



GENERAL ACUPUNCTURE

A Report From the 3rd Annual ASA Council Congress

David Miller, Dipl. OM, LAc

This past March the American Society of Acupuncturists (ASA) was proud to hold its third annual ASA Council Congress in Denver, Colorado. The meeting was attended by 27 state associations represented by 41 delegates, as well as representatives from CCAOM, NCCAOM, the American Alliance for Professional Acupuncture Safety (AAPAS), and retired Colonel Keven Galloway of the Defense and Veterans Center for Integrative Pain Management (DVCIPM).

We also had Skype/Zoom meeting addresses by ANF and ACAOM, including a screening of the first segment of "Getting to the Point," a new film by film maker Doug Dearth via the Acupuncture Now Foundation (ANF). Marilyn Allen and the American Acupuncture Council sponsored a lunch program presenting information on ICD 11, which will include Traditional Medicine codes, and opened discussion for the potential for course development in orthopedic acupuncture.

NCCAOM also sponsored a lunch program answering stakeholder questions. Our evening gathering was offered by Modern Acupuncture, and we had a valuable breakfast program sponsored by CM&F insurance looking at malpractice coverage options for the industry. We thank our general supporters as well, including Golden Flower Chinese Herbs, AcuClaims, Lhasa OMS, and Legendary Herbs.

These are truly critical and exciting times for our industry. We have begun working on facilitating the inclusion of licensed acupuncturists in care offered by the military, and have engaged legislators at the national level in a way not previously achieved. The importance of involvement has never been greater.

The Profession's Current Challenges

We have been challenged by the American Medical Association to achieve a membership volume of "50%+1" for inclusion at talks surrounding CPT code development, and nationally and internationally we need solid infrastructure and representation to participate in the development of the profession worldwide. Our industry is at a tipping point, not only because of our own growth, but also because of the greater acceptance of acupuncture in the medical world, and by the public.

The concern is, however, that while acupuncture is becoming more accepted, licensed acupuncturists are by no means guaranteed inclusion. Numerous other licensure types, as we know, who are already included in mainstream systems, are looking to co-opt acupuncture practice and seek to become the preferred providers. The military is actively incorporating acupuncture into care, but successfully integrating licensed acupuncturists is a work in progress. Your involvement with your state associations is critical in showing our global professional maturity and the value of this licensure type.

A Milestone Accomplished

On January 1, 2018 "acupuncturists" became an officially recognized group by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This was a monumental achievement, and paves the way for the equal treatment of this field in multiple domains. With this step forward, we are challenged further to take our profession to the next level.

Please take time to read the full conference report from the ASA meeting to learn more about what we are doing to make this a reality

(http://www.asacu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/American-Society-of-Acupuncturists-3rd-Annual-Council-Congress-Report_3_26_18.pdf). We have also initiated a monthly newsletter that will keep you abreast of activity on an on-going basis. Please sign up to receive this! Visit www.asacu.org for more information and links to subscribe.

To truly bring our profession back onto the national scene, the ASA is also extremely excited to announce that next year's 4th annual ASA Council Congress will occur in conjunction with our first profession-wide national meeting in Washington, D.C.

Please keep your eyes open for more information (coming soon) on this industry-wide conference: "The State of Our Union: American Acupuncturists in U.S. Healthcare." This meeting will be the event at which to learn about everything going on in our profession, and also what you can do to advocate for its advancement.

Thank you to those that are members of your state associations, and thereby members of ASA. You are the bedrock of the profession, and we will continue to work to make your investment pay back! Thanks as well to the ASA Council, state boards, national boards, and all others donating time and expertise to serve this industry. Together we will take acupuncture by acupuncturists to a new level.

JUNE 2018