

Preserving FOR THE FUTURE

How the NATA Historical Commission is preserving and protecting NATA's rich history and legacy

BY CLAIRE WILLIAMS

In almost 75 years, the athletic training profession has experienced growth, overcome challenges, broken barriers and improved patient care for their communities – the NATA Historical Commission wants members to reflect on that progress and continue to take the profession into the future.

The Historical Commission was formed in 2015 and tasked with preserving the history of athletic training, providing athletic training historical education and to be a resource to NATA on historical issues.

“It’s been a labor of passion to preserve our history,” Historical Commission Chair Roger Kalisiak, AT Ret., said. “As the NATA Historical Commission, our job is to record our profession’s advances and achievements.

“We do that to make notes of our rich history, and part of that is so we can move our profession forward and we don’t make the same mistakes twice.”

Kalisiak and the eight-person commission have been hard at work to digitize the NATA history collection, which has grown to include more than 10,000 photos, 3,000 documents, 100 books, 300 audio and video recordings and dozens of artifacts. Many of these items will be on display in the NATA virtual museum, which the commission is currently working to finish.

When available to members on the NATA website, the virtual museum will allow members to view exhibits organized into collections about early pioneers of athletic training, women in athletic training, diversity in athletic training and other featured stories that have contributed to the growth of the profession. The museum will also include an organized collection of national, district and state records meeting minutes, newsletters and directories through the years, as well as an extensive timeline.

Most recently, the commission created the Pioneer Athletic Trainer Legacy Award that will be awarded for the first time in 2023. The purpose of this award is to honor and recognize people who contributed to athletic training before NATA was established in 1950. Many of these early leaders, inventors and sports medicine practitioners were pioneers in their own right and contributed to what is now known as the modern-day athletic training profession.

In addition to the virtual museum and record archive, the commission has formally interviewed more than 30 people who have contributed to the profession as part of an oral history collection. The commission hopes that these video interviews will help share their stories so

that future generations can learn first-hand how the profession was developed.

The commission is also planning to celebrate the 75th anniversary of NATA in 2025, and hopes to create an exhibit that will feature 75 people who have impacted the athletic training profession and shaped the foundation of NATA.

As the commission continues work on preserving the history of NATA and athletic training, they encourage and welcome contributions from members, as well.

“We would love for more people to become part of the process,” Kalisiak said.

“We are in exciting times for the athletic training profession as we move from being AT pioneers to AT innovators. The time clock pendulum is rapidly swinging from the past and moving forward into the future – the Historical Commission continues to work to preserve NATA’s rich history for present and future generations to enjoy!”

Members can submit content online through the virtual submission form, available at new.forms.nata.org/webform/historical-commission-submission.

Members can also volunteer to curate exhibits within the virtual museum; review the guidelines to do so at www.nata.org/sites/default/files/historical_exhibit_curator_guidelines.pdf. §

NATA AND ATHLETIC TRAINING TIMELINE

TIP FOR SUCCESS: DOCUMENT OUR HISTORY

The NATA Historical Commission welcomes content from members that can be added to the NATA virtual museum in the forms of:

- Exhibit Curators: Become a curator and create an exhibit about a person or topic connected to the athletic training profession. Review the curator guidelines at www.nata.org/sites/default/files/historical_exhibit_curator_guidelines.pdf.
- NATA and Athletic Training Timeline: Comments and/or suggestions for entries that the Historical Commission should consider adding to the timeline. Send any submissions to Rich Carey at rcatchbass9@gmail.com.
- Digital Collection: Submit photos, videos, books and documents that can be considered for inclusion in the Historical Commission's digital collection. Review the guidelines and submit content at new.forms.nata.org/webform/historical-commission-submission.

For more information about the NATA Historical Commission, visit www.nata.org/about/nata-history.



1881: The first known athletic trainer, James Robinson, is hired by Harvard University, where he sets up the first training facility.



1935: Naseby Rhinehart is the first Black athletic trainer hired by the University of Montana, where he works for 47 years and organizes the university's first athletic training curriculum in 1971. Rhinehart was inducted into the NATA Hall of Fame in 1967.

1950: NATA is formally represented as a national association and the first NATA convention is held at the Muelbach Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri.



1938: Bill Frey (left) is elected as the first executive secretary of NATA and Mike Chambers is elected as president of NATA during an attempt to officially form the association.

1955: William "Pinky" Newell is appointed as the fourth NATA executive secretary and holds the position until 1968.

1969: The Board of Certification is created to implement a certification process for the profession.

1969: The first NATA undergraduate athletic training curricula are approved.



1971: Otho Davis is hired as NATA executive director and holds that position for the next 18 years.

1970: The first athletic training certification exam is administered Oct. 1.



1970: Bobby Gunn becomes the first president elected by the general membership.



1984: Janice Daniels is the first female athletic trainer to serve on the NATA Board of Directors.



1993: Eve Becker-Doyle is hired full time as the sixth NATA executive director and holds that position for 19 years.

2008: The AT Strategic Alliance of NATA, BOC and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education is formed.



1999: Julie Max, MEd, ATC, becomes the first female NATA president elected by general membership.

2018: The NATA and American Physical Therapy Association alliance is formed on Dec 19.

2020: The NATA declares on April 30 that the 71st NATA Clinical Symposia & AT Expo will be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.