



**Introducing: Said Hamdan, M.S., ATC, NYSATA Fundraising Committee Chair, Coordinator of Durable Medical Equipment for Orthopedic Associates of Long Island**

Said Hamdan is a certified Athletic Trainer, chair of the NYSATA fundraising committee, and the Coordinator of Durable Medical Equipment at Orthopedic Associates of Long Island. In the latter role, he oversees all facets of bracing orthopedic injuries and distributing equipment for the patients of 15 doctors. In this role, Hamdan is able to employ all the skills he learned and developed in his 35 years as an Athletic Trainer including patient care, physician relationships, purchasing and distribution, and knowledge of medicine.

Prior to his current position, Said served as the New York Knicks Assistant Athletic Trainer (1997-2004) and beginning in 2004, worked as the Medical Coordinator for NBA Referee Operations. Before moving into professional athletics, he was the Head Athletic Trainer of Division I Sports and Adjunct Full Professor at Long Island University Brooklyn. He has also spent many years as a consultant providing medical services for a range of athletic and performance events throughout New York.

When asked about his career path, and where he ended up now, Hamdan said, "I loved working for the Knicks and the NBA. Both jobs afforded me the ability to excel at the highest level. But after 35 years, much of those spent traveling, I had to reexamine my priorities and what worked for me in my personal life. I wanted to be home more and travel less, so the transition to Orthopedic Associates of Long Island was a natural fit."

The recipient of NYSATA's 2015 Thomas Sheehan Award, Said is the organization's fundraising committee chair. While raising money is a priority in his position, he doesn't see that as the focal point in his responsibilities. "Fundraising for the sake of money isn't the point for me. The point is to get our message out there and to raise logo and brand recognition. The more people recognize NYSATA and our mission, the better off we will be."

When asked for advice for aspiring Athletic Trainers, Hamdan said, "Diversify. Make sure to learn all the different aspects of sports medicine, such as emergency care, rehabilitation skills, manual skills, and interpersonal communication skills, so you can pivot on a moment's notice. Also, work on your patience and learn how to listen more and speak less. Listening is a skill a lot of people don't know how to employ and it's one of the most important skills of all."

Like many in the field, Said did not start out intentionally on the path to become an Athletic Trainer. He knew he always wanted to do something in medicine, but he missed the deadline for being a physical therapist and didn't have the grades for medical school. He loved sports and had a desire to be in a health profession, so athletic training seemed like the natural fit. He graduated with his Master of Science degree in Sports Science from Long Island University and became a Certified Athletic Trainer in July of 1986.



Throughout his career, Said says his ethnicity has helped him bridge gaps when it comes to diversity. He is half Palestinian, half Puerto Rican, and spent most of his life and career in diverse settings. “Cultural competence is critical in athletic training. If there is anywhere that diversity needs to be welcomed with open arms, it’s athletics. The people we work with, whether student-athletes, professional athletes, or anyone else, are incredibly diverse. There needs to be a greater effort to address the lack of diversity, which would benefit any occupation or organization.”

All in all, Said has loved being an athletic trainer. “I love the uncertainty of it all, and the older I get, the athletes keep me young. My ability to do what I do at the highest level allows me to feel like I’ve never gone to work a day in my life.”