



WCCS

World Congress of Chiropractic Students

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The WCCS: A phoenix arising from the ashes

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Exposition

The World Congress of Chiropractic Students has been an international not-for-profit, student-led organization since 1980 when 11 Chiropractic Colleges met at Logan College for the first of many AGMs. Since then, over 40 AGMs have been hosted and more than 30 chiropractic schools became members over time. The WCCS has been a source of connection, education, and opportunity for many of its members over the years, allowing students from different parts of the world to come together to discuss and learn more about the incredible field of chiropractic.



This organization has the remarkable ability to make its members feel as though they are part of something that is bigger than themselves. We are the only international student-led chiropractic organization, paving the way for a future of higher standards of chiropractic care, globally. Being a member of the WCCS has given me opportunities that I could never have dreamed of, especially being a student coming from South Africa. I have been able to look at chiropractic through the various lenses of my brilliant student colleagues, therefore allowing me to have a better understanding of my future career and go into the workspace with a more open mind.

From my past position as regional coordinator and now internal affairs director, I have had a “behind the scenes’ perspective when it comes to the WCCS. There are many factors that go into running an organization like this. Communication, transparency, and perseverance are ones that come to mind.

It goes without saying that the pandemic has put a major dent in the operations of this organization. Where previously, hundreds of students gathered each year to discuss key topics in chiropractic, and meet other students from different parts of the world at the AGM and regional events, to now where almost all of our events and forms of communication have been solely online. At first, the novelty of open and online communication was exciting and students were engaging with us regularly. It allowed easier access to each other without having to leave your

own home, but in this, we lost one of the most important factors that kept the heart of this organization beating, and that was human contact.

I have just recently completed my Master's dissertation on the prevalence of stress and burnout in UJ chiropractic students during the pandemic and long story short, students are more stressed and more burnt out. The outbreak of COVID-19 has led to students feeling overwhelmed by various additional stressors, on top of the standard university ones. Things that were important to us before the pandemic, don't seem relevant anymore and people across the globe have taken financial strain. This ultimately led to many of our members feeling disconnected and unenthused because of the lack of face-to-face interaction and the inability to travel. We have had our struggles to keep members engaged and committed since one of the main reasons why people have been part of this organization has been taken away as a result of the restrictions of the pandemic. The flame that once lit the WCCS seems to have dwindled BUT, there is light at the end of this dark and dingy tunnel.

As the world begins to open its borders, and businesses start to open, the opportunity for travel and in-person interaction grows. Because of this, we have started to plan face-to-face events again and are encouraging our members and chiropractic students from around the world to be represented by an organization that previously brought so many people together for so many years. There is still a small flame that burns within this organization, and that little flame is the members that have enough faith and patience to nurture it and watch it spread to more regions and to more members over time. We need to be reminded about why we need the WCCS and why it is a privilege to be a member. We as students are the future of this profession, and when you fill a room with individuals from different walks of life, with many ideas and opportunities, you create a space that cultivates growth and development for the field of chiropractic. We are the future leaders of the profession, and the WCCS is the first stepping stone in our journey to promote unity and advance the profession on an international scale. Like a phoenix, we will rise from the ashes.

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Note

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