

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project
Codifying our knowledge.
It's time.



Champion Sponsor Invests in FNM Project

Editor's note: As part of its contract agreement with FNM, NDNR will on occasion include interviews of the FNM Project's top sponsors in the news section. NDNR did not solicit, write or participate in the creation of this interview.

When Seroyal's vice president and general manager, Yves Yau, first listened to FNM

senior team members talk about their vision and goals, he was intrigued: "The thought of writing a textbook involving the naturopathic community and its wide range of modalities and philosophical points of view ... everyone coming together ... That is what drew me to the Foundations Project."

Two years later, Seroyal is now FNM's Champion Sponsor, unrestrictedly providing the majority of FNM's financial backing over the next five years. Watching FNM's resolve, its successful editors retreat, and its ongoing invitation and coordination of writers (246) and editors (7 senior, 22 associate), colleges (9), agencies (9), organizations (18+) and donors (38) in six countries

to collaboratively write and publish the textbook, *Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine*, galvanized its decision to get involved. FNM's goals reflecting its own, Seroyal is excitedly in for a journey it sees as instrumental in heralding a watershed moment in the profession's maturation and mainstream credibility.

"We want to make a difference in people's lives," says Seroyal CEO Carmen Fortino. "We think we can do this better in partnership with FNM, and through collaboration with the profession and the naturopathic colleges."

Based in Ontario, Canada, Seroyal was founded 24 years ago by Rosetta Raso, who saw a void in the industry's profes-

sional market when it came to consistently stable and viable natural supplements and medicines. "I developed a great sense of appreciation and respect for her vision, focus and unrelenting dedication to her cause," offered Fortino, as a 30-year friend. She built the company's reputation around product integrity, service and continuing education programs stressing individualized treatment and traditional naturopathic concepts. Fueling FNM and its projects is an obvious outgrowth of Seroyal's quest for ever-effective means for assisting physicians who work to attain optimal health with their patients.

As FNM continues its march toward the textbook's completion, and publication by Elsevier in 2010, Seroyal is making it possible to initiate two other important elements of the project that will in turn foster future scholarship. The second element will follow the book's publication: FNM will organize and host an international symposium on clinical integration of philosophy and theory, giving the profession and colleges the opportunity to respond to the textbook's content. There will be a call for abstracts, setting the stage for vigorous discussion and facilitated debate intended to continue to improve and refine the profession's foundational concepts. The venue will encourage diverse ideas within a unified context of collegiality.

The third element – an idea that arose from an editors retreat discussion about the importance of adding a chapter on the emunctory system – will involve researching and developing a new model and educational resource for teaching the historical and scientific basis for clinically based detoxification. An independent panel of naturopathic experts will be assembled through a profession-wide nomination process. They will rigorously research the academic, scientific and historical literature, developing an educational resource as a module. The module will undergo faculty peer review at Southern Cross University and at NCNM, after which the module will be available to the colleges.

"This project will allow naturopathic education to dynamically teach our philosophical roots in the context of today's medicine," says Dr. Rita Bettenburg, NCNM dean and FNM project team member.

When looked at as a multifaceted effort to continue to build credibility in the profession through dialog and scholarship, each element marks a turn in an ongoing spiral propelling naturopathic medicine's unique contribution to health care into mainstream view. Possibly, in time, a self-sustaining forum for advancing ongoing, solid scholarship will be established, bringing scientific rigor and modern inquiry to traditional naturopathic concepts and theories of healing. Scholarly inquiry, writing, independent academic research and support for developing educational resources will help modernize its language, strengthening the profession's ability to communicate in the mainstream healthcare system.

In all aspects of the project, Seroyal will be a silent partner, entrusting FNM to uphold its commitment to inclusive rigorous debate, peer review and independent research as it engages the community in conversation. As Fortino "applauds NCNM for taking a lead role in housing the project and for providing the critical administrative backbone," he inclusively adds, "people support what they help create." In

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