

New Editor's Statement

Eric L. Denson
University of Washington

As I assume the editorship of the *Academic Athletic Journal*, this seems to be an appropriate time to share my aspirations for the *AAJ*. Before taking on that task, several "thank yous" are in order. First, I would like to thank Kathy Lyons, the former editor, for encouraging me to consider serving as the editor and generously sharing her wisdom and experience during the transitional period. It did not take me long to appreciate the magnitude of the position and the effort and dedication that were such key parts of her work as editor. Thanks are also due to Dr. Janice Jordan, mentor extraordinaire, for providing additional encouragement, the previous editorial board for their contributions, and finally to the University of Washington Department of Intercollegiate Athletics for financial and material support for this undertaking.

In many cases, a journal serves as the flagship for an organization. It is a major publication that represents one part of the organization that all of its members see, in contrast to events such as national conventions, whose influence is at times limited to those who attend. Perhaps more importantly, the journal is a document that represents the organization to those who are *not* members. The journal is often the first link between the organization and prospective members. In that regard it may serve—depending on how it is perceived—as an important resource and an enticement to pursue membership in the organization, which is important since strength in numbers is often a prerequisite to greater influence, and a strong and active membership is the lifeblood of any organization. Certainly, the N4A is no exception to that.

Apart from its value as a flagship for the organization, the journal is also an important disseminator of information. In this way, the journal is a forum for both research questions and application. It represents an opportunity to present the state of the art of knowledge in the field, and to do so in sufficient depth so that other professionals may apply that knowledge to their own institutional environments. The journal is also a way to stimulate thought and debate among professionals involved in providing support services to student-athletes.

With this issue, the *AAJ* ushers in several changes. The editor and composition of the editorial board have changed. Another change with the *AAJ* is the inclusion of an index of all articles published in the journal from 1986 to 1995. This index will be updated annually to reflect the articles published during the past year and should be useful to authors wishing to review the literature, as well

as new members wishing to know what has been previously published in the journal. The most obvious change, of course, is the cover. Even the best designs need to be changed occasionally in order to get people's attention. This seemed to be a natural time to redesign the cover, as well as the layout of the journal.

The basic philosophy of the journal has not changed, however. The primary audience remains the same—the psychologists, counselors, teachers, and advisors to student-athletes who make up the membership of the N4A—and the articles published in the journal will continue to emphasize that audience. As editor, I am committed to maintaining the readability of the journal's articles, while increasing the number and quality of scientifically rigorous submissions. Efforts will be made to expand the readership of the journal so that those currently lacking access to it will be able to gain such access, as the journal's contributors have important things to say that others should hear.

The purpose of the journal will continue to be publishing high quality articles that add to the knowledge base, challenge existing opinion, and explain the implications of research. Because ours is an applied field, articles considered for publication must clearly address practical applications as well theoretical foundations. As our field evolves, sharing information about what we do in our programs that works, and explaining the nuts and bolts of those processes remains an important task and one that this journal will ask its contributors to share in.

In closing, it is a privilege to serve N4A as the editor of the *AAJ*, and I look forward to hearing from lots of prospective authors. Thanks and enjoy!