

The *Journal of Athletic Training*: An Ongoing Value Proposition

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As an athletic trainer, I have grown up with the *Journal of Athletic Training (JAT)*. It represents progress in an ever-changing and constantly evolving profession. The *JAT* is the repository of evidence that has changed thinking and practice, and it will continue to serve this role into the future as our profession continues to grow. Each of the Editors-in-Chief during my professional career has offered a unique vision, resulting in improved quality of the journal and increased visibility and strength of our profession. My plan as the incoming Editor-in-Chief is to continue this tradition of growth. As the Editors and Editorial Board consider the future of the journal, we will focus on a single word: value. The top priority for our leadership will be to provide value to the members of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA). Additionally, the journal should provide value to authors and researchers, other clinicians and professionals, and the public. By offering value to these populations, the journal will continue to lead the athletic training profession into the future and contribute to sports medicine worldwide.

Above all other readers, the *JAT* must provide value to the members of the NATA. Because *value* is defined differently by each member, we will try to collect as much information as possible from the membership through surveys and discussions. These data will help inform what value means to our members and provide a clearer path to enhancing the impact of the journal within our profession. Perhaps the most impactful way the journal can increase value to members is to continue to improve the quality of manuscripts published in the journal. This is a tradition that has been pursued by every previous Editor-in-Chief, and we will remain committed to that tradition. The quality of research being produced by athletic trainers is always improving, and our goal is to actively solicit manuscripts from these talented and accomplished clinicians and researchers. Manuscripts that improve clinical practice, advance patient outcomes, and assist professional practice will be an ongoing area of focus. We hope that the journal will be a tool and resource for all athletic trainers, both in everyday practice and for the advancement of the profession. As the quality of *JAT* manuscripts continues to improve, the reputation of the profession will also grow, and members will benefit from that enhanced reputation.

To publish the best papers from our best authors, the journal must demonstrate value to those authors. Today's authors have many options in the scientific publishing world. We aim for the *JAT* to provide an efficient and easily navigated submission and review process and facilitate exposure of their work. An effective review process requires thoughtful evaluations from competent, knowledgeable reviewers in an acceptable period of time. To achieve this goal, we may need to increase the size of our Editorial Board, improve training, and further diversify the Board. Once their articles are published, we need to promote our authors' work so that it reaches all clinicians and researchers who can benefit from that work. This will include working with traditional, nontraditional, and social media outlets. If we can demonstrate value to authors, then we will, in turn, enhance value for our members by increasing the quality of papers published in the journal, the number of journal readers across disciplines, and the reputation of the athletic training profession.

Other sports medicine professionals often look to the unique expertise of athletic trainers for guidance. We must continue to highlight the important work published in the *JAT* and, when appropriate, develop special issues and other opportunities to share this expertise. As the journal broadly promotes this work, the value of the journal and the profession are increasingly evident across multiple disciplines.

Finally, the *JAT* needs to demonstrate value to the public, including all active people. Communicating important findings from *JAT* papers to the public can position athletic trainers as experts in ways that the community may not already recognize. Nontraditional media, such as visual and video abstracts, clinical summaries and commentaries, and podcasts, can provide digestible information for the public. The *JAT* also needs to continue to use traditional and social media to promote this helpful information to the public, in addition to its members and other professionals. Athletic trainers can use this information to educate and inform patients, coaches, parents, and the media.

The *JAT* will continue to provide evidence that will advance our profession in the coming months and years. We will intentionally work to increase the journal's value for NATA members, authors and researchers, other clinicians and professionals, and the public. I look forward to continuing to grow as a clinician and scholar with the *JAT*.

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