

## PRESS TIPS

What should you do when your professional education unit is accredited? *Celebrate!* There are several audiences with whom you'll want to share your news:

### PRESS & PUBLIC

- ✓ **Send a press release (sample enclosed) to the media.** Use congratulatory quotes from local opinion leaders and university leaders in the press release. Fax or mail it to the education reporters. Call first to ensure you have the correct name and title—that goes a long way with reporters.
- ✓ **Follow up with a telephone call.** Ask if the individual received the fax; newsrooms are busy. Ask the reporter if he/she would consider covering your news. Explain its larger meaning to the community—that teachers in public schools from your institution will have been prepared according to accepted national standards of excellence. Explain that not all schools of education are professionally accredited, and that your institution now has the “seal of approval” that comes with accreditation. Therefore, P-12 students will benefit. In addition, promote a unique feature of your school (i.e. a professional development school or nontraditional program) so that the reporter has enough material for a story. See the enclosed *Houston Chronicle* article on the University of Houston's year-long clinical experience for elementary education candidates to spark ideas about special aspects of your programs that you can “shop” to reporters.
- ✓ **Be available for interviews—by phone or in person.** Suggest that the reporter visit the campus if he/she has time.
- ✓ **Create an announcement.** Inform local business and civic leaders, foundations, and other higher education leaders of your accreditation. Grab their attention with a specially designed card or announcement, and use the NCATE logo.
- ✓ **Write an op-ed for the newspaper's editorial page.** Discuss how your institution is responding to the move toward standards-based reform by meeting national standards for teacher preparation. See the enclosed op-eds for ideas on how to tie your institution's efforts to improve teacher preparation to current education news. In smaller communities, op-eds are more likely to be placed than in large urban areas. Use information from NCATE's *Speakers Guide* and other publications.

### LOCAL EDUCATORS

- ✓ **Send your press release to local high school principals and guidance counselors, school boards, and school districts.** In this way, those responsible for guiding students as they consider careers in education, as well as those who hire new teachers, will know about the high quality programs your school offers.