

Mercedes A. Himmons PhD, LAT, ATC: President Elect

Greetings fellow PATS Members! I am Mercedes Himmons (she/her/hers), and it would be an honor to serve as your next President-Elect. I have been a certified athletic trainer for 13 years and currently am an assistant athletic trainer at Southern Connecticut State University providing healthcare to Women's Gymnastics and Men's Soccer. My athletic training journey began at California University of Pennsylvania (Cal U), where I earned my Bachelor's and Master's degrees. I completed my PhD in Instructional Management and Leadership at Robert Morris University. It was at Cal where I learned the importance of service and leadership within athletic training. Since being an undergraduate student, I have been serving my peers, our patients, and promoting our profession. As a PATS Member, I have served on the Quarterly News/UpdATe Committee since 2013; was the Inclusivity Committee Chairperson and still am a committee member; and have most recently joined the newly formed PATS Quiz Bowl Committee. In 2022, I was honored to receive a PATS Service Award for my dedication to serving the Society, our Members, students, and patients.

I currently serve our profession as the NATA District 2 Ethnic Diversity Advisory Committee (EDAC) Representative. It is my passion to increase the ethnic diversity in athletic training and more specifically, in District 2. Initiatives I worked on as PATS Inclusivity Chair included highlighting our Members during Heritage Months, composing infographics with information on diversity, inclusion, and navigating tough conversations, and working on programs to present athletic training to underrepresented minority populations in the Philadelphia area. I am also passionate about serving our athletic training students and guiding them to be the future leaders of our profession, our state, and nationally.

If you were to ask current and recent PATS leadership about my involvement, they would likely tell you that anytime I have been called with a question or to assist with a project, I have gladly accepted (most times without question). Making sure that PATS remains ahead of the curve and a trailblazer in our profession is important to me. I love being in spaces and highlighting all of the things our Society does, especially the amazing work of the Governmental Affairs committee in moving our practice act forward to reflect our vast skill sets. This is why it would be an honor to serve as your next President-Elect. I have learned so much from the leaders of PATS, and have been provided opportunities for having been led by those before me. I am prepared to continue serving PATS and moving us forward wherever we can progress. My tenacity for learning and forward motion is clear in my daily life. It is my goal to show everyone that we CAN be athletic trainers and have lives outside of work. I am a daughter, a sister, an aunt, a godmother, a friend, and a mentor. In my free time, I travel the world to explore new cultures, experience new foods, and see the wonders I learned about growing up.