

News in Brief

Editorial Staff

Trudy McAlister Fund Awards Two Scholarships

At the AAAOM Conference in October 2007, the Trudy McAlister Fund awarded its first two scholarships to students of acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. The recipients were Jason Moskovitz from Yo San University in Los Angeles, and Andrew Fritsch from the Minnesota College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in Minneapolis. Both students received a \$1,000 scholarship. These scholarships will help support students who show promise of making significant contributions to clinical practice.

When Moskovitz was asked what he thought about the scholarship process, he responded, "Not only was receiving this scholarship an honor, but to be involved in its inaugural year is something extra special."

Fritsch said, in a letter of thanks, "The application for the Trudy McAlister Fund scholarship challenged me to consider my role in the future of our profession in Chinese medicine. Receiving the scholarship has filled me with gratitude and drive to take our profession to a higher level and to eventually make Chinese medicine available to every American."

Advisors to the fund are Gene Bruno, William Prensky, Doreen Chen, Martin Herbkersman and Pamela Lee. These advisors make the recommendations to the Triskeles Foundation for final approval of scholarships. The Triskeles Foundation manages and oversees the funds assets and the scholarship process. The advisors encourage colleges, individuals and organizations to make donations to the fund.

Donations can be made at the fund Web site or can be sent to:

Trudy McAlister Fund
c/o The Triskeles Foundation
707 Eagleview Blvd., Suite 105
Exton, PA 19341

For more information about the Trudy McAlister Fund please visit (www.triskeles.org) or contact Gene Bruno at acudoc27@aol.com.

NCCAOM Programs Receive Five-Year Accreditation

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) full, five-year accreditation for all of its certification programs, including acupuncture, Chinese herbology, Asian bodywork therapy and Oriental medicine.

NCCA is the accreditation body of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA).

NCCA accredits certifying programs based on the highest quality standards in professional certification to ensure that these programs adhere to current standards of practice in the certification industry.

Kory Ward-Cook, CAE, PhD, NCCAOM's chief executive officer was very pleased to get the news of the accreditation. She told the press, "NCCA accreditation is another demonstration that NCCAOM's programs are of the highest quality. The public can feel confident that an NCCAOM-certified practitioner has met nationally recognized standards of competency and safety in acupuncture and Oriental medicine."

Acupuncturist Wins WebMD Foundation Fellowship

The WebMD Health Foundation, a San Diego-based national foundation dedicated to "improving the quality of healthcare through education, access and innovative collaborations" recently awarded three \$240,000 fellowship grants to clinicians working at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine Student-Run Free Clinic Project.

The project is 10-year-old university/community partnership of volunteers led by students at the UC San Diego School of Medicine. Students, faculty and community health professionals provide health care and social services to the underserved at three separate clinics each week. The grants will allow for training health care professionals interested in working with the uninsured and underserved and will expand the project's impact.

One of the fellowship recipients is Aaron Cook, LAc, an instructor at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine. Cook believes that acupuncture really makes a difference in the lives of the people he sees in the clinic: "It's important to me to see this level of care available to all. Many patients can't pay \$70 for an office visit. Acupuncture relieves stress, anxiety, tension - things that people without means deal with everyday. I see improvement and empowerment in every single person who visits the clinic."

The foundation was equally enthusiastic about the clinic. Executive Director Dixie Newman told the press, "We were simply blown away after touring the UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic. What a perfect example of how to increase access through innovation and education. What impressed us the most is that, along with providing innovative high quality health care, the program is educating new physicians about the importance of providing health care for the underserved."

Acupuncture May Normalize Blood Pressure

The Susan Samueli Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of California, Irvine, released study findings that showed how acupuncture can help normalize blood pressure. In other words, it can lower elevated blood pressure or raise pressure when it is too low. Furthermore, it may also work alongside conventional treatments for cardiovascular patients. Acupuncture combined with low levels of electrical stimulation can lower elevations in blood pressure by as much as 40 percent. The researchers believe that acupuncture works in such cases by relaxing the stiffened vascular system, thereby allowing for the drop in blood pressure.

Researchers also found that weekly, 30-minute acupuncture sessions produced substantial pressure reductions of 15 mmHg to 25 mmHg in three to four weeks. Dr. John Longhurst, study leader, said, "We believe these new findings on acupuncture and hypertension will help educate both Western and alternative medical practitioners while encouraging dialog on developing

integrative treatment solutions."

The research also showed that the acupuncture has a slow onset and prolonged effect. If the treatments were stopped, the pressure would stay down for another month or so, and then comes back up over a period of weeks.

"In our real world of clinical practice, we're encountering patients who find it difficult to make these changes or who continue to have high pressure despite making real changes. They're looking for something else, and acupuncture is a potential solution that's relaxing and relatively painless," said Dr. Longhurst. "We believe these new findings on acupuncture and hypertension will help educate both Western and alternative medical practitioners while encouraging dialog on developing integrative treatment solutions."

For more information about the Susan Samueli Center for Integrative Medicine, please visit: www.sscim.uci.edu.

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