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LINDENWOOD

Athletic training program gets national accreditation

Lindenwood University's athletic training program scored a major victory this week with the achievement of national accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

Randy Biggerstaff, head athletic trainer and athletic training program director, said news of the five-year accreditation comes after years of hard work to develop athletic training into an intensive academic program.

"It is a major accomplishment," he said. "The big winners are our students because they are assured a certain quality and standard of education when they come here to study athletic training. National accreditation like this is very prestigious. We are the only college in all of St. Louis to get this honor."

Biggerstaff and his staff's accomplishment will be recognized at halftime of Lindenwood's 1:30 p.m. football game against Northwestern College. Lindenwood officials were notified of the accreditation earlier in the week.

Lindenwood's quest for accreditation began in 1997, two years after the national certification board announced that as of 2004 only those who graduated from an accredited program would be eligible to take exams to become certified athletic trainers. Previously, students who accumulated 1,500 hours of internship and minimal coursework were eligible.

"Our athletic training program has been growing and building a tremendous reputation," said Biggerstaff. "We have a premier program and we wanted it to stay that way."

Today, about 100 students are majoring in athletic training at Lindenwood, with many graduates out working in the field with professional teams, colleges and high schools across the country. Devoted to the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of sports injuries, athletic trainers work closely with physicians to give athletes the best possible medical care.

Recently, the university formed a student organization for prospective athletic trainers, LUSATO, the Lindenwood Student Athletic Training Organization. LUSATO is run by assistant athletic trainer Delaine Mizell.

For more information on Lindenwood's athletic training program, contact Biggerstaff at 636-949-4683 or Mizell at 636-949-4684.

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