

CAMPUS LIFE

VOLUME XIV, NUMBER 2

Media Spotlight on Dr. Sid

Dr. Sid E. Williams is to many in the profession the personification of chiropractic. Now his achievements and staunch philosophical stance have drawn the attention of the news media. You can hardly open a newspaper or magazine or turn on radio or TV without seeing a story about the man dubbed the "Defender of Chiropractic."

The crescendo of media coverage has brought tremendous attention not just to the man, but to the profession he has championed for the last four decades. The American public is now coming face-to-face with Dr. Sid and at the same time chiropractic as well. Newspapers and magazines with a total circulation of 1,794,257 presented articles about Dr. Sid and chiropractic during December, January and February, while a potential audience of more than 60 million people outside the chiropractic profession were expected to see Dr. Williams on TV.

This is not the first time that the media spotlight has been trained on the founder and president of Life College. He has been the subject of extensive coverage in many newspapers, magazines, local and national television and radio since his days as a football standout at Georgia Tech. Even the country's most popular television

news program *60 Minutes* devoted a lengthy segment to his life and approach to chiropractic. No wonder then that Dr. Sid is America's best known doctor of chiropractic.

Among the recent coverage he has garnered was a two-part series and follow-up article in one of the South's major dailies — *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution* — which began on the front cover and included more than six full pages of text and photos.

Passengers on Kiwi Airlines and Air South Airlines were treated to a profile with photos of Dr. Sid in the January issue of *Inflight Magazine*. "The Sid Williams Story" by noted journalist Vincent Coppola presented a vivid look at the founder and president of "the Mecca of Chiropractic."

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Dr. Sid and his bride of 42 years, Dr. Nell, were the subject of a "Real Valentines" tribute in *Atlanta Magazine's* February issue. They along with other prominent Atlanta couples — including Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell and his wife and local TV News Anchors Chris Curle and Don Farmer — answered the question of "what's the secret to a lasting marriage?"

Through his drive to excel and ambition, this *chiropractic* celebrity also joined the likes of actress and social activist and exercise guru Jane Fonda, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, actor Emmanuel Lewis, talk show host Rolanda Watts, singer Nancy Wilson and others as a presenter for the Fourth Annual *Trumpet Awards* honoring African American achievement. He was joined on stage by actress Lynn Whitfield to present a distinguished achievement award to renowned defense attorney Johnnie Cochran, Jr. The show, a production of Turner Broadcasting, was televised to a nationwide audience of millions February 24 on TBS Superstation.

Life's president and founder was also seen by millions nationwide on cable and local television stations across the U.S. when he — along with other prominent chiropractic and health care figures — were interviewed as part of a documentary on chiropractic entitled "*Healthy Choices.*"

The media coverage received by Dr. Sid is reflective of larger forces at work in this country. He has been a frequent subject of media attention as Life College has grown to become the world's largest school of chiropractic. At the same time chiropractic itself has assumed a larger and more prominent role in the American health care system as the public has turned more and more to alternatives to traditional high cost, high technology health care.

There is little wonder then that these factors have combined to increase curiosity about this high profile member of the chiropractic profession.

While most coverage of Dr. Sid has been positive or at least even-handed, it has not always been good. The December Atlanta newspaper coverage took a critical look at some of the problems faced by chiropractic colleges and their students such as high HEAL loan default rates. Dr. Sid himself came in for some critical appraisal for his sometimes evangelical approach to spreading the chiropractic message of health. For example, he was characterized in the article as a "ubiquitous TV pitch man" because the College spends more than \$650,000 a year on TV advertising.

Few would argue with the fact though that Dr. Sid's approach to marketing chiropractic has worked. Life College has enjoyed a period of unprecedented growth from its original founding in 1974 with just 22 students to its status today as the world's largest school of chiropractic with more than 4,300 students.

That same approach has brought him to the status of the single most recognizable spokesman for chiropractic. As America gets to know Dr. Sid it is getting to know chiropractic as well. And judging by the results America is coming to like what it sees — about Dr. Sid and chiropractic. Dynamic Chiropractic, in a report on the media hype and the growth and success experienced by Life College, noted that "you get the feeling that for Dr. Williams and his Life College, you might have to upgrade 'the sky's the limit' to outer space."