



Report to the Community, 2019–2020



**We Train the Doctors
Who Treat the Pain.**

Acus Foundation brings life-changing medical acupuncture to our nation's service members and veterans.

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Executive Summary

Our vision is to create a culture of *Think Acupuncture First* in medicine.

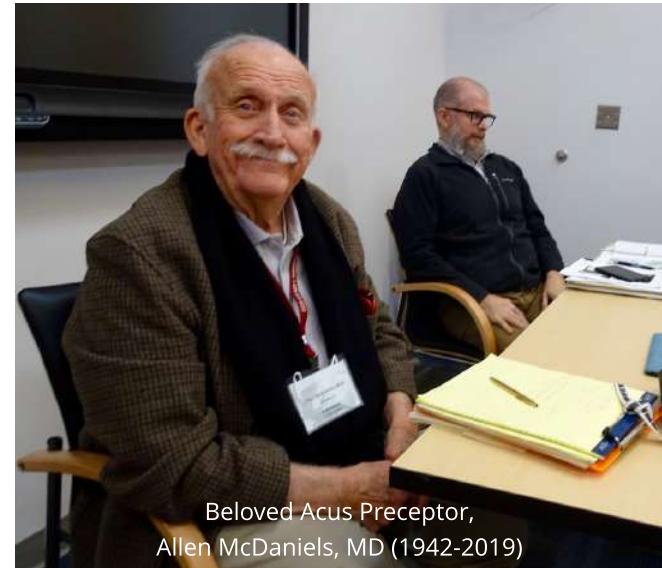
Acus Foundation believes in medical acupuncture as standard care.

We believe all doctors should have the ability to heal their patients with medical acupuncture.

Since 2015, the Acus team has trained more than 500 military physicians in medical acupuncture. These brave doctors *Think Acupuncture First* when it comes to treating patients for pain, stress, and sleep disturbances.

It is with deep gratitude that we thank our doctors for treating thousands of military patients and their families both at home in the U.S. and while deployed around the world. Their service to those who serve is invaluable.

With this success in the military, we will continue our efforts to bring a culture of *Think Acupuncture First* into medicine. We train the doctors who treat the pain.



Medical acupuncture is standard care.

President's Letter



Joseph M. Helms, MD
Acus Founder



When seeing patients with pain, stress, and sleep problems, *Think Acupuncture First* starts the decision process for U.S. Air Force family physicians trained by Acus. This means that Acus-trained doctors use medical acupuncture as first-line treatment as often as they can.

Acus has documented a 45% drop in opioid prescriptions at one base, as well as reductions in medications for anxiety, depression, pain, and insomnia. Patients report feeling overall better in stamina and focus, along with relief from their presenting problems. Physicians report less professional burnout and improved job satisfaction because of their closer relationships with patients and the pleasure of seeing effective responses to acupuncture.

Since 2015, scores of military doctors that we have trained in comprehensive military medical acupuncture have helped thousands of patients. We are very proud of their accomplishments.

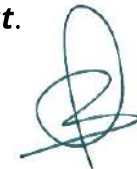
Doctors today face strict time constraints when seeing patients. Our

goal is to give them new tools to help their patients effectively while working within this clinical setting.

In 2020-21 we are introducing a three-module medical acupuncture training course, distilling our five-module, 300-hour comprehensive program into a 200-hour essentials course for primary care physicians.

In parallel with this training program the Acus team will conduct new research. The first is a retrospective analysis of health data from three USAF family medicine residencies where *Think Acupuncture First* represents the clinical culture. The second is a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the efficacy of auricular acupuncture on sleep disturbances.

With teaching and research we are moving closer to making medical acupuncture standard care in family medicine practice. We hope you will help spread the message of ***Think Acupuncture First.***



Programs

The gold standard of medical acupuncture training.

ACUS FLAGSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Location: Nellis AFB ☆ Length: 9 months ☆ CME Credit Available: Yes

The Acus Foundation Flagship Training Program is the most comprehensive and rigorous medical acupuncture training available to military medical professionals in the United States.

Taught in five modules over the course of an academic year, students master the skills of auricular (ear) acupuncture, scalp acupuncture, body acupuncture, and theories of acupuncture energetics. They also learn specialized Acus acupuncture protocols that are developed specifically for military-unique conditions, such as combat-related post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury.

Students hail from family medicine residencies in the U.S. Air Force at Eglin (FL), Nellis (NV), Offutt (NE), Scott (IL), and Travis (CA) Air Force Bases. The Southern Nevada VA Healthcare system is also well-represented by physicians and physician assistants enrolled in the training program. Students earn 300 hours of continuing medical education (CME) credit upon completion of the program.

Acus has graduated 70 students from this flagship program, helping active duty and veteran patients find drug-free pain relief across the U.S. as well as while deployed overseas.

ACUS MEDICAL ACUPUNCTURE RESEARCH PROGRAM

Location: Various ☆ Length: Ongoing ☆ CME Credit Available: No

Acus Foundation's research program advances cutting-edge scholarship in military medical acupuncture. Since 2017, the research team has published nine articles that document the positive health outcomes of Acus medical acupuncture, including reduced medications, improved communication, and less physician burnout. Currently, the team is designing two studies: a retrospective health data analysis of acupuncture outcomes across three USAF family medicine residencies and a prospective study on the impact of medical acupuncture on sleep disturbances. Acus's complete research portfolio is available online. The team also developed an app to aid military physicians, which will launch 2020.

ACUS PRECEPTOR CLINICAL RETREAT

Location: Nantucket, MA ☆ Length: 3 days ☆ CME Credit Available: No

Acus Preceptors (instructors) are the most experienced medical acupuncture teaching team in the country. Each year, Acus holds a clinical retreat where Preceptors update their knowledge base with research presentations on current issues in medical acupuncture, compare treatment results, and assess pedagogical approaches. In this way, our team is able to continually improve our teaching techniques and our training programs overall.

Think Acupuncture First—the next generation.

Programs

SPOTLIGHT

Train-the-Trainer Program

Our Train-the-Trainer program recruits and educates exceptional graduates to become certified instructors of Acus medical acupuncture. Trainers apprentice under Acus Preceptors and attend extra training modules. Once core training is complete, they then organize and deliver a standalone Acus medical acupuncture program under the supervision of a Senior Preceptor. If approved, they become Acus-certified Clinical Instructors who can subsequently deliver training programs in coordination with Acus Foundation.

Prerequisite: Graduation from Acus flagship training program or equivalent, and invitation from Acus faculty. Since 2016, seven graduates have undergone training for Acus certification to teach auricular acupuncture through this program.

Right. Three Acus graduates training as Clinical Instructors of auricular acupuncture by assisting with the Class of 2020.



Impact

Positive outcomes for patients and doctors.

Patients who receive medical acupuncture:

- Experience less pain and stress
- Sleep better
- Reduce medications, including opioids
- Share decision-making with their doctors
- Report improved well-being overall
- Prefer drug-free, no side effects treatments

Doctors who perform medical acupuncture:

- Prescribe fewer pain medications
- If needed, prescribe weaker opioids
- Experience less burnout
- Build closer relationships with patients
- Prioritize clear communication
- Consider the whole patient

Results in documented in peer-reviewed scientific research studies,
available at www.acusfoundation.org/research.

PERSPECTIVE

Acus Program Manager,
Sarah Weiss



"I am very proud of Acus Foundation's accomplishments. At our graduation ceremony last year, it was amazing to see how far all the students had come over the past nine months and hear them talk about how much medical acupuncture training has meant to them. It's also so rewarding to see students who previously shadowed colleagues and hear their success stories now be able to handle the needles themselves. I am thrilled to see this new group of thirty students grow into medical acupuncturists and continue to inspire the generations after them."

Hands-on teaching in action.

Preceptors



Gratitude

Connecting with patients in new ways.



"I cannot thank the Acus team enough for providing this training. Acupuncture is an essential part of my skill set now. It has changed my practice of medicine."

Noah Cooperstein, MD (Scott AFB, IL)

"I have seen people transformed and finally able to take control of chronic medical conditions without having to try new medications which often have unwanted side effects...we are truly able to get at the core of their problems and help them live the life that they wish to live. Thank you!"

Sarah Carroll, DO (Eglin AFB, FL)

"As a military physician, I know that these skills will help to keep our armed forces and veterans functioning at the highest level. I thank you not only on my behalf, but on behalf of those I serve."

Melany Shearer Vu, DO (Nellis AFB, NV)

"Thank you for the opportunity your generous donation has given me... I have gained new skills that will improve my ability to give humanistic medical care to my patients... I am connecting with previously difficult patients in a new way given my ability to understand them more clearly thanks to acupuncture, and I can offer my patients a different type of medical treatment that often gives them benefit."

Kelli Leli, MD (Travis AFB, CA)



"It has changed my practice of medicine."

Gratitude

"Acupuncture has given me a new perspective... I find that I am now able to spend more time laying hands on my patients, talking to my patients, listening to my patients, and caring for my patients. I have found incredible joy in providing relief to these patients who have suffered for so long and are frequently passed along from one doctor to another leaving each more frustrated than before. This course has made me into a better doctor, and I am so grateful."

Andrew Gaillardetz, MD (Scott AFB, IL)



"The class has revolutionized my care for patients, and has re-kindled my passion for helping those in pain. I will continue to use the skills that I've learned throughout my career. Thank you for your generous support of Acus!"

Bonnie Nolan, MD (Eglin AFB, FL)



"My understanding of disease and the body has been improved by learning acupuncture. As a DO, it has given me a deeper toolbox to pull from for the patients that come to my clinic. To heal is to help, ultimately, with the ideal goal of making someone whole again. Acupuncture makes that more possible. Thank you for the work you have done in making acupuncture accessible for those of us at turning points in our medical careers. Your continued efforts have unbelievable downstream effects for thousands of patients."

Norm Hurst, DO (Travis AFB, CA)

"The course has made me a much better physician, and I will be taking this with me as I move overseas on my next assignment. This wouldn't be possible without your generous gifts, and I am forever grateful for your support of my education."

Sarah McCullough, DO (Eglin AFB, FL)

Board of Directors



Joseph M. Helms, MD
Founder and President

Dr. Joe Helms is regarded as the Father of Medical Acupuncture in the United States. He has taught physicians since

1978 through the continuing medical education program “Medical Acupuncture for Physicians,” sponsored initially by the UCLA School of Medicine, then Stanford School of Medicine. Since 2000, he has chaired the program through the Helms Medical Institute in Berkeley, California. 7,000 physicians have completed this rigorous training, constituting 90% of physicians practicing acupuncture in the US.



Steve Leininger
Secretary

Steve Leininger is the managing partner at TWD Advisors in Walnut Creek, California, where for 20 years he has

served both as CPA and investment advisor to healthcare enterprises. His strength is evaluating challenges facing organizations seeking to thrive in the new order of health care. He is the author of numerous publications in industry journals, and white papers about the financial aspects of health care as a business.



Nelson Ford
Director

Past President and CEO of LMI in Tysons, Virginia, Nelson Ford has served as the Under Secretary of the Army, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Budgets and Financial Policy in the Department of Defense. He also served as the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer at Georgetown University Medical Center. He has extensive experience in the governance of health care organizations.



Dan Hillmer
Vice President

Dan Hillmer is an urban designer and licensed architect who has served four terms as Mayor of Larkspur,

California. His entrepreneurial experience includes working with private companies, government agencies, and start-up organizations in domestic and global markets. He is currently Director of Business Strategy for Muses Labs.



Bill Maimone
Treasurer

Bill Maimone has over 25 years of experience as an Executive VP, CFO, and counsel to a wide variety of

privately held companies. He has served on the boards of non-profit organizations such as East Bay Services for the Developmentally Disabled, TOPS, The Orinda Pre-School, and now, Acus Foundation. His consulting company is located in Orinda, California.



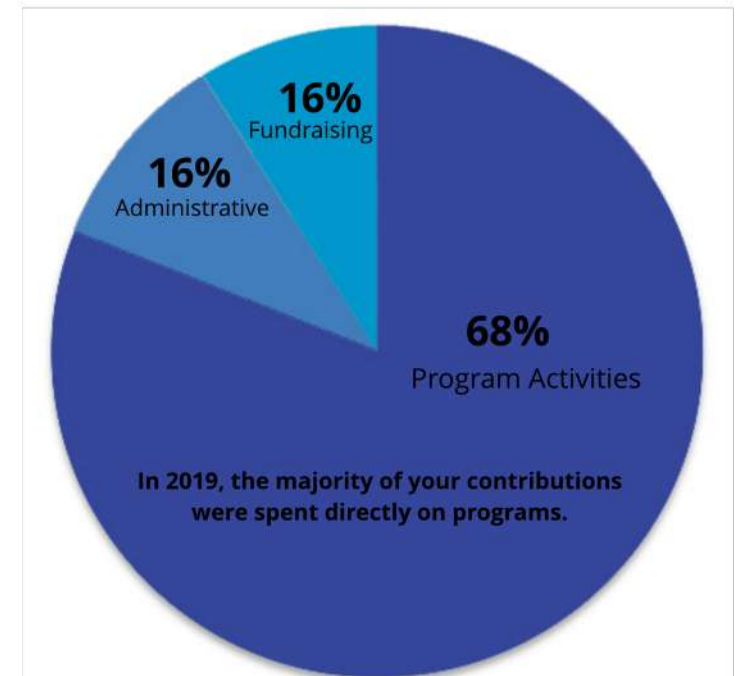
Chloe Sundara
Director

Chloe Sundara is a businesswoman from Marin County, California. A firm believer in medical acupuncture, she joined the

Acus Board in June 2018. In her spare time, she is an avid skier, hiker, and world traveler.

Financial Statements

FISCAL YEAR	2019	2018
Revenue		
Individual Donations	\$1,038,000	\$30,000
Grants	\$20,000	\$5,000
Investments	\$19,200	\$18,400
In-Kind Contributions	\$132,900	\$126,700
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,210,100	\$200,750
Expense		
Programs	\$693,000	\$624,500
Management	\$168,000	\$180,000
Fundraising	\$170,000	\$129,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,031,000	\$930,000
Change in Net Assets	\$179,000	(\$729,250)



Our tax returns (Form 990) are available online at GuideStar, the Foundation Center, as well as upon request. Acus Foundation's financial statements for FY16-FY19 have been independently audited by Armanino LLP. They are also available online and upon request.



At Acus Foundation, we pride ourselves at being responsible stewards of your donations. In 2020 we earned the Silver Seal of Transparency from GuideStar, a leading charity resource group.



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www.acusfoundation.org

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