Acupuncture was practiced by both Western medical doctors\(^1,2\) and Chinese medicine doctors\(^3,4\) in the United States (U.S.) in the 19th century; however, after 1910, it seems that people seldom heard about it until it was re-introduced during the 1960s–1970s. Acupuncture legislation, acupuncture practice and the start of acupuncture education were some of the events that marked the re-introduction of acupuncture in the U.S.\(^3–9\).

Based on the author’s earlier research\(^4\), the first formal instruction of acupuncture in the U.S. was led by Dr. Gim Shek Ju in Los Angeles from 1969 to the early 1970s and the first nationally recognized school of acupuncture was the New England School of Acupuncture (NESA), which was founded by Dr. Tin Yau So and his students Steven Rosenblatt, Gene Bruno and others. The Institute for Taoist Studies (ITS), or later the National Acupuncture Association (NAA), was a major player in the initiation of the following three professions in the U.S.: acupuncture — for acupuncture practitioners; medical acupuncture — for Western-trained medical doctors; and animal acupuncture — for AOM practitioners and veterinary medical doctors.

In order to best document the history of acupuncture in the U.S., I interviewed Dr. Gene Bruno, one of the earliest non-Asian acupuncturists in the U.S., who both witnessed and was involved in the start of these three fields in the U.S. He has played an important role in AOM development since its very beginning\(^4,10\).

**Dr. Arthur Fan (Fan):** Dr. Bruno, it is nice to get a chance to speak with you and review the history of acupuncture and Chinese medicine, or say, Oriental medicine in the U.S. You are a pioneer in AOM. What year did you start your AOM learning with Dr. Gim Shek Ju (better known as Ju Gim Shek, 赵金石), and when did you meet Dr. James Tin Yau So (苏天佑)? What was your background at that time?

**Dr. Gene Bruno (Bruno):** I began studying AOM in 1970. As a part of the group that studied Tai Chi with Marshal Ho’o (in West Hollywood, LA), I was introduced to Dr. (Gim Shek) Ju (Figure 1) and joined his second class as a student (to learn AOM). I heard about the first class, but at that time I wasn’t available to take part. I was at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles) as an undergraduate with a double major, as well as a teaching...
assistant with Professor Angela Davis, in the Philosophy Department, getting ready to go into my senior year in pre-med in 1969.

Before I formally attended the acupuncture classes of Dr. Ju, I wanted to see for myself the potential benefits of acupuncture. As an experiment, I suggested my girlfriend’s mother try acupuncture. She had migraine headaches that were so terrible that she ended up taking a lot of medications that didn’t really work and she would be out for several days with these headaches. She was interested and went to see Dr. Ju. After three treatments with Dr. Ju, she had no more headaches. Gone! So I’m thinking, “Wow, are you kidding me? Maybe I will look at this.” So I went there to see Dr. Ju when he was treating a couple of other patients. I saw some amazing results. So at this point, I decided to start pursuing studies with Dr. Ju and knew (being in) his group (to learn acupuncture) was very important (to me). I said to myself, “I need to be in that class.” So I discussed the possibility of being in another class of students with William (Bill) Prensky. [Fan notes: Mr. Prensky at that time was the chairman of the ITS, which was responsible for arranging the classes with Dr. Ju.] The second class had just started, so I only had to make up a few sessions. There were originally ten students in that class but a couple of people left for different reasons and I ended up being able to be a part of it.

Dr. Ju was very hesitant at first about teaching. In fact, he would not have taught us at all if it was not for Marshall Ho’o [Fan notes: Marshall is a close friend of Dr. Ju; he successfully persuaded Dr. Ju to teach acupuncture to his Tai Chi students]. After the second class, there were a lot of other interested (persons), some of them from outside (of our class of Tai Chi students of Marshall Ho’o), but there never was a third class. At Dr. Ju’s own clinic, we would help him treat patients during the day as well as learn acupuncture from being in the practice at the same time. He would have us take patients’ pulses, talk to us about it and have us try to locate points. And he would say, “No, not there,” “Here! — this is how you will get the point.” The evening was the time when we would have our didactic discussions with Dr. Ju. So from the very beginning, his style was a more classical style; he would teach us in clinic during the day and then, in the evening, we were doing a discussion of acu-points and how to treat that point and the indications and contraindications for that point. That was it.

In 1972, after the second class was nearly finished, he (Dr. Ju) told us that we needed to go on and finish our classical studies with another master. We went — “Okay, great”. He said that Dr. Tin Yau So would be the other person and that he was still in Hong Kong, China. At that time, Dr. Ju was treating people all over the place, so he was too busy to be teaching a class because he’s traveling to Mexico, he’s traveling to Texas, and so on. Sometimes he was at his home (clinic) in Chinatown, L.A. One time, I took him out for lunch after he had just returned from Texas. He was wearing a ‘ten gallon’ cowboy hat! [Fan notes: it is really big.] It was during that time that we would send one person, which was Steven Rosenblatt, to Hong Kong, China to invite Dr. So to the U.S. Steven went there with his fiancée, Kathy (and Dr. Ju). I should mention that at that time, the AOM classes were run by ITS, which was formed by the original group or the first class of acupuncture students back in 1969. Steven was one of these members, which is why he was chosen to go over to Hong Kong.

[Fan notes: In order to invite Dr. Tin Yao So to the U.S., so that the students could learn more about AOM under him, a program was created under the NAA, which established a formal job for Dr. So to meet immigration requirements. This was one of reasons why an acupuncture clinic was established at UCLA.] The UCLA pain clinic opened in late 1972 and was the first clinic in the U.S. This clinic was under the direction of the NAA, of which Dr. Prensky was the President. We had something to offer Dr. So, which was that he could come and work in the UCLA clinic. In the beginning of the NAA formation, we introduced acupuncture to Western medical doctors all across the U.S. at conferences sponsored jointly by the NAA and their state medical associations or medical schools. [Fan notes: At that time, acupuncture became a very “hot” topic in the U.S. [3–8]; this may be why Western medical doctors were also getting interested in acupuncture knowledge.] This continued with Dr. Ju and Dr. Prensky until 1973 when Dr. So arrived in the U.S. I then continued my studies with Dr. So. During that stage, we also began to study more advanced forms of Tai Chi with Master Tung Kai Ying.
Fan: Let’s talk more about the Institute for Taoist Studies and the National Acupuncture Association — about the members and the leader.

Bruno: Dr. Ju’s classes were the first (program of AOM in the U.S.), and a group of students from his classes created the ITS which began in 1969. I did not join this group until 1970. In early 1972, after serious consideration of the responsibility we were given, the NAA was organized. This was because we quickly realized that we needed a national, non-profit organization to do research, among other things. ITS became the transitional organization that allowed the NAA to be formed. They were recognized by the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) as a not-for-profit research organization.

Dr. Prensky was the President of both of the organizations (ITS and the NAA), because Bill was the best organizer and most dedicated leader there; he was our “rainmaker”. The NAA had an educational part to it, so we were educating and teaching, such as with lectures and research. Then at UCLA we were also actually treating patients (under a research program). It was the NAA that initially put up all of the funding to establish the UCLA Acupuncture Pain Clinic in the medical school of UCLA. There were seven (active) members — William Prensky, Steven Rosenblatt, Dr. Elliot Green (who was a dentist), Kathy Ferrick (Steven's wife), John Ottaviano, David Bresler, and myself. Prensky, Rosenblatt, Ottaviano and I were the most active in terms of the organization, while Dr. Prensky was running the entire operation, including all the seminars. Steven Rosenblatt was the primary acupuncturist at the UCLA clinic. Elliot Green, DMD, was in charge of (NAA acupuncture) research on dental analgesia (program). David Bresler was an administrator at the UCLA acupuncture pain clinic. Ottaviano and I were working 5 to 6 days per week treating large and small animals (in different veterinary doctors’ clinics, which also was a NAA research program), so I could only help at the UCLA clinic one day a week.

As for others involved in the start of acupuncture introduction in the U.S., there was Lewis Prince. I lived across the street from Lewis Prince; he was a great guy, and involved in the very beginning of the formation of the ITS. He used to be very involved in it, and even drove Dr. Ju to places he wanted to go. After we began the UCLA clinic, Lewis was not involved with us nor did he go with us to Boston.

Fan notes: Based on the literature, Lewis Prince was one of the major members of the ITS and the NAA in their early stages. On October 19, 1972 at the Acupuncture Hearing in California, highly advertised to the public by Dr. Prensky, Lewis attended and gave a speech and testimony, as did Dr. Gim Shek Ju (with Marshall Ho’o as an interpreter) and Steven Rosenblatt[45]. We should correct Dr. Prince’s name as Lewis Prince, because I misspelled his name as Louise Prince in an earlier article[46].

Fan: Let’s talk more about the UCLA pain clinic in 1970s.

Bruno: The UCLA pain clinic, which was the first legal acupuncture clinic in California, opened under the guidelines of a new law that allowed acupuncture to be done by non-physicians in medical schools in approved research settings. This was the first clinic of its type in the U.S. There are several states in which (the acupuncturists) claim their acupuncture clinics were established earlier, but those states had acupuncture clinics practicing only under the licensure of medical doctors as allowed by their state laws. This was how we were later able to open clinics in Massachusetts. But in California there was a specific law allowing acupuncture to be done in medical schools for research purposes by non-Western medical doctors.

We did dental anesthesia, too, which was authorized by the UCLA Medical School and USC (the University of Southern California) Dental School. At the beginning, we had to have some way of doing acupuncture that the medical doctor wouldn’t object to, and so doing it as research in the medical school, under Western medical doctor’s supervision, was a way for us to begin. We also knew that over time, once they saw how important acupuncture was, we could probably move on to a new level. We thought that the doctors would want to study it. It turns out that the doctors, after understanding more about how complex the diagnostics of Chinese medicine were and how detailed the actual treatments could be, finally said, “You do it.” They also said they would support a bill for acupuncturists if we wanted to propose legislation. And so we had their help a few years later when legislation finally passed in California. We were teaching physicians and dentists to do this, and eventually they said, “No, you guys should do this.”

Initially, William Prensky and Steven Rosenblatt were the only acupuncturists (in this clinic). The clinic was developed and run by the NAA, which was the very first national acupuncture association in the U.S. All funding for the UCLA acupuncture pain clinic was initially provided by the NAA. Under Prensky’s leadership the NAA was able to hire a number of other acupuncturists from different schools of practice.

This allowed the UCLA project to compare the results of a number of different styles of acupuncture. There were basically two major styles: our style, or the classical style that Dr. Ju taught us, and then that which was being practiced in medical schools in China at the time. This was called traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). TCM was, at that time, a more abbreviated version of the classical style; sometimes they didn’t take any pulses at all. I was there two days a week assisting Steven, but as the veterinary research project began to expand its clinics, I was eventually at UCLA only one day a week.
It wasn’t until October of 1973 that Dr. Tin Yau So came to the UCLA clinic. He was in Washington, D.C. for a couple of months before that — maybe 3 to 4 months. Dr. So was working at the clinic five days a week and he only had one treatment room because we didn’t have much space. In that treatment room we put up some curtains so that he could treat (more than one patient at a time) and he would treat only the men. He treated 20–25 patients a day with no problem. We were booked out into the future for about 6 months. Steven was in another (smaller) room — we had like 1.5 rooms, so Steven could see two people there. I was there working with Steven and Dr. So just one day a week. So I had 6 d a week treating animals and 1 day at UCLA (acupuncture pain clinic). For the veterinary project, we had more patients (i.e., sick animals) than they had (human patients) at UCLA. I would get one day off (per week); sometimes, maybe not even one day off.

As for how we were able to get space for our clinic, that was due mostly to David Bresler. Bresler was an assistant professor at the UCLA Psychology Department. Since he was on staff, we used his name, even though the NAA would pay the rent, to find a space there. Officially, this was through the UCLA Medical School Department of Anesthesiology and not through the Department of Psychology. Originally (we) rented space in the basement of the Physiology Department and then actually had space in the hospital when Dr. So arrived. The clinics were always in the hospital but we did do some research in the Department of Psychology. Bresler was the research director of the UCLA Acupuncture Research Project. He conducted the research on behalf of the Department of Anesthesiology. So he did not serve there as an acupuncturist performing treatments in clinic.

We left for Boston in 1974. At that time it was only the core group of the NAA — Dr. So, William Prensky, Steven Rosenblatt, Kathy Ferick, Gene Bruno and Karen Freede, a nurse. We went to Boston to open public clinics. Under the law in Massachusetts we were able to work under the supervision of a medical doctor. We went to Boston because, under medical supervision, a non-physician could do acupuncture (or treat the public in a practice and not have to be in a research project). There was this little clause that said, under medical supervision, any non-physician like a nurse could do any procedure that a physician could do. In Boston and in most other places, a doctor could do acupuncture; there was nothing against it. So we knew we could go to Boston. We almost went to Oregon, and we were licensed in Oregon. But at the end we decided to go to Boston; it was just a choice that we made at the time. Most importantly, it was because the law would allow us to actually practice there. We knew that Dr. So needed a school, so we established what (later) became NESA — the New England School of Acupuncture, the first formal school of acupuncture in the U.S. Steven Rosenblatt and I worked with Dr. So every week to translate all his books from Chinese to English. Karen Freede typed these translations for the students. Later, these books were published by Dr. James Tin Yau So and used as the primary textbooks in the NESA.

Then in 1975, I finished all my studies and clinical internship with Dr. So, and I was ready to bring my family back to California. That’s when we established the West coast version of the school. I did not go back to the UCLA clinic; none of us did. We didn’t even really deal with them anymore.

Fan: Let’s talk more about the earlier acupuncture schools.

Bruno: ITS and NAA trained everyone who went on to (establish) other schools. Members of the acupuncture boards for the next 10 years of the various states could trace their roots to the ITS and the NAA.

(1) James Steven Acupuncture Center/NESA (the first state licensed school): The James Steven Acupuncture Center [Fan notes: it was named after Dr. So and Dr. Rosenblatt’s first names—they used Dr. So’s English name, James] was in a large room that was also our Tai Chi studio at first. Steven mostly taught the Tai Chi to the students there. The teacher for the acupuncture was Dr. So. I was involved in the clinical supervision for the students in the clinic with Steven; both of us translated work from Dr. So’s teachings one day per week as well. It was a formal school established in 1974 but then the next year the name was changed because Steven was going to leave. So the group of people who were taking over the administration decided to change it to the New England School of Acupuncture (NES2) and Dr. So was fine with that. Dr. So, Steven, and I were the founders of NESA; at that time, Bill was in New York. [Fan notes: When NESA was formally registered with the state in Watertown, MA, it did so with the help of Arnie Freiman and Steven Breeker, who were two former members of the James Stevens Acupuncture Center[12]. So, it could be said that NESA had five founders — Dr. So, Rosenblatt, Bruno, Freiman and Breeker.]

(2) California Acupuncture College (CAC): Initially located in West Los Angeles, CA, the CAC eventually had two other campuses [Fan notes: the CAC actually had between 4 to 5 campuses; when Gene left in 1976 to go to Oregon, the CAC may only have had two campuses]. There was one campus in San Diego and one in Santa Barbara. Rosenblatt, Prensky and I were the founders of the California Acupuncture College (CAC); Prensky came to California when we started CAC and taught some courses there.

The first class of the CAC took place in my home in West Los Angeles. Initially there were ten students. Within a few years of when we formally changed the name to
the CAC, the other branches or campuses developed. The intention was that they would at some point become independent, which they did. One was in San Diego, which became the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine (PCOM). The other was in Santa Barbara, which became the Five Branches University, after CAC’s main campus closed. Maybe in the first ten years (1975–1985), 70% to 80% of all students in (AOM) colleges within the U.S. were from the schools that Dr. So, Steven, Prensky and I had started. Probably 80% of practitioners can trace their lineage to our schools in this country. Santa Monica was the only campus that completely closed. I wasn’t part of it after I moved to Oregon. Steven tried to sell the Santa Monica campus to somebody and that failed. It just failed and so it closed. But the other branches didn’t close except the CAC campus in Santa Monica.

Fan: I am very interested in the history of veterinary acupuncture, or animal acupuncture.

Bruno: We became interested in practicing on animals at first because we had our own pets. My roommate had a dog that had a problem with her hips. This dog immediately responded to treatment and needed no recovery or down-time after acupuncture. I treated dogs and so did John Ottaviano. One thing we discovered was that they responded to treatment faster than humans! The reason why John and I were involved was because we were the only ones really treating our own animals; John also had cats. We started doing research and found that animal acupuncture hadn’t really been done since the 13th century. There was no work being done in China at all. Dogs were never treated in China anyway. There were a few charts for the horse, and the cow, but basically we had to construct everything. There was NOTHING being done at the time in China in regards to treating animals with acupuncture. We developed a research team for treating animals, and John and I were the two acupuncturists on that team. At the NAA, we got calls from local veterinarians and they wanted to know if we treated animals (with acupuncture). Eventually we agreed to work with a veterinarian, but we told him in exchange he would have to commit to helping us with the comparative anatomy. The veterinarian’s name was Richard Glassberg, and he convinced us that he was very serious about wanting to study with us. His clinic was in Orange County, CA. We worked with him for several weeks, showing him points for conditions that dogs had that were not easily treated with Western veterinary medicine. We explained to him, from the beginning, that we did NOT want to become a part of veterinary medicine and that this was NOT veterinary acupuncture — it was, in fact, animal acupuncture that had been a part of the TCM for thousands of years. But, in working with veterinarians, and trying to do research, we would refer to this work as veterinary acupuncture since they would also be treating animals using acupuncture, which was our medicine, not theirs. Glassberg had no problem with this and was fine to work with us as practitioners in another field.

One day when we were working with him he asked us, “Well, what about horses?” John looked at me and I said, “Yes, absolutely!” I had first started riding horses when I was 5 years old and I loved horses. That is when Dr. Glassberg introduced us to Alice DeGroot and this was when the Animal Acupuncture Project began to “take off”.

At the time we were working together, John Ottaviano was already trained in Western herbal medicine and he had been in Dr. Ju’s first class. He was also the inventor and owner of Nature’s Gate Shampoo; he later sold this company. John, who passed away in 2009, and I did all the animal acupuncture. This was under the research arm of the NAA starting in 1972. No classes or seminars were held for animal acupuncture; we taught all the vets on the spot as a part of the clinical treatments. We initially enlisted the assistance of a Korean acupuncturist, Dr. Sang Hyuck Shin. He was not interested in continuing with treating animals after the first two or three months, so John and I essentially ran the project by ourselves.

The initial work with horses was done at a horse ranch in Chino, California, with a veterinarian that Dr. Glassberg had introduced us to Dr. Alice DeGroot. We would go to this location once a week and treat 12 to 15 horses each time. Owners of the horses would donate what they could to the NAA Research Project. I also worked at a small animal clinic in West Hollywood with Dr. Jim Craig and Dr. Joel Rossen, as well as at a small animal clinic in Van Nuys with Dr. Ron Freedman. John also worked at a small animal clinic in West Covina and at another small animal clinic with Dr. Richard Glassberg. Through 1972 to 1974, until I went to Boston, I treated at these places. After moving with the NAA team to Massachusetts, I worked at Amherst University on animals, but I didn’t treat very many animals while I was in Boston, as I was spending most of my time with Dr. So in the clinic; however, when I came back to CA in 1975, I started treating animals again.

We were trying to teach these veterinarians how to do animal acupuncture. Dr. Rossen and Dr. Glassberg were both very interested in and serious about studying with us. The other veterinarians were more interested in letting us do the acupuncture and not really learning it for themselves.

Here is the interesting thing – because our work on animals was done directly with veterinarians, and because it was only for donations to the NAA research project, the California Veterinary Licensing Board and the California Horse Racing Commission allowed John and I to practice acupuncture on horses and other animals without a license. We were to be supervised by veterinarians but it did not have to be direct supervision. John Ottaviano and I spent a lot of
time treating horses at the racetracks — *i.e.*, Hollywood Park, Santa Anita, and Del Mar racetracks. One of the great things about treating racehorses was that the records on their performances were easy to get, pre-treatment and post-treatment. This really helped our research in determining how acupuncture helped them.

As we worked with these veterinarians we began to do the comparative anatomy that allowed us to develop the first modern acupuncture charts for dogs and horses. There were actually no good charts on acupuncture from ancient China, and there was nothing being done at the time in China itself. Most of what was done ended in China around the 13th century. We did a little work with other animals at that time, including cats and occasionally a rare animal (rhino), but 98% of all the animals treated by us were dogs and horses. Almost all of our charts were taken by others and copied, with or without our permission. Many of these charts, even until today, have points that are not placed or named correctly. John did the cat charts, we both worked on the dog charts, and I did most of the charts for horses but John still helped with some of them. John and I worked on everything together. Very few things were done by just one person.

So we did develop the first comprehensive charts for horses and dogs. We discovered in our research that ancient charts for horses were extremely limited and often only had 12 points. Dr. Prensky convinced Dr. Gim Shek Ju to help us try and translate some of the very old charts from China, even though only a few had survived. It turned out that there were almost none talking about acupuncture. Several were locations on the horse for ‘bleeding’ certain points. But you have to understand that there was just very few. Dr. Ju told us that in some other texts there was ‘mention’ of certain books on acupuncture for horses, but that those texts were evidently lost. And there were no charts for dogs. Our work with small animals was essentially the first time it had ever been done. So, since this work was not done in China at this time in 1972, John and I were responsible for really introducing animal acupuncture to the Western world.

Eventually this work led to the establishment of the very first organization for veterinarians who were trained in animal acupuncture, of which John and I were members — even though we were not veterinarians. This was the National Association of Veterinary Acupuncture. John and I were the instructors. Later, in 1975, this group merged with a newly created group, the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society (IVAS).

One thing that I want to emphasize, since it is of utmost importance, is that although we often did call this “veterinary acupuncture”, it is in fact “animal acupuncture”. Since we trained veterinarians, and since the veterinarians were the primary members of these organizations, we used the phrase “veterinary acupuncture”. However, animal acupuncture from its inception has always been the domain of acupuncturists, not veterinarians. Just as acupuncture itself does not belong to medical doctors, animal acupuncture is not a part of the natural domain of veterinarians. I mention this because currently I am a part of an organization, the International Academy of Animal Acupuncture (IAAA), that is in the process of re-introducing “animal acupuncture” to licensed acupuncturists. There are a number of states where acupuncturists can legally treat animals under certain conditions, but each state is different.

I eventually moved to Oregon because I had one son at the time, and I didn’t want to raise him in Los Angeles. I wanted a more friendly environment for him and since I was licensed in Oregon, I could practice there. The NAA helped to pass the licensing exam in Oregon in 1975. Bill, Steven and Dr. So were also licensed in Oregon. The thing is, in Oregon, there was no grandfathering — you had to take Western medicine tests and Chinese medicine acupuncturist tests. After you passed those written tests, you then were qualified to take the Oral and Practical Exam before the entire Acupuncture Committee of the Board of Medical Examiners. In CA, I was grandfathered in with a lot of other people. Many tried to take the test in Oregon but they failed; it was a very hard test. In those days, if you had a license from Nevada or Oregon, that was a pretty special thing. I took and passed the Oregon exam in late 1975.

**Fan**: I heard that you and other NAA members held seminars or lectures, or did studies at some famous universities.

**Bruno**: From early 1972 to later in 1975, the NAA put on conferences and teaching seminars in many universities. The team from the NAA was working with the University of Southern California Dental School and held seminars (an on-going course) for medical doctors and dentists. Steven, Kathy (Steven’s wife) and I were the major instructors at that time. Sometimes Kathy would treat a patient (for demonstration) while I would be explaining it. We also did Grand Rounds for the Department of Anesthesia at the UCLA Medical School, as well as workshops for: (1) University of Oregon, Medical School in Oregon; (2) Tufts Dental School in Boston, Massachusetts; (3) Harvard Medical School in Boston, Steven Rosenblatt and I were the major speakers; (4) University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where I was the major speaker.

From 1974 to 1975, in Boston, I was involved in acupuncture research at both the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Harvard University Medical School.

**Fan**: Let’s talk about acupuncture and Oriental medicine legislation.

**Bruno**: As a group, we were very active in three states:
Oregon, Nevada and California. In Oregon, the NAA was a prime factor in moving (acupuncture) legislation forward. We were working with Joel Sears, MD, a neurosurgeon, along with other medical doctors and dentists who were interested in acupuncture. Because of their interest, we did seminars in Oregon, and in other places like Nevada. At a certain point, Oregon Senator Wally Carson and Representatives Ted Hallock and Hector McPherson asked us if we would help them put together a bill to legalize acupuncture. We were able to get a piece of legislation through in 1973 and the Governor signed it.

In Nevada, we were brought in to assist with legislation (for Chinese medicine), because the NAA was really the only national association working in this area. [Fan notes: The NAA played an important role in Nevada, the first state legalizing acupuncture in 1973, in which Dr. Ju and Steven Rosenblatt gave testimonies].

In California, it took a lot longer to get (acupuncture) legislation passed. It was still tough getting it through in 1976. We helped out in California mainly because of our UCLA clinic. But the Chinese community was also very strong in California, and that was a big help. It took California a few years to actually develop a licensing exam.

We did start the Acupuncture Association of Massachusetts, due to the hard work of Steven, a medical doctor, and myself, as well as with the help of a few other people.

Personally, I testified and helped with a law in Alaska a couple of years later and that’s just part of the history, too. I wrote the whole acupuncture law in the state of Washington; I was the first acupuncturist in Washington State in 1979. I went to Washington’s Medical Board with my medical doctor, Samuel Moon, MD. I asked the Medical Board if they could make me an acupuncturist. The Board there said they didn’t have an acupuncturist designation, but they could license me as a physician’s assistant who could do acupuncture if I could promise to help them write a law on acupuncture for the state of Washington. I agreed! So I became the first acupuncturist in the state of Washington and I later re-wrote the law once more; it’s the same law that they have today. It created an independent board of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. I wrote every word of it. This was in the 1980’s in the state of Washington. There have been recent changes, but they have mostly been related to semantic changes in language. For example, the phrase “Oriental Medicine” has been replaced with the phrase “East Asian Medicine.” Personally I consider this a foolish and irresponsible attempt at only being politically correct, because it is not accurate.

The situation that occurred in states like Massachusetts and Maryland, and also the District of Columbia (during 1972–1975), was because the state laws regulating medicine allowed in some ways for acupuncturists to treat patients under the supervision of a licensed physician. This was entirely under the license of the supervising physician. What is important to note, is that in places like Maryland and Washington, D.C. (at that time), the acupuncturists were not licensed, or even registered. They underwent no testing or licensing exams. However, in Oregon and Nevada, acupuncturists were licensed only after rigorous exams.

Fan: Thank you so much for what you did and sharing your impressive story.

Acknowledgements

Dr. Arthur Fan was the interviewer and the original author. Ms. Sarah Faggert was involved in part of work in drafting and editing. Words quoted by ( ) are the contents added, or by [ ] are noted by Dr. Fan. Dr. Gene Bruno reviewed the first draft of this article.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests. Due to the limitation of the interviewee’s and interviewer’s personal experience and perspective, this article is not a full piece of the acupuncture history in that time and there may be some omissions and errors; comments or corrections are welcomed and appreciated.

REFERENCES

9. Fan AY. Nevada: the first state that fully legalized acupuncture


---

### Submission Guide

*Journal of Integrative Medicine* (JIM) is an international, peer-reviewed, PubMed-indexed journal, publishing papers on all aspects of integrative medicine, such as acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, herbal medicine, homeopathy, nutrition, chiropractic, mind-body medicine, TaiChi, Qigong, meditation, and any other modalities of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Article types include reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses, randomized controlled and pragmatic trials, translational and patient-centered effectiveness outcome studies, case series and reports, clinical trial protocols, preclinical and basic science studies, papers on methodology and CAM history or education, editorials, global views, commentaries, short communications, book reviews, conference proceedings, and letters to the editor.

- No submission and page charges
- Quick decision and online first publication

For information on manuscript preparation and submission, please visit JIM website. Send your postal address by e-mail to jcim@163.com, we will send you a complimentary print issue upon receipt.