

Pinky Newell Address—Now, That's Leadership

Stephen E. Bair Med, ATC, Boston MA, January 9, 2010

Thank you Jack, for that kind introduction. We have been colleagues a long time and supporters of each other's projects over the decades and I appreciate your friendship and guidance. It is a great honor to give an address in Pinky Newell's honor. I had the opportunity to meet Pinky back in the seventies when we held this meeting in the Catskills. Grace and I joined him searching for the all important cheeseburger and milkshake that is hard to find in the Jewish Alps. I am proud to say that I have championed his primary causes of credentialing and accreditation.

I am certain that many of my friends on the Executive Council helped me reach this honor. However I think that most of them put me up here to see if I could embarrass myself again, damn near falling out of my chair during my hall of fame introduction and speaking into a mystery microphone during a District two meeting are my primary fauxpas's .

As is the norm for serious talks, I will start with a little laughter, I hope. And possibly follow this little short story with a few more chuckles. Last month one of my student athletes was resting with her compatriots prior to practice asked very seriously: What is Pink and fluffy, AJ my friend, can you answer this?.....Don't know, well it is a Pink Fluffy!!! So the next question is what is Blue and Fluffy.....Charlie, Do you know? Nope not a Blue Fluffy!! Everyone knows that Fluffy's don't come in Blue!! It is a Pink Fluffy Choking!!!!

I am going to try to lead you through my career and progression into leadership roles. None of this was planned, most of it I just fell into, Hopefully when I finish, you will say to yourself...I too can be leader!

Only my closest friends know that I am an Ordained Minister of the Universal Life Church. Surprised, me too, It took me ten minutes on line and a Twenty Dollar check to get my credentials, parking pass, and some sample certificates, wedding certificates, baptismal certificates, funeral certificates, and so on....also a little documentation on how to run services at home and write off Beer and Pizza at Football parties and call it halftime communion. At any rate, I am going to spin some anecdotes at you now and instead of a halaleula or amen reprisal, I would like each of you to answer each of these stories with.....NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP.

I have performed one Wedding in my ministerial career, Chuck and Cali Whedon, please stand and wave to the fans!! I officiated their wedding on the beach in Sea Girt NJ, wearing a clerical collar and a Hawaiian Shirt quoting Bruce Springsteen, Jimmy Buffett, and Tom Waits....

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

I was very lucky to meet John Kolmer the very first day that I arrived to go to work at Temple U. John "Doc" Kolmer MD practiced medicine for fun. He had sold a lucrative practice in Center City Philly, got lucky

and invested in IBM at \$17 a share, bought at Shore Home in Ocean City NJ for 18K and happened to be the son of a Clinical Research Physician that invented the first test for syphilis. He worked in the TU Health services, set his own hours and convinced his boss that he needed to be in the Athletic Training Room daily to check up on the sick athletes. John was a good catholic and avid Villanova alum and took great pride in the fact that he and his sons have played football there. He also took a great deal of pleasure in torturing our AD and Football coach during Villanova week. He was the only person allowed to smoke in the training room and we took to seeing how many ciggies we could get him to have going at once!

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

In fact, one time Dave Colt, Steve Pymmer and I gave ourselves ashes on Ash Wednesday out of John's Ashtray just so we could look like him. He immediately nicknamed us the "Protestant Bastards"!

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

John Welcomed our staff into his shore home at the end of each year for our annual party and he and his family joined in on all the fun. Doc taught us a lot about general medicine and was always there to lend a hand. He nicknamed Jeff Ryan, Mark Bramble and Bill VonLeer endearingly, shall we say, Tiny Male Anatomy. Mostly because they were always threatening to date his daughter and often putting stones in his hubcaps for a rattling ride home.

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

I would not be standing here if it weren't for Ronnie Barnes. He called my Temple Office one day in the early eighties and asked if I could host a certification exam at Temple. Two years later he recommended me for his seat on the Certification Committee that turned into the Board of Certification. I was able to be part of a Board that courageously and rightly broke away from the NATA to create an autonomous credentialing body. From this break off BOC credentialing grew to a three part examination with a credible item bank on to a nationally respected certification vehicle that manages an independent office with a full time executive Director. Thank you Ronnie....

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

I remember the first exam we gave at Temple. I arrived at 6:30 am to set up the Pearson Hall Dance Studio for the written exam. Todd Brutto, now a renowned physical therapist, was waiting in the dark in North Philadelphia to take his exam. A scary place for a Penn Stater. I brought him into the building and he helped set all the chairs up before he registered for the test!!

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

I also remember our first Board Meeting. Chairman Grace was called out of the meeting to sit on the Hot seat in front of the NATA Board and the ten of us were left twiddling our thumbs waiting for him to get back. Dr Joe Geik had the wonderful idea of ordering a case of Beer from Room service. The beer arrived cold

and tasty and we all began to wet our whistles when Paul arrived back in the room...of course the only idiot that had his beer planted in front of him was me, the rest of the group stuck their beers under the table, hence it was my ass that got chewed. I learned a wonderful lesson from Dr. Geik that day...

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

I served on the Board of Certification from 1984 to 1992. During that period of time I personally ran Examination sites all over District 2. I met many dedicated Athletic Trainers that volunteered their time to help administer the exam as well as many energetic young people that were sitting for the exam. In fact, I met a few of these folks more than once! So in 1993 I decided to run for District Director. I felt that my BOC experience gave me a very strong political base along with working and networking in Both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I was a good exam administrator and my colleagues recognized this by electing me to the District 2 director's position. When Dave Colt and I arrived in Board Room we were the outsiders. Everyone else had risen through the NATA District Ranks and was not part of the usurper BOC. We always spoke up and were prepared....

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

Probably the most important thing I accomplished on the District level was organizing the District Executive Council and giving the State Presidents and the Secretary and Treasurer the autonomy they deserved. We split the Secretary/Treasurer into two positions, created a viable budget and began to share resources with the State Associations. We all realized that the most important task facing all of us was state regulatory efforts and those efforts needed funding. I am very proud to say that each of our District 2 states has viable practice acts and we are national leaders in attaining these statutes.

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

I believe that one of the primary jobs of a leader is to identify leaders and work to put them in a position where they can show their skills. I consider these men and Women great leaders and I am proud to say that I had some small part in their success. Chad Starkey, Education Council Chair, Author, Professor: Tim Kelly, State President, Council on Employment Leader. Foundation Fund Raiser: Joe Iezzi, State President, District Director, Presidential Candidate; Mike Goldenberg, State Secretary, District Secretary, Database Guru, Website Designer, National Chair, Secretary Treasurers: John Davis, State President, District Secretary, National Chair, Secretary Treasurers, Tim Sensor, D2 Treasurer, Governance Expert extraordinaire; Jim Thornton, District Secretary, National Chair, Secretary Treasurers, District Director: Tanya Dargusch, Council on Employment Leader, State Leader, District Secretary: Paula Turocy, CATT E President, State President, Foundation Board Member. These are just a few of the people....Anyone else here that I influenced into leadership roles please stand and be recognized....

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

As Jim Thornton, Joe Godek, and Joe Iezzi can all tell you the amount of reading and preparation needed to do due diligence as a District director is time consuming, However the knowledge gained really

increases your skill sets and you get better and better with fiscal issues, educational issues, governmental and governance issues as well as management and organization skills.. I have often said that NATA Board is like gaining another Masters degree!! This all really piqued my interest into what is now my favorite thing....MONEY!!

I got the opportunity in 1998 to become ATSNJ Treasurer. We certainly had some issues then, including back IRS returns and no line item budget. Once these issues were solved ATSNJ grew into one of the fiscally strongest State Associations in the Country. I am very proud of what we have accomplished in New Jersey. We have passed or amended our practice act and created the only Department of Education Certification in the country. We also have a growing Political Action Committee that follows all Health Care Legislation in New Jersey. I am honored to be one small part of this leadership.

#### NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

In 2001 our former Regional School District dissolved and our school district went from 2 7-12 Schools to 7 individual districts, some K-8 and some k-12 with different High school sending arrangements for the K-8's. A real mess...at any rate our High School faculty joined an existing Elementary Education Association, **We needed High School representation and I had the background to become the treasurer.** Again I had the opportunity to develop a viable line item budget and bring fiscal strength to our Organization. We had a Philanthropic Fund that had no IRS recognition, so somehow I figured out how to gain IRS 501 ©3 recognition for this charity. That was just fun for me, **the import thing is our entire bargaining unit now knows the Athletic Trainer and realizes that that person is an integral part of the Educational System.**

#### NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

Early in 2004 Paula Turocy was appointed as chair of CATTE. Now this a is a huge task, Paula was charged with administering the accrediting arm of athletic training and soon moved that group to an autonomous accrediting agency. How about a quick.....

#### NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

At any rate, she asked me to take her Foundation seat, and I was duly nominated and elected to this post. **I have been a Foundation donor for a long time. I believe that it will be research that will position our piece of active person health care into the Future. In reality all you have to do is look at Doug Casa, Sandy Godek, and Kevin Guiskiewitz's and many others work regarding heat illness and closed head injury, to see that Athletic Trainers are focused on quality health care and safety for every active individual.**

Please realize that early in the Foundation development, NATA was able to add funds out of the excess created by working under budget. The foundation grew their savings into a 1.5 million dollar account. Times changed and NATA needed to fund other important projects and was unable to add annual funds to the Foundation. The Foundation Board has been primarily filled with researchers, who have done a great job selecting projects to fund, putting on the Free Communications and Poster sections of the Annual meeting and giving scholarships, but we have struggled with the fundraising and business end. Our ATSNJ Golf committee

and Executive Board created the Dick Malacrea Research Endowment, It took us four years to Fund the Endowment, but now it provides at minimum a grant for a Masters grant yearly in Perpetuity. The Foundation took this model and began the Capital Campaign...We created 32 similar scholarship or Research Endowments and have over 2 million dollars in pledges to these funds. Each Endowment and every sponsored scholarship will provide some funding for the operation of the Foundation. Our Goal is to Endow every scholarship and Every Research Grant, pretty lofty goals but certainly reachable with persistence and patience over time. Part of this Process was creating the Shoe Box Society for Planned Giving. **This is the planned giving arm and we are looking for each of you to support Athletic Training on the way OUT!!**

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

Now I hope that I haven't bored you with my story and I hope you didn't think I was just blowing my own horn.

**If you take anything away from this evening I want it to be this; everyone is a leader...If someone is hurt on the field of play who takes charge YOU DO!! Bill von Leer and two policemen saved a man's life last week. Stand up Bill!!**

NOW, THAT'S LEADERSHIP

There has been a lot of talk regarding Masters for entry level athletic training and the need for more independent clinical experience. I think we need to look at different models here; Masters Entry just follows the PT model. **My thought is to look at post certification Board Credentialing.** Require a time period of clinical practice to sit for the Board Exam and ongoing clinical experience to maintain your Board Certification. Think how many issues could be solved here, clinical educators would have to maintain Board Certification and Program directors would at least have to attain Board Certification. Food for thought.

**Public Relations are grassroots; use your leadership skills by volunteering with your local Community Service Groups or youth groups. If you work in a school system, get involved with your Local Education Association. You can serve in many different capacities; just ask your building Reps for some guidance!**

**Research will lead our profession into the future; you must fiscally support the foundation so that we can continue to grow the AT knowledge base. Make a pledge today, carry that pledge through the rest of your Athletic Training Career and then put a piece of your estate toward the future of our profession.**

**I am no different than any of you, pretty much an everyday Athletic Trainer. Don't be a complainer, if something doesn't work for you, be creative and visionary and find an answer.**

Thanks for your Attention.