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Chiropractor Graduates From Military Residency Program

Dr. Joanna Hudec: A "Shining Example" for Chiropractic

By Editorial Staff

While there have been many great doctors of chiropractic and many notable events in the chiropractic profession's history, only a few DCs can truly say that they were the "first" to accomplish something of importance to the profession. Dr. Joanna Hudec is one of those select few. In June, she completed a fellowship in integrative medicine at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., making her the first DC in history to graduate from a military hospital residency program.

National Naval Medical Center officially opened on Feb. 5, 1942. The facility is unofficially known as "the President's hospital," because it is the site at which sitting U.S. presidents and other officials receive care. It is also the National Capital Region Resource for homeland defense, and in 1996, it became one of the first military hospitals to participate in the Department of Defense's Chiropractic Health Care Demonstration Project.

Dr. Hudec began her fellowship at NNMC in April 2003. Prior to the fellowship, she served approximately two-and-a-half years as an attending clinician at Texas Chiropractic College's Moody Health Center in Pasadena, Texas. She graduated from Cleveland College of Chiropractic-Kansas City in 2000.

"For chiropractic care to be integrated into a program within the most hallowed halls of medicine is an unparalleled step for this profession," remarked ACA President Dr. Donald J. Krippendorf. "The ACA sincerely thanks Dr. Hudec for the shining example she has set for chiropractic."

During her fellowship, Dr. Hudec worked under the supervision of William Morgan, DC, an attending physician at NNMC and director of the fellowship program.* She observed and participated in several levels of care in a multidisciplinary hospital setting, and performed a series of rotations at NNMC and off-site military health clinics, which increased her knowledge of medical procedures and protocols significantly.

She also instructed other treatment providers about the benefits of chiropractic care, and participated in Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations readiness drills. In addition, she established a chiropractic clinic for medical students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS), also located in Bethesda. The clinic is believed to be the only one of its kind ever established within a medical school setting.

Dr. Hudec was one of approximately 350 interns, Fellows and residents to graduate from NNMC in June. Among those in attendance were U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona, and the commanding officers of NNMC and Walter Reed Army Medical Center, who thanked Dr. Hudec personally for her efforts. Representatives of the Army, Navy, Texas Chiropractic College and Cleveland Chiropractic College also attended the graduation ceremony.

"I don't think anyone could have predicted a few years ago that the bastion of conservative medicine would be the setting for honoring one of our own," noted Garry Cuneo, the ACA's executive vice president.

At a dinner following the ceremony, TCC President Richard Brassard, DC, presented Dr. Hudec with a diploma certifying her completion of the college's postdoctoral fellowship in integrative medicine. Dr. Hudec called the founding of the fellowship program "just the beginning of the advancement of chiropractic into the military." She added that she was honored to receive her diploma from National, and that she had "a lot of fun" earning the postdoctoral fellowship from TCC as well.

The fellowship program was the result of a collaboration between National Naval Medical Center and Texas Chiropractic College. Dr. James Giordano, the director of research at TCC, and Dr. Morgan were instrumental in the implementation of the program, which is designed to offer structured training in a mainstream hospital setting. Based on its current success, they expect the fellowship program to continue on an annual basis. The program's long-term goal is to create a qualified pool of chiropractors who will be able to serve the needs of patients in a variety of settings, including civilian hospitals, Veterans Affairs facilities and Department of Defense hospital-based chiropractic clinics.

"In establishing this fellowship program, Texas Chiropractic College has made a very real contribution to our profession's ongoing efforts toward integration into both the military health care system and our nation's hospital system," noted Dr. Krippendorf.

Resources

1. DC begins fellowship at naval medical center. *Dynamic Chiropractic*, May 5, 2003;21(10).
www.chiroweb.com/archives/21/10/15.html.
2. Hudec becomes first doctor of chiropractic ever to graduate from military residency program. ACA press release, June 28, 2004.
3. Doctor of chiropractic graduates from naval medical center. *CHRF News File*, June 30, 2004.
4. President's message, June 14-18, 2004. Texas Chiropractic College news release.
www.txchiro.edu/story.asp?PageID=575.

*DC interviewed the accomplished Dr. Morgan in the March 11, 2004 issue. For more information, read "Spotlight on William Morgan, DC," available online at www.chiroweb.com/archives/22/06/05.html.



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