



**Introducing: Lauren Stephenson, MC, ATC, NYSATA President, Assistant Professor at SUNY Oneonta**

Lauren Stephenson is an assistant professor in the exercise science program at SUNY Oneonta, works part time as an athletic trainer there, and is the NYSATA president. In the Exercise Science program, Lauren teaches Kinesiology & Biomechanics, Special Populations & Current Health Problems & Issues, and is the faculty advisor for the softball team. As an AT she has transitioned from a more traditional role of being with specific teams to assisting with long term and post operative rehabs as well as with game coverage when needed.

As NYSATA president, Lauren draws on her business consulting and administration experience to elevate the profession and awareness of athletic trainers with the goal of improving the general public's understanding of what athletic trainers do and the importance of their role in protecting the health and well-being of the physically active. She also works to bolster diversity and inclusion initiatives while working to get legislative goals passed in New York state. This includes the recent passage of a licensure bill for athletic trainers in NYS.

As an athlete her whole life, Lauren decided to go into athletic training as it combined her love of medicine, specifically emergency medicine, with sports and being a part of a team. She enjoys making a difference in her patients' lives and is deeply invested in how her athlete-patients are doing on and off the field and court. Her involvement in NYSATA began because of her interest in public perception and recognition of athletic trainers. She joined the organization in 2011 and has been involved in various public relations projects and lobby days and letter writing campaigns on behalf of the governmental affairs committee.

Lauren has held academic and clinical positions throughout her career and in both of those the best memories she has are when her students/patients have come up to her and told her something she said or did had an impact on their life. Receiving notes from them or their parents is such a kind gesture that really makes you realize how much of a difference it can make to show that you care.

When asked if she had any advice for aspiring ATs or young professionals, Lauren said, "From a professional perspective, your knowledge and training have a value. Know that value and stand up for it. You are an expert in your field, and you should be treated and compensated as such. Do not be afraid to walk away when your value is not being recognized." She continued to say, "From a personal perspective, treat every patient like they have made your day by walking in the door. In most cases, patients coming to see you for treatment is not going to be the best part of their day. They are injured and potentially missing out on participating in a sport or activity they love. Smile, show you care, and listen to their concerns. You have the opportunity to make a difference in not only their day, but their life."