

BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROFILE

Alumnus, Dr. Kevin Prime, Promotes Overall Wellness at Chiropractic Clinic in Lyman, S.C.

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GWU Scholarship Helped Trinidad and Tobago Native Reach His Goals in Medical Field

As a member of the Track and Field team at Gardner-Webb University, Kevin Prime, a native of Trinidad and Tobago, set school records (<https://gwusports.com/sports/2017/12/9/gardner-webb-track-and-field-record-book.aspx>) in 2003 for the 60 m dash and in 2005 for the 55 m. Today, Dr. Kevin Prime is again breaking ground in the community of Lyman, S.C., as the owner of Elite Wellness Center (<https://www.elitewellnesscenter.org/>), a chiropractic practice that also employs a medical doctor and nurse practitioner.

“There aren’t many Black professionals in this arena,” Prime observed. “Most of them work for others as employees and don’t really get to express their full potential. I know my dreams are too big to be tamed by working for someone else. I exponentially grow every year and provide employment for so many community folks, which increases my awareness in the community.”



Prime is part of a group of pioneers who are the focus of this year's Black History Month theme: Black Health and Wellness. (<https://asalh.org/black-history-themes/>). This theme acknowledges the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also the midwives, naturopaths, and herbalists throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well.

Prime, who double majored in biology and chemistry at Gardner-Webb, became interested in chiropractic medicine when he was denied acceptance to graduate school. "I actually wanted to become a neurosurgeon," he said. "They told me I needed to have clinical experience prior to applying so I decided to shadow in the ER, along with (shadowing) at a chiropractic office."

He noticed that when patients left the chiropractic office, there was a change in their mental and physical attitudes. He liked this whole-person approach to care, so he obtained his Doctor of Chiropractic at Sherman College of Chiropractic in Spartanburg, S.C., and established his practice to focus on wellness plans to alleviate patients' symptoms and improve their overall health and well-being.

Prime said without the opportunity to attend Gardner-Webb on a scholarship, he would not have had the ability to become a chiropractor. "I came from a small Caribbean Island of Trinidad and Tobago with only \$1,500 in my name, and in my small way, became successful at the American dream," he affirmed. "I chose GWU for the small class size. Coming from an island where music, parties and fetes are big in my culture, I needed to focus without distractions. The largest class I had was 18 students, so the professors were able to give me the attention I needed to be successful. I also had some intelligent international students as my classmates who were able to push me. Dr. Tom Jones, Dr. (Venita) Totten, and Dr. (Ben) Brooks were very instrumental in pushing me during class."

Prime is honored to represent the Black community through his profession in the health and wellness sector. "Chiropractic is the expression of true health since the brain and spinal cord control all body functions," he explained. "My office aims at building an all-in-one health center. This is promoted in my daily encounter with the patient. Our office tries to be an environment that is friendly, family-oriented, and down-to-earth. You can't come into our office stressed and leave as you came in. With our choices of music, singing with the doctors, dancing, and high fives, we strive to bring joy to your day."

He has many role models, local and national, and celebrates their successes. He has received guidance and leadership from Cleveland County, N.C., pastors, Dr. Billy Houze and Dr. Michael Isaac. Then, there are national leaders, like former President Barack Obama, and inventors and entrepreneurs: Jesse Eugene Russell, who created the digital cell phone; Patricia Bath, who invented laser eye surgery in 1981; Emmit McHenry, a telecommunications pioneer; Silas Adekunle, who is the highest-earning robotic engineer in the world, and many others. "These are just a few people that no one has really recognized, so I'm glad that people are making the effort to recognize some of the black professionals who might become influential in the upcoming years," Prime stated.

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