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FEATURE

President, Board Advocate Educational Changes

Dear NATA Members:

In May, the NATA board of directors unanimously approved three educational concepts: structured clinical, approved clinical instructor and clinical proficiencies. The Education Council is refining and finalizing these three concepts. The documents are posted on the NATA website, and constructive dialogue has occurred.

The board fully supports the proposed educational reforms, as we believe changes in our standards and procedures for educating future athletic trainers are imperative to ensure our professional colleagues are recognized as qualified and equal health care providers.

To maximize the qualifications of the members and the future position of the profession in the health care arena, former President Denny Miller and the board created the Education Task Force in 1994. After two years of comprehensive study, research, discussion and presentations at all district meetings and at the NATA annual meeting, 18 educational reform recommendations were presented to and approved by the board in December 1996. Subsequently, Dr. Chad Starkey of Northeastern University was selected to chair the newly created Education Council, which consists of committees that address entry level, post-certification, clinical and continuing education, as well as competencies.

Your president and the board are fully cognizant of, and have advocated, the belief that educational reform is necessary to advance the athletic training profession and the individual members' success in the next millennium. The membership has been involved in and informed about this educational reform process. The changes were presented to the membership on the website and in the *NATA News*. Presentations were delivered at all district meetings, which allowed for membership questions and input. Certified athletic trainers from all practice settings serve on the various committees and have participated in the formulation of the educational changes now beginning to occur.

We realize these recommendations will result in changes for the accredited programs and the personnel involved. These changes are necessary and are being implemented to advance the profession of athletic training and all certified athletic trainers.

It is our sincere hope that the membership continues to take an active role in shaping the future of our profession. Becoming involved in – and supporting – the educational changes is an excellent way to do so, because the future professional and personal growth for certified athletic trainers will be educationally based.

Sincerely,

Kent Falb, ATC, PT
President