

News in Brief

Editorial Staff

NCCAOM Puts out Call for Participation in Job-Task Analysis

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) is in the process of conducting a job-task analysis for the month of April 2008, with assistance from Schroeder Measurement Technologies. The primary purpose of the job task analysis is to provide a framework for the future of NCCAOM's certification examinations.

In addition to assuring that the content for the certification examinations reflects current practice, the NCCAOM will be gathering additional practice data to assist with efforts to become recognized by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics as an independent occupation. Therefore, it's urging diplomate participation in this survey. The survey is open during the month of April to all NCCAOM-certified practitioners and may be accessed via the NCCAOM Web site at www.nccaom.org.

On its Web site, the NCCAOM emphasized the importance of completing the survey: "As a certified practitioner, you are already aware of the importance of creating an examination that accurately reflects current practice in the fields of acupuncture and oriental medicine. Your participation is vital in order to obtain the most accurate picture of the profession possible so we can properly develop the content of the certification examinations."

Pacific College of Oriental Medicine Receives Maximum Accreditation

The San Diego Pacific College of Oriental Medicine (PCOM) recently was accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM). The ACAOM awarded PCOM with the maximum periods of five and seven years for its doctorate and master's programs, respectfully. This length of time for accreditation is very unusual; three and five years used to be the maximum possible periods of accreditation that schools could earn.

There are 14 areas of examination, known as the Essential Requirements, which PCOM fulfilled in the process of this accreditation. Some of these include the excellent performance of admissions, programs of study, faculty, library and surrounding facilities, as well as legal governance records. PCOM is one of less than five schools in the United States to be awarded the maximum accreditation by ACAOM. Accreditation enables institutions like PCOM to be eligible for federal financial aid.

The ACAOM is the only accrediting agency that is currently recognized by the Department of Education and that is qualified to accredit schools of Oriental medicine.

AAAOM Announces New Board Appointments

The American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) recently announced two

new appointments to its board of directors. In accordance with the AAAOM bylaws, Michael McGuffin, president of the American Herbal Products Association was elected as the public voting member to the Board, and Michael Taromina, Esq., was elected as alternate public non-voting member.

McGuffin has been active in the herbal industry since 1975. He has owned and managed both retail and manufacturing businesses in the herbal field. He is the managing editor of the *Botanical Safety Handbook* (1997) and *Herbs of Commerce, 2nd Edition* (2000). He also serves on the boards of the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia, United Plant Savers, and the Dietary Supplement Education Alliance, and as chair of the industry committee of the Plant Conservation Alliance/Medicinal Plants Working Group.

Taromina has an extensive background representing and educating acupuncture and Oriental medicine practitioners, institutions, organizations and students. As chair of the NCCAOM's Professional Ethics & Disciplinary Committee, he co-drafted the Code of Ethics and Grounds for Discipline and oversees the adjudication of misconduct cases from all over the country. As legal counsel to New York State Acupuncture Coalition (NYSAC), he has served an integral role in the drafting and lobbying effort to amend the New York State Acupuncture statute, which was covered in the March issue of *Acupuncture Today*. Taromina also has held ethics classes through NYSAC. He is legal advisor to AAAOM's Herbal Medicine Committee, NCCAOM's Regulatory Affairs Task Force, the TCM World Foundation and the Chinese Medical Science Foundation.

"This is the first time the newly reunited AAAOM has elected public members to its board, and we're excited about the depth of expertise and acumen that they will contribute to the strategic direction of the association," AAAOM President Martin Herbkersman told the press.

Students Lobby for Equal Access to Acupuncture

On March 4, more than 60 students, faculty and staff from the Minnesota College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (MCAOM) at Northwestern Health Sciences University lobbied for equal access at the state capitol in St. Paul, Minn.

"We want to make an amendment to the current bill [S.F. No. 3388] that adds a clause ensuring those seeking acupuncture treatment are also reimbursed for health care costs the way they are for visits to medical doctors and chiropractors," according to Hilary Patzer, a MCAOM student and co-organizer of the event. She told the press, "We just want the public to have equal access to us."

A copy of the bill with the amendment can be accessed at www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/bin/showPDF.php.

Another student, Robert Lowe stated, "I think this is important because it's for the future of medicine. The acupuncturists have just started forming groups to lobby and make the public more aware of these issues. It's critical to education that legislators support us. Short term, I'm hoping for the passage of this bill. Long term, I would love for acupuncture to be considered a key form of health care in this country. We can do really great things for people."

Mark McKenzie, MOM, LAc, and dean of MCAOM, said he was pleased with the turnout. "Today has gone great," McKenzie said. "The student turnout and support of this effort will be extremely important for the passage of the equal access amendment. In addition, it gives students legislative experience so once they become practitioners it will become easier for them to interact with senators and truly inspire change."

New York Chiropractic College's School of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Receives Initial Accreditation

New York Chiropractic College (NYCC) achieved initial accreditation for its School of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine from the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM). The accreditation is for a five-year period, effective Feb. 9, 2008.

An ACAOM site team visited the college last fall. It then released findings that included areas of strength and recommendations based on the team's educational evaluation of both the institution and the execution of its educational objectives.

Pleased with the news, NYCC President Frank J. Nicchi, DC, MS, said, "I'm extremely proud of the college's acupuncture programs. They absolutely rank among the nation's best."

CCAOM Convenes Meeting for AOM Leaders

The leaders of eight national AOM organizations met on Saturday, March 8, in Columbia, Md. This was the fourth consecutive year in which the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CCAOM) convened this meeting to provide an opportunity for AOM leaders to come together for dialogue in an informal and collegial setting. Representatives from each organization discussed the first-professional entry-level doctorate, federal and state legislative issues, data development, the practice of acupuncture by other health care providers, financial challenges currently being experienced by students and practitioners, professional development/recognition/credentialing, research, annual ACAOM accreditation and quality assurance.

Previously, these national meetings focused on sharing general information and updates concerning organizational activities and priority projects. The meeting this year was the first in which AOM leaders began a focused discussion on topics that affect the entire AOM field where there may be a variety of views on such subjects.

The Council was represented by:

- Lixin Huang, MS (President);
- Mark McKenzie, MOM, LAc, Dipl.Ac/CH (Vice-President);
- Barbara Ellrich, MA (Treasurer);
- Steve Given DAOM, LAc (Secretary);
- Shen Ping Liang, LAc, PhD (Member-at-Large);
- Nancy Browne, LMT (Member-at-Large);
- Valerie Hobbs, LAc, Dipl.Ac/CH (Member-at-Large);
- Elizabeth Goldblatt, PhD, MPA/HA (Immediate Past-President); and
- David Sale, JD, LLM (Executive Director).

Representatives from the other attending organizations were as follows:

- Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine: Howard Simmons, PhD (Chair) and Dort Bigg, JD (Executive Director)
- American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine: Corinne Axelrod, MPH, LAc, Dipl.Ac. (Vice-President) and Rebekah Christensen (Executive Director)

- American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia: Maria Spuller, Dipl.ABT (President) and Beverly Sonen, Dipl.ABT (Vice-President)
- Federation of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Regulatory Agencies: David Paton, MAC, LAc (President) and Penny Heisler, BS (Treasurer and Public Relations Chair)
- National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine: Tess Hahn, LAc, OMD, Dipl.Ac. (Chair) and Kory Ward-Cook, PhD, CAE (CEO)
- National Federation of Chinese Traditional Chinese Medicine Organizations: Johanna Chu Yen, MD (Board Member)
- Society for Acupuncture Research: Richard Harris, PhD (Co-President)

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