

## meet...

TIM KELLY, 85BS

## Training American Heroes

The 1,000 college athletes under **Tim Kelly's** watch don't just train for the next game. They prepare for war.

As head athletic trainer at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, Kelly makes sure they're ready. His 11-member staff oversees athletes from Army's 26 varsity sports, working to prevent injuries and treat them when they occur.

Because West Point cadets are being groomed as the nation's next military

leaders, Kelly can't take his injured athletes out of class for rehabilitation—and students who disobey the academy's rules are quickly dropped from the team.

While these practices don't necessarily promise wins on the field, Kelly enjoys the advantages of a well-disciplined crew. "We have no egos here," says Kelly, 85BS. "You ask an athlete to do something, and it gets done without any questions. A lot of athletic trainers would be jealous of the relationships that we have with our athletes."

Kelly, who has worked at West Point since 1987, credits the UI mentors who guided him as a student athletic trainer for inspiring his career. Grateful for his learning experiences with

both Hayden Fry and Dan Gable's championship teams, Kelly plans to pursue a doctorate in education, with hopes he can prepare a new generation of athletic trainers.

While Kelly enjoys working with Army athletes, friendships initiated at West Point can lead to heartbreak. After graduation, Army cadets serve five years of active duty, facing death on the frontlines in Afghanistan and Iraq. "When you get to know them personally, it punches you in the gut," says Kelly of losing former students and friends. "It's a struggle sometimes, but here, it's a fact of life."

--SHELBI THOMAS



West Point athletic trainer Tim Kelly inspires Army cadets with a quote by General Douglas MacArthur, which serves as a reminder of how success in sports can translate to the battlefield: "Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that, upon other fields, on other days will bear the fruit of victory."