foundation. We are fortunate at the beginning of our careers to be able to reap the benefits of a successful public-relations effort of this magnitude. This is how our profession is going to move the health market penetration dial upward - when patients get the real story of the effectiveness and clinical skills of doctors of chiropractic.

I deeply appreciate the work of the foundation board and the 1,800 current monthly contributors who are making this happen for patients everywhere; patients who need the care that only a doctor of

chiropractic can provide.

To those of you who have yet chosen to get behind the foundation, all I can say is, "What are you waiting for?" The success of the FCP is your success. You can go to the Web site and sign up at whatever amount you are comfortable with giving. Giving nothing should not be an option.

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