

ATAF 2023 Executive Board Candidate Bios



President



Pradeep R. Vanguri, PhD, LAT, ATC
Associate Professor
Nova Southeastern University

Pradeep R. Vanguri is an Associate Professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance at Nova Southeastern University where he has worked since 2008. He earned his Bachelor of Science from East Carolina University (Greenville, NC) in Exercise Science and his Master of Science in Education from North Carolina State University (Raleigh, NC). Upon completing his graduate work, he served as Assistant Professor and Assistant Athletic Trainer in the Athletic Training Program at Barton College (Wilson, NC) in the Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies. He completed his Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Instructional Leadership at The University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, AL) where he also served as graduate assistant in the Athletic Training Program.

Having lived in the State of Florida for the past 18 years, Dr. Vanguri served the Athletic Trainers' Association of Florida as the Education Committee Chair from 2007 to 2012 where he organized and developed the ATAF Annual Meeting including inviting speakers, managing conference logistics, and registration as well as maintaining the educational records for members. He served as a member of the ATAF Marketing and Public Relations Committee in 2017 and was elected to serve as the ATAF Secretary in 2018 and ATAF Vice-President in 2021. In his role as ATAF Secretary, Dr. Vanguri developed the strategic plan and goals with the Executive Board, maintained and coordinated all board meetings, and oversaw the Marketing and Public Relations and Young Professionals Committee. As the Vice-President he has helped to develop the strategic plan and priorities, implemented project management paperwork for greater accountability, and served as a liaison for the Board of Athletic Training.

Dr. Vanguri is seeking the office of ATAF President to provide his leadership to its members and constituents. Dr. Vanguri will advance the strategic plan developed through his term as Vice-President working with President Pattie McGinn-Tripp by setting new goals to achieve. Through his leadership, Dr. Vanguri will support the association and its many committees and help promote the initiatives set across the state of Florida. He has been a part of the Executive Board for the past five years and has developed relationships within the athletic training and medical community. As President, Dr. Vanguri will serve as an ambassador for the members of the association and support the profession of athletic training during his term.

Vice President



Kristen Couper Schellhase, EdD, LAT, ATC
Senior Lecturer
Program Director - Athletic Training Program
University of Central Florida

Dr. Schellhase has been the program director for the Master of Athletic Training degree at the University of Central Florida since 2004. Prior to becoming the program director, she was a practicing clinician with UCF Athletic Association (Orlando, FL 1999-2004) and Coastal Carolina University (Myrtle Beach, SC 1997-1999). While her current position is mainly academic, she retains her skills as a clinician by volunteering for the US Olympic Medical Volunteer Program, within Orange County high schools, and with the Magical Classic Gymnastics Meet (level 1- elite gymnastics). Dr. Schellhase has a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from UCF, a Master of Education in Athletic Training from the University of Virginia, and an undergraduate degree in Exercise Science/Athletic Training from the Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Schellhase has been an active volunteer within the profession since 2000. She has been the chairperson for the ATAF Secondary School Athletic Trainers' Task Force (2001-present), the Education Chairperson for the ATAF Annual Meeting (2014-2021), and was the Florida Representative to the Women in Athletic Training SEATA Committee (2004-2008). At the national level, she is currently serving as the Vice-Chair of the CAATE Standards Committee (2021-present) and was a member of and SEATA Representative to the Professional Education Committee (PEC) of the NATA (2014-2018). She participated in Capitol Hill Day in June of 2016, advocating for the Sports Medicine Licensure Clarity Act. She was awarded the ATAF College and University Athletic Trainer of the Year Award (2005), an ATAF Service Award (2021), an NATA Service Award (2019), and is an ATAF Hall of Fame honoree (2022).

Campaign Message: I have thoroughly enjoyed this career as a clinician, as an academic, and as a volunteer. I have a passion for advocacy and will work hard for athletic trainers in Florida. My past positions at the state, regional, and national level provide me with the knowledge and skillset to move the ATAF Strategic Plan forward. Specifically, I will ensure that Florida athletic trainers receive high-quality continuing education opportunities, I will lobby for legislation that promotes the profession, and I will bring recognition to the benefits that athletic trainers bring to all areas of clinical practice.

Secretary



Christopher D. Brown, PhD, LAT, ATC, CSCS, PES, OPE-C

Clinical Associate Professor

**Clinical Education Coordinator, Doctor of Athletic Training Program
University of Florida**

I am from Atlanta, GA. I began my athletic training career as an Assistant Athletic Trainer at Barry University in North Miami. While at Barry I also worked as the insurance coordinator and briefly filled in as the interim Head Athletic Trainer. After Barry University, I took a Head Athletic Trainer position at Sterling College in Kansas for five years. I received my PhD in Athletic Training from Rocky Mountain University and took a faculty position at the University of Southern Mississippi. While in Mississippi, I served as the MATA PR and Marketing Chair. After a few years at Southern Miss, I took my current faculty position at the University of Florida. I currently serve ATAF as the Secretary. I was awarded the ATAF President's award in 2018 and was named Educator of the Year in 2022. I live in Gainesville, FL with my wife Debra and our 5-year-old son David. We are expecting our second child this summer.

Campaign Message: I have truly enjoyed serving as the ATAF Secretary during the past several years. We have supported our members through the pandemic and on the political stage. We have helped shape the future practice of ATs in the state by working with the FL Board of Athletic Training on upcoming practice act changes. We have also revised ATAF's logistics to make it streamlined and more efficient. As an ATAF Executive Board member, I am excited about the future of our state organization, and I hope to continue to effectively serve the organization.

South I Representative



Dustin Gatens MS, LAT, ATC
Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine
Nova Southeastern University

Dustin Gatens is currently the Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine at Nova Southeastern University. Before returning to Nova Southeastern University, he served as an athletic trainer with the Holy Cross Orthopedic Institute and as a Clinical Sales Consultant with Sway Medical after serving for 12 years as a member of the Nova Southeastern University Athletic Training Staff. His final 5 years at NSU, he served as the Head Athletic Trainer for Research & Development. As a clinician, Dustin has been an advocate for an interprofessional approach to healthcare. He has spearheaded initiatives aimed at sleep hygiene, concussion management, and motivational interviewing.

Dustin has coauthored several peer-reviewed original research articles, focusing primarily on movement strategies and athletic injury.

Campaign Message: During that time, I have seen ATAF make tremendous strides in advocating for our profession in the state of Florida. If elected, my focus will be to continue to make sure that the profession of athletic training is better represented at the secondary school level in the state of Florida. The secondary school athletic trainer is an invaluable member of the local health community and are often one of the first experiences young patients have with the profession and therefore serve as ambassadors for athletic training. Through advocacy, education, and professional development of our members, we need to continue to emphasize the role of the secondary school athletic trainer in Florida and better support our members who serve in those roles.

Central Representative



Carlos J. Gual, Ed.D, LAT, ATC
Associate Instructor
Clinical Education Coordinator
University of Central Florida

Carlos J. Gual is a husband, son, and brother in Orlando, Florida. He earned his bachelor's degree in athletic training from the University of Central Florida in 2009. Additionally, he has earned a Master of Science in sports administration from the University of New Mexico and a Doctor of Education in educational leadership at the University of Central Florida.

Carlos became a member of the Athletic Trainers' Association of Florida in 2013. He served as a member and chair of the ATAF's Young Professional Committee (2016-2020). As a part of this committee, they met one of ATAF's 2018 Strategic Plan goals by increasing the percentage of ATAF members with a National Provider Identification (NPI) number. As chair of the ATAF Young Professional Committee, Carlos served as the Florida representative in SEATA's Young Professional Committee (2018-2020), where he was a part of hosting virtual power hours to discuss topics and information relevant to early career professionals. Carlos also served as a member of the ATAF College/University Athletic Training Student Committee (2018-2020) to develop the Student Leadership Enhancement and Professional Success Program. Carlos was also part of the task force for the Board of Certification Practice Analysis, 8th edition (2020-2021). Lastly, Carlos was voted as ATAF's Central Rep by the executive board in August 2022 to fulfill the remaining term of his predecessor.

Carlos is the clinical education coordinator at the University of Central Florida. He began working there in the Fall of 2013. He teaches several courses in the athletic training program, including Acute Care in Athletic Training 1 and 2, General Medical Conditions in Athletic Training 1 and 2, Seminar in Athletic Training, and all the Practicum courses. In addition, Carlos stays active clinically as an athletic trainer by serving as a medical consultant and on athlete medical teams for Red Bull North America. Lastly, he serves as a clinical instructor for Sports Medicine Emergency Management, American Red Cross, and Stop the Bleed.

Carlos previously worked as an assistant athletic trainer at the University of Maryland, providing healthcare services to the baseball, men's lacrosse, and men's and women's soccer teams. He also served as an athletic trainer for the women's volleyball, swimming, and diving teams at the University of New Mexico.

Carlos enjoys traveling, cooking, and experiencing new adventures with his wife in his spare time.

Campaign Message: I believe in service and servant leadership. I also believe that to be a successful ATAF area representative, a person must desire to serve the members of their region/community. My background demonstrates my willingness to serve others and allows me to represent the members of the central region of ATAF. As an athletic trainer, I serve and advocate for my patients. As an educator, I serve my students by providing them with an optimal education while tailoring their development to their specific goals and needs. Lastly, I serve my students, preceptors, and community as a clinical education coordinator.

As the ATAF Central Representative, my goal will be to serve the members of the central Florida region as their advocate to the ATAF executive board. In addition, my role as a clinical education coordinator allows me to interact with ATAF members in my region that work across various healthcare settings (i.e., high schools, colleges/universities, professional, rehab clinics, recreational/wellness, etc.). My constant communication with these members aids me in viewing their concerns through various lenses. As a result, I will be able to make informed decisions when voting in ATAF Executive Board meetings.

My goal as the central representative will be to grow my communication with the central region members so I can be more informed of their needs and concerns. To effectively achieve this, I intend to reach out periodically throughout the year to check in, request feedback on current topics, and answer their questions. I will also make myself available during the annual symposium to listen to their needs. Secondly, I will strive to provide professional support and resources as our local, state, regional and national organizations provide.

I believe I am qualified and can be a voice for the ATAF members in the central region. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve my colleagues and profession.

Pan Handle Representative



DeAnne Green MS, LAT, ATC, PES
Consumer Sales Manager
Select Medical

DeAnne Green, MS, LAT, ATC, PES is a graduate of The University of West Florida and received a Master's Degree from California University of Pennsylvania in Health Promotion and Exercise Science. Ms. Green has 15 years of experience in a variety of settings including clinic outreach athletic trainer at the secondary school level, professional soccer, and sports medicine/healthcare leadership in Indianapolis, Indiana. Presently, she is employed by Select Medical and is the Consumer Sales Manager for AZ, TX, LA, OK, and FL. She largely spends her time highlighting patients, services, and healthcare providers through various digital channels and social media outlets in those states.

Her first professional step was as a clinic outreach athletic trainer for the Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine located in Gulf Breeze, FL. During her seven years, she provided medical coverage for a variety of sports including high school athletics as well as youth league, Special Olympics, 18U international football, collegiate, and professional women's football. This afforded her the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from various providers along the continuum of care.

DeAnne was then recruited into leadership in Indianapolis, Indiana. During her 7-year tenure, Ms. Green played an integral part of the Community Health Network (CHN) Sports Medicine team as the sports medicine manager. She was tasked with operationalizing the new sports medicine program in Central Indiana. She managed athletic trainers and strength coaches that provided care for 33 schools, Indy Fuel Professional Hockey, Sarah Fisher (Indy Car) Racing, and Indy Eleven Professional Soccer for whom she was the inaugural team's Head Athletic Trainer. Upon leaving, CHN was the largest provider of sports medicine services in Indianapolis and top 2 in the state!

Additionally, throughout her career, Ms. Green has chaired, coordinated, or presented at various education initiatives. She has lectured on various topics including safety in sports, emergency care, catastrophic injuries, career ladder and transitions, leadership styles, conflict resolution, and project/process management in healthcare. Notably, she was a panel guest at the University of Indianapolis where she was able to share her experiences being a woman in leadership in sports with representatives from NCAA Compliance and NFL Combine.

Ms. Green has held positions on the Ossur Americas Athletic Training Advisory Committee, Education Committee for the Indiana Athletic Trainers' Association, and the Outreach Advisory Board for Advocates for Injured Athletes. She has received endorsements by the National Academy of Sports Medicine as a Performance Enhancement Specialist and the National Academy of Speed and Explosion as a certified speed coach.

Campaign Message: “We face numerous changes and challenges in the “how” and “why” of healthcare and daily practice such as telehealth, entry-level masters, evidence-based practice, cultural competency, and much more. For my fellow athletic trainers, my focus would be two-fold: First, I would like to continue my work with ATAF to ensure our athletic trainers are at the forefront of professional advancement. Second, I would continue to be a resource for Panhandle ATCs in understanding the various ATAF engagement opportunities and how that impacts them.”

West Coast Representative



Raena Steffen MS, LAT, ATC, CKTP
Athletic Trainer & Research Coordinator
Children's Orthopaedic and Scoliosis Surgery Associates, LLP

Raena Steffen is a graduate of the University of South Florida Athletic Training Education Program, earning her bachelor's degree in Athletic Training with a minor in Public Health in 2009. She later returned to the University to earn her post-professional master's degree in Medical Sciences, with a concentration in Athletic Training and Pediatric Sports Medicine, graduating in 2013.

During her career as a certified athletic trainer, Raena has worked across a variety of settings, including in administration, the physician clinic, the rehabilitation clinic, research, secondary schools, and national-team sports. She has had the opportunity to travel domestically and internationally providing care to the US Soccer Women's Youth National Teams. As part of her time with Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, she worked alongside sports medicine physicians and orthopaedic surgeons providing care in the clinic, on the sidelines, and to the USA Gymnastics Women's National Team. In 2019, she returned to her alma mater, the University of South Florida, as the Outreach Coordinator for the Sports Medicine and Athletic Related Trauma (SMART) Institute. Following the closure of the SMART Institute as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, she returned to the clinical setting. Her current focus and practice is in pediatric orthopaedic surgery, working as an AT in the physician clinic and as the research coordinator for a local private practice: Children's Orthopaedic and Scoliosis Surgery Associates, LLP.

She is a member of the Hillsborough County Public Schools Sports Medicine Advisory Council (HCPS SMAC), helping to develop county policies regarding exertional heat illness and return to play following a positive COVID-19 diagnosis.

In her free time, Raena enjoys spending her time volunteering, reading, baking, gardening, and spending time with her roommate and her dog. Raena is an active member of the Junior League of Tampa, participating in various community service programs, awareness campaigns, and charity events.

Campaign Message: Advocacy, communication, and professional support are three key components to a successful organization and profession. As the ATAF West Coast Representative, I will continue to advocate for the members of the West Coast of Florida to the ATAF executive board regarding their concerns. In order to effectively do this, open lines of communication must be created and maintained between the representative and the area members for which they represent. I will do my best in providing professional support and resources to the West Coast ATAF members as provided by our State, Regional, and National organization. I will constantly encourage my area athletic trainers to both utilize and support their peers for the overall benefit of the profession. It is my opinion that each individual athletic trainer serves as an example of both the importance and the impact that our profession can have in the healthcare setting and will use my position as ATAF West Coast Representative to support the continued advancement of our profession locally.



Lora Stelzer, MEd, LAT, ATC
Program Manager
WHS Human Factors & Ergonomics

Lora has been a part of the west coast of Florida for eight years. Initially she started as the Head Athletic Trainer at State College of Florida in Bradenton, FL. During this time, she also served as the chair for the previously known College and University Athletic Trainer Committee. Lora briefly left Florida for a University position in California, then transitioned to the industrial setting with Amazon. She returned to Florida in 2020. She continues to work with health, wellness, and ergonomics with Amazon. Prior to living in Florida, Lora volunteered with the Governmental Affairs committee in Missouri for MoATA.

My promise to all West Coast members: As your West Coast representative, I will ensure our voice is heard by our executive board. I will be the liaison between our membership and the executive board, making sure our best interests as allied healthcare professionals is a top priority. Let's show off what amazing professionals we are on the west coast and provide content for all members to see. As your west coast representative, I am here for you. Please allow me to make west coast concerns, accolades and achievements heard.