

Practical learning from the “On the Front Lines” at the 2nd International Tai Chi Symposium

In July of 2014, the world’s foremost authorities on the five traditional Chinese Family Schools of Tai Chi, as well as other top Tai Chi practitioners and scholars will come to Spalding University in Louisville, Kentucky for an international level Tai Chi Symposium.

The theme of this Symposium will focus on bringing together the wisdom of Chinese culture with the precision of modern science through evidence-based literary review sessions, Master’s workshops and other special events designed to foster an exchange of knowledge and cultures.

This Symposium will be the second time this event has been held. It offers an unparalleled opportunity to study with five of China’s top Masters along with respected scholars carefully selected for their unique and highly professional level of expertise in the scientific study and examination of Tai Chi.

The International Tai Chi Symposium on Health, Education and Cultural Exchange is a one-of-a-kind forum that offers the opportunity to network with others who seek a deeper understanding of how the practice of Tai Chi can enhance health, wellness and quality of life.

On the Front Lines

An extremely important contribution to the 2014 Symposium will be the academic program. In addition to the keynotes, there will be a series of practicum lectures by Tai Chi practitioners who are applying Tai Chi ‘on the front lines’ of health care. These experts will explain how they conducted their work, the challenges they encountered with specific populations, the successes as well as the setbacks they encountered along the way.

“Chronic Inflammatory Diseases,” Ramon Suarez Zaldu, MD

Clinical application of Tai Chi for pain management,” Kristi Hallisy, PT, DSc, OCS, CMPT, CTI

“Tai Chi Fundamentals® for Veterans and VA Staff across the Health Care Continuum: From Rehabilitation to Wellness,” Patricia Corrigan Culotti, CTI, MTF and Tricia Yu, MA

“Healing Invisible Wounds, teaching veterans suffering from post-combat stress,” Chris Bouguyon, Director, SimplyAware, Texas

“Community Based Tai Chi to reduce risk factors for chronic heart patients,” Rod Ferguson, National Director of Training & Chief Instructor with the Australian Academy of Tai Chi & Qigong

There will also be “On the Front Lines: teaching, studying, researching; the voices of personal experience in the Tai Chi community.” A panel discussion including questions and answers with the above presenters

This is the second time that Rod will be presenting at the Symposium. In 2009 his presentation on “Distilling the Essence” to create successful “Applied Tai Chi” programs, was very well received.

“As the United States creates more appropriate health care priorities I hope that our country will look at the success of models such as the one used by Rod Ferguson in Australia. The Tai Chi programs initiated by Rod [Applied Tai Chi] provides Tai Chi activities in partnership with government sponsored wellness programs allowing many more people to experience the benefits of Tai Chi. I am grateful that Rod travelled to the International Symposium to share his success in Australia”. - Dr Sandy Matsuda - Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy, University of Missouri Deputy Chair, Academic Steering Committee, International Tai Chi Symposium.

World Tai Chi Day founder Bill Douglas, reporting on the event, published in his international newsletter that: *“Master Rod has pioneered working with state and local governments to expand Tai Chi extensively into Australian senior and health care sectors. He’s created an ‘Applied Tai Chi’ model that can be emulated worldwide”.*

In fact in the latest WTCD May 2014 Newsletter. Bill Douglas says - This is now part of a global pattern where civic and government agencies are supporting Tai Chi activities including the UK, Hong Kong New Territories Govt., the Egyptian National Tourism Board, Italy's Sports Union, and Mangalore India's WTCQD was supported by their local Lion's Club. A REFLECTION OF A GLOBAL TIDE!

Rod Ferguson is the National Director of Training & Chief Instructor with the Australian Academy of Tai Chi & Qigong. A full-time professional instructor since 1978, he manages 45 locations throughout Queensland. As well as conducting Traditional Academy Tai Chi classes, he also trains Traditional & Applied Tai Chi instructors and ‘non-expert’ group leaders for Applied Tai Chi. Rod personally teaches more than 800 students on average per week.

Rod has won many awards – including a Gold Medal Fan performance in China - yet his teaching style is very natural and inspires students of all levels. Ongoing learning is an essential part of his practice, to enhance and expand his skills - not only with his mentor Grandmaster Gary Khor (founder AATC 1976) but also with many Tai Chi Qigong Masters and health experts around the world.