

Sec. of Education Asks SCASA to "Show Cause"

Mark W. Goodin

"There should really only be one accrediting agency. It should be big enough for all the schools. There should be an association large enough for all fields of thought within it. When we unite and become uniform on an idea and the idea of freedom and that advancement will come out of enlightenment rather than forces and farces, then I think we'll really make some good progress."

The above quote is from Thomas A. Gelardi, D.C., president of Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic, made during a panel discussion ("Alternative Philosophical Perspectives in Chiropractic") at the International Conference on Spinal Manipulation April 12-13, 1991 where Dr. Gelardi presented a paper.

There is now an opportunity for Dr. Gelardi's vision of a united chiropractic profession to be partially fulfilled.

Last November the National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility recommended that SCASA not be reapproved by the Department of Education as a post secondary accrediting agency. (Please see "USDE Advisory Committee Votes 10-1 Against SCASA's Re-recognition" in the December 5, 1990 issue of Dynamic Chiropractic).

The National Advisory Committee reported that SCASA had not complied with the Secretary of Education's own administrative criteria for post secondary accrediting agencies. Other education groups, including the Committee on Post Secondary Accreditation (COPA) and the American Council on Education (ACE) also expressed concern over SCASA's operation and standards.

Acting on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, U.S. Education Secretary Lamar Alexander has informed the Straight Chiropractic Academic Standards Association (SCASA) that it must "show cause" why its recognition by the secretary as a "reliable authority" for the accreditation of chiropractic colleges should not be withdrawn.

SCASA has reportedly requested that the Department of Education give it "sufficient time" (up to four months) to prepare for the show cause proceeding and to initiate new communication with the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE) to see if any progress can be made in resolving differences between itself and CCE on accreditation issues.

CCE has repeatedly indicated in correspondence with SCASA and the Department of Education its willingness to engage in productive discussions in this area. CCE president John Miller wrote an article for Dynamic Chiropractic (please see "Let's Make it Better" February 1, 1991 issue) in which he encouraged unity within chiropractic's educational system.

Following the show cause proceeding, Secretary Alexander will render a final decision on SCASA's petition for reapproval as an accrediting agency recognized by the Department of Education. The department's Office of Post Secondary Education will notify SCASA within the next two weeks about the particulars of the show cause proceeding and how much time the association will be given to prepare for that event, according to informed sources.

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Editor's Note:

This is a fantastic opportunity for the chiropractic profession to achieve unity in yet another critical area. It would seem that with leaders from both CCE and SCASA anxious to accomplish this type of unity, that there should be nothing to stand in its way. As Dr. Gelardi suggested, the chiropractic profession can only benefit from unity in all areas.

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