



From the President

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Board of Directors Update

President Ann G. Macfarlane sent the following message by e-mail last month to all members of the ATA for whom we have e-mail addresses on record. It is reprinted here for the information of all members and other interested parties.

Dear colleagues:

This message comes to inform you that at our last meeting, the Board of Directors and the Accreditation Committee reviewed and discussed several key recommendations that had been made by Mr. Michael Hamm in his report of last year. I am very happy to announce that the Board approved some of the recommendations by means of the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously on March 25, 2001:

WHEREAS the accreditation credential offered by the American Translators Association is an important benefit to our members, to the profession of translation, and to our society, and

WHEREAS a careful review by an expert in the certification process has affirmed many strengths of our credential, while also suggesting several areas of potential improvement, and

WHEREAS the Board of Directors and the Accreditation Committee, after seeking member input, studying these suggestions, and discussing their merits, wish to approve some of them, to be implemented in the future, and

WHEREAS the Board of Directors and the Accreditation Committee wish to continue to study how and when to implement these suggestions, as well as whether to implement certain other suggestions made by the aforesaid expert,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, at a time yet to be determined, the following changes will take place:

- 1. The name of the credential will be changed from "accreditation" to "certification";*
- 2. Pre-qualifying requirements for the examination portion of the credential will be established;*
- 3. Continuing education and/or professional development requirements to retain the credential will be established;*
- 4. Eligibility to apply for the credential will be extended to persons who are not members of the association; and*

- 5. The fee structure will be adjusted in conjunction with these changes.*

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that these changes will be implemented in conjunction with our continuing efforts to improve and strengthen all aspects of the examination process.

You will see from the text of the resolution that this was a decision to make certain changes, leaving for the future the question of how and when to make those changes. In some respects, the "how" and "when" questions will be at least as difficult as the "whether." I am very pleased, however, that by a process of consultation and discussion, the Board came to unanimous agreement that the time is right to commit to this new direction for our translation credential.

At the meeting of the Accreditation Committee and the language chairs in Alexandria on May 5-6, we discussed this decision. The Committee and the language chairs were very supportive of the Board's resolution, and are energetically working to lay the groundwork for these changes. The Committee is also reviewing the examination process itself, and will report to you, the membership, as decisions are made. In particular, the "Accreditation Forum" column in the *Chronicle* is an excellent source for the latest information.

Many of you who responded to my earlier messages have also been very supportive of Mr. Hamm's proposals. There have been some particular concerns expressed, however, about point #4, which will open the examination to nonmembers. Our custom of offering the examination as a "member benefit" goes back a long time. The Board and the Accreditation Committee believe, however, that the attachment of long custom is outweighed by the benefits to the profession in its entirety that this step will bring. By opening the examination to anyone who wishes to take it, we truly will serve the wider translation profession. This is consistent with the purposes listed in our bylaws. It is also consistent with our status as a nonprofit organization under U.S. law that is presumed to serve

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