



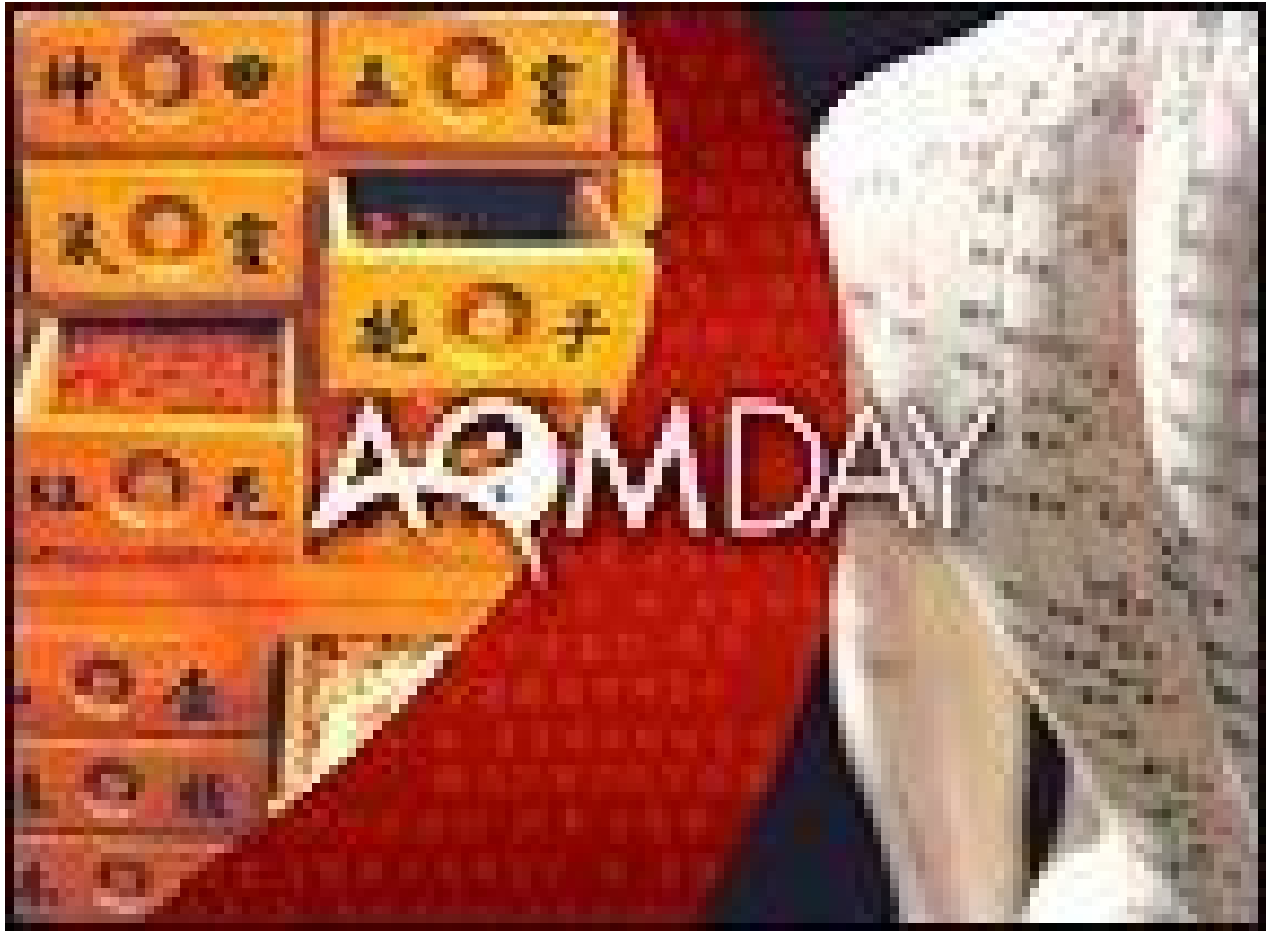
BILLING / FEES / INSURANCE

AOM Day: Organizations Look to the Past and Forge Toward the Future

Kory Ward-Cook, PhD; William Morris, DAOM, PhD, LAc; Lixin Huang, CCAOM; Amy McCoy, AOM Alliance; Debra Howard, AOBTA

Last month, the AOM community came together to commemorate AOM Day for its fifth year. Since its inception in 2002, AOM Day has given the profession a way to promote, support and celebrate a tradition that has been around for more than a thousand years. Groups have used this day as a way to network with their local communities, answering questions, dispelling myths and offering citizens an alternate avenue of healing. *Acupuncture Today* has taken this opportunity to provide some of the AOM organizations a forum in which to discuss their thoughts about AOM Day and about the profession as a whole. In the upcoming months, *AT* also will feature a periodic column authored by different AOM organizations. If your organization is interested in submitting an article for consideration, please e-mail it to: editorial@acupuncturetoday.com.

NCCAOM



It is hard to believe that on Oct. 24, 2006, we celebrated the fifth observance of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Day. In 2002, NCCAOM and our collaborating partners launched the first national awareness day dedicated to educating the public about the progress, promise and benefits of acupuncture and Oriental medicine. Five years ago, we saw this day as a unique way to pay homage to this great medicine and the community that supports it. We also saw this day as a vehicle to unite our community. After all, how can we bring this remarkable medicine to a deserving public unless we present a unified presence to the media and to all who seek to learn more about this impressive medicine?

We have seen how in the past few years, the practice of acupuncture has garnered the most attention in the media of all of the complementary and alternative forms of medicine. We see acupuncture again and again on the front page of the health section of major newspapers and magazines. Members of the press want to know more about the practice of cupping and new techniques used in facial acupuncture to rejuvenate the face. Yet, we need to make certain that the spotlight shines on well-qualified, certified AOM practitioners by being accessible to the media and working together to represent all facets of Oriental medicine, including those practitioners who use Chinese herbs or who practice Asian bodywork therapy, when we meet with the media and present ourselves to the public.

At the NCCAOM, our commitment to our diplomates includes continuing to promote the importance of choosing an NCCAOM-certified practitioner to the public. Beyond our efforts to promote the value of certification to the public, we see ourselves serving as a resource to our diplomates in order to assist them in promoting their practice. As part of our efforts to promote the importance of certification and the medicine itself, we have collaborated with the leaders of AOBTA, AAOM, AOM Alliance, and CCAOM to promote AOM Day. The results of this effort have been extraordinary. We have had an 80 percent increase in media coverage in the past two years,

with over 240 stories featuring or mentioning NCCAOM certification in news publications and on Web sites since the beginning of 2006. We cannot continue to accomplish such successful marketing campaigns without you. It is imperative that we join together to celebrate AOM Day, not just on Oct. 24, but every day. Every day is an opportunity for us to promote our medicine and to bring our message to the public. Send us your thoughts and ideas. Get involved. Be available for a news interview or to testify for a piece of legislation that will make a difference. It's up to all of us.

In the coming months, we will be launching the 25th Anniversary Celebration of NCCAOM. We welcome your thoughts and ideas on how to make 2007 a special and memorable year. Although we have come a long way, the journey has only just begun.

Dr. Kory Ward-Cook, *NCCAOM CEO*

AAOM

In the words of Plotinus, "It is by the One that all beings are beings. (If) not a one, a thing is not. No army, no choir, no flock exists except that it be one. No house, even, or ship exists except as the one."

Humanity faces potential triple destruction - material, biological, and spiritual - at the hands of a blind technocracy.¹ The nuclear proliferation on the planet is capable of destroying it many times over. Millions of deaths occur in the name of fleeting ideologies and numberless conflicts whose obscure motivation eludes us. For the first time in history, humans can alter genetic code. We have not evolved on great metaphysical questions, but we permit ourselves to alter our very essence. Virtual reality allows us to fly through space in the comfort of our small home computer station. Our spiritual, biological and physical nature is perilously vulnerable.

In the words of Plotinus, "It is by the One that all beings are beings. (If) not a one, a thing is not. No army, no choir, no flock exists except that it be one. No house, even, or ship exists except as the one."

These are interesting times. It is up to us to change the story. It is up to us to change the possibilities. Chinese medicine offers a way of life that is deeply meaningful on personal and cultural levels. We enjoy a knowledge that is genuinely connecting and human. But that is not what we do. Rather, we are a house divided without reason. Many doctoral programs now exist, and we enjoy national associations that have the ability to support the full plurality of Chinese medical practices. But therein lies the problem: We do not have a single voice.

Let us laugh, enjoy the humor, and work together to achieve our common goals. Human beings tend to behave with a measure of coherence. This is primarily due to a sustained interaction between individuals that leads to an overall order independent of the conscious aim of any individual. These collaborative social behaviors are handed down to successive generations through patterns of value, belief and customs that are prevalent within the culture.² We can trust this tendency.

We follow in the footsteps of the countless practitioners before us who have connected with the rich traditions of this medicine. We are conscious that closer ties among all practitioners are a necessary and urgent condition for securing a more just and peaceful world.

As we promote excellence and integrity in the professional practice of acupuncture and Oriental

medicine, we will transform society so that all people have the right to choose their course of care. We will transform society such that the benefits of this medicine are fully realized. We will promote inclusive dialogue and discussion, regardless of ideological concerns. Through shared knowledge, we connect to a shared understanding based on an absolute respect for both the collective and individual Otherness, united by our common life on one and the same Earth.

References

1. Nicolescu, B. *Manifesto of Transdisciplinarity*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2002.
2. Laszlo, E. *Evolution, The General Theory*. Hampton Press, 1996, p. 99.

William R. Morris, *AAOM President*

AOM ALLIANCE

AOM Day is the perfect opportunity to reflect upon the amazing journey of our profession in the United States. The AOM Alliance is proud to join in the celebration of our many and diverse traditions as we recognize the contributions made by AOM to ever-increasing numbers of folks. The dramatically increasing popularity of AOM is a testament to the power of this medicine.

The AOM Alliance is especially proud of its efforts to foster unity among diverse groups within the broad tradition. For us, this has been marked on AOM Days past with our encouragement of and participation in group or worldwide *qi* efforts, with acupuncturists across America and around the world. Focusing on auricular acupuncture, these global efforts have forged real ties among different groups, reminding us that we are not alone.

In recent months, the AOM Alliance has been proud to have continued to work with our sister organizations to create greater unity within our community, and to strengthen the ties that bind us together. For that reason we continue to reach out to state, regional and national groups seeking points of collaboration and cooperation. We are pleased to work with NCCAOM, the Council of Colleges, ACAOM, and the AAOM to strengthen our profession. We are also excited about the new cooperative ventures we have been launching with our state associations. We look forward to closer ties and more unity in the weeks and months to come.

The AOM Alliance continues to strive for the important goals of our profession, including increasing the public's awareness and understanding of AOM, appropriate practice legislation in every jurisdiction, federal recognition of AOM as a health care profession as worthy as any other, fair reimbursement rates for our practitioners, and universal access for patients. We continue to support diversity within our profession, which we take to mean support for the many traditions of AOM, the many styles of practice, and the many different approaches to practice. All are valuable and we are enriched by all.

The AOM Alliance remains more-than-ever confident about the direction of AOM in this country. We are optimistic about the future and proud of the past. In this year's celebration of AOM Day, we offer our congratulations to the whole community and pledge our best efforts to continue the work that lies before us.

Amy McCoy, *AOM Alliance Administrator*

CCAOM

The AOM community recently commemorated AOM Day on Oct. 24. This was the fifth commemoration of the day since its establishment in 2002. The AOM colleges have supported this day in their local communities through a variety of activities designed to promote the benefits of acupuncture and Oriental medicine, and the profession in general. In addition, the Council has actively collaborated with other national organizations to promote AOM Day, in particular by supporting the strong lead of NCCAOM and its AOM Day Web site for this occasion.

Beyond the annual commemoration and the related events associated with AOM Day, the occasion always offers a valuable opportunity to take stock of the profession to date. Two frequently articulated aspirations are greater recognition for AOM within the larger culture, including by other health care professions, and for greater unity within the profession itself. These two aspirations are interdependent, and it is reasonable to expect that as the profession inwardly becomes more united around mutually agreed core values and goals, the outer dimension involving increased acceptance and recognition by the larger society and other professions will naturally follow.

Aspirations that are collectively shared are very powerful and the timing for their ultimate realization depends fundamentally on the level of commitment among those who share the aspirations. As of AOM Day in 2006, there is evidence of a growing consensus within the profession that parochial organizational agenda must expand to include a more universal or collective process essential to the development of a shared vision. For the Council, whose primary focus is upon promoting excellence in AOM education, every effort is being made to engage other national organizations in a continuing and very respectful dialogue concerning educational issues. This dialogue is beginning to bear fruit, not only by establishing an atmosphere of trust among the participating organizations, but also by providing opportunities for specific collaborative projects and initiatives.

As within the world at large, within the AOM profession issues are also becoming more intricate and complex. In this context, the need for increased collaboration is imperative. While at any single moment it may not be possible to agree entirely on a matter of substance, at that same moment, it is always possible to disagree respectfully and to agree to come together again for further discussion, in a shared desire to find greater common ground. To this process, the Council is committed.

Lixin Huang, *CCAOM President*

AOBTA

The AOBTA, as the representative of Asian bodywork therapy (ABT) in the U.S. today, supports AOM Day as an opportunity to express unity in all aspects of Asian medicine. As we continue to move forward in our mission to promote and protect ABT and its practitioners, we see the movement toward unity in acupuncture and Oriental medicine as a very positive trend.

AOBTA supports high standards of excellence in our profession, including national certification through NCCAOM. We expect ABT to keep moving toward even more mainstream acceptance as people continue to discover the benefits of this amazing healing art.

Debra Howard, *AOBTA President*

