

## Lead by Example

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The acupuncture profession has made more inroads for establishment than any time before in the history of the United States. There is licensure and regulation in most states, with several other states working on the process. The profession must be ever aware and vigilant against forces that would erode established statutes and market share. It is the responsibility of each member of the profession to be watchful for signs of professional losses.

However, let's not dwell on that aspect. It is more important to move forward. Several entities have demonstrated outstanding leadership for the profession. Here are just a few examples of excellence in AOM leadership:

The American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM), the national professional association, has hired a [Washington D.C. lobbyist](#). They studied, researched, interviewed and selected the lobbying firm based on what they believe is needed for the profession. This act of leadership will help to ready the profession for the efforts needed to get into the Medicare system and to work on representation in the national health care discussions. Both of these venues are necessary to assure that Americans have the right to choose their health care options in the future.

[Samra University of Oriental Medicine](#), the oldest Oriental medicine school in the United States, has built a new, beautifully appointed [clinic](#). It is a state-of-the-art facility incorporating both X-ray and MRI machines. It has a [picture archiving and communication system \(PACS\)](#), which is a computer system dedicated to the storage, retrieval, distribution and presentation of medical images. The clinic also uses modern technology in the form of electronic medical records (EMRs). The Samra Acupuncture Spinal Center has set for itself the goal of providing treatment for muscle or skeletal pain relief. Clearly, they are leading the profession into the high-tech future.

The [Academy of Oriental Medicine in Austin \(AOMA\)](#), with Linda Fontaine, Dr. Will Morris and Dr. Fred Lerner, are working with Whole Foods to [create a place for acupuncture](#) in their workers' compensation program. Having more doors open for the profession will lead us toward a future where we are integrated into the health care system.

The [Air Force is leading the way](#) in another arena of health care integration. Now that it has approved training in the use of battlefield acupuncture, our brave soldiers can benefit from AOM treatments to combat posttraumatic stress disorder and pain. Furthermore, [once they return](#) from their tours of duty, those benefits will continue to be available. Joe Chang, MAOM, Dipl. OM, LAc, has been at the forefront of providing acupuncture services to returning veterans.

AOM has also been steadily working toward integration into the hospital/medical school system. Due to the efforts of one pediatric pain specialist at [Childrens Hospital Los Angeles](#), young patients no longer need to suffer in pain. The very fact that other doctors at the hospital cheered when they heard about the program is proof that we are leading the way into the future. An AOM clinic has taken the lead in its own way by [offering a rotation](#) to medical school students so that they may

then know of our medicine when they start their own practices.

The new FDA and cGMP rules will go into effect soon. Blue Poppy has taken a leadership position to be the [first herbal company](#) to gain GMP audit by NSF International. NSF certifies that companies are in compliance with cGMP and is published by the FDA in May 2007. Blue Poppy also just conducted the first "Webinar" in Oriental Medicine on effective Chinese diagnosis.

In all of these cases, AOM is leading the way into the future of health care, and setting examples for those who come afterward. How will you lead by example?

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