

# A doctor with heart

*On Valentine's Day, North Bergen chiropractor donates full day of free service, courtesy of nationwide program*

**By Jim Hague**  
Reporter staff writer

**D**r. Alex Hernandez is a North Bergen native who just recently opened his chiropractic business on Kennedy Boulevard in his hometown.

"I went away to Boston to get my doctorate, but when it came time to start my own practice, I came home," said the 30-year-old Hernandez, who opened the doors to his practice last May. "I wanted to be in North Bergen. It's where I grew up and where I belonged."

Hernandez, a 1993 graduate of North Bergen High School and a 1998 graduate of St. Peter's College, became interested in chiropractic medicine after being a patient himself. As a child, Hernandez suffered from many migraines sought chiropractic care. Through chiropractic medicine, his migraines decreased in frequency and intensity and changed his life.

Once Hernandez got established in his new practice, he wanted to make his presence felt in the community. So he signed up to join a nationwide program called "Doctors With A Heart," where physicians all across the country donate their services free of charge for Valentine's Day.

The program began in 1986, when a Cedar Rapids, Iowa-based dentist named Dr. Duane Schmidt decided to donate his services free for one day of the year.

"He wanted to give back to his local community and thought it was the best way, picking Valentine's Day as the day to have a heart," Hernandez said. "It gained a lot of recognition then. President Ronald Reagan hailed the program. It was featured on all the television sta-

tions and newspapers. Other physicians followed suit."

Now, 20 years after Dr. Schmidt started it, there are 15,000 physicians nationwide who donate their services every Valentine's Day.

This year, as he nears his first anniversary of his business, Hernandez will follow suit and join the others.

## Pay a visit

Any patient in need of chiropractic care on Tuesday and pays a visit to Hernandez' office, located at 8325 Kennedy Blvd. will be treated

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***– Dr. Alex Hernandez***

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at no charge.

"All existing patients will not be charged for their visit, and new patients will receive consultation for their neck and back pain," Hernandez said. "Any necessary x-rays are also included in the deal. I guess you can say that I'm giving away the house, so to speak."

Hernandez will also have a massage therapist on hand to help any patients who are in need of special care.



**GIVING HIS SERVICES AWAY –**  
For one day, North Bergen chiropractor Dr. Alex Hernandez will treat patients with neck and back pain for no cost, as part of the nationwide "Doctor With A Heart" program.

"I like to be able to give back to my community," Hernandez said. "As doctors, one way of giving back to the community is donating our services for free. It's a way of me introducing my services to the neighborhood, helping those who can't normally afford chiropractic care."

Any patients interested in taking Hernandez up on his offer should call the offices and make an appointment.

"We have already made appointments for the day," Hernandez said. "If you walk in, we will take care of you as soon as we can. This is a great event. No one is getting paid. We're all doing it volunteer. But it's a nice feeling to give away our services and help people who wouldn't normally get to you."

Hernandez said that he hopes to treat 100 patients free of charge on Tuesday.

"It's the first time I'm doing it, so I don't know what to expect," Hernandez said. "Maybe I'll have a better idea how many next year. I'm sure I'll be tired, but that's okay, because I know I'm helping." □

*If anyone is interested in being seen by chiropractor Dr. Alex Hernandez on Tuesday, they are asked to call (201) 861-2025 for more information. Dr. Hernandez' office is located at 8325 Kennedy Boulevard in North Bergen. For more information, log on to [www.dralexhernandez.com](http://www.dralexhernandez.com).*