

NEWS

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NOCSAE meets to consider sports medicine research grants and review concussion committee progress

PHOENIX, ARIZONA, Jan. 20, 2012 – The National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) Winter Board Meeting begins today. During the session, the organization will review and decide on several new, two-year research grant applications. If approved, NOCSAE will be funding new and ongoing concussion and head injury research grants that total more than \$2 million dollars.

The board also will review work done by the Scientific Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Robert Cantu, one of the nation's top sports concussion specialists. NOCSAE is an independent and nonprofit standard-setting body with the sole mission to enhance athletic safety through scientific research and the creation of performance standards for protective equipment.

"Through our grant research funding program, NOCSAE has been one of the international leaders in helping to advance the scientific and medical knowledge relating to concussions," said Mike Oliver, NOCSAE executive director. "It is our mission to continue to drive the science of sports medicine so youth and adults who choose to play sports can know their equipment is certified to standards based on the best available information."

Formed in 1969, NOCSAE is a leading force in the effort to improve athletic equipment and, as a result, reduce injuries. NOCSAE efforts include the development of performance and test standards for football helmets and facemasks, baseball and softball batters and catchers helmets, baseballs and softballs, ice hockey helmets, soccer shinguards, lacrosse helmets and facemasks and polo helmets.

NOCSAE is the leading nongovernmental source for research funding in all sports medicine and science related to concussion. Since 1995 NOCSAE has devoted more than \$5 million toward research by the foremost experts in sports medicine and science to develop and advance athlete safety.

In Phoenix last January, NOCSAE established the Scientific Advisory Committee to help tackle the issue of concussions and tapped Cantu, NOCSAE vice president, to direct the committee's work. The committee – made up of independent experts in the areas of neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedics, biomechanics and epidemiology – focuses specifically on conducting and directing scientific research to help answer pivotal questions about concussion and helmet standards. Cantu will present a progress report to the full board today.

The board also will take action on a list of possible research grant awards for scientists studying concussion risks. In 2011 the NOCSAE approved a new research grant of nearly \$340,000 to study concussion biomechanics, for example.

"Concussions remain a source of heavy discussion in the sports world and among our members," said Cantu. "These injuries are complex events both biomechanically and physiologically, and scientists are working hard to understand these issues so that improvements can be made in protection, prevention and treatment. Our goal is to incorporate scientific findings into our standards to better protect against concussions."

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About NOCSAE

NOCSAE, the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment, is an independent and nonprofit standard-setting body with the sole mission to enhance athletic safety through scientific research and the creation of performance standards for protective equipment. Formed in 1969, NOCSAE is a leading force in the effort to improve athletic equipment and, as a result, reduce injuries. NOCSAE efforts include the development of performance and test standards for football helmets and facemasks, baseball and softball batters and catchers helmets, baseballs and softballs, ice hockey helmets, soccer shinguards, lacrosse helmets and facemasks and polo helmets. NOCSAE is comprised of representatives from a number of groups which have an interest in athletic equipment – including manufacturers, reconditioners, athletic trainers, coaches, equipment managers, sports medicine and consumer organizations. These diverse interests have joined forces in an attempt to arrive at a common goal of reducing sports-related injuries. NOCSAE is a nonprofit, charitable organization supported by individuals and organizations with an interest in athletics.