

Distinguished Alumni

Q&A former DIII Representatives: These interviews are meant to take a candid look into the approach and point of views from previous representatives of District III's Young Professionals Committee.



Jay Sedory, M.Ed, ATC, EMT-T

Athletic Trainer, Force Fitness Readiness Center
United States Marine Corps
Division IV representative, NATA State Association Advisory Committee
Past President, Virginia Athletic Trainers' Association

What does it mean to engage and give back to the profession?

“Engage” and “give back” have separate meanings. Engaging the profession (as a leader) means sending information to members, getting their feedback, and setting up opportunities for members to participate. I hope more leaders engage their membership by using electronic mediums but also taking advantage of face-to-face opportunities. Giving back to the profession means selflessly serving the membership or profession without seeking personal gain or recognition. Some give back by serving on a committee while others give financially to further the goals of the profession. Each one of us benefited from the work of another athletic trainer, it's important we try give back in a small way.

What led you to participate in the YPC?

When I first started my career, I sought out professionals and resources that could advise me on becoming a better athletic trainer. At the time I was an athletic trainer in the law enforcement setting, it wasn't easy to find resources and I didn't identify with the traditional committee settings. When I came to hear about this committee forming, I was really excited about the opportunities.

How do you mentor or inspire others (students, patients, peers)?

I hope to inspire others through my actions. There are many people that talk at the table and like to have meetings about projects. One of my friends that is an Army Ranger and Bronze Star recipient always said, “deeds not words.” Till this day that message rings true. Each individual is motivated differently, the key is trying to find the right “push” or “pull.”

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What is your advice to YPs?

First, read. Read just about anything you can get your hands on. I've read fiction, non-fiction, journal, news articles and they have all provided some benefit to me personally or professionally. I started to read the Commandants' reading list one book at a time. Not only did I enjoy it but I started to understand the mindset and history of my organization on a new level.

Second, be patient and stop worrying about the destination. By being patient, you can build a level of perseverance and work ethic that will serve you well in the future. We get a lot of information "instantly" and typically multi-tasking three things at once. It's pleasant to simply stop and take stock in the moment.

Third, listen carefully and ask good questions. You'll find more information when you listen carefully. Ever meet someone that has to talk first and get the last word in? Even when you're talking, they are not listening because they are ready to start talking again. You'll hear the **real** problem when an administrator or coach is complaining and you'll **hear** the pain and frustration from an injured patient. Once you've listened, ask questions. Finding purpose and intent with your communication will define clear goals or outcomes for both parties.

What takeaways do you have from working on the YPC?

I have developed friendships with committee members that I will always enjoy and cherish. It has made me cognizant of the variety of challenges that Young Professionals face. It is arguably the most transitional phase of an athletic trainers' career and personal life cycle.

What would you say to a YP to get them involved with the profession?

Consider getting involved locally if possible. You tend to see and meet with other local athletic trainers because of proximity or schedule. Start talking about the common problems or obstacles and see how you can solve them. Next, I would ask them to get involved with their state governmental affairs committee. While this doesn't sound as exciting as the Public Relations Committee; it is critically important. How you practice, the permissions you have, and the authority of the athletic trainer is dictated by the state regulation. While members of the state legislature see the regular 5-10 state members; they like to see and hear from YPs. Want to improve the impression? Look to your governmental affairs committee.

What experiences prepared you for your role with the YPC?

I've been fortunate to have experience within the military and law enforcement setting where leadership is a key component to their daily duties and organizational success. By learning from the culture and being led by good leaders, I have picked up a few tips and tricks along the way. My experience as an EMT has given me good decision-making skills under pressure and has tested my ability to organize personnel/resources.