

Santa Barbara College of Oriental Medicine: A Journey of Inspiration and Love

JoAnn Tall, LAc

As reported in the December issue of *Acupuncture Today*, SBCOM has made the decision to close after 25 years of dedication to the field of Oriental medicine. We have made arrangements to finish our commitment to those students who have a year left of studies by arranging a "teach out" through Pacific College of Oriental Medicine. This means all of the same faculty and personnel from SBCOM will continue to provide both academic and clinical instruction in Santa Barbara in order to finish the requirements needed for these students to graduate. PCOM will be the college that provides the legal and financial structure for this program. This program will be a year in length and finish at the end of December 2007.

We want to acknowledge all of the loving support and kindness that Jack Miller, president of PCOM, has given us. His help was invaluable to SBCOM during this difficult and painful time; our students and faculty are so grateful for his assistance with this "teach out." It enables us to finish our journey for this group of students with grace and dignity. The rest of our student body is being guided individually to other Oriental medical colleges according to their personal needs.

I want to thank all of the colleges that have given their support, time and effort in assisting our students in finding new homes for their education. YoSan and Five Branches were instrumental, bending over backward to assist our students in their time of need. Many other colleges came to SBCOM to aid our students and we received so many phone calls of support from the whole Oriental medical community. ACAOM, the Acupuncture Board (California), the Department of Education and other agencies were more than supportive and kind in their efforts to help us through the process of closing and all the paperwork and details that needed to be done properly. It is in these times of crisis that people of integrity rise to the occasion; I can attest to this personally. We were inundated with love and support from every avenue imaginable in our profession. The flow of qi was strong and powerful, helping to heal the disruption in the health of SBCOM and all of its constituents.

I want to thank our students, who gave us love, compassion and support during their own pain and loss. I want to thank our staff, which continues to volunteer to help us, long after the paychecks stopped. I want to thank our faculty, who supported and nurtured us and our students through this crisis, and who continue to be inspiring role models for this profession. I want to thank the countless clinic patients who supported our efforts to provide excellent health services at a low cost to our community. I want to thank our board of directors and shareholders, who so selflessly gave of themselves over these years. I want to thank all those who helped nurture and support us since our inception, including all past administration, faculty and students.

SBCOM is a reflection of all the joy and love that it has received through the years. Our closing, even though sad and painful, does not diminish our accomplishments and achievements. We have graduated

more than 250 Oriental medical practitioners, and we are so proud of every one of them. They are committed to the process of healing those in need and have gone out into the world (they are spread out all over the globe now) to practice this powerful and effective medicine. We have worked hard to assist our profession in its quest for educational excellence, and the rights and responsibilities that go with that excellence. SBCOM's vision of molding students into healers who practice Oriental medicine is being carried on by many quality colleges in the U.S. It's a great comfort to know this important job is in good hands.

This college has been a labor of love for all of us involved in the administration and faculty. It has brought us great joy and lots of hard work and aggravation during these past 25 years. It seems to be a perfect description of yin and yang: opposite forces existing in the same space, constantly changing, always in motion. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to be a part of this medicine that I adore and respect.

JANUARY 2007