

NCBTMB Leadership Reappoints Neal Delaporta & Monica Reno to Board of Directors – Despite Their Previous Failure to Recertify

Recent actions by the NCBTMB Board of Directors demonstrate a failure to support the credential and the value of recertification. In an NCBTMB press release dated May 9, 2007, the Board determined to “offer reinstatement to the two individuals who were removed from the Board in November 2006” subject to their renewing their certification. These individuals, Neal Delaporta and Monica Reno, failed to maintain their certification in 2006.

In another recent NCBTMB press release dated July 2, 2007 regarding Ms. Reno’s reinstatement, one key issue was omitted: according to NCBTMB Bylaws, a practitioner member of the Board of Directors must be nationally certified and in good standing with NCBTMB. (See excerpts from Bylaws and Policies below.)

At the end of October 2006, when the NCBTMB National Office randomly searched its database to address another issue, it was discovered that Mr. Delaporta’s certification had expired in December 2005 and Ms. Reno’s had expired in June 2006. Based upon the discussions between the Executive Committee and the organization’s legal counsel, two options were available: these individuals had to voluntarily resign from the Board or be declared ineligible to serve on the Board based on the Bylaws. Ms. Reno voluntarily resigned, and Mr. Delaporta was declared ineligible to serve.

Mr. Delaporta and Ms. Reno were aware that their certifications had expired, and that maintaining this credential was required of Directors. Yet both continued to serve on the Board by attending Board meetings, strategic planning sessions, participating in conference calls, as well as receiving stipends. Ironically, the top organizational priorities for 2006-2007 (as determined in strategic planning meetings) were certification and recertification.

In April 2007, Board Chair Donna Feeley approached Mr. Delaporta and Ms. Reno about returning to the Board on the condition that they properly renew their national certification. In May 2007, 16 months after allowing his credential to lapse, Mr. Delaporta recertified. During these 16 months, Mr. Delaporta continued to use his NCBTMB credential even though it was expired. Ms. Reno recertified in June 2007, nearly 12 months after allowing her credential to lapse. Both are now back on the Board serving as Directors. No disciplinary action was taken by the Board against Mr. Delaporta or Ms. Reno for continuing to hold themselves out as Certificants when they did not possess a current credential. This is a violation of a number of provisions of the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Mr. Delaporta was recently placed in the office of Chair-Elect position on the Board.

Individuals who are elected to serve as Directors come from every aspect of the profession with outstanding backgrounds and energies to contribute to the organization. However, that is not the sole qualification required of a Director. What is absolutely essential is that Directors must be in good standing with NCBTMB, thus remaining nationally certified while serving their entire term on the Board and not merely holding national certification for several months of their Board tenure.

The Board is not a private club that “represents an essence of unity” as stated by Chair Feeley. It is the elected leadership body for a national organization that is charged with public protection by administering a credible program of quality assurance for massage therapists and bodyworkers. The integrity of this program relies on the ongoing governance of the Board being conducted in strict compliance with NCBTMB’s established Bylaws and Policies. The failure of the Board to follow these standards places the entire certification program at risk and creates doubt about the value of certification and the credential.

Kat Burnett, NCTMB

(Director, 2004-2007, Secretary/Treasurer 2007, resigned 2007)

Bob Lehnberg, NCTMB

(Director, 2003-2007, Chair-Elect 2007, resigned 2007)

Elizabeth McIntyre, NCTMB

(Director, 2002-2006, Immediate Past Chair 2007)

Cosper Scafidi, NCTMB

(Director, 2006-2007, resigned 2007)

Bill Stoehs

(Director & Public Member, 2000-2006, Secretary/Treasurer 2001-2002; 2004-2006)

All of the above individuals have signed onto this document

References:

According to NCBTMB's Bylaws - Article VI. Board of Directors, Section 6.2 Qualifications,

"Members of the Board of Directors, except for the public member(s) must:

- 1) Be credentialed by NCBTMB,
- 2) Have a minimum of three years experience in the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork, and
- 3) Be in good standing with the NCBTMB."

According to NCBTMB's Policies (Section II. F. 2),

"It is the responsibility of each certificant to notify the NCBTMB office of address and name changes in writing or online, to be aware of the expiration date of his/her certification, and to know when to apply for recertification."

According to NCBTMB's Policies (Section VII. D.),

"Individuals who serve as volunteers and who are eligible for national certification through NCBTMB must attain and maintain an NCBTMB national credential."