

INTERVIEW DORENE PETERSON President of ACHS

Q: Could you tell us about the history of Australian College Of Health Sciences?

A: The Australasian College of Herbal Studies was originally formed as the distance learning department of the South Pacific College of Natural Therapeutics ("SPCNT") in 1976. SPCNT is a residential naturopathic institution in Auckland New Zealand. Dorene Petersen, a graduate of that College, was recruited to head the new division. One program was initially offered: the Diploma in Herbal Studies. Within the next two years, this was expanded to five programs.

In 1978, the SPCNT began accreditation with a UK osteopathic accrediting body that did not accredit distance learning. The school offered Dorene Petersen the option to assist with closing the division and teaching out remaining students, or for her to take over the division as a separate entity, teaching out students from the previous division under the umbrella of the new school. Thus the Australasian College of Herbal Studies Limited was formed. The name Australasian reflected the geographical nature of the student body at the time, encompassing New Zealand, Australia, and the South Pacific islands. Programs were developed by Dorene Petersen, BA, DipNT (NDNZ), Dip Acu, with leading natural health experts in New Zealand, including faculty of the SPCNT.

In 1989, Dorene Petersen moved to the U.S. A manager was appointed to the New Zealand school. In 1991, the decision was made to sell the New Zealand school and to establish a separate entity in the U.S. to meet the increasing demand for quality, affordable education in Natural Health in the U.S. and Northern Hemisphere. Australasian College of Herbal Studies USA Inc was incorporated in 1993. The U.S. office began on a very small scale and expanded slowly until 1997, when the decision was made to pursue Oregon State licensing and status as a career training school.

In 1998, the Australasian College achieved State Licensing with the Oregon Department of Education ("ODE").

Other milestones:

- o 1997 First Natural Health School to be approved to offer Liability Insurance for Aromatherapy Graduates. First Natural Health School to offer Continuing Education Credits for Registered Nurses*
- o 1998 First State Licensed Distance Learning Aromatherapy Programs. Continuing education credits for Licensed Massage Therapists*
- o 1999 First State Licensed Aromatherapy Travel Education Programs*
- o 1999 First State Licensed Natural Health School to offer Continuing Education Credits for Pharmacists and Veterinarians*
- o In 2003, the College name was changed to Australasian College of Health Sciences to better reflect the wide curriculum offerings.*
- o In 2008 the College became degree granting and now offers Associates and Masters degrees.*





Q: ACHS is recognized as an industry leader in holistic health education worldwide. Could you tell us which are the objectives and the vision of ACHS?

Vision and Mission

Mission:

To further excellence in natural health by providing comprehensive professional education and training and high quality natural products.

Objective:

Through our mission, Australasian College of Health Sciences will foster competence, professionalism, and cooperation in holistic healthcare, and preserve and share knowledge in natural medicine.

Company Values and Beliefs:

- o We will achieve our mission and goal through a set of values that respect our students, customers, employees, suppliers and community, and to operate with integrity that is deserving of their trust.*
- o We believe that excellence is an essential means of sustaining our values in a competitive marketplace.*
- o We believe in providing employees with a safe and fulfilling work environment and an opportunity to grow and learn.*
- o We believe in an ongoing commitment to innovation and learning.*
- o We believe that we have a responsibility to cultivate the best relationship possible with our co-workers, customers, suppliers, agents, and community.*
- o We will value the different gifts, contributions and perspectives that each employees brings to our team*
- o We will conduct our business in a socially and environmentally responsible manner*

Our Values

- o Integrity - it is our foundation!*
- o Students & Customers - our friends and partners in success!*
- o Quality - our philosophy, not only a result!*
- o People - our most valued resource!*
- o Teamwork - more than a means to an end!*
- o Innovation - focusing our creativity and intelligence!*

tudents are adult students that would not otherwise be able to go back to school while juggling other life obligations such as work and family.

Q: Could you tell us about your study abroad programs and of course for ACHS summer session in Greece?

A: ACHS student abroad programs provide an opportunity for students to complement their online training with practical, hands-on workshop training as well as an opportunity for the general public to learn more about holistic health. While studying holistic health abroad, we also have the opportunity to enjoy the rich local culture and beauty of the Greek islands.

Q: You have chosen a Greek island for ACHS summer session. Would you like to tell us the reasons for this choice?

A: In the past, ACHS offered a study abroad program in Provence, France. In France, the botanicals were fairly limited and consisted mostly of lavender. Greece, and specifically the island of Syros, has provided a study location rich with medicinal botanicals. Greece is the birthplace of Hippocrates who said "Let thy kitchen be thy apothecary". The climate and terrain on Syros is ideal for a study abroad program that includes botanical walks and harvesting while also enjoying the all the island has to offer. There is also a focus on the Mediterranean diet and a wellness lifestyle.

Q: What type of diplomas are granted afterwards the follow up summer session and which is the cost involved for the Greeks who would like to participate?

A: The summer session program is designed for anyone wanting to study natural health, including distillation of essential oils, sustainable wildcrafting of medicinal botanicals and other holistic modalities such as iridology, flower essences and reflexology and successful students in a Certificate of Completion. The certificate is credited towards the Aromatherapy Diploma or Degree, which can be studied online. It is a ten-day program total wellness and cultural program. Students spend ten days living with two natural health and essential oil distillation experts, ACHS President Dorene Petersen and Master Distiller Robert Seidel. The cost is 2612 Euros, which includes all training, lectures, tours, workshop supplies, accommodation and freshly prepared meals each day for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Full details of the ACHS Sumer School are available online at

<http://www.achs.edu/course-desc.aspx?pid=75&id=61>

Q: Could you give us please some information about the ACHS Mediterranean cooking school?





A: What better place to immerse your self in the sun-drenched flavors of the Mediterranean than on the island of Syros in the Aegean Sea? Students will join culinary herbalist, food writer, and famous cookbook author Susan Belsinger as she leads them on a sensory experience through the cuisines of the countries surrounding this bountiful region with influences from Greece and Italy to France and Spain.

Students will learn first hand about the ingredients that the Mediterranean has to offer from mouthwatering fresh summer produce like tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, squash, cucumbers, melons, peaches and apricots, as well as fresh herbs and salad greens grown right in the garden at Villa Abela on Syros where the class is held. Ahh and we mustn't forget delectable items such as olives, olive oil, capers, wine, vinegars, sun-dried tomatoes and fruits and regional cheeses.

This will be a hands-on participation class where everyone cooks together getting first-hand experience in choosing food at the market, harvesting fresh produce from the garden, and basic kitchen prep. Students will learn how to make pasta, as well as pizza and focaccia dough and experience baking in an outdoor wood-fired oven as well as grilling over an open fire. Besides the creativity, the best part will be in partaking of these wonderful recipes that Susan is putting together just for this class and ACHS will prepare as a booklet for each student.

*In the evenings, Susan will introduce students to her latest book, *The Creative Herbal Home*, co-authored with Tina Marie Wilcox and she will instruct students about using herbs and essential oils in and around the house for everything from household cleansers, first aid, as insect repellents, in aromatherapy, and for making herbal spa products. Participants will do a bit of pampering from herbal facials, creating their own spritzers and sugar scrubs to relaxing with foot soaks.*

Don't miss this unique opportunity for a sun and fun-filled week featuring flavors of the Mediterranean, creating healthy, fresh and simple food with herbs and seasonal produce of the region; you will be inspired.

This is a 6 day program and the fee of 1494 Euros includes all instruction and materials, five nights accommodation, Mediterranean cuisine prepared with fresh local produce, transfers to and from meeting point, all tours and applicable entry fees during tour days, an autographed copy of Susan Belsinger's book, and all recipes.

Full details of the Mediterranean Cooking School are available online at <http://www.achs.edu/course-desc.aspx?pid=114&id=61>

