



Introducing: Erin Thornton, MS, ATC, Surgical Clinical Assistant at Rothman Orthopaedic Institute, and Webmaster for NYSATA

Erin Thornton, MS, ATC, is the surgical clinical assistant at Rothman Orthopaedic Institute in Westchester County, New York, and the webmaster for New York State Athletic Trainers' Association. In her role as a surgical clinical assistant, Erin assists the physicians during office hours by completing tasks such as brace fitting, MRI authorizations, patient follow up phone calls, paperwork, and more.

Thornton has been an athletic trainer for 16 years and got involved with New York State Athletic Trainers' Association for about 3.5 years ago. She initially engaged with the district level as part of the NATA District 2 Help Network and now sits on the NYSATA Website Committee. In this role, she works directly with the NYSATA web designer to keep the website updated with the latest information for NYSATA members.

Prior to her job at Rothman, Thornton spent 13 years as an associate athletic trainer for women's soccer and women's basketball at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York, which also happens to be her alma mater. She also spent three years as the program director for athletic training education at Canisius. One of the most memorable moments in her career actually happened while she was an athletic trainer at the school. "My favorite memory must be when I travelled to Italy with my women's basketball team. It was amazing to see another country, but also to see how the sport is in a completely different culture," said Thornton.

Thornton's interest in becoming an athletic trainer came from watching her father coach hockey. "I was around that sport a lot. I knew from a young age that I wanted to be that person that helps the injured athletes when they go down on the ice," said Thornton. "Funny enough though, I've never actually worked with hockey in an official capacity since I've been certified!"

When asked about her favorite part of the job, Thornton responded, "I just recently switched settings from collegiate to physician practice. I always loved being able to watch an athlete return to the court/field/etc. after an injury. Now, I get to see a wide range of patients including those who will return to sport, and some that will get to have their pain relieved to get back to day-to-day activities."

The last thing Thornton had to add was advice for aspiring athletic trainers or athletic training students. "Take care of yourself," she said. "As athletic trainers, we are constantly trying to help others. That's great, but in doing so we sometimes forget to keep up with our personal mental and physical health, and we are no help to anyone if we end up burnt out."