

# PROFESSIONAL ISSUES



## A Tribute to Randy Neblett

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*Randy Neblett guided the Biofeedback Certification International Alliance (BCIA) through almost 3 years of intense change following a visionary strategic plan. This article pays tribute to Randy's leadership and highlights BCIA's major achievements in didactic education, creation of new certifications, development of new options to fulfill the human anatomy/physiology requirement, revision of our certification exams, online testing, recertification, ethics, marketing our organization and certifications, advocacy, and international outreach.*

Randy Neblett, MA, LPC, BCB, completed an unprecedented 2½-year term as Biofeedback Certification International Alliance (BCIA) Chair. The inscription on his plaque describes his passion for the BCIA mission and his steady leadership: "In Appreciation of Distinguished Leadership as Chairman of the Biofeedback Certification International Alliance Board, 2008–2010. We honor Randy for his inspiring vision, wise counsel, tireless advocacy, and generous friendship."

Under Randy's leadership, BCIA revised and implemented a visionary strategic plan that was developed with Past-Chair Celeste De Bease during a 2-day retreat in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, in 2008. BCIA reinvented itself during the past 3 years of breathtaking change to fulfill our mission in a time of challenge: "BCIA certifies individuals who meet education and training standards in biofeedback and progressively recertifies those who advance their knowledge through continuing education."

### BCIA's Main Achievements

#### *Didactic Education*

BCIA extensively revised the Blueprints of Knowledge and reading lists for the biofeedback and neurofeedback

certification programs. The new blueprints reflect advances in terminology, clinical practice, and instrumentation. The new reading lists contain a compact selection of current textbooks and articles recommended by our experienced educators. These references are accessible, affordable, and closely tied to our certification exams.

#### *New Certifications*

BCIA added academic and technician certifications in biofeedback and neurofeedback. Academic certification is designed for educators, researchers, and staff supervisors. Technician certification is intended for unlicensed individuals who are working under a BCIA-certified licensed supervisor and who do not meet the educational and degree requirements of traditional certification.

#### *Human Anatomy/Physiology*

BCIA has expanded applicants' options for satisfying the human anatomy/physiology requirement. The "Study on Your Own" option uses Marieb and Hoehn's *Human Anatomy and Physiology* (seventh edition or later). After reading selected chapters, applicants may take an online or written exam to demonstrate their mastery. The vendor courses listed on the BCIA Web site, [www.bcia.org](http://www.bcia.org), provide another popular choice.

#### *Certification Exams*

Experts evaluated all of our biofeedback and neurofeedback exam items to ensure that the questions adequately cover the blueprints, are sourced to our reading lists, and adhere to the highest psychometric standards. We validated new exam questions contributed by the most experienced educators in our field and replaced outdated items. Although the revised exams have maintained the rigorous

BCIA standards, between 85% and 90% of candidates now pass on their first attempt!

### *Online Testing*

BCIA now offers online testing for our anatomy/physiology and certification exams. Candidates can now take our exams at a proctored site in their area whenever they want at a significantly reduced cost. This has helped us promote standards internationally and has offered a more convenient and cost-effective option to all who seek certification. We continue to provide paper exams for applicants who prefer them at a lower cost than previously offered.

### *Recertification*

BCIA lowered the continuing education (CE) requirement for Senior Fellows from 55 accredited hours to 30. We initiated an online CE option in which certificants can read selected magazine and journal articles from the Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback (AAPB) and International Society for Neurofeedback and Research (ISNR) Web sites and then complete a brief online exam at a nominal price. Our Web site contains a complete list of these articles.

### *Ethics*

BCIA significantly revised our Professional Standards and Ethical Principles document. The new code emphasizes BCIA's role in ethics education and shifts the responsibility for ethics enforcement to state regulatory agencies. We also implemented a 3-hour ethics education requirement that also counts for CE credit. Certificants may satisfy this requirement through the online CE option, teleseminars, and workshops that are accredited and specific to biofeedback or their profession.

### *New Name*

BCIA changed its name to the Biofeedback Certification International Alliance to support our international affiliate program. The new name has received universal approval and has removed a potential barrier to future global partnerships.

### *New Professional Designations*

BCIA announced three new professional designations for BCIA certificants: Board Certified in Biofeedback (BCB), Board Certified in Neurofeedback (BCN), and Board Certified in Biofeedback for Pelvic Muscle Dysfunction

(BCB-PMD). Certificants may now use these terms on their Web site, business cards, professional correspondence, and advertising.

### *New Logo*

BCIA revised our logo to increase its graphic impact and readability. Certificants can download our new logo from our Web site and use it to market their practice following our guidelines.

### *New Web Site*

BCIA redesigned our Web site to create a more professional appearance, speed navigation, improve consumer and applicant education, and automate and simplify the application process.

### *Advocacy*

BCIA surveyed our certificants to identify their priorities and implemented our strategic plan guided by their concerns. We created the Public Information Office to help our certificants directly address misinformation and/or the lack of information about biofeedback and neurofeedback in mainstream articles. We collaborated with AAPB and ISNR to produce a consensus definition of biofeedback to counter unscrupulous marketers who have co-opted this term for devices that neither feed back physiological activity to the individual nor promote self-regulation. Finally, we meet twice a year with the leaders of both organizations as the Biofeedback Neurofeedback Alliance to coordinate our responses to issues that affect the lives of our certificants and the entire field.

### *International Outreach*

BCIA board members have represented our certificants at the Biofeedback Foundation of Europe meetings for the past 4 years. BCIA has certified professionals in more than 17 countries outside of the United States and Canada, including Australia, China, Germany, Japan, and South Africa. BCIA's curriculum is currently offered entirely in French at the *Institut de Neurofeedback du Quebec* and in German at *Sigmund Freud University* in Vienna. The Applied Neuroscience Society of Australasia is working with BCIA to become its first international affiliate. An affiliate is a certification program based on our blueprint and exam but specifically tailored to meet the health care realities of that country or region. Several other international groups have requested affiliate relationships.

## Conclusion

Randy Neblett helped BCIA realize the promise of our 2008 strategic plan through his extraordinary leadership and steady focus on our mission. He strived to promote excellence in biofeedback and neurofeedback education and practice to ensure that our professionals are “More than qualified, BCIA Board Certified!”



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