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## APTA ARIZONA ANNUAL ELECTIONS 2021

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This is a chance as an APTA Arizona member to voice an opinion about those who will be shaping the future of Physical Therapy in Arizona. The APTA Arizona election will be done by electronic vote. The ballots will be tallied and announced at the virtual Fall business meeting on October 3, 2020.

No voting will take place at the business meeting.

This year we will be electing:

Districts 1, 3, & 5 Representative,  
3 Delegates.

This notice is to introduce you to all the candidates running for the election. Electronic ballots must be received no later than 3 hours prior to the Fall Members meeting.

### **Slate of Candidates**

**District 1 Director** (Western Maricopa) Letha Zook

**District 3 Director** (Eastern Maricopa) Jefferson Holm

**District 5 Director** (Northern Arizona) Kara Koenitzer Tate

#### **Delegates (Vote for 3)**

Katherine Hench

Jefferson Holm

Tarang (TJ) Jain

Lori Pearlmutter

Kim Varnado

# 2021 APTA Arizona Nominations

## DISTRICT ONE Representative



### CANDIDATE

Letha Zook

#### **Education:**

EdD - Columbia University - Teachers College, New York, New York (Applied Physiology); MS - New York University, NY, NY (Pathokinesiology); BS - University of Pennsylvania, Phila, PA. (Physical Therapy)

#### **Employment:**

Chair Physical Therapy, Associate Professor, Franklin Pierce University, Goodyear AZ February 2020 - present Rehab Program Manager, Physical Therapist; HealthPro-Heritage and Sunrise at Bluemont Park, Arlington, VA and Sunrise at Reston, VA March 2018 – February 2020

#### **APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:**

Virginia Chapter of APTA: Co-director of Northern District 2018 - 2020; West Virginia Chapter of the APTA: Education Program Chair, Delegate to HOD, President-Elect and President, 2000-2005; Various committees in New York and California.

#### **COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:**

D.R.E.A.M.S. Community Development Corporation, Charleston, WV, Board member, 2015- June 2017  
Café a la Fikr, Charleston, WV Board member, 2013 to 2020

#### **Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.**

My leadership style is collaborative and inclusive. I enjoy creating a team and helping each member grow and develop skills to reach their passion in the profession. I believe that developing leaders for our profession is the key to our growth and stability. The APTA and its components are vehicles for this development.

#### **Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?**

I have been privileged to be a member of several state chapters and in leadership roles in two. I started in committee membership in New York and California. After moving to West Virginia, I moved into leadership as president of that chapter. In Virginia, I was the co-director of the Northern Chapter during my brief time in that state.

#### **Discuss two major challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.**

The profession is involved in great change, along with the entire health care environment. No one is sure which direction the change will occur, but the APTA and the Arizona Chapter are the best tools to keep us moving forward. With national and local perspectives, we can maintain a realistic perspective on the best way to weather the winds of change. I have significant experience in the academic endeavor, including several levels of leadership. I have worked closely with different disciplines in these leadership roles and have learned about the critical role of PT in the interdisciplinary team.

The past couple of years, I returned to working full time in the clinical world of geriatrics. In this time, I have learned the strains of working in a restrictive system of Medicare and the challenges it brings to our profession. Again I believe that the association provides the best way to make our voices heard to the government and insurance companies in advocating for our patient's health.

## DISTRICT 3 Representative



### CANDIDATE

Jefferson Holm

#### **Education:**

BS Kinesiology (Arizona State University)

Doctorate of Physical Therapy (University of Pittsburg)

#### **Employment:**

Advanced Neurologic Rehabilitation

Physical Therapist & President

#### **APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:**

APTA Member (2010-Present)

APTA Delegate (2017-Present)

District 3 Representative (2019-Present)

#### **COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:**

Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona

We're Moving Forward: Fun, Friends, and a Community after Brain Injury

American Parkinson's Disease Association

#### **Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.**

As an entrepreneur, I feel I am able to come up with creative solutions to tackle old problems. Small business owners are faced with challenges on a daily basis. These challenges require a novel solution secondary to budget, personnel, and time restraints. In order to not only survive but also thrive, individuals must be able to identify the problem and quickly determine a solution to that problem. Sometimes the solution is straightforward and easily determined. Other times, the solution requires creativity, flexibility, and ingenuity.

As an entrepreneur, the other quality of leadership I feel I possess is one of resiliency. Sometimes, life is a grind, and those that survive are the ones who stick it out. In business, those who make it are often the ones who refused to give up. I'll admit that serving within the APTA hasn't always come naturally to me. The two positions I have served in have often caused me to stretch and grow professionally in ways I wasn't prepared for. However, I have committed to the struggle, and I hope that I am eventually molded into someone that is of great service to the profession.

#### **Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?**

I am a candidate who has been serving in the position of Delegate from 2017. I have attended and participated in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 house of delegates. I have observed and learned from great men and women who have served our profession in these roles. Blair Packard, Jim Roush, Kimberly Verado, Karen Muller, Karen Bustillo, Jamie Kettle, and many more. These individuals have helped to mentor me and prepare me to serve effectively in this position. I have been on the front lines of policy decisions and am knowledgeable about the issues that are most important to our profession at this time, including payment and reimbursement issues, student debt, telehealth, and other areas for expanded practice, cultivating a profession that is more inclusive and diverse, member engagement, governance, and bylaws.

#### **Discuss two major challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.**

Since my first term, I have always felt the most important issue facing our profession was that of reimbursement. Physical therapists provide a valuable, cost-effective service that is grossly undervalued by Medicare and other 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers. In 2021, physical therapy services are expected to see an 8% pay cut so that Medicare can balance the budget after giving physicians a raise for their services. Additionally, next year services provided by a physical therapist assistant are expected to see a 15% reduction. Medicare and the major commercial insurance companies have continued to devalue physical therapy services, and the APTA needs to elect leaders that will fight against this disturbing trend.

## CONTINUED – Jefferson Holm

In addition to the above, one of the greatest threats facing our profession is that of student loan debt. The cost of physical therapy education is outrageous. On average, physical therapy students are graduating with > \$107,000 of debt. The average salary of a newly graduated physical therapist in Arizona is approximately \$71,000 to \$75,000 per year. Therefore, the return on investment for a physical therapy degree is becoming increasingly questionable. To make matters worse, physical therapy schools are continuing to proliferate across our state and country at a rate that will eventually lead to a supply and demand issue. Imaging graduating with over \$100,000 in debt and not being able to find a job. Many of the 2020 graduates faced this challenge with hiring freezes brought on by our current pandemic. I fear our profession will face this problem to a even greater extent if we do not start finding solutions to these problems.

## DISTRICT 5 Representative



### CANDIDATE

Kara Koenitzer Tate

#### Education:

2007. Doctorate of Physical Therapy from Northern Arizona University.

2004. BS Biology from Northern Arizona University

#### Employment:

Current: Self-Employed, Kara Tate Physical Therapy, LLC. DBA: Heal at Home Physical Therapy. Treatment focus: Ergonomics, Employee Wellness, Orthopedics, Pain Management, Chronic Pain, Sports Rehab, Post-op, and Pre-hab. Current: PRN staff Physical Therapist with Synertx Rehabilitation at Aspire 2015-2017: Briotix Health Injury Prevention and Physical Therapist for the Vera Whole Health Clinic Public Trust Employees. 2015: Concentra Physical Therapy 2014: Medical Management Profession at Walgreen's Distribution Center 2008-2013: Synertx Rehabilitation at The Peaks 2007-2008: Flagstaff Medical Center's Outpatient Clinic in Sedona, AZ (now Entire Care)

#### APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:

APTA member since 2007

Private Practice and Orthopedic member since 2014

APTA Arizona District 5 Representative since January 2018

#### COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Orthopedic Physical Therapy since 2018

Volunteer with Coconino Humane Association

#### Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.

I lead by listening, and what I've heard from you is that this has been a very trying time. All of the physical therapists and physical therapy assistants I have spoken with have stepped up to handle this crisis in stride. Some have lost their employment, permanently or temporarily. We've reached out to help each other manage the economic strife. I want to continue to help unite us as stronger together so that we may serve our population in a way that provides insightful and purposeful growth. I look forward to hearing more of your concerns and stepping up to serve by taking action efficiently and effectively.

#### Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?

I have been a practicing physical therapist for 13 years and have worked in a variety of settings by choice. Currently, I am serving as the District 5 Representative. The future is very exciting in that even though our district is very spread out, we have moved our platform to provide accessibility through virtual experiences. I am well-versed in providing ZOOM events and have been practicing Telehealth Physical Therapy since the pandemic. I can help you bring your ideas forward in this unusual yet very effective technological shift.

#### Discuss two major challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.

First, On all of our minds is providing best practice patient care in the time of COVID. I would like to improve access to testing so that we are able safely to provide services with increased safety and observance of safety for the larger population. And second, insurance and reimbursement with the challenge of competitive forces increasing in the time of dissemination of information through multi-media that affects the perception of

## CONTINUED – Kara Koenitzer Tate

wellness, health, healing, and rehabilitation. This effect can influence prospective patients/clients such that they may receive care from those not as qualified as those of us who've dedicated our lives to the field of rehabilitation. The change in the way care is delivered is changing.

Exponentially. I'm interested in helping our profession move forward effectively and quickly, given the dynamic multi-media technological platform growth. And finally, I'm driven to provide better access to PTs and PTAs interested in access to recent research. I would like to increase membership benefits to include open access to relevant journal articles in addition to currently accessible journal articles through APTA

### DELEGATE



### CANDIDATE

Katherine Hench, PT, DPT, NCS

#### Education:

Doctor of Physical Therapy, 2015 from Rosalind Franklin University

#### Employment:

St. Joseph's Hospital, Dignity Health 2017-current  
Shirley Ryan Ability Lab 2015-2017

#### APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:

IPTA Student Representative 2015

IPTA District Representative 2016 -2018

I am an active member of the APTA and APTA ARIZONA. I attend district meetings and annual conferences.

#### COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

I am an active member in the ANPT. I volunteer at community events such as triathlons, swimming competitions, running, and adaptive cycling. I also am engaged in the community as a foster parent.

#### Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.

I bring outside experience in the IPTA with new ideas and innovations to grow the APTA Arizona. I am a strong leader with organizational skills, initiative, and a strong work ethic.

#### Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?

I bring my past experience as a District Representative in IL.

#### Discuss two major challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.

1. We have low participation in district level events. We need to increase participation at this level so we can increase feedback and create an appropriate agenda to meet the needs of our district. I would help create a plan to increase participation through appropriate events and outreach to members.

2. Public perception of our field: We are a looked over specialty. I would help to create a plan to increase our visibility and promote awareness of our strengths in our field.



### DELEGATE

### CANDIDATE

Jefferson Holm

Please see above District 3 Representative for Jefferson Holm's Information

## DELEGATE



### CANDIDATE

Tarang (TJ) Jain

#### Education:

MGM Medical College, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya,  
Indore, India 2003

University of Kansas Medical Center Kansas City, KD 2011-2014

Certified Clinical Densitometrist	2017
Scholar – Faculty Development Collaborative Program in Geriatrics	2014 – 2015
Health Professions Educator Certificate	2013
Certified Kinesio Taping Practitioner (CKTP)	2013
Certified Exercise Expert for Aging Adults (CEEAA)	2012
Certified Basic Life Support (BLS)	2009 – present

#### Employment:

Physical Therapy and Athletic Training, NAU, Flagstaff, AZ

Associate Professor – 2020 – Present

Assistant Professor – 2014 - 2020

#### APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:

2020 -2021 - Centennial Ambassador – Academy of Physical Therapy Research, APTA

2019 - 2021 - Member – Continuing Education Committee, APTA Arizona

2019 - 2020 - Alternate Delegatee – APTA Arizona

2018 - Emerging Leader Award – APTA

2017 - 2020 - Chair Research Committee – APTA Arizona

2017 - 2019 - Member Awards Committee – APTA Arizona

2017 - Member - Scholarship Committee – APTA Arizona

2014 - 2018 - Chair & Vice Chair Early Career SIG – APTA

2016 -2018 - Member - Awards Committee – APTA

2016 - 2018 - Chair - Communications Committee – APTA

2007 - Present - Member - Educations Section - APTA

#### COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

2018 – 2021 - Chair – Communications Committee, American Society of Biomechanics

2014, 2015, 2018 - Item Writer – Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy

2014 – present - Social Network Coordinator – American Society of Biomechanics

2016 – 2018 - Member - International Society for Clinical Densitometry (ISCD)

2014 – 2018 - Member - WCPT network for Physical Therapy Educators (PTE)

2007 – present - Member - American Society of Biomechanics 2007 – present - Member - International Society of Biomechanics

2007 – present - Member - The American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists

2014 – present - Member - Gait and Clinical Movement Analysis Society

2009 – present - Ad-Hoc Reviewer for several journals and conferences

#### Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.

I am humbled to be considered for the Delegate Position of the APTA Arizona. As I went through the list of past delegates, I find noteworthy not only the remarkable contributions that these individuals have made to refine the vision of physical therapy but also their service to our profession and the exceptional role models they have been to many of us. This is an elite group of people, and I am honored to have my name in consideration for this position.

## CONTINUED – Tarang (TJ)Jain

I am a big proponent for the physical therapy profession and always worked in enhancing its role in the community/society. Through my various leadership experiences, I have had opportunities to meet a diverse range of people from all backgrounds and walks of life. Volunteering has not only helped me to develop my interpersonal skills but also has provided numerous networking opportunities. I understand the importance

of effective communication, being organized, and keeping a growth mindset to meaningfully contribute to an organization and infuse the greater sense of community. I have a continuous desire to learn and am always looking for opportunities to better myself and bring positive changes in people around me. I am dedicated to upholding and continuing the path towards excellence set before us, and I am excited about the opportunity to help further APTA Arizona's vision and growth.

### **Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?**

Leadership is about working with people to do new things, tackle problems, and empower individuals to deliver their best in this increasingly complex and fast-changing world. In my working with different committees/organizations within and outside Arizona, I have had the privilege of working with leaders who I see as role models, motivators, informants, challengers, a citizen, and a change agent all in one. With increasing years, I have come to appreciate the importance of

"thinking global and acting local"—that is, to put a tactical set of steps to deal with the ever-changing challenges, while at the same time be extremely focused on the game-plan week-by-week and even day-by-day. I have always been a team-player and understand the importance of communication/ making new connections in running a successful organization, as evident by my leadership positions as Communications chair for the American Society of Biomechanics and Academy of Physical Therapy Research, American Physical Therapy Association.

I was new to the alternate delegate position last year, and I feel that I was able to partially meet my goals of a) understanding APTA Arizona and its needs, b) create new connections, c) learn the House of Delegate (HOD) processes, and d) experience the nuances of being an APTA Arizona delegation committee member. It will be an honor to continue in the committee and learn more about the Association governance from the seasoned delegates through these challenging times. I believe that my enthusiasm, background, and past leadership experiences will help me to be a strong delegate member and make a substantial contribution to the APTA Arizona chapter. I am in awe of the APTA Arizona's willingness to grow with the needs of the membership and am committed to supporting that in whatever capacity I can. If elected, I will continue to work with the committee members and APTA Arizona leaders who have promoted important policy issues within the APTA Arizona while encouraging diverse membership involvement at the APTA and beyond.

### **Discuss two major challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.**

There have been many important initiatives taken up by APTA Arizona, but I still believe the top 2 major challenges facing the profession/state association are:

- 1) *Membership Engagement and APTA Arizona influence:* Staying relevant for APTA Arizona members and non-members in delivering our value – being nimble enough and truly innovative to produce and provide timely and vital support – information, education, mentorship, resources, and tools - for owners and practitioners in different healthcare settings is needed to better serve the community. Unfortunately, most payers still only focus on the cost side and neglect the benefits portion of the value proposition (Value=Benefit/Cost). Establishing a value for our practices and professional services will be necessary to thrive in the coming years. As a candidate for this position, I can do my part to foster a culture of inclusivity and strengthen membership engagement within APTA Arizona by integrating intentional networking, mentoring, and coaching into the work that we do. I believe it's up to each one of us to reach out and invite others to become an integral part of a dynamic and engaged membership.
- 2) *Professional Diversity:* We are a large group, and we have many things in common, including our commitment to patient/client care that truly help the communities we are blessed to serve to live with less pain and improve quality of life. However, I believe that we can further achieve quality health outcomes for all and better serve our communities by committing ourselves to be a more diverse profession and meet the demands of the changing demographics of US society. We, as a profession and organization, need to devote our attention and energy in advocating for and developing resources to help promote physical therapy as a viable career option for a diverse population, broader than just racial and ethnic minorities. I bring a different perspective about increasing diversity and will be willing to share my experiences to promote cultural diversity in the physical therapy profession.

In closing, my previous experience as an alternate delegate and continued involvement in the physical therapy profession make me a stronger candidate for this position. I am passionate about our profession and our association, and I sincerely thank APTA Arizona for the opportunity to run for the delegate position. I look forward to working with you and on your behalf.

## DELEGATE



## CANDIDATE

Lori Pearlmutter

### Education:

Masters Public Health – University of Arizona  
BS Physical Therapy – Northern Arizona University

### Employment:

ACO Executive/ Director Population Health – North Central Az Accountable Care – Prescott, AZ 2019-Present  
Quality Manager – North Country HealthCare – Flagstaff, AZ 2016-2019  
Director of Rehabilitation – Kachina Point Rehabilitation Hospital – Sedona, AZ 2016  
Senior Manager Therapy – Banner Healthcare – Page, AZ 2015-2016  
Process Improvement Advisor – Steward Healthcare Network Boston, Ma 2014-2015  
Director Therapy Svcs/Wellness/Cardiac Rehabilitation – Flagstaff Medical Center – Flagstaff AZ 2009-2014

### APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:

Executive Board (Treasurer) - APTA Health Policy Admin/The Catalyst Section 2019-present  
Executive Board (Secretary) - APTA Acute Care Academy 2016-2019  
Payment and Practice Committee - APTA Health Policy and Administration/The Catalyst 2016-2019  
Board (Nominating Committee Chair) - APTA Acute Care Academy 2014-2015  
Member Nominating Committee - APTA Acute Care Academy 2012-2014  
Delegate - APTA Arizona House of Delegates 2010-2011, 2012-2013  
Ethics Committee – APTA Arizona  
Nominating Committee Chair – APTA Arizona  
Vice President - APTA Arizona 1994-1995  
Public Relations Chair - APTA Arizona 1986-1989

### COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

Co-Chair Summit Society - United Way of Northern Arizona 2017-2018  
Board/Executive Board (President)- Northland Family Help Center Shelter Services – Flagstaff, AZ 2013-2015  
Diabetes Together Community Task Force – Flagstaff, AZ 2012-2013  
Advisory Board – Native Americans for Community Action – Flagstaff, AZ  
Executive Board (Secretary, VP, President) – Flagstaff Family YMCA 2004-2010  
Member Arizona Governor's Council On Traumatic Brain Injury  
Board Including Chair) Arizona Governor's Council on Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Diseases 1991-1995  
Humanitarian Efforts Reaching Out (HERO) Medical Mission to Nicaragua 2014  
Northern Arizona Volunteer Medical Corps (NAVMC) Medical Mission to Haiti - 2011

### Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.

Since becoming a PT, I have held many leadership positions at work and in the AzAPTA and APTA. My generally transformational leadership style with teams of highly-skilled, talented, and motivated people has helped to create a mission and vision and achieve meaningful goals. I support, encourage, provide skill development, and help remove barriers for the members on my teams. My ability to work with others to operationalize strategic aims aligns with the work of the AzAPTA and APTA in moving our profession forward. As a delegate, I will use my skills to help us maintain our professional perspective and envision how our dreams can move us to action. With my teams, I have been able to create successful innovative programs in hospitals, primary care, and now an Accountable Care Organization. I look forward to using my expertise in achieving the purpose of the House of Delegates.

### Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?

As someone who has embraced professional and community leadership throughout my career in a wide variety of settings, I believe I am well-positioned to be an asset to the Arizona Delegation. I am impressed with the vision and growth of the APTA, which is in great part due to the hard work of the House of Delegates. The motions put forward by the larger HOD and the Arizona Delegation, in particular, has assured that our profession remains true to our original ideals while helping us take a greater role in the larger healthcare discussion. We have grown to be major contributors to the national conversations addressing Population Health, Social Determinants of Health, and Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

## CONTINUED – Lori Pearlmutter

My breadth and depth of healthcare leadership roles both in my jobs and in APTA positions allow me to understand the needs and challenges of the PT community in diverse areas of practice, payment, education, and leadership, as well as how to best collaborate with other aligned professions. The experience I bring is of someone who has a deep love of PT, with my feet firmly grounded in the Rehabilitation model, while able to assimilate new ideas and partners to improve healthcare and Population Health.

I have directed many teams over the years. I have been told by other leaders, as well as those who reported to me that I listened, supported all members of the team, and always held the patient and our mission/vision at the center; skills that are essential in addressing difficult and complex subjects. I will help make sure that all in the delegation have a voice and that we stay true to our goals. I believe strongly in day to day improvement and work hard to keep a sense of perspective and state my opinion respectfully while understanding I may not have all the answers.

**Discuss two significant challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.**

1. PTs have so much to offer our patients and healthcare. Unfortunately, we still have a way to go in how we are perceived by other healthcare professionals, something that is apparent during this pandemic. PTs understand how "essential" we are. Still, I am disheartened to hear how many PTs are being repurposed into nurses' aides, doing all the temperature screenings, working in the supply chain, or furloughed while our patients in the ICU and elsewhere struggle to breathe and move. There are incidents of care managers at Health Plans telling people they don't need PT during the pandemic, without even a nod to the possibility of a telehealth visit or a plan for a patient to see a PT in person safely. We all know what will occur with people who have had COVID and will potentially be disabled and how "essential" PTs will become. We cannot wait for that, or for the "tsunami" of chronic illness which will occur when people who have avoided COVID but due to months of immobility and isolation, have exacerbated chronic conditions. It is almost criminal that CMS is trying to reduce our payments during a pandemic, reducing our potential impact. We cannot let this happen. We all know intuitively, and from our research that we make huge changes in the lives of our patients and our populations. This is the time for us to ensure that everyone knows how valuable we are. As an ACO director, I have come in contact with many "movers and shakers" in the healthcare world and have communicated the value of PT outside of our "traditional" roles. I have written and called leaders in the state and at the national level. I am active in local politics and contribute to state and national PT PACs. I think we all have to identify where we have influence and share our message in the most effective manner. Being a part of the House of Delegates, driving APTA policy is another way I believe I can make an impact.

2. PTs must continue to take on larger leadership responsibilities in healthcare. Our unique knowledge of the movement system has led to us transforming the lives of many of our patients, but it has also created a niche for us that can feel very safe. There is too much we have to offer and too much at stake for us to continue to "stay in our lane." A few years ago, when I had to find a new job, I was dismayed to find out that many jobs for which I was qualified, in executive leadership, quality, care management, compliance, and IT, to name a few –required an RN or an MD license. We need to remove this roadblock and take the lead in moving into higher-level leadership positions in healthcare organizations and governing bodies, to assure that the Physical Therapy voice is heard in the larger healthcare community. The Health Policy and Administration/The Catalyst section recently created a catalyst group "Beyond Clinical," and it was so wonderful to attend the CSM presentation and see that there was standing room only in the huge auditorium. I also was excited to attend other presentations about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Population Health, Global Health, and LGBTQ issues and find that there was no room for me to sit. I think we need to use that groundswell of interest and seize the time to become true partners in interprofessional practice. I have included this message in mentoring students and new graduates. We can all encourage new PTs and even those with experience to become leaders in the nation's health. I have presented on many leadership topics locally and nationally, and have joined groups that are addressing larger healthcare issues. I continuously communicate the value that PT brings to our healthcare system, reaching out to people working at CMS, Community Health Centers, hospitals, and other organizations, probably boring them with my elevator speech; about the importance of partnering with PTs. I look forward to the opportunity to be a part of the Arizona delegation, offering my expertise and vision to help move the profession onto the next 100 years!

## DELEGATE



### CANDIDATE

Kim Vernado

#### Education:

Credentialed Fellowship Graduate of the APTA Education Leadership Institute (ELI) (2018)  
Doctor of Health Sciences (Education Concentration), A.T. Still University (2017)  
Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists (2011)  
Board Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (2011)  
Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapy Fellowship, Kaiser Permanente (2010)  
Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency Program, Kaiser Permanente (2009)  
Doctor of Physical Therapy, Indiana University (2005)  
Bachelor of Science (Biology), Tennessee State University (1998)

#### Employment:

Founding Program Director/Associate Professor, College of Saint Mary, Omaha NE (2018-Present)  
Assistant Professor, Midwestern University, Glendale AZ (2011-2018)  
Private Practice Owner/Physical Therapist, Inquisicare LLC, Phoenix AZ (2015-Present)  
Scorebuilders, National Physical Therapy Exam Instructor, Scarborough ME (2018-Present)  
Onsite Solutions, Physical Therapist, Maple Grove MN (2015-Present)

#### APTA Arizona & APTA Engagement:

American Board of Physical Therapy Residency & Fellowship Education  
Accreditation Service Committee (January 2016-Present)  
Delegate, Arizona, (2017-Present)  
APTA Federal Advocacy (2019)

#### COMMUNITY/CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

Hearts in Motion, Supervising Physical Therapist: Provided physical therapy services to medically underserved patient populations and supervised physical therapy students in patient care management

Zacapa, Guatemala (November 2017, 2016, 2015)

Forever Young Running Series LLC (Cookies & Milk Run)

Emergency Medical Coordinator

Created & coordinated the emergency medical plan and organized healthcare volunteers for the 5K race, Scottsdale AZ (March 2017, April 2016)

Rock' n' Roll Marathon

Physical Therapy Team Lead for Midwestern University

Provided physical therapy services to event participants, Tempe AZ (January 2017, 2016, 2015)

Forever Young Running Series LLC (Wings & Sneakers Run)

Emergency Medical Coordinator

Created & coordinated the emergency medical plan and organized healthcare volunteers for the 5K race, Glendale AZ (November 2016)

#### Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of APTA Arizona.

Describe your leadership qualities relative to the current needs of AzPTA.

I build inclusive communities and empower groups and individuals to use their strengths, knowledge, networks, and resources to advocate for health equity for all patient populations, improve access to physical therapy services and education, and lead diversity initiatives within organizations. To empower others, I use skills acquired through self-study and formalized educational programs to mentor, coach, and/or

## CONTINUED – Kim Vernado

consult with university administrators, program directors, faculty, private practice owners, students, clinicians, and community partners around the country. I spend a considerable amount of time reading, studying, planning, and anticipating the changing needs of society. I readily use a structured leadership approach. I am a logical and practical problem solver who enjoys envisioning creative ways to support people and communities. I follow my values, I lead by example, I enlist others in a common vision, I search outward for opportunities to be innovative, I foster collaboration by building trusting relationships, and I encourage others to be the best versions of themselves. I also use a shared leadership approach with my teammates; I think it is important to gather multiple perspectives from a diverse group of individuals to inform decisions that are made that impact the association and the profession. The leadership qualities listed above can help support the current needs of AzPTA.

### **Based on the specific position you are running for, what experiences would you bring to this position that makes you a strong candidate?**

For the past four years, I have been mentored by the Chief Delegate and seasoned delegates in the Arizona chapter. I understand the importance of identifying the needs of my constituents and drafting comprehensive motions that will improve our professional practice. I engage in robust discussions within the Arizona delegation to ensure that motions presented to the House of Delegates truly benefit the members and improve the profession. I challenge the status quo, and I lead from the middle to make certain the delegation writes and supports motions and elects leaders who are aligned with the values and vision of the Arizona delegation. I often reference past motions the Arizona chapter has supported or created to strengthen the development of future motions. I have extensive experience engaging in productive and sometimes difficult conversations to address problems and build collaborative relationships. I enjoy solving problems, learning, writing, achieving, analyzing data, and fostering connections within organizations (i.e., APTA). These skills and experiences have prepared me to serve the Arizona delegation for a third term.

### **Discuss two major challenges facing the profession and/or the state association and how you would contribute to a positive agenda for progress in these areas.**

1. Membership reduction due to COVID-19 and fostering support for clinicians and patients affected by COVID-19 (patterns of practice and patient management).

2. Addressing health disparities in minority populations by improving race relations within the profession and clinical practice.

To address the first challenge, I am open to exploring creative options to keep members engaged in the association, including tiered membership, providing no-cost or low-cost continuing education for clinicians managing challenging patient populations affected by COVID-19. This could include exploring options for the development of a telehealth mentoring portal to connect clinicians with experts within the profession to assist with patient management. I have consulted with APTA staff to learn best practices to establish and support membership engagement. Therefore, to get more input from our members, I've been investigating the possibility of using the APTA Engage platform to connect with members to potentially host live quarterly virtual Arizona townhall meetings or sending out surveys to our members to gain their perspectives and ideas on motions that we should bring before the House of Delegates. I think it is important to hear the concerns of our members, and that the Arizona delegation uses that information to inform the motions concepts that we create and support in the House of Delegates.

To address the second challenge, I am working with the President of AzPTA to establish a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee within the chapter to build and sustain a community that embraces diversity, is inclusive, and pursues equitable processes for AzPTA members and the public. In addition, I am working with the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT) DEI Consortia to create webinars to improve race relations within academic programs, clinical settings, and professional encounters. I also have experience building mentorship pipelines to support efforts to diversify the profession. I have been engaged in this work for a decade, and I am committed to using my knowledge, networks, skills, and resources to promote positive changes in the profession. I am the founding Program Director of a blended learning DPT Program. With my DPT faculty team, we use holistic admissions processes, culturally responsive teaching, and learning practices, and we integrate social determinants of health throughout the physical therapy curriculum to develop graduates who will provide quality PT services to medically underserved and diverse communities.

I believe these ideas will address the identified challenges facing our profession and/or state association.