



NCCAOM Diplomate Spotlight: Vanina Wolf



Once a quarter the NCCAOM draws the name of a recently recertified Diplomate who has completed the NCCAOM Diplomate Demographic Survey. The individual receives a voucher for a free recertification and an opportunity to be featured in a Spotlight Article on Facebook and on our website.

The winner of the January 1, 2016 Diplomate Demographic Survey drawing is NCCAOM certified

Diplomate of Acupuncture Vanina Wolf.

1. What attracted you to the field of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine?

I never said to myself: "I want to be an acupuncturist when I grow up!" because I didn't know what one was. I was raised as a child in Paris, France, where homeopathy and preventative medicine are more prevalent. My mother had all sorts of cures for our ills with herbs and common sense wisdom. Years later, while in the United States, after many unsuccessful attempts to treat a persistent digestive disorder that I was suffering from, did I learn of acupuncture. Not only did it provide profound and lasting relief, but I was also introduced to a holistic way of thinking that was rooted in common sense. At the time, I was already looking into medicine and healing as a career, but this exposure made me consider Oriental Medicine more thoughtfully. Thanks to my personal experience with acupuncture, I was encouraged to share my new knowledge with enthusiasm and dedication.

2. What was your first impression of the NCCAOM®?

My first impression of the NCCAOM was that it was a board that developed and administered a standard exam that would allow me to be a "board certified" Since I had graduated from a 5 element acupuncture school, I was doubtful that I would pass, knowing the exam was geared towards TCM practitioners. I took an intensive study class that my school offered just for the NCCAOM exam. What I didn't expect was that preparing for the exam ended up rounding out my education in a complimentary way and I passed on the first try!



3. What would you tell someone who is thinking about applying for certification with the NCCAOM®?

Having Nationally recognized certification in your field has multiple benefits. Some of which are flexibility of applying for licenses in many states; buying into an industry standard that denotes a certain criteria of competence. The less tangible benefit is the result of having a national standard of practice.

4. Why did you think that it was important to complete Diplomat Demographic survey?

In order for the NCCAOM to continue to be relevant in our field, it must meet the demands of its constituents. I appreciate that, through its online survey, the NCCAOM seeks out post-graduates' information to chart and analyze.

5. What do you think are the most beneficial aspects and challenging aspects of your field?

The benefits of what I do is mostly clear in the positive results with patients. This is where I derive much of my satisfaction as a practitioner. I enjoy the business aspect of marketing and making my business grow in creative ways. I also enjoy the perks of a flexible schedule when it comes to making time for my family. The most challenging aspects are the managerial aspects of having a clinic: Constant marketing, management of clients, education of clients/staff, and dealing with insurance.

6. What do you wish other people knew about the field of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine?

Most people seek acupuncture as a last resort solution to manage pain or treat a condition of some kind. Though most people will agree that there aren't shortcuts to health, they don't necessarily make the connections themselves in recognizing how their lifestyle may be contributing to their symptom. I wish that people would view acupuncture as a part of their regular preventative health, like going to the gym, and getting enough sleep. The mindset of preventative medicine is catching on, but isn't part of the norm yet.

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In addition, patients, by and large, have a perception that acupuncture is sticking needles in the places that hurt. In reality, what I and many other acupuncturists offer with Oriental Medicine is not only acupuncture and herbs, but lifestyle coaching, dietary recommendations, and an opportunity to be truly heard. Many patients often tell me, that the perspective that I offer stays with them for a long time and inspires them for change. This is a perspective that's drawn from centuries old wisdom of Chinese Medicine. I wish patients knew that what they get with Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine is wholistic and encompassing.

7. Where do you practice?

I practice in Baltimore, Maryland with a fabulous team of colleagues.

8. Is there a particular specialty or interest as part of your practice (OBGYN, Orthopedics)?

Since 1999, I have been interested in reproductive health. I've build many connections with fertility clinics in the area, educated myself in western and eastern medicine, and can sympathize greatly with women who are suffering from infertility. I've made it my area of special expertise.

9. As an acupuncturist, what trends do you see in your profession?

Because acupuncture is becoming more widely accepted, covered by health insurance, and slowly integrating in western hospitals and other clinical settings, I see that it has the potential for growth and specialization. I suspect that current graduates will have to get their doctorates in order to practice, similarly to physical therapists.

10. What might someone be surprised to know about you?

One might be surprised to know that I rarely prescribe herbs. Though I do prescribe them when it's absolutely necessary, I mostly rely on acupuncture and lifestyle coaching to do the treatment.



11. What do you do when you aren't working?

When I'm not working, I'm either shuttling kids to various activities, preparing meals, managing my household, walking my dog, serving on committees, grocery shopping, planning fun things to do as a family, catching up on the news, catching up with friends, exercising, pursuing continuing education credits, or watching Dancing with the Stars with my daughter... I enjoy traveling, reading, and eating delicious foods with family and friends.