

## “Factors Impacting Collegiate Athletic Trainer’s Job Satisfaction: A Qualitative Study”

NATA FOUNDATION MASTERS RESEARCH GRANT: 2024-2025



**FUNDING:** \$1,000

**FUNDED BY:** MOUNTAIN WEST CONFERENCE AT RESEARCH ENDOWMENT

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Athletic trainers (ATs) are employed in settings outside of the traditional healthcare model and experience different workplace demands and environments. A multitude of factors can contribute to a provider’s level of job satisfaction. The purpose of our study is to explore factors that contribute to job satisfaction among ATs employed in the collegiate setting. This study will examine the ATs lived experience within the collegiate setting and examine the perceived job pros and cons, coping mechanisms, and work-life balance. Participants will be recruited utilizing convenience and snowball sampling. Each participant will take a pre-interview survey and be interviewed utilizing the phenomenological framework with semi-structured interview. Following data saturation, we will discover the themes and subthemes using processes including establishing trustworthiness using member checks and an external auditor.

### IMPACT ON THE ATHLETIC TRAINING PROFESSION

The purpose of this study is to add context to the body of research surrounding job satisfaction by examining the lived experience of collegiate ATs and their identified factors that contribute to job satisfaction. This study will offer better understanding of what the ATs value most in their workplace, setting, and profession. This information would allow employers to make educated decisions when structuring their workplace environments and allow future ATs to advocate for themselves when considering entering a new workplace environment or setting. We are hoping to begin to identify the driving factors for athletic training professionals’ attrition from clinical practice, what factors may increase longevity, and what aspects of the workplace inspire an athletic trainer to stay in their setting and workplace.



CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:

**Annaliese Andersen, Sophia Balmaceda, and Madison Cirillo**  
**SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Annaliese** completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Alabama. She began working with Dr. Weber Rawlins immediately after she matriculated to the San Diego State University Master in Athletic Training Program. She began working on Dr. Weber Rawlin’s Far West Athletic Trainers’ Association (FWATA) grant titled “Medical Disqualification Following Concussion: Insight into the Patient Perspective,” and “The Influence of Social Determinants of Health on Concussion Care Seeking Behaviors in Historically Underrepresented Ethnic and Racial Groups” which has resulted in two abstracts being accepted to SDSU’s Student Research Symposium and the FWATA Annual meeting in April of 2024. Upon graduation, Annaliese intends to pursue a career in the tactical setting.

**Sophia** completed her Bachelors of Science in Kinesiology with a Minor in Psychology from Washington State University. She has completed multiple clinical rotations at collegiate institutions and intends to pursue a career in the Division I setting. While her current clinical rotation is at a K-12 school, this diversity of patient population allows her a unique perspective on patient populations as an early professional.

**Madison** is an SDSU alum, having completed her undergraduate degree in Kinesiology Pre-Physical Therapy. She has had clinical experiences at a high school, junior college, and professional baseball. This diverse clinical experience shapes her perspective on workplace settings as an emerging clinician.