

Doing Double Duty to Protect and Serve

MAJOR CARLOS DOMINO, DC, OF THE TEXAS STATE GUARD.

Editorial Staff

For Dr. Carlos X. Domino, a doctor of chiropractic practicing in Houston, Texas, protecting and serving seems to be in his blood. Before becoming a DC, he served in Vietnam; now, he not only protects and serves his patients, but also the public as a member of the [Texas State Guard](#). Here's his unique story.

Give our readers some background on your chiropractic career, including why you decided to become a chiropractor, where you went to school, your previous and current practice, etc. I became a chiropractor after serving in Vietnam (4th Infantry Division). After an injury incurred during the war only seemed to be getting worse, I went to a chiropractor in my home town. (We all know the story about going to a chiropractor and getting well when everybody else has given up.) I graduated from Texas Chiropractic College in 1975 and have been in practice since that time; I have also taken an active role with the Texas Chiropractic Association throughout my career.

How and why did you get involved in the Texas State Guard? I served eight years in the U.S. Army and then joined the Texas State Guard for an additional three years. Then, after 9-11 occurred, I returned, determined to respond to what terrorists had done to our country.

Briefly describe the function of the Guard and qualifications for entry. The Texas State Guard (TXSG) is a State of Texas military force. Our commander-in-chief is the governor of Texas. Our function is that of homeland security. We back up the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard and the U.S. Coast Guard.

We are divided into four divisions: Army, Air Force, Maritime and [Texas Medical Reserve Corp](#). Most of the members in the TXSG are prior service veterans who wish to continue serving their country as citizen-soldiers. Prior military service is not compulsory, but those without prior service will have to attend basic training classes to understand military protocol. Acceptance into the TXSG also depends on what the individual has to offer in terms of skills that would be an asset to the guard.

What are your general and specific responsibilities as a member of the Texas State Guard? Primarily, I am a soldier prepared to defend my country by any means possible and give my life, if necessary. All TXSG members observe the Federal Military Code of Conduct. Secondly, as a member of the Texas Medical Reserve Corps, I am trained as an Emergency First Responder. I am a field grade officer, namely a major.

Our mission is to protect the public. This may mean inoculating the public against bioterrorist attacks, such as smallpox or anthrax, or radiation clean-up after dirty bombs. The Medical Reserve Corp also provides shelters and medical care for the public in case of natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes and tornadoes, and sometimes go on search-and-rescue missions. Most of us have prior federal military service.

In your practice and with the TXSG, what are your interactions with members of other health care professions, particularly medical professionals? In my practice, I take referrals from MDs and even treat some of the referring doctors. In the Medical Reserve Corp, my presence is well-accepted. I work alongside MDs and RNs. During our drills many of the medical professionals seek out adjustments for their own pain relief. Once, however, I had a tete-a-tete with a brigadier general who did not believe that DCs were real doctors. I did not convince him, but I never backed down. I could have been called before the carpet for it, but my profession comes first. I forgave him because he was a pharmacist and of course, believed that "real" doctors prescribe drugs and nothing else.

Have you ever been activated in a disaster situation? Please explain. I am activated each summer for active training. We have in Texas an operation called Operation Lone Star; we go to the Rio Grande Valley and tend to many indigenous people. While there, I perform various medical duties, but the musculoskeletal cases are mostly referred to me.

The last time I was activated for a "real" situation was [Hurricane Ike](#). The TXSG set up a triage at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. While there, we saw thousands of people. I worked in Triage and adjusted some of our own soldiers who were tired and worn from the heavy workload.

What are the challenges and rewards, both personally and as a member of the chiropractic profession? One of the greatest challenges is getting medical personnel to understand exactly what a chiropractor is. This has been hard-earned turf. I was amazed about the lack of knowledge.

The rewards are multi-faceted. Of course, there is the satisfaction of having served my country once again. I am also working shoulder-to-shoulder with other medical professionals. I feel that I am leaving a legacy and setting a precedent for DCs.

On that note, any advice for chiropractors interested in participating in Homeland Security / emergency preparedness efforts in their state? Not all states have a state guard. If someone is interested in participating and they do have a state guard, they should get in contact with them. You should come in with a commission. I would not accept less. I started as a second lieutenant and have worked up to major, and hopefully will become lieutenant colonel before my career is over.

I have a message for veterans, chiropractors or otherwise: Your country is in trouble and needs you again. You should step up to the plate. I will be happy to help if you need me to do so. If your state does not have a State Guard, consider the American Red Cross and the Emergency First Responder program it has to offer.

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