

If Not Me, Then?

By Mark Stoessner, GLATA Vice President

Welcome all athletic trainers in GLATA to the start of another fall sports season (for those of us involved with providing athletic training services to sports teams). This is always a special and busy time of year for many of us in the profession, not only at work, but with our families as well. With school starting for the kids, work getting busier and life generally being more hectic than ever these days, it is sometimes difficult to think of anything else besides the day to day grind of it all.

In spite of that, the fall also brings to us some important times within GLATA. Fall is the culmination of both the Honors and Awards nomination process and the GLATA Election cycle. Both of these give us an opportunity to do important things for our district organization and its members.

The first opportunity is through GLATA Honors and Awards nominations. Over the past several months the Honors and Awards Committee has spent some time revamping the evaluation process for those who have been nominated. The goal has been to make the process more objective so that we can ensure the members who are most deserving can be recognized.

Whether it be for the Golden Pinnacle Award, Distinguished Athletic Trainer Award, Outstanding Educator Award or the Honorary Membership Award, there are many individuals within GLATA who are worthy of the recognition that comes with the granting of these awards. It is our responsibility as members to be involved in the process, and the more involved we are, the better a representation of our membership the award winners become.

As for the election process, we need you to be active in two ways. Primarily, members of GLATA should vote in the elections. The elected officers are making decisions on how to best serve the members, and the more people who vote in the elections, the better the process is. Also, we need to thoughtfully consider nominating members for the office for which elections are being held each year.

I spent nearly 20 years as a GLATA member before I got involved in the process. I was one of those athletic trainers who was "too busy to be involved," I felt the process was for people in different work settings and that I just wasn't the type of person who could be effective in an elected role. I have found through being involved at the state and district level for the past 6 years, that I am not too busy, and that it is an honor to serve the membership.

My goal is to make sure other athletic training professionals understand this as well. While there is a time commitment, the opportunity to learn about our profession and serve the members is one I will not forget. I hope that all of you consider not only colleagues and friends who may be well suited, but to consider running for an elected position yourself. There are many committees at the district level that are or will be looking for involvement from members (Please see Ashley Minnick's note on the Young Professionals Committee in this e-blast), and that service is also extremely valuable to the membership.

In closing, please accept my best wishes for a safe and healthy fall for you and your family, and as always, remember to take time for yourself and those who are close to you, especially when things get hectic at work. Thanks to all who have supported me during my term as Vice-President as well.