



Greetings Friends of the Arizona Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association:

Welcome to November, and Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours! APTA Arizona has so much to be thankful for, and I encourage you to reflect on the past year with a sense of gratitude for all that we have accomplished with the support of our members. We are better together, and I thank you for your continued support.

Please allow me to personally thank all our exhibitors, sponsors, and attendees for a wonderful Fall Conference. Special thanks to Laura Safa and Christina Romeo from Gateway Community College for hosting us, and a sincere thank you to our speakers, Muna Ali, Torry Foster, and Lee Ryder, for their wonderful presentations. Also, a huge thank you to everyone who participated in the return of our poster and platform presentations. A special thanks to incoming Board President Adi Halili and Board Treasurer Tarang Jain for their work on the research committee. We did not have enough members present and voting for our potential Bylaw changes, but we look forward to returning these potential changes to our next Business meeting. Thank you to the Student SIG for hosting P.T. Pub Night afterward and to our Executive Director Christa Lombardo-Ploof for making this Conference a success!

Please allow me to thank all who ran for a position on the APTA Arizona Executive Board and Arizona Delegation. Congratulations to newly elected Board Members Jim Linskey (Vice President), Griffin Lee (District 2 Representative), Melissa McCune (District 4 Representative – Board Appointment), Valerie Beuschlein (PTA Caucus Representative Alternate), and Tanya Lee (Nominating Committee). We have an amazing Board for 2024, and I thank you all for your service to the Profession. Jamie Kuettel, Seth Peterson, Kayla Black, and Stephany Shaibi were elected as Arizona Delegates and Jaime Gonzalez as Alternate Delegate. Welcome to APTA Arizona; I look forward to working with you all!

We also had the privilege of publicly acknowledging our 2023 APTA Arizona Award Recipients and Student Scholarship winners. Please allow me to publicly recognize Valerie Carter as the 2023 P.T. of the Year and Kacey Dennis as the 2023 PTA of the Year. Christina Romeo was formally announced as the Chapter's 2023 Emerging Leader Award, and the outgoing Board members were recognized. Thank you to Ami Griver (Vice President), Christina Romeo (District 2 Representative), Jennifer Zoucha (District 4 Representative), and Kacey Dennis (PTA Caucus Representative) for their contributions to the Board. I am honored to call you colleagues and friends.

Each year, APTA Arizona awards three \$1000 scholarships to P.T. students and two \$750 scholarships to PTA students, made possible by the generous contributions from the Arizona Physical Therapy Director's Group. Student Physical Therapist Award Recipients were Catherine Deck – NAU, Kyla Quintanilla - A.T. Still University, and Madeleine Ansel - A.T. Still University. The Student Physical Therapist Assistant Award Recipients were Austin Wright - Gateway Community College, and Erik Castelan - Gateway Community College. Thank you to all of the students who applied, and we hope that you will consider serving Arizona's Physical Therapy needs in the future! Please consider supporting the Arizona Physical Therapy Director's Group by attending their next continuing education course scheduled for November 16th on Informed Consent.

We would also like to recognize our 2023 APTA National Award winners from the Arizona Chapter, who are John Heick PT, DPT, PhD, and Amit Kumar PT, MPH, Ph.D. Dr. Heick was awarded the Dorothy Baethke-Eleanor Carlin Award for Excellence in Academic Teaching, and Dr. Kumar was awarded the Jack Walker Award. Congratulations to both of you on your well-deserved recognition!

As always, I wish you all the best on behalf of the Arizona Chapter. Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Executive Director Christa Lombardo-Ploof if there is anything the Chapter can do on your behalf.

With Gratitude,

Brian Schmitz PT, DPT
President, Arizona Physical Therapy Association