



CHIROPRACTIC (GENERAL)

## Born to Energize the Human Spirit: Recollections of Sig Miller

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*Editor's Note:* Sig Miller, longtime executive director of the Association of New Jersey Chiropractors ([ANJC](#)), passed away on Sept. 17 after a long battle with cancer.

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Quite simply, Sig was a lifeline. At the time the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research, in which I had been so joyfully engaged for 15 years, decided to end its research initiatives and then closed forever shortly afterward, Sig was the one who approached me first with a sense of reassurance and humor when it was most needed. He immediately thought of so many ways I could keep the pulse of chiropractic research (as well as my own, in terms of being gainfully employed) alive. He knew of my passion for writing and research design, and immediately suggested ways in which I could write and present evidence on behalf of the profession before numerous insurance panels and legislative bodies.

Sig also recruited me as a guest repeatedly for his energizing and inspiring webinars. It was such a rush to hear his introductions – such an imaginative concoction of praise and mischief – not to mention the questions he posed and meaningful discussions he initiated at the end of those presentations.



But this was indeed the essence of Sig. He had this knack of leaping to the heart of the matter and engaging people in as many ways as possible. This is why I can remember so vividly the times he was able to initiate so many meetings, and times he brought me into presentations at ANJC conventions in various locations around New Jersey - and even at Aetna's national headquarters in Hartford.

That last meeting was maybe the most memorable because we actually faced head-on some of the top brass at Aetna and heard their reluctance to revise their [restrictive guidelines](#) on chiropractic reimbursement due to what Aetna perceived - incorrectly - was the lack of scientific evidence in the literature. This all occurred during a blinding snowstorm in which Sig courageously defied the elements and trooped his entourage up from New Jersey that same day (while I had been graciously afforded the luxury of staying overnight at an inn nearby so I could be on hand as well).

What actually transpired was rather revealing, in that I and my colleagues from New Jersey were able to produce reams of evidence supporting numerous procedures, including maintenance care, only to have officials from Aetna run for cover by scheduling future meetings which, not so surprisingly, never happened. But Sig seemed to take this all in stride and never lost sight of what had to happen with numerous insurance companies in New Jersey, regardless of where Aetna wanted to go. He never quit

the fight.

The conference calls Sig organized also were a revelation. Who else could have guided a discussion involving so many differing points of view such that clear courses of action could emerge at the end? As a Zen master of collaboration, Sig must have figured prominently in being able to bring the fragmented, multiple chiropractic organizations within New Jersey into one cohesive and functional organization, which now has earned a reputation of being one of the most proactive state chiropractic associations in the country.

It also was Sig who conceived and organized "casino night" at the state conventions, which brought the best of the Jersey spirit out of the pit bosses, croupiers, dealers, floormen and gamblers alike. Where else could you go, mix it up with the Big Guys, and not worry about losing your shirt – even though you were deep in the heart of New Jersey? This was just one of so many of Sig's callings in being able to energize and touch human nature into such a spirit of collaboration and production, to say nothing of understanding.

It was always such a treat to get a call from Sig explaining a new development and how I would be needed to contribute. One of the many ways Sig brought the best out of people was when he shared worker's compensation data from the Workers Compensation Research Institute ([WCRI](#)) and inspired me to find the numerous ways (all of which really require attention from the highest levels if the national health care system is to avoid going broke in managing an aging population) in which the cost savings from chiropractors (as compared to family doctors and physical therapists) yielded tremendous benefits.

I forever have Sig's warmth, intensity and curiosity at the center of my being, and feel blessed to have been able to be at his side for the time we shared. Because of Sig, I have this nagging and chronic itch to present our case on behalf of chiropractic health care. With this in mind, I hope that in some small way, I can now carry forward at least some of the ideals Sig embodied. Sig, you've left behind a crowd that, thanks to you, forever will be stirred into trying to accomplish so many of the things you wanted to get done.

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