



# Martin “Marty” Matney MBA, LAT, ATC, LPTA

**EDUCATION:** Washington State University (BS), 1981; City University of Seattle (MBA), 1999

**CAREER:** Assistant athletic trainer, U.S. Military Academy, 1983-85; faculty instructor, physical therapy, U. S. Army Academy of Health Sciences, 1985-87; head athletic trainer, The Sports Medicine Clinic, 1987-89; athletic trainer, Seattle ProSports Therapy, 1989-95; athletic trainer/PT assistant, Bellevue Sports Medicine Clinic, 1995-97; manufacturer’s representative (sales), Generation II (now Ossur), 1997-99; co-owner, clinic manager, ATC/PTA, Whitesel ProTherapy Inc., 1999-2009; business partner, R&D, Marketing, Polarzone-NW, 2005-present; program manager/head athletic trainer, Work-Fit, contracted to the Boeing Company, 2009-present

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE:** Washington State Athletic Trainers’ Association associate director/executive director/president, 1989-93; Washington State Athletic Trainers Association Governmental Affairs Committee chair, 1989-94; NATA Clinical/Industrial/Corporate Athletic Trainers

Committee District Ten representative, 1995-98; NATA Reimbursement Advisory Group/Committee on Revenue District Ten representative, 1998-2006; NATA Political Action Committee Board of Directors, 2008-11 and 2013-15; NATA Service Award Committee, 2012-15; NATA Governmental Affairs Committee District Ten representative, 2014-15; Committee on Practice Advancement incoming chair, 2015-16; NATA Board of Director’s Federal Legislative Council, 2015; NATA Transition to Practice Workgroup, 2015; NATA Documentation Standards Workgroup, 2016; NATA “At Your Own Risk” website development group advisor, 2015-present; NATAPAC Contributions Subcommittee, 2015; NWATA District 10 Hall of Fame Award Review Committee, 2016-present; Committee on Practice Advancement chair, 2016-present

## Why did you pursue athletic training as your career?

I was the first “athletic trainer” as a high school student at Cheney High School in Cheney, Washington, in 1973. Nearing graduation, I wanted to become an oceanographer, but kids from farming country don’t do that. Since I had learned how to tape and make ice bags (thank you, Cramer), and had no money, my counselor steered me to athletic training, where I could get some of my college paid for. I thought it would be fun and, at that age, when a door opens, you walk through it. I had no idea it would come to this.

I have come to realize that we are in this profession because we want to help and be a positive influence in someone’s life. To make a difference on a personal level. I feel truly blessed stumbling on to a profession that connects me with something I never knew I wanted: to make a difference in people’s lives and help, simply help.

## What is your most memorable moment?

There are so many, but I’d like to mention two. Passing the licensure legislation in Washington state. It took 20 years. When it passed, I felt a huge weight off my shoulders, and told friends, “Now the real work begins.” The second is a friend, Spud Harris. He collapsed in his first

senior football practice. Mark Smaha and I performed CPR. Spud didn’t make it. Even now I think of him almost daily and I feel this has created a drive to always try my hardest, do my best and stay the course.

## Who are your biggest mentors and what impact have they had on you?

Mark Smaha has been a mentor to so many, and I feel fortunate to be in that group. I watched how he came in fresh to WSU, learned the ropes and built a program from scratch that today is one of the best athletic training programs in the country. He taught me how to be a builder. Through the years, I have seen Mark deal with adversity and challenges that have influenced how I approach life on life’s terms – probably the most important lesson I can learn.

Jimmy Wallace at the U.S. Military Academy taught me to care for each person with compassion, attentive listening and careful understanding because we are all equal regardless of our position in life or our circumstances. Jim Whitesel, a friend since 1976, taught me the art of athletic training, including how to figure things out and how fix them.

## What is the most valuable advice you have received during your career?

You can have every modality ever invented

– even three of each – but you can do just as good of a job, if not better, with your hands and an ice machine (thank you, Bruce Scott). My hands and a keen sense of awareness are tools that I have been fortunate to develop through countless interactions with patients, peers and other professionals.

## What advice would you give to young athletic trainers just starting out in the profession?

Zappa said, “Your mind is like a parachute – it doesn’t work if it’s not open.”

Be impeccable with your word. Speak with integrity and say only what you mean. Avoid using words to speak against or be boastful of yourself or to gossip about others.

Don’t make assumptions. Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, unhappiness and drama.

Don’t take anything personally. Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is simply a projection of their own reality and their personal perspective.

Always do your best. Your best is going to change from time to time, but under any circumstance, humbly do your best. You will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.