

# **Give Chapters a Hand: Awards of Excellence**

## **Vermont Chapter**

### **PART 2: EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION IN PROGRAMMATIC AREAS**

The Vermont chapter decided to move from a paper-based newsletter mailing to an electronic newsletter for 2009, primarily for reasons intended to better serve its members (see below). The chapter has also launched a new version of its website, which currently includes some of the below features.

One of the major benefits to moving to an electronic newsletter and updated website is accessibility and marketing to multiple parties across Vermont and New England. For example, advertising costs have been reduced for the e-newsletter, so we have seen an increased interest in placing ads for events other than CEUs. Additionally, we are able to feature members (and prospective members) through published feature and news articles. For example, in the Spring 2009 newsletter, graduating students from the Community College of Vermont massage program submitted hydrotherapy articles which had been reviewed by a faculty member. As a result, current members have access to new, academically-researched hydrotherapy treatments for various pathologies (without paying for a book or CEU course) and nearly all the students involved with the writing project have applied for AMTA membership.

The new website will hold archived, searchable newsletters (old ones were .pdf and not searchable by a search box on the website). It will also include a chapter calendar, augmented by the National calendar entries. This will allow individuals in the massage community to better search for upcoming events opportunities if they have not been entered into the National calendar. It can also include non-CEU events that members and non-members may be interested in (like free clinics at massage schools).

Any items added to the chapter website (including the newsletter) will be posted to the chapter's Facebook page, and members will have the option of receiving an email when the website is updated with new information.

The chapter's video library, registration for events, and request for advertising space will all be converted from paper forms to electronic databases. Finally, members will have an opportunity to submit ideas, personal updates, questions, corrections, "letters to the editor", and potential articles through a web-based database form so that information and events can feel more community-based and interactive.

### **PART 3: OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO MEMBERS:**

Moving to an electronic newsletter better serves the Vermont chapter members in several ways.

First, the money allocated for paper publishing and delivery will be rechanneled into revamping the chapter website during 2009. For 2010, the Board will vote on moving most of that money into reduced-costs or free CEU workshops and other initiatives which make AMTA's benefit clear to the public.

Second, the Vermont chapter recognized that not all members had access to email, so Amy created a postcard to announce the shift to an electronic newsletter in late 2008 and the archives available on the website. She also individually contacted (by phone) each of the 27 members who did not list an email address with the National office in order to update the mailing list and remind them to update their information with the National office. Recently, 20 of those 27 have provided updated information. At that time, 68 of 155 (44%) members on the mailing list opened the winter newsletter.

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There was no tracking available before this time. Since the first electronic newsletter, "click rates" have increased to 57%.

Additionally, the chapter has changed its web server, host, and electronic communications to new vendors to reduce costs and increase results-driven decisions. For example, it is now possible to track the number of people who have opened the newsletter, how many times, whether they then "clicked through" to the website to read stories (and which ones). Since the newsletter is available online, it is also possible to include Google Analytics on the website to improve our "reach" to members.

Many of the ideas for the new website (listed above) are member-driven and strive to more closely connect the Vermont members of AMTA and interest new members in joining!

**WEBSITE ADDRESS:** <http://www.amta-vermont.org/index.html>

**NEWSLETTER ADDRESS:**  
<http://campaign-archive.com/?u=1e1f87e500530d913f589f84a&id=2393220ee4>