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LETTER FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Reform Not Always Easy, But Changes Help Profession

Dear Colleagues,

How many times have we heard the adage "Change is not always easy?" Yet it remains true, as evidenced by the changes occurring in athletic training education. Colleges and universities are grappling with the issues related to the profession's education reform, and many aspects of the modifications continue to be debated. Change is not *always easy.*

But the alterations taking place today will improve the profession tomorrow. Educational reform is a key step in making sure athletic training keeps pace with the transformation of health care in America.

At the same time, the reform goes to the heart of efforts to enhance the image of certified athletic trainers. In fact, it's a building block: appropriate education will lead to greater professional credibility, which boosts public awareness and recognition, which aids in state regulation efforts, which may result in more widespread reimbursement, which will improve employment atmospheres and opportunities. In the end, all of these outcomes combine to elevate the profession to a higher plane.

courtesy photo

Cynthia "Sam" Booth, MS, ATC

This ultimate goal is a worthy one, and considerable research and thought went into it. The Education Task Force spent more than two years determining the most effective measures to reach success. The group's recommendations –approved in December 1996 – carefully weighed the consequences of overhauling athletic training curricula. The effort, it was decided then, will be worth it. And it is – but it requires patience, vision, perseverance and unified support from all corners of the profession.

The Education Council members knew when they were called upon to implement the task force directives that challenges would occur. The NATA Board of Directors urges each of you to rise to meet those challenges in a positive, productive manner by being visionaries, seeking information from those directing the reform and sharing advice and experience with each other. Some of you have involved yourselves already, and the Education Council and NATA board applaud you.

Education reform will have a profound effect on our profession, and we must embrace what challenges emerge and look to the future optimistically. We must band together for the greater good. Don't miss out on this crucial period of our profession's development.

Sincerely,

Cynthia "Sam" Booth

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