

Dallas Fort Worth Professional
Musicians Association
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Why We Belong

Messages From Our Members

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Be Professional, Be Union!

By Jennifer Garner, Esq.

Jennifer Garner is a violinist with the Richardson Symphony Orchestra and is an attorney with the Kellett Law Firm in Dallas.

In almost every profession, there are certain credentials that distinguish those who strive for the highest degree of professionalism. One of those credentials is usually membership in a professional association. Although joining an organization is not likely to make one smarter or more talented, active engagement in a community of one's peers does tend to separate those who care about the bigger picture from those who just care about what they can take from it.

Organized groups of professionals in various fields, including educators, physicians, brokers, accountants, lawyers, and airline pilots, have each developed and articulated general standards of competence and conduct in order to enhance the dignity of their respective professions and engender the confidence of the public. Though not always formally written, these standards recognize the fact that professionalism encompasses more than just being able to perform in the job; it includes a broader duty to the industry and the patrons who are served by it. Professional associations exist to promote professionalism, and membership in these organizations is legitimately viewed as a gesture of commitment to the standards adopted by one's professional peers.

The Musicians' Union is the preeminent professional association for musicians. For over one hundred years, Union musicians have set the standard of professionalism throughout the music industry. Our Union not only protects the interests of its members, it also serves the broader interests of the industry and the public by advancing the principles of professionalism established by generations of the finest musicians in the world.

Of course, the way we conduct ourselves in the performance of our jobs is the primary indication of our sense of professionalism. As musicians, we must not only be musically prepared, but must also maintain our instrument or voice in top condition. We have to continuously strive for technical perfection and be consistently on top of our game no matter what time of day or night. A musician's schedule can be grueling, yet, Union musicians understand that taking care of our health and our instrument are as relevant to our overall competence as a regular practice routine.

In addition, the way in which we treat others in the performance of our job, for better or for worse, reflects on the dignity of the entire industry. While professional musicians are highly competitive by nature, denigrating a colleague with personal attacks is demeaning to

Be Professional, Be *Union!* (cont.)

the profession and casts the field as a whole in a negative light. On the other hand, being respectful of our peers has the effect of making us appear more confident in our own ability while enhancing our standing as a community of true professionals in the eyes of the public.

Professionals have a further obligation to improve their profession. Union musicians do this in many ways, from teaching music and mentoring aspiring young professional to composing new music, selling and repairing the instruments that we play, assisting with the bargaining of better deals with our employers, and advocating for the legal and legislative interests of musicians. There are countless other opportunities for people of diverse talents to contribute to the vitality of our industry.

Membership in the most outstanding professional association in your field is an indication of respect for your peers, a commitment to further individual development, and a desire to contribute to the betterment of the profession for the sake of the public interest that you serve. The Musicians' Union fosters these values of professionalism by supporting performance-readiness, expecting fairness and civility when dealing with others, and encouraging musicians to give something back to the profession that provides their livelihood.

Join the Musicians' Union as early

in your career as possible. Membership will not do what years of practice can do, but it will definitely make an already talented performer a better professional musician.

Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Dr. Kee Fedak, D.C.

Seven to 10 million Americans suffer from the debilitating effects of fibromyalgia. It is called a "syndrome" because it involves a number of symptoms that occur together. The most common of these include: chronic muscular pain, tender spots, chronic fatigue, sleep disturbances, depression, and anxiety.

Although FMS is a chronic or lifelong condition, it does not worsen over time and is not crippling. Depending on its severity, it often interferes with the patient's ability to work, perform normal daily activities, and participate in social and recreational activities.

FMS was once thought to be "psychosomatic," or an illness that is "all in the patient's head." As a result, many were misdiagnosed and untreated in the past. Over the past ten years, however, FMS has become more widely recognized by healthcare professionals. As a result, sufferers can now benefit from a variety of treatments.

Since the cause of fibromyalgia is not yet fully understood, treatment strategies focus on easing symptoms through a combination of therapies. The goal is to help each patient regain as much of his or her ability to function at work, at home, and at leisure activities as possible.

Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue syndrome are two frequently misunderstood conditions. Both can be extremely debilitating, leading to years of frustration and emotional trauma.

CFS vs. Fibromyalgia

Both share many of the same symptoms, and are often used interchangeably in medical literature. Between 50-70% of people who have CFS fit the criteria for FM, and vice versa. What ideas are thought to trigger these conditions?

Fibromyalgia is commonly triggered by a trauma, either physical or emotional. In Chronic Fatigue Syndrome it is typically triggered by an illness. One of the main differences between the two is that moderate aerobic exercise tends to ease the symptoms of FM, whereas it aggravates CFS.

Fibromyalgia is quite common as it affects 3-7% of the U.S. population. Nine out of ten cases are women, typically of child-bearing years.

Fibromyalgia is characterized by chronic pain, general fatigue, stiffness, and widespread musculoskeletal pain. Not only does FM involve chronic pain and fatigue, but often involves impaired sleep. Fibromyalgia pain is profound and widespread. It knows no boundaries, and can migrate to all parts of the body. Many people describe the pain as deep muscular ache. The pain may also involve throbbing, twitching, burning, tingling, and numbness.

Chronic Fatigue syndrome is characterized by extreme fatigue. It's more than just feeling tired. It's an all-encompassing exhaustion. It interferes with even the simplest activities. It is not unusual to hear of patients too tired to walk, talk, or even blink.

There are many other symptoms to fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Patients often complain of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), headaches and migraines, restless leg syndrome, poor concentration, sensitive skin and rashes, dry eyes, ringing in the ears, dizziness, vision problems, impaired co-ordination, Reynaud's Syndrome, and anxiety and depression.

There are many overlooked causes to these conditions such as nerve interference, hormone imbalance, delayed-response food allergies and systemic toxicity. All should be explored to rule out these causes.

How Chiropractic Helps

A number of recent studies have shown that chiropractic care can provide relief from the pain of fibromyalgia. Be-

cause chiropractic addresses the whole patient, it offers a combination of specialized treatments, including:

- Spinal manipulation to relieve pressure on nerves,
- Trigger point therapy—strategically applied pressure to pain-sensitive points in the body,
- Massage to ease muscle tension,
- And physical therapy to strengthen muscles and increase endurance.

We often work with your current doctor to formulate a treatment plan that is right for you. As pain decreases and strength improves, so does the ability to function more actively in all areas of life. The resulting sense of well-being can do much to reduce depression, anxiety, and improve the patient's ability to participate more fully in life.

If you or a loved one suffers from chronic pain accompanied with fatigue or depression, we invite you to give chiropractic care a try. It just may be the relief you have been looking for.

Dr. Fedak is a member of Local 72-147 and received his Bachelor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance at the University of Western Ontario. He has studied at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, and at the University of Montreal under Marc Durand. He received his Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Parker College of Chiropractic in Dallas, TX.

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