Alumni News

Holli Jackson (Vandeman) received the FWATA PR Excellence in Athletic Training Award.

Katy Maty and Doug Burton are expecting their first child.

Armando Rivas is an Assistant AT for the Chicago Bulls.

Keith Candelaria is the Head AT at Whittier College.

Senait Berhe started her MS degree in Education at USC.

Kyle Burnett is an Assistant AT at CSUF.

Yo Shimada was an Assistant AT at CSUF.

Brent Smedley is the Co-Head AT at Cal Tech.

Micah Ohlen is the AT at San Juan Hills High School.

Shalina (Johnson) and Craig Truglio welcomed baby Liam Michael Truglio in October 2014.

Melissa Nuno (Lentz) and Michael welcomed Jaxx Michael Nuno in March 2014.

Hiro Oda and Tia Durand are engaged.
Town & Country Resort

Appetizers & refreshments will be provided.
$20 donation requested.
Come by & say hello. Hope to see you there!
Contact Sarah Young if you have any questions.

Mike Martinez is an AT at UCI.
Stacy (Diaz) Camou earned her MS in Education from Fort Hays State University.
Kelly Wilson is the DME Coordinator at Newport Orthopedic Institute.
Jamie Wilson and Lisa are expecting their 5th child.
Jasmine Simental is engaged.
Rick Becker is an Assistant Athletic Trainer at Diablo Valley College and the Sports Performance Specialist for the NorCal Quakes Baseball.
Marcy Griffitts worked the AMA Supercross at Anaheim Stadium in January.
Ali Lacayo was accepted into the Wesleyan University MS program.

TITANS Awarded Scholarships ...

Brenda Valdez Nava
2015 NATA Research & Education Foundation
William "Bill" Chambers Scholarship
District 8

Jesse Williams
2015 NATA Research & Education Foundation
Larry "Stosh" Neumann Memorial Scholarship
Professional Football Athletic Trainers' Society
2015 Far West Athletic Trainers' Association
Jerry Lloyd Scholarship
This issue, *TITAN Update* catches up with alum Mike Martinez ...

After earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Kinesiology at CSUF in 2002, Mike Martinez came back as a graduate assistant with the Athletic Training Education Program in 2007. He worked with baseball and basketball. During this time Mike also had the opportunity to work with the US National Soccer team. After graduating in 2009, Mike experienced several states and employers in quick succession. Beginning at UC Santa Barbara in 2009-2010, moving to University of Maryland 2010-2012, and then coming back to California to the Newport Orthopedic Institute and San Juan Hills High School.

“I never truly had a desire to become an AT in the secondary school setting”, Mike says about his time at San Juan Hills High School “but it was one of the best tenures in my career. I had the pleasure of being included in graduation 2014, and as I prepared for graduation and I entered the gym with other teachers and colleagues, the senior class began to chant ”Mike, Mike, Mike…”. The gym filled with cheers and laughter, and in that small moment I became entirely humbled and thankful. I realized how much we as ATs can affect an entire class of kids. We can make positive changes in their lives and offer them love and mentorship. I realized how blessed I really was to be placed in a great position as the AT at San Juan Hills High. I am thankful to God for putting me in a place I did not realize I needed to experience.” It was one of Mike’s all time career favorite memories.

Now at UC Irvine, Mike encourages students to try any setting, even if their final goal is Division 1 athletics. “…do not limit yourself, through all of it you will have a greater understanding of what you don’t want to do, and what you thought you didn’t want to do may be just the thing for you. Work hard, be honest, complain less and treat others with respect, it will take you far.”

Each of Mike’s mentors contributed differently to his growth as a person and athletic trainer. Julie Max provided “the truthful, hard to hear, honest, you got your back and loving type of advice”. Mike says “I used to want to know Julie simply because I heard she was so great, now I want to be close to her because of the amazing friendship and mentorship she continues to offer”. He credits another mentor, Chris Mumaw, with always having his best interest in mind. “The amazing trust and faith [Chris] has in me as a person and professional humbles me to the core, and at the same time gives me the drive I need to keep pushing.” Last but not least, Mike credits Dr. Kersey’s mentorship with helping him understand what it means to be a “man of service”. Dr. Kersey “introduced me to many of the concepts of being a man of faith; a man that understands and appreciates what he is offered and has, and to living life humbly.”

As Mike continues in his career, he hopes to be the sports medicine director for a Division 1 athletic program, ideally returning to his Titan Family one day. He also wants to continue to serve the profession through the CATA (currently the Region 5 Director), FWATA, and the NATA. To attempt to balance his life, Mike makes sure to stay fit and spend time with his young niece and nephews. With importance Mike expressed that “the opportunity to say a prayer and remember to be close to the Man upstairs helps remind me that what I do and why I am here is greater than just me, and the effect I have on others can be positive and great.”

About the least favorite parts of his job, Mike says “I am blessed beyond belief so even the least favorite [parts of my job] are better than many worst days for others so … the most important thing to share is that when challenges are delivered, always respond by taking time to think about the challenge, understand what is truly important and understand how your decisions will effect more than just you. The challenges of each day, week, year will help you grow, and the least favorite parts will always change, it’s how you deal with those challenges that will matter.”

Mike’s final thought for the Titan Family? ”If in your attempt to be great you make others feel less than great, you have failed”.
Kavin's Korner

A couple of months ago, I was in Dallas attending my last meeting as a member of the NATA REF Free Communications Committee. As athletic trainers tend to do, after long hours of meeting and work, several of us were sitting around and enjoying the evening over a few Shiner Bocks. The discussion moved towards the fact that a couple of us were terming off the committee and how this was such a strange position to be in.

Over the past six years, we had been intimately involved with the growth and development of the program … often initiating and steering new ideas and approaches to an already established program. Even though we knew our term
limits were approaching, a part of us were hoping for the chance we would be asked (allowed) to stay. Someone then mentioned how this discussion/situation was like the book “Who Moved My Cheese?” (Spencer Johnson MD). I had not heard of this book (probably because it wasn’t related to therapeutic modalities) and set-out to get a hold of it.

found a really good used copy (Amazon) for less than a dollar ... the shipping was more than the book itself ... there are numerous cartoons of this parable as well

Anyhow … a synopsis of the book … it is a parable examining how we deal with/react to change. The four characters in the story, Sniff and Scurry (who are little mice), Hem and Haw (who are little people) are confronted with change to their established situation. Their response run the spectrum of quickly abandoning what they were comfortable with to seek out a new situation, to clinging onto the remnants of what they were used to. You also see how the reaction/decision of one character impact those around, with or without their knowledge. There is no one better or more right response than the other, just different.

"we don't truly grow until we choose to step out of our comfort zone" … paraphrasing JMax

The TITAN AT Family has definitely experienced (and will continue to) change … Dr. Zinder leaving and my arrival … Amanda’s departure … Jaime’s arrival … Chris’ retirement … Brent’s departure … Kyle’s return … Mike’s return … and let’s not forget our preceptors and the countless undergraduate and graduate students that continue to “come and go”. This summer, we are excited to welcome Melissa Montgomery and Tricia Kasamatsu to the family. It doesn’t stop there … BOC-EBP requirements … graduate level professional program … and on it goes. How did we react to these changes … how are we going to in the future?

"argue for your limitations and sure enough they are yours" Richard Bach

We are continually confronted with change in our lives … personal, professional, social … the degree and overt impact may vary but change is always present. It is important that we recognize in ourselves how we react to change and perhaps just as important, appreciate how we impact those around us. Are you Sniff, Scurry, Hem, or Haw?

KTsang

Join us …

6th Annual CSUF Athletic Training Education Program Golf Tournament

RECENT GRADUATES
Dwayne Phillips
Dwayne Phillips III will be graduating from CSUF this coming spring. His plans after he graduates are to find work as soon as possible and return to school at a later time in order to pursue his master’s degree in kinesiology. Two of his favorite rotations were at Walnut High School and at CSUF with the Men’s Soccer team. Both rotations pushed him to find new ways to interact with colleagues and athletes, as well as pushed him to be creative in developing rehabilitation plans for athletes. Dwayne’s advice to students still in the program is to continue to learn and try to grow as much as possible in the short amount of time you have.

Jasmine Simental
I would describe myself as a very thoughtful person. One of my favorite parts of the ATEP was having a family away from home, made up of my peers, preceptors, and alumni. I would have to say my favorite rotation was Walnut High School and PT. I enjoyed working with the students at WHS. Cathy, Heather and Nate made my PT rotation memorable and fun with BOGO surveys. Upon graduation I will be looking into graduate schools and planning a wedding. Being a part of the ATEP has helped me learn to balance life better. Words of wisdom I’d like to share “kind words make the sweetest echo”… it reminds me that everyone needs someone to share a smile. To current students: don’t stress about small things, but enjoy every experience. Some of my favorite memories where driving with Marcy and Pratik to WHS or MTSAC … too many laughs to count.

Cole Hobson
The most valuable thing that I learned is to not be too cocky when it comes to treating patients. We all have our strengths and weaknesses and it is best to collaborate with other for the sake of the patient. My favorite part of the ATEP was meeting and working with a bunch of intelligent, experienced, like-minded individuals. I think I enjoyed my rotation with Chris Mumaw and the men’s basketball team the best. As my “capstone rotation,” the level of autonomy I had with the athletes, the interactions with the coaching staff, and experience working the basketball games, both home and away, made me feel like a certified athletic trainer, which was very exciting! My plans after graduation include working a few years in the capacity of an ATC, possibly in the HS setting, and applying and attending a graduate DPT program. My advice to current students would be to always make sure you are challenging yourself, constantly improving your skills, and always making sure that you are happy!

Marcy Griffitts
One of the most valuable things I learned from the ATEP is not to forget to make time for yourself and for your loved ones. I would have to say that my favorite part of the Titan ATEP was the personal relationships I made with other students and preceptors.

My favorite rotation was my lead rotation working with Bill at Mt SAC. I loved being able to work with so many other students from different programs as well as an athletic trainer who is very hands on and open to
teaching and letting the students learn and try new things. I felt like I grew a lot personally and professionally from this rotation, it was a great way to finish up my time in the program. My plans after graduation are to study for the exam and look for a job (hire me!)

I’ve matured A LOT since joining the ATEP in a lot of ways, but the most important would be learning to work with others, becoming more patient, and thinking before speaking or acting. Clinically I have learned to not be afraid to take chances and make mistakes.

I will carry the word Always be the "X" factor with me. I would advise those still in the program to cherish it. And don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone and make mistakes.

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Michelle Collins

Everyone has told me that 5 semesters go by faster than you can imagine. As a normal student, 5 semesters seems like a lifetime, but as an athletic training student, 5 semesters goes by faster than the blink of an eye. Two and half years seem very short in the grand scheme of things, but my time in the athletic training program has helped me grow not only as a student and clinician, but as a person. I think everyone remembers the moment Dr. Kersey called to say they have been accepted into the program. I remember the moment like it was yesterday. I missed his first call and called him back to get a busy signal. The whole day I had my phone attached to my hip, checking it every 5 minutes to make sure I hadn’t missed anything. As I was driving a call came and I pulled over on the freeway to take it. I stepped out of my car onto the shoulder and answered. When I got back into the car my friend asked me why I was crying. I told him Cal State Fullerton ATEP must have seen something in me and is crazy enough to accept me into the program. From that moment on I have been set out to prove that the committee made the right decision.

What I will take away most form this experience is the relationships that I have formed; my relationships with my professors, mentors, preceptors, athletes and other staff. I would not be where I am today without their support and encouragement. These relationships created the memories that define my time in the program. I thought I might share a few: long talks with Dr. Tsang in his office about logging hours, dealing with a softball emergency alongside Julie, late night class with Dr. Kersey, long study nights with my group, my first time teaching ROP class at Walnut High School while trying to keep everyone awake and focused, creating a customized shoulder tape job for an athlete, Nelson giving me my ranking every day, and having my athletes come on my last day of my rotation to say thank you and showing I have made an impact. These moments and the people I have shared them with, are what make this program special. It makes me very proud to say that I was a part of it.

My favorite rotation was my senior rotation at Walnut High School. It was the rotation that opened my eyes to different opportunities in my future. It allowed me to gain the confidence and strength to reach for the things I want out of life and never settle for less. I was able to make a difference and I will never forget how the people there changed my life. To me, there is nothing more satisfying than making a positive difference on someone’s life.

To all my preceptors and mentors, I just have one thing to say; thank you. Thank you for never losing faith, even when I failed. Thank you for being honest with me no matter how hard it was to hear or say. Thank you for telling me when I’m wrong and giving me constructive criticism. Thank you for telling me when I was right and encouraging me to continue striving for greatness. Thank you for pushing me every single day to make sure I continued to get better. Thank you for setting high expectations so that I may rise to meet them. Thank you for sharing your stories and wisdom which have all become pearls in my treasure chest. Thank you for being great examples and reminding me why I chose this profession. Most of all, thank you for guiding me on this path to a profession that I have fallen in love with.

Some advice I can give to the students in the program and future students: enjoy and learn every day! It has been the little moments that have shaped my experience in the program and those little moments will help guide you in the big moments. Always remember you are part of the Fullerton ATEP family and through thick and thin we will always be there for each other. No matter where life takes you remember your roots because ONCE a Titan, ALWAYS a Titan.

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Kirsten Marony

I would describe myself as an ambitious person. Clinically, the Titan ATEP strengthened my understanding, desire, and determination to provide the best care I am capable of providing for my athletes; to go above and beyond; to be the clinician I always looked to for help and support when I was the athlete. Personally, to be thankful for every moment, keep those who matter most close, and to go after the future I want for myself. My favorite part of the program was learning and finally commencing my journey towards grasping a better understanding of the human body and how it functions and responds to injury/mechanical stresses. I would have to say my favorite rotation was My first semester, during my very first rotation, with my first preceptor. It set the stage for who I have become as a clinician thus far and established and or made me that much for aware of why I chose to follow this path that God has opened my eyes to and guided me towards. This moment in time has also blessed me with meeting and establishing a lifelong relationship and
friendship with a truly outstanding human being whom I have the utmost respect for. After graduation i hope to earn my MS in Kinesiology in Athletic Training or Kinesiology, currently I am working as an AT for Softball at Vanguard University. Personally, the ATEP has made me more aware of who I am, what makes me happy and what it is I want out of this life I am truly blessed to be living. Clinically i have grown in many areas; Evaluation, acute treatment/chronic rehabilitation, establishing professional relationships with my athletes and coaches and gaining that rapport. The words of wisdom I will carry with me are If it is wet and it is not yours, don't touch it. Be humble. Life balance. Lastly, to those in the program Be humble and keep your eyes open to the world around you. There is so much beauty, knowledge and opportunity out there to grab on to. Don't be afraid to to jump and take that leap for what it is you want. You only live once and life is too short to wonder what if. Live every moment as if it was your last. God Bless.

Pratik Patel

If I had to choose one word to describe myself it would be that I'm very humble. I have learned great amounts of valuable things from the ATEP at CSUF over the 2.5 years but the most valuable lesson I will take is that no matter what I will always have my CSUF ATEP family. The friends and preceptors I have meet I can truly count on them for advice and guidance not only in athletic training but in my person life as well. One of my favorite parts of ATEP were all the parties we had where we got to meet alumni and had a chance to interact and see that we represent in various settings of AT. My personal favorite part of ATEP was beating Nate in basketball day after day. It is really hard to choose which rotation was my favorite because each rotation played a crucial part in my life and I have learned different things that I can add to my tool box. Each preceptors/rotations I have special memories and funny stories that I will recall back on and enjoy the great time I had with them. My plans after graduation are to go visit family back home in India and when I return I want to work at a high school setting to get some experience for several years and hopefully get a GA position later down my career. I have grown tremendously as a person from day one thanks to the program/preceptors which have challenged me to overcome my fears. One aspect that I have grown in because of the ATEP is my confidence level that I have in myself compared to when I first came in. Clinically I have improved in all areas but especially in my hands on skills and documentation. "Life is about choices" I can never forget that because I heard it numerous times thanks DR.K. My advice to the ATEP students is make sure you learn as much you can and don’t be afraid to ask questions. I just want to thank everyone that have been part of my journey starting with Julie, Dr.K, Dr.Tsang, Barbie, Bill, Andy, Cathy, Nate, Heather, Nelson, Ali, Amanda, Jordan, Sally, Brent, Chris, Yo, Ned and Marcella. Wow that list was long and others that I may have forgot to mention.

Michael Gregory

My time in the CSUF ATEP was full of challenges, opportunities for growth, and relationships with wonderful people. My clinical rotations taught me to learn and grow no matter what, even if the lessons being presented were not what I was expecting. Having a plan and goals is part of being successful, but being flexible and adapting to every situation is a skill that did not come easy for me. All of the support from my mentors and other colleagues helped me improve my communication skills and build lasting personal and professional relationships. I plan to continue my professional development by working as an ATC in multiple capacities before continuing on to a graduate assistantship at a D1 University out of state. No matter where my career path takes me, I will always look forward to coming back to Alumni events to catch up with my Titan family!

moments ...
Welcome our new TITANS ...

Tricia Kasamatsu, PhD, ATC
Ph.D. Education, Chapman University
M.A. Teaching, Chapman University
B.A. Kinesiology, Chapman University

Melissa Montgomery, PhD, ATC
Ph.D. Kinesiology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Every year I contemplate what to write in this short article to all of those I love and most importantly, want message do I want to leave on everyone's heart. As I was preparing for yet another presentation on "leadership", I was reminded about the time someone special made me look at the word, define the word and apply the word to my own life. SO...I started to do a bit of research for ALL of you.

Here are some of my findings. In asking myself, what exactly does leadership mean, I realized that every business owner, CEO, department head wants to be a good leader, but how can you be a good leader if you don't know what leadership really is? Unfortunately, leadership doesn't have a one-size-fits-all definition. We all have our own ideas about what it means guiding others to complete a particular task, while others believe it means motivating your team to be the best they can be. But while the definitions may vary, the general consensus remains the same: leaders are people who know how to achieve goals and inspire others along the way.

As I was trying to create my own definition, I found myself reading what other accomplished leaders had written. Business News asked several experts to define what leadership means to them. Maybe some of these ideas will lead you to create your own definition, just as it did me. Here is what some had to say:

"Leadership is being bold enough to have vision and humble enough to recognize achieving it will take the efforts of many". Kathy Heasley.

"A true leader is secure in creating a framework that encourages others to tap into their own skills and ideas and freely contribute to the whole of the project". Judy Crokett.

"In my experience, leadership is about three things: to listen, to inspire and to empower". Garfield Group ...

"A leader is someone who has the clarity to know the right things to do, the confidence to know when she is wrong and the courage to do the right things even when they are hard". Darcy Eikenberg...(One of my favorites)!

"A leader is a person who takes you where you will not go alone". Susan Ascher ...

"For me, leadership is an act...a decision to take a stand, or step, in order to encourage, inspire or motivate others to move with you. What's more, the most effective leaders do not rely on their title, to lead. Rather, their ability to use their own personal power combined with their use of strategic influence are what make them effective". Kendra Coleman.

"And lastly, another favorite..."Leadership is influencing others by your character, humility and example. It is recognizable when others follow in word and deed without obligation or coercion". Sonny Newman.

As you all know, I truly believe I am a blessed woman. I have had the opportunity to work with some of the best leaders and practice on those who are patient with me as I develop my own definitions. I am daily put in situations to "make solid" what is important. I am constantly reminded of how hungry many are to be lead, and lead with passion, dignity, humility, character, courage and faith. Therefore, these are some of MY adjectives important in MY leadership definition. As we all continue moving down our designated journey,...what are your "key words" in your leadership definition. Have you even considered the leadership "mark" you are or need to be making? Hopefully this will create a "pause" in your day and help you think about the impact you have on those around you. Daily....I think about mine! Remember always, you are loved! Stop and tell someone close to you the same thing! A true leadership moment!!!

JMax

A Tradition of Giving Back ...
Got Blankets?
The annual TITAN ATEP blanket drive was again a success … we collected and delivered 146 blankets to the OC Rescue Mission.

lb for lb!
The ATEP collected & donated over 600 pounds of food to the Second Harvest Food Bank during the 2014 holiday season.

NATA Research & Education Foundation

From the Soapbox

Change is sometimes good; change is frequently difficult; change is rarely smooth, but change is always challenging. Athletic training at Cal State Fullerton has certainly survived many changes over the decades. Some few of those reading these brief comments recall days of polyester shorts, mullet hair-styles, and old “physician bag” kits (still have mine somewhere). Like student-athletes and coaches, our AT students, team physicians, clinical staff, and related faculty have come and gone.

Some fortunate folks were able to meet and interact with Mr. Jerry Lloyd, who served as the Titan Head Athletic Trainer for
many years until his untimely passing. A few may know that Ms. Jo Silken was the first female athletic trainer at CSUF many years ago. More recently, some may recall our first official Clinical Education Coordinator was Dr. Steve Zinder, who now oversees the AT Education Program at the University of South Florida in Tampa Bay. Change is inevitable.

We must continue to consider our past, as we look to improve through change in the future. Recent months have brought more change to Cal State Fullerton athletic training. Ms. Amanda Rice-Vannatt departed for South Carolina and new adventures following her wedding in 2013. As a Titan alumna, Amanda dedicated herself to her students, her patients and her profession, while serving in her many roles at Cal State Fullerton. After many years of service, Mr. Chris Mumaw retired late last summer. Chris left a never-ending impression on many student-athletes, as well as AT students among others. Chris continues to make impressions today in his unofficial way, as he can frequently be seen in the AT Clinic imparting his words of wisdom and skills to all who pass through those doors. In addition to Chris and Amanda’s departure, Mr. Brent Smedley made the move last fall to join the AT staff at Cal Tech. Brent spent many years interacting with Titans as a clinician, a part-time teacher, and mentor.

With the departure of each, a void occurred. No one can replace any one of these folks and their unique skillset, but we have done our best to find individuals of strong character and good clinical skills to continue the legacy. Ms. Jaime Potter is presently completing her second season with the Titan Women’s Basketball team. Her upbeat personality and inquisitive nature make Jaime a great fit for us. Mr. Kyle Burnett and Mr. Michael Hoang both return to the campus where they earned degrees in years past. Kyle presently serves in his first year as a full-time assistant with the CSUF Men’s Basketball team, while Mike just came back to campus and will assist the many Track and Field student-athletes this spring. Both bring a unique mix of experience and knowledge that we know will move us to be better professionals.

In other changes, the AT faculty has recently completed a long and arduous search to add an additional faculty to the current three full-timers: Dr. Kavin Tsang, Mrs. Barbie Gil-Alviso, and myself. This search spanned the US and beyond, but in the end we found two outstanding academicians right here in our backyard. Drs. Tricia Kasamatsu (currently at La Verne) and Melissa Montgomery (currently at CSU Northridge) will join the AT faculty beginning in August of 2015. We are very excited about this change and their decision to join the Titan family. They have both exhibited expertise as clinicians, teachers, and scholars, which means we will continue to challenge our students for years to come. Additionally, Dr. Kavin Tsang was just voted to become the Chair for the Department of Kinesiology for the next three years. Although we certainly will miss his direct AT leadership and guidance, he will continue to be closely associated with the ATEP. He has promised to continue to teach, as well has help with the transition for our new AT faculty.

We extend our thanks and best wishes to Amanda, Chris and Brent in their new roles. The hiring of these five great young and rising super-stars are certainly evidence of the University’s commitment to Titan athletic training and our profession. Rest assured, the folks associated with CSUF athletic training promise to continue our pursuit of excellence. More detailed information on these folks will be shared in the coming months, but it is important that we welcome them into our family. Please consider extending your personal thanks to those who have moved on to new roles, and welcome each of our new Titans in the coming weeks.

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**Athletic trainer Julie Max a Titan through and through**

BY MIRIN FADER
Orange County REGISTER
2015-03-24 18:17:24

The athletic-training clinic at Cal State Fullerton is her home.

“Hey, how are you?” “What’s up, how was your weekend?” “Everybody OK? Have a great day.” Julie Max’s energy fills the place, and she doesn’t let a student-athlete pass by without a few words or a hug. “She is the mama of this ship,” assistant athletic trainer Jaime Potter said. Known as “Mama Max,” she serves as more than Fullerton’s director of sports medicine and assistant athletics director; she’s someone students depend on for support, as she’s
given as much love as instruction since she joined the Titans’ staff in 1979. “I'm happy to be sitting here today, 35 years later, and still being able to say I love what I do,” Max said.

All eyes were on Max. As a budding student athletic trainer at Fullerton College, she became the first female student allowed to work football games. Cognizant that every movement she made could potentially have an effect on future women entering the program, she took pride in her craft. “She commanded respect and got respect,” former Fullerton College head athletic trainer Bill Chambers said. “Some young athletic trainers think they have to be buddies with the athletes to get respect. Julie didn’t do that. The athletes respected her because she was smart, competent and always professional.”

After transferring to Cal State Fullerton and receiving her bachelor’s in kinesiology in 1979, Max continued to break barriers once she began working for the university full-time. She became the first female president of the National Athletic Trainers’ Association in 2000, serving two terms. She was inducted into the NATA’s Hall of Fame in 2007. Max remains one of few female head athletic trainers at the Division I level. Division I has the highest percentage of athletics trainers of both genders, but the smallest percentage of female head athletic trainers at 19.5 percent, according to a study by R. Vivian Acosta and Linda Jean Carpenter, “Women in Intercollegiate Sport. Thirty-Seven Year Update. 1977-2014.” Division II (31.6 percent) and Division III (42.4 percent) have higher percentages of female head athletic trainers.

“Make no bones about it, there were pressures,” Max said. “My philosophy is to first and foremost be a woman of faith, a woman of integrity, a woman of honesty. And if I run my life and my programs around that, I’m sure not to fail.”

“So I think so much of the barriers were just taking that philosophy and saying, ‘I’m going to work as hard as I can and I’m going to try to de-gender this position and see if it worked.’ And it just did.”

Every morning and night is the same for Max. She slips into her car to leave for work and prays: “Please, dear Lord, make this be a day that we don’t lose an athlete.” Then when she returns to her car at the end of the day: “Thank you, Lord, we got through this day without losing an athlete.”

For Max, athletic training is about saving lives; keeping athletes on the field as healthy as possible. But equally important to her is ensuring that athletes are in peak mental shape, too. Athletes deal with a great deal of stress and even depression from the pressures of performance. As a result, Max ensures that her clinic is more than a place to get ankles taped; it’s a safe haven for athletes to feel revitalized and supported. Coaches who are yelling or being negative are not allowed to come inside.

And no matter how packed the clinic is in the afternoon, Max makes an athlete feel like he or she is the only one in the room.

“Her people skills are unbelievable,” professor of kinesiology Robert Kersey said. “There's a lot of people in this country who have athletic-training skills that are equal to hers, I would say. But why she stands out, why she shines, why she's an ex-NATA president, why she's a Hall of Famer – is that combination of her clinical skills, her leadership or people skills, then her passion for athletic training and the people around her.”

In addition to her duties as director of sports medicine and assistant athletics director, Max is also a part-time kinesiology instructor at CSUF. She teaches a course on pathologies of sport injury. Just as she evaluates herself at the end of the day, replaying the day’s events in her head, she asks her students to constantly reflect on their experiences throughout the week.

Touching base with each student, she asks: “Tell me about the scariest experience you had this week? The most exciting experience? What did you learn? What could you have done differently?” She places her students in situations where they must think on their feet. Max said students are accustomed to being given a formula of how to do something before they can complete the task. Yet in athletic training, students must problem-solve using their own instincts, critically thinking through circumstances to find the answer. When students make mistakes, she calmly explains to them the error and how they can improve. “It makes a big difference, having a support system behind you, someone who actually genuinely cares about your well-being in this program,” senior athletic-training major Chris Mendez said.

Max has helped develop numerous athletic trainers who have gone on to be successful in various levels of sport. Notable alums include Ivan Piera, head athletic trainer for the L.A. Galaxy; Nina Hsieh, head athletic trainer for the Los Angeles Lakers’ development-league affiliate, the D-Fenders; and Armando Rivas, assistant athletic trainer for the Chicago Bulls. Witnessing students’ growth is rewarding for Max. “You mold them, you grow them, you mentor them, you water the seed,” Max said. “You have to prune, you have to fertilize, but the greatest joy is for me to step back and see the crop.”

Athletic training is not for the faint of heart. CSUF’s staff is present at every Titan practice, home game and 95 percent of road games. The clinic closes just two days of the year – Christmas and Easter – and that hasn’t always been the case. “We're the only ones that are in the trenches, no matter what,” Max said.

When her staff is fatigued during a long weekend of work, Max encourages them to remain positive. “She walks in and she just loves you up and says, ‘Dig your heads in, we got this. We can do this. This is OK,’” Potter said. “She's
that person that comes in with a smile on her face and just fires you back up.”

But as much as she inspires others, others inspire her, too. Every year, she asks her students for feedback on how she can improve as a teacher. Ten years ago, one student suggested she “slow down and be more present” with her students, despite her demanding schedule. Since then, she’s had a post-it on her wall displaying the message. “That never leaves me,” Max said. “Every day I look at that.”

Future generations of students will be able to share Max’ enthusiasm and passion for her work. This is the first year that Cal State Fullerton will offer the Julie Max endowed scholarship, which will provide $1,000 annually for an athletic-training student.

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