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Beyond the Dura 2005 Marks The Upledger Institute's 20th Birthday

Beyond the Dura, a biannual international research conference sponsored by The Upledger Foundation, was held in Jupiter Beach, Fla., Apr. 27 - May 1, 2005. The ninth Beyond the Dura Conference was themed "Unlocking a World of Possibilities in Integrative Healthcare."

Massage Today columnist John E. Upledger, DO, OMM, president and founder of The Upledger Institute (UI) and Upledger Foundation said, "In the 18 years since Beyond the Dura first captured the attention of innovation-minded health care practitioners, a revolution in thought processes has occurred regarding the care and treatment of the human body. In that time, we have seen the scales of health care tip noticeably in the direction of natural, whole-body solutions." He further encouraged participants in Beyond the Dura 2005 by stating, "I hope you will be inspired to keep growing and exploring. The future of health care depends on it. The quality of life of our patients and clients depends on it."

Dr. John's son, John Matthew Upledger, president and CEO of The Upledger Institute, Inc., beams when speaking about the accomplishments over the last two decades. He mentions that from humble beginnings with just a handful of people on staff, the Institute has grown to more than 75 onsite staff members, plus more than 2,000 instructors, teaching assistants and workshop facilitators worldwide. UI also has satellite offices and affiliates on six of the seven continents. In fact, therapists in attendance at the celebration hailed from Russia, Portugal, Netherlands, England, Iceland, Germany, Japan, Scotland, Denmark, Israel, Ireland, Austria, Switzerland, Canada, Spain, Italy, and the Bahamas.

"At the beginning, our biggest challenge was simply creating awareness of the existence and benefits of CranioSacral Therapy," he said. "Now, 20 years later, our challenge is quite different. Creating an accepted medical modality and doing it right requires a great deal of careful growth management. CranioSacral Therapy has gained so much popularity and acceptance that many people also want to put their own spin on it. A lot of our work involves educating people about what is and what is not CST, so practitioners and the public are informed and protected."

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When asked about some of the milestones in UI's 20 years, John Matthew is quick to point out the creation of the nonprofit Upledger Foundation in 1987, which was established by Dr. John to develop and provide ability-to-pay patient care and research into new therapeutic applications that enhance health and well-being. He also mentions:

- Dr. Upledger's appointment in 1994 to the Alternative Medicine Program Advisory Council for the Office of Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health in Washington, DC;
- CranioSacral Therapy being credited on Oprah for contributing to the 1996 Olympic-bronze-medal success of diver Mary Ellen Clark;
- The 1999 program co-designed with the Veterans Administration to treat 22 Vietnam veterans with CranioSacral Therapy for symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder;
- Dr. Upledger testifying before a U.S. House of Representatives Government Reform Committee on Autism in 2000;
- Dr. Upledger being named one of America's "next wave of innovators" in TIME magazine and on CNN in 2001;
- The Compassionate Touch Helping Hands program conducted with 560 children in grades K-2. It centers on a simple technique that allows children to help classmates who sustain minor injuries. The results show statistically significant increases in pro-social behaviors, indicating a greater sense of empowerment and self-esteem, and equally significant decreases in aggressive and hostile behaviors;
- Establishing Dolphin-Assisted Therapy for patients. After conducting a successful pilot program in 1996, there is now a program in place in the Bahamas; and
- Worldwide expansion. UI has conducted seminars for health care practitioners in more than 56 different countries and on six of the seven continents.

At Beyond the Dura 2005, *Massage Today* learned how beautifully massage therapy integrates with CranioSacral Therapy. According to UI, blending the two has a powerful, synergistic effect that can open up a client's system and allow deep healing to take place. For instance, massage can open up the soft tissues while CST can release dural tube restrictions. Together they get the fluids flowing through unrestricted avenues, which often have a much stronger cumulative effect than if you used only one modality or the other.

The celebration was capped by a Roaring 20s-themed dinner/dance, which allowed attendees to share in The Upledger Institute's pride in accomplishment. For more information about The Upledger Institute, visit www.upledger.com.