

For Immediate Release

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Grassroots Summit to Pursue Greater Unity of the Naturopathic Profession in Contributing to the Health of the Public *AANP Annual Convention to serve as kick-off for the “watershed moment”*

SEATTLE, WA., May 23, 2018 – In what is being called a “watershed moment” for the naturopathic profession, organizers announced today the launch of a grassroots initiative to strengthen the culture of collaboration in the profession. The goals of the facilitated process are to gather input from all individuals and organizations that care about the profession’s future to ultimately unify around an action agenda that will best serve the health of patients, the public, and the planet. The initiative will kick-off at the “NMC Summit on the Future of Naturopathic Medicine” on July 11, 2018, the day before the opening of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians’ (AANP) 2018 Annual Convention in San Diego.

Throughout the profession, conversations have been emerging regarding its future within student groups, educators, professional and specialty organizations, and among practicing naturopathic doctors (NDs). These conversations motivated Billings, MT doctor Maggi Beeson, N.D. to convince key partners to support a profession-wide summit, which is being organized through the Naturopathic Medicine Collaborative (NMC), a unifying vehicle housed in the Institute for Natural Medicine (INM).

“Our profession has grown and moved in a number of ways since many were involved in defining its course 30 years ago,” stated Beeson. “Countless conversations of deeply engaged naturopathic doctors throughout the country have made it clear that it’s time for soul-searching and clarity on how we can work in greater strength and unity as agents for health. This work can only be done authentically when the many valued voices within our profession itself are heard, from students to veteran NDs. What’s most promising about this summit is the opportunity to collectively celebrate our diversity, honor our humanity, and reaffirm our shared commitment to a cause that’s greater than any one of us.”

Lead organizers are a “vision team” that includes Beeson, the AANP’s 2016 Naturopathic Physician of the Year, INM president and CEO Michelle Simon, PhD, ND, Seattle-based naturopathic physician Jeana Kimball, ND, MPH, and AANP Executive Director and 2014 Champion of Naturopathic Medicine, Laura Farr. Ten Directions, an integral coaching and consulting company based in Canada, will manage the July meeting and the year-long engagement process. A twelve-member planning team is guiding the process.

The vision team engaged the work amidst an awareness of growing diversity among naturopathic doctors’ practice models, pressures, and needs. These are reflected in diverse opinions about professional identity and scope, about how the profession should relate to the economics of clinical practice, how to participate in various payment regimes, and how to best position itself for maximum impact on the health of the public. These are among the issues in this “strategic conversation” the NMC Summit and the Ten Directions-facilitated process are designed to address.

Simon also underscores the importance of the NMC Summit in strengthening the profession’s potential to lead: “Advocacy is at the heart of everything we do as licensed naturopathic doctors. It begins with

motivating healthy lifestyles among our patients who we're privileged to serve and includes fostering models of clinical care and policy change built on the principles of health promotion and disease prevention," she said. "This calling comes with an attendant agreement to be advocates for our profession as well as for the health of the public. The NMC Summit invites voices from across the naturopathic community as we together shape the future of our work for years to come. This really is a watershed moment that we're truly excited about."

Registration is now open for the Summit on the Future of Naturopathic Medicine, as well as for the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians 2018 Annual Convention and Exhibition, at www.aanpconvention.com.

About the Institute for Natural Medicine:

Founded in 1992 as a philanthropic foundation serving the profession of natural medicine, the Institute for Natural Medicine works for the transformation of the healthcare system by education about and promotion of the principles and practices of natural medicine.

About the AANP:

The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP) is the professional association that represents licensed naturopathic physicians. The AANP strives to make naturopathic medicine available to every American, and to increase recognition of naturopathic physicians as the identified authorities on natural medicine. Learn more at www.naturopathic.org.

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