



NEWS / PROFESSION

A Giant Has Fallen: Remembering Dr. Gerry Clum

THE PROFESSION RESPONDS TO HIS PASSING AFTER A CAREER DEDICATED TO CHIROPRACTIC

Editorial Staff

One of chiropractic's greatest heroes passed away on Friday, Oct. 27, 2023: Gerry Clum, DC. Those who knew him well can't help but feel a deep sense of irreplaceable loss.

Most recognize Gerry as the founding president of Life Chiropractic College West. Others are aware of his leadership as a founding member of the Association of Chiropractic Colleges. Internationally, Gerry was also a founding member of the World Federation of Chiropractic; and he was always involved in the efforts of the International Chiropractors Association, having served on its board of directors. Most recently, Gerry served as a spokesperson and executive committee member of the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress for almost 20 years.

Gerry was well-known for his untiring service to chiropractic. He was well-respected even by those with differing opinions. Gerry never felt the need to argue. His diplomacy allowed him to communicate the facts in such a way that made you stop and consider the validity of his position.

For five decades since his graduation from Palmer College, Gerry Clum essentially gave his life to chiropractic. It was his constant focus. He was always available to participate and ready to work hard at whatever was needed. This is what earned him his many positions of leadership. Between his travel for Life West, the ICA, the WFC, the ACC and other organizations, Gerry racked up over 5 million airline miles on a single airline. Needless to say, he spent a lot of time away from his family.

Like so many of our leaders, most of his accomplishments were never recognized or even recorded. Gerry did what he did sacrificially for the good of chiropractic. If you knew him or had the privilege of hearing him speak, you understand. At his passing, a number of chiropractic leaders shared their thoughts about Gerry:

"It was 1981 at a Council on Chiropractic Education meeting. We were both youngsters among the chiropractic leadership of that day. You (Gerry) were 28, and the new president of Life West, and I was 35, and Vice President of Cleveland Chiropractic College Kansas City. And now reflecting back since our first meeting on our past four decades working together, I am honored that our paths have so often passed. It has been quite a journey.

"This year represents now five decades of your service to this chiropractic profession since your Palmer graduation in 1973. And Gerry, you have done more in your five decades than most could do in two life-times." — *Carl S. Cleveland III, DC; President, Cleveland University - Kansas City*

"I'm sure those who knew Gerry all have their favorite stories, as he was truly larger than life. He held every position in the alphabet soup of chiropractic organizations, spoke and represented not only Life West, but chiropractic in every corner of the world, and made friends everywhere he went. Dr. Gerard W. Clum was the ultimate gentleman, the ultimate orator, and the ultimate human being. He will be missed sorely.

"As we each grieve the loss of an extraordinary individual, I reflect on Dr. Clum's influence on Life West and the chiropractic profession as a whole. Dr. Clum dedicated himself to Life West and educating chiropractic students. It was his passion, his calling, and his legacy. We pay tribute to his memory by steadfastly upholding the principles and values that he lived by, and his dedication to bring more chiropractors to a world that so desperately needed them. His vision was huge, and wide. He was inclusive, collaborative, and most of all, he was relentless. And because of those qualities, Gerry made a difference in the world. He touched most of your lives in a way that helped shape you into who you are today. He was that kind of guy ... never wanting the credit, but always there to make a difference." — *Dr. Ron Oberstein; President, Life Chiropractic College West*

"Gerry Clum was one of the greatest advocates for chiropractic. His life was truly dedicated to the vision of the WFC: that all people, of all ages, in all nations should have access to chiropractic. With Gerry, it was never about him; it was always about chiropractic. I was humbled when he asked me to take his place on the Board of the WFC after having served 27 years. To me, Gerry was a mentor, a champion, but most of all, a friend." — *Dr. John Maltby; President, World Federation of Chiropractic*

"Dr. Gerry Clum was a legend. He dedicated his life to making the Chiropractic World a better place. We called upon him many times for his intellect and wisdom ... all for the betterment of the profession. He was an absolute delight to work with ... optimistic, pleasant, dedicated, and so perceptive. He was one in a lifetime so rare and special. We will forever miss this great man." — *Kent Greenawalt; Chairperson, Foundation for Chiropractic Progress*

Gerry Clum will be missed in many ways. His wisdom, encouragement, perspective and council have provided guidance for many people and organizations.

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