



# Academy for Five Element Acupuncture

*passion · education · community*

Winter 2021

## Letter from the President

### Winter Greetings!

I hope this note find you safe and healthy as we experience the final turning of the year towards its close.

It gives me great pleasure to announce Class 39A who started their journey with us on August 19. We were thrilled to welcome the new class in person on campus for their first intensive. In addition to our wonderful local faculty, we were happy to have “away faculty” **Gary Dolowich**, **Niki Bilton**, and **Chuck Graham** teach in intensive one, assisted by technology in the classroom. This is an impressive group of students and we look forward to getting to know them better during their second intensive in December.

After meeting the challenges of a difficult clinical year, the Class 36 interns completed their clinical residency in September. We livestreamed the commencement ceremony from Sweetwater Inn for the second time with

the added luxury of holding the ceremony indoors thanks to high vaccination rates and a robust COVID safety protocol for the event. Air conditioning is a big blessing in September in Florida! **Savannah Sapodin** spoke on behalf of her class, and **Ashley Baker** shared a poem. **Joon Thomas**, who teaches Qigong, Chinese history, and calligraphy, was the keynote speaker for this year’s ceremony. Their speech on establishing oneself between the realms of heaven and earth was such a welcome and positive message for the students as they move out into their new profession. Please send the new graduates your good wishes as they prepare for their national exams.

Class 37 arrived in Gainesville for their final intensive and the start of their clinical residency in July. After a few weeks of class, they began to see patients in the acupuncture clinic in early September. They also started seeing patients in herbal clinic just a few weeks ago. The interns are quite busy in the clinics and they

are doing great work. I am very excited about the changes we are making to the program- especially as they manifest in the clinical year, under the direction of **Niki Bilton** as Chair of Clinical Education, to truly support and educate these clinicians in Five Element acupuncture. Working with the interns in the clinic a couple of shifts a week, I am continually reminded of the beauty and power of this medicine. It is my great hope to be able to offer continuing education in person in 2022, so that we can promote the positive impact of these changes for graduates of the program.

We are thrilled to announce that we are reopening our auricular community clinic in January 2022, after having to close it in March of 2020 due to the pandemic. We offer this community-style clinic once a week free to veterans, active duty military personnel, and their family members. The auricular community clinic is also open to everyone for a small suggested donation. These donations help offset the cost of operating the community-style clinic so we can continue offering free community acupuncture to veterans and active duty military personnel and their families.

**Shayna Stringer** and **Margaret Ginestra** (Class 35 graduates) are joining the supervision team! Last year, they were Teaching Assistants in the acupuncture clinic. This year, they are training as junior supervisors by shadowing senior supervisors in the clinic. Both of these talented newly-licensed practitioners are also in training to teach. It is very exciting

(Continued on page 5)



## Commencement of Class 36



It is with great pride that we announce that Class 36 graduated in September. We're excited to see where they go next.

Pictured here (back row, l. to r.) **Lindsay Boyum, Stephanie Phillips, Max Glennon, Sue Zandstra-Beggs, Kelli Keene, Courtney Kelly, Brianna Woodward, Heather Schert**, (front row, l. to r.) **Rae DiMidio, Renee Miller, Crystal Lane, Gryphon Corpus, Savannah Sapodin, Gretchen Sadock, Lucia Popescu, Michelle Morisi, Brooklyn Cole, Samantha Gamble, Tiffany Petry, Ashley Baker.**

## Welcoming Class 39A

Class 39 A began in August. Everyone at the Academy is so happy to have them on our campus and have been enjoying the past few months with them greatly. We are confident that they will do a wonderful job of continuing the longstanding tradition of Five Element acupuncture as well as the Academy. Look forward to their future accomplishments and triumphs.

Pictured here (back row, l. to r.) **Lauren Tobia, Jamie Neel, Angela Hunt, Anna McClement, Victoria Michalove, Nan Lou Brown** (front row, l. to r.) **Sandy Vandeven, Margo Briggs, Christina Chandler.**



## Now Hiring at Thrive Acupuncture



### *Michaela Carder* **Class 30**

Thrive Acupuncture in South Dakota is seeking a kind, professional, patient and timely practitioner of acupuncture and herbalism to support our purpose by providing an attentive, connective and individualized experience.

This position is ideal for a practitioner who:

- Prefers to work as a W9 employee in a setting where all supplies are provided and there is an Office Manager present who handles all business aspects including billing.
- May be interested in increasing hours to full time as client load grows.
- Will start with a minimum of 10 - 20 patients a week.
- Is a NCCAOM Diplomate of Acupuncture (NCCAOM).
- Is CAQH Accredited - will need this to get VA credentials.

Go to [www.thriveblackhills.com/now-hiring.html](http://www.thriveblackhills.com/now-hiring.html) for a detailed description of the practice and job.

# Acupuncturists Without Borders



## *Aria Walker* *Class 25*

At the end of 2017, I began a long sabbatical, getting involved with Acupuncturists Without Borders (AWB) early in 2018. While traveling by motorcycle in Mexico, I joined two AWB offerings, including a Healing Exchange in the Yucatan peninsula. I held a couple AWB trauma-relief clinics around Copper Canyon (Canon de Cobre) in the mainland, and was invited to teach a short introduction to Five Element Acupuncture concepts, as well as to give a presentation at a local elementary school. I attempted to hold a clinic in Guatemala following the volcanic eruption near Guatemala City, and was unsuccessful at gaining access due to political pressures.

Leaving my bike in Mexico, I traveled to many other places. I was part of an AWB Healing Exchange and Medicine of Peace group in Israel/Palestine which involved Israeli, Palestinian, and Bedouin people working together, multiple clinics, and my teaching a segment in the practitioner training class. I was able to briefly meet and work with the AWB office members in Athens, Greece. That field office had grown out of the refugee crisis there. While I was in Cuba, a once-in-80-years tornado severely damaged parts of La Havana. I went into the affected area and held trauma-relief clinics in the remains of people's homes. In 2019, after spending time in Australia and looking at options to help set up a stronger AWB presence, I returned to the United States. During the Covid year of 2020, I held several clinics in Baja Sur, Mexico, and in 2021 started an ongoing trauma-relief clinic at an orphanage for infants through teenagers.



## G.I. and Acupuncture

## *Liz Newman* *Class 27*

After graduating from Academy for Five Element Acupuncture in 2013, I opened a solo practice in Delray Beach Florida. I did not have a particular specialty, yet I noticed that the majority of my patients had gastrointestinal issues. Most of the time that was not the reason they came to see me for treatment.

After about seven years practicing mostly five element acupuncture, I decided to add functional medicine to my training. I completed a year-long online program with Chris Kresser called ADAPT.

My current practice combines five element acupuncture and functional medicine. The two practices go together very well. The focus of my functional medicine practice is gastrointestinal disorders. I generally see people who have been experiencing very distressing G.I. issues. I order stool tests and do blood work when necessary. I am having great success and often my patients feel that they've gotten their life back after working with me for only just a few weeks. It's very rewarding.



## New Junior Supervisors



(l. to r.) Shayna Stringer and Margaret Ginestra

### *Margaret Ginestra* *Class 35*

Margaret Ginestra graduated with class 35 and is excited to stay involved with the clinic ("...to keep engaging in rigorous conversation with peers and mentors around patients, protocols, health and healing!"). As a beginning practitioner, Margaret has chosen to emphasize trauma awareness, having studied Compassionate Inquiry with Dr. Gabor Maté concurrent with her clinical residency. She named her private practice Pointing To The Moon, and her first months as a licensed acupuncturist have been deeply special because of the fantastic patients she's had the opportunity to support. In the clinic and the classroom, working with students who are right where she so recently was has kept her awe magnified and her hope bright. Above all, she is grateful to be in community with the heart-centered people that the Academy gathers together.

### *Shayna Stringer* *Class 35*

Shayna graduated from the University of Florida with her dual degree in psychology and sociology. She spent her following years working in education. Her experiences led her from preschool care to working in public schools, a local Waldorf Institute and private homeschooling. Shayna has a love for teaching and couldn't be happier pursuing this passion amongst the Academy family.

When asked about her experiences thus far in the clinic, she expressed how much of a gift it's been to continue working with the school. "I am immensely humbled and honored to work with such wonderful humans. I get to learn from the best patients, supervisors, interns, and teachers alike to continue honing this craft and understanding its lineage. The Dao has been very generous." She was ultimately led to become an acupuncturist by the heart-felt impact this medicine has had on her life. She is now practicing locally as Empowered Yin.



## Practice for Sale in Virginia



### *Ki Ennes* *Class 18*

**Beautiful Five Element Acupuncture practice for sale in Richmond, Virginia**

9+ year old practice located in a busy family chiropractic wellness center which includes massage therapy and yoga. Full-time receptionists, scheduling, payment collection, reminder texts, laundry, cleaning, free chiropractic and all utilities included. Acupuncturist keeps 75% of fees, wellness center keeps 25%.

Training and transition period provided. Perfect for a new practitioner or someone wanting to relocate. Patients are already booked.

Send inquiries to [bgd.acupuncture@gmail.com](mailto:bgd.acupuncture@gmail.com).

## Practice for Rent in Miami

*Dava Michelson*

*Class 12*

### Beautiful and Peaceful Furnished Office and Treatment Room

Available for 1, 2, 3 or 4 days per week. Flexible sharing, nights, and weekends may be available.

This office is perfect for acupuncture, massage therapy, energy work, body talk, and more.

#### Some attributes:

- Convenient Miami Beach location with easy access to 195 causeway
- First floor location for easy client access
- Low occupancy, Covid safe environment
- Cold water sink in treatment room
- Ample parking and natural sunlight

Call Dava Michelson at (786) 877-3942 for more information.



## Letter from the President

(Continued from page 1)

to see the school's future developing in this beautiful way.

I want to offer a note of special thanks to Joanne Epstein and Teresa Bruggeman for creating and managing the school-wide COVID19 Safety Plan for almost two years. Creating separate safety plans for the classroom, administrative office, and clinic, locating the correct safety equipment, and implementing the new protocols was a herculean effort, requiring regular adjustments and revisions as new

situations arose both in the school and in the community. They both had the care and safety of our entire community in their hearts and minds. After going above and beyond throughout the pandemic, they have stepped down as our COVID Safety Officers. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their efforts. Our new professional consultant on COVID safety is Cindy Prins, PHD, MPH, CIC, CPH (<https://phttp.ufl.edu/profile/prins-cindy/>).

I hope you are continuing to find ways to thrive in these difficult and unusual times.

Please reach out and let us know how you are doing. We would love to hear from you. May you enjoy deep stillness and rest this winter season,

**“To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake, it is necessary to stand out in the cold.”**

-Aristotle

## Stay Connected with the Academy

### End of Year Fundraiser



Looking to contribute to a charitable cause this year? We're currently running our End of Year Fundraiser and would greatly appreciate any donations.

[Donate Now](#)

Your financial support enables us to prepare the next generation of Five Element acupuncturists.

### Official Academy Facebook Group



We have just launched a new official Academy group for graduates, staff, faculty, and more to connect over their shared experiences with the Academy.

Click on the icon above to join.

Make sure you also "like" our Facebook page to stay up to date with continuing education and workshop opportunities.

### Alumni Services

Are you a graduate of the Academy with an active acupuncture or Chinese herbal medicine practice? Click the button below to get added to our searchable database of alumni practitioners. It's one of our highest-traffic website pages, getting hundreds of page views per week.

[Update Info](#)

We feature new and updated practices on our Facebook page. [Contact Mariam Higginbotham for more information.](#)

## Class 12 Mini Reunion



Pictured here from left to right: **Patty Getford**, Student Dean and Intensive Coordinator; **Dava Michelson**, Faculty Member; **Chuck Graham**, Academic Dean; **Gale Mowry**, Clinic Manager

Four graduates of Academy class 12 recently had a small reunion at Gainesville-local restaurant The Top. It was wonderful to have them on campus at the same time after so long.

Throughout the years, they've remained in close contact and continue to share stories of their private practices and their experiences as faculty and staff at the Academy.

## Upcoming Events

All Continuing Education workshops in a live format remain canceled. We hope to reschedule all of our on campus offerings for later in 2022. Please check our Facebook page for updates. We hope that you and your family are staying safe in this challenging time.



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