

by Scott Albright

Dr. Jacobs blazes new trail in Romania

Chiropractors have historically been trailblazers — men and women who have an intense passion for what they do, and a willingness to forge ahead where others dare not tread. Dr. Lou Jacobs '02 is one such chiropractor. The trail he is blazing is across the Atlantic in Eastern Europe just about 125 miles from the Black Sea. There, in Bucharest, Romania, Jacobs has the distinction of being the first licensed American chiropractor, and only the second licensed D.C. to be practicing in the entire country.

“The process was challenging at times, but I admit it was a bit easier than it could have been because I had my wife, her family and friends over there to help me along the way,” Jacobs said. “Ultimately, the regulatory board granted me a license as an ‘alternative medicine practitioner’ with permission to operate as a doctor of chiropractic. That was the most important rite of passage for me in all of it because now I am free to practice without being bound to organized overseas traveling doctor programs.”

So, on Sept. 29, 2014, with his license in place, Jacobs began the first of his planned quarterly visits to Romania to practice chiropractic. His office in Bucharest is located within Intermedicas Worldwide, an integrative healthcare facility that offers second opinions to patients. He works alongside some of the world’s finest medical specialists in an environment of mutual respect.

“There is a much greater respect for all doctors in Romania,” Jacobs said. “This respect comes from patients and colleagues regardless whether they are a neurologist or an orthopedist or a plastic surgeon. My experience so far has been great. People are very excited to refer others and are certainly interested in learning more about chiropractic.”

Jacobs is excited about growing his practice in Romania, while at the same time continuing to practice in Maine. He returned to Bucharest in February 2015 for his second quarterly trip as a visiting doctor at Intermedicas Worldwide.

“With each visit, I will see established, as well as new patients,” Jacobs said. “Creating some level of consistency is essential for patients and for understanding how to best serve Romania as a whole going forward. I am very hopeful that there is a great opportunity in Romania for chiropractors and patients.”

His ambitions in Romania reach far beyond his new practice in Bucharest.

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Dr. Lou Jacobs '02 stops for a photo in Dr. Carl S. Cleveland III's office during a campus visit in July 2014 prior to starting his practice in Romania. Jacobs is the first licensed American chiropractor in Romania, and one of only two in the country.

Hailing from the coast of Maine, Jacobs has practiced the past 11 years in Portland. However, his wife is a Romanian national, and their trips to her home country each year have sparked a new beginning about which Jacobs could not be more excited.

“I love Romania!” Jacobs said. “For the past six years, my wife and I have spent a month vacationing there each year. During these trips, I would occasionally see stickers or some other form of advertising for chiropractic. That prompted me to do some investigating, and I found out chiropractic is almost completely unregulated in Romania. The country is disturbingly underserved by chiropractors. I decided I wanted to set up an office there.”

Getting started was easier said than done, Jacobs indicated. He first got in touch with the regulatory board that grants licenses, which is associated with the Romanian Ministry of Health. A large quantity of paperwork was required, the proverbial “red tape” one might expect when embarking on such a daunting journey that would ultimately result in him being one of two chiropractors in a country of 20 million people.

“My goal is to take it further, to see how it would be to practice in Romania more frequently, to take an active role in the growth of chiropractic throughout the country and to help as many people as possible. I think it would be quite fun and fulfilling to change the face of healthcare for the entire country.”

Dr. Lou Jacobs '02

more frequently, to take an active role in the growth of chiropractic throughout the country and to help as many people as possible,” Jacobs said. “I’m working as quickly as I can to create the complicated infrastructure to open my own offices, while still working within Intermedicas.”

Jacobs is committed to championing chiropractic to the masses in Romania, helping educate its people one adjustment at a time. He said his mission is to “serve on a grand scale.”

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Jacobs is well on his way to doing just that with the work he has started in Romania. There are differences, of course, in doing business half way around the world. However, he is employing the same philosophy on patient care that has elevated his Portland, Maine, practice for more than a decade.

“It has always been my philosophy that people deserve to know the truth about their health, and then they must be held accountable for following through and doing their part to achieve optimum health,” Jacobs said. “Compassion, education and accountability drive the care that I provide my patients. I also believe in fairly rigid office policies to make sure patients do what’s in their best interest.”

Another aspect of Jacobs’ philosophy is in how he characterizes to his patients the care that he is providing. Some may call it splitting hairs, but Jacobs strongly believes it’s a vital part of properly educating patients on chiropractic.

“What I tell my patients is that I don’t operate a pain clinic; I operate a ‘correct function’ clinic with pain relief being a side effect,” Jacobs said. “People have a hard time understanding function over feeling, but the harder you try to help them, the more likely it is to stick.”

Treating patients in this manner has proved successful for Jacobs, who is a highly-sought-after chiropractic expert and spokesperson in Portland, Maine, and beyond. Portland’s local television and radio stations have called on Jacobs numerous times for his input on a variety of health issues. His reputation has also led several high-profile musical acts, including Mumford & Sons, Phish and

Tommy Emmanuel, to seek his care when they make tour stops in Maine.

Jacobs is humbled by the attention his career has brought him, and said he is deeply honored to be entrusted with the lives and health of all his patients.

“Every single interaction is an honor, every adjustment a statement of trust, faith, hope and healing,” Jacobs said.

Passion, dedication and hard work is at the core of Jacobs’ success, although he prefers to focus on those who helped him get where he is today. He was quick to give credit to a handful of people who have influenced him on his journey.

“I’ve been influenced and inspired by a number of great people through the years,” Jacobs said. “Dr. Reggie Gold, Dr. Carl Cleveland III, the doctors who teach the ICPA program, Dr. Paul Inselman, my coach, and many others have exposed me to great chiropractic philosophy, professionalism and clarity. And I have been truly inspired by my great friends and classmates, Dr. Kelly Larson Brunner and Dr. Warren Lain of Westbrook, Maine. I respect these two as much as any chiropractors I know. They both have such big hearts and they are true chiropractic leaders.”

Beyond practicing chiropractic on a global scale, Jacobs has many other interests and hobbies, although he admits that they are somewhat underdeveloped with his busy schedule. He loves music and travel and the performing arts. He also enjoys entertaining children, and has developed a series of art and anatomy workshops where he performs as a clown and balloon sculptor.

Jacobs and his wife, Ana, have been married for six years. They have a 5-year-old daughter, Anca. □



(Top) Jacobs is backstage with Mumford & Sons to provide chiropractic care before and after the band’s August 2012 show in Portland, Maine. (Center) “Rolling” advertising helps Jacobs engage potential patients on his business cards in Bucharest. (Above) Jacobs answers questions during an information session he presented at Intermedicas Worldwide.