

Candidate Statement – Candidate for Director



Tracy Porter, PT, DPT, EdD

Question: What uniquely qualifies you for the role of Director, and how does that contribute to the association's vision, mission, and strategic plan?

Response:

I am humbled to be a candidate for the role of Director for the American Physical Therapy Association. I have been a member of APTA and APTA Iowa since 1995, and my career is truly enriched by the resources and connections membership provides. My personal value of service, and the example of professional mentors, led me to formal roles within the association. I served as APTA Iowa secretary from 2013-2016, vice president from 2017-2019, and president from 2019-2021. I also participated as an Iowa delegate from 2018-2020. Three things uniquely qualify me for the role of Director: diversity of experiences and connections, ability to meet emergent needs while maintaining focus on strategic priorities, and effective conflict resolution skills.

I often say I have yet to meet an area of physical therapy practice that I don't enjoy. I practiced for nearly 15 years for a privately owned, certified rehab agency in Iowa in critical access hospitals, outpatient clinics, skilled nursing facilities, and home health settings. For the past six years, my primary clinical practice has been in a university-based, outpatient setting. In addition, my academic role includes coordinating clinical education experiences for DPT students. I regularly interact with physical therapists in all settings throughout the United States. I will bring a broad understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities in many areas of physical therapy practice to the APTA board.

As APTA Iowa president, I led the board in addressing emergent needs while maintaining focus on strategic priorities. In 2019, we developed an ambitious strategic plan focusing on member engagement, leadership development, public awareness, and interprofessional collaboration. Enter COVID-19. APTA Iowa pivoted quickly to provide key resources to our members forming a COVID-19 task force and providing weekly updated telehealth guidelines for all major payers. A COVID-19 Facebook group and webpage were created as centralized points for information and communication. We hosted webinars with area experts to assist members in navigating critical issues, such as employment law. I included our strategic plan on each board meeting agenda to maintain accountability to our priorities. Through the efforts of our board and the strategic plan champions, we accomplished nearly all our strategic initiatives including the development of board leadership orientation materials, launching a practice podcast, increasing participation in district activities, and developing public awareness opportunities.

A third unique qualification is my experience facilitating crucial conversations and managing conflict. My approach involves assuming positive intent, maintaining focus on shared goals, and creating an environment which offers opportunities for differing viewpoints to be shared respectfully. In my professional role, I use these skills regularly when addressing student performance in the classroom and clinical environments. In my service on various boards, I am often asked to lead challenging conversations.

My attributes and experiences support APTA's vision, mission, and strategic plan. Achieving our vision will require the ability to respond to emergent issues without losing sight of our professional identity and value as movement specialists. Societal challenges threaten to divide us, but we must remain focused on living out our core values, increasing public awareness of our profession, and identifying key ways we can use the power of

movement to better our communities. Building community is inherent to APTA's mission. I bring experience engaging with diverse communities and identifying unique collaborations to improve the health of society. A recent example is my collaboration with a local non-profit agency providing life-skills development, mental health support, and addiction prevention services. I have had the opportunity to present to several community-based groups about movement as a tool for managing stressors and building resilience, through this partnership.

Finally, I am equipped to support APTA's strategic plan. By engaging with and demonstrating value to our members, APTA Iowa maintained a strong fiscal position even during the COVID-19 pandemic. My work in building community collaborations and identifying public awareness opportunities in Iowa supports APTA's initiatives to increase access to physical therapists in innovative settings and maximize stakeholder awareness of our profession. My career experiences and APTA Iowa leadership roles have positioned me for this next step. Diverse experiences, ability to meet emergent and long-term needs, and conflict resolution skills have prepared me for service at the national level. I look forward to an opportunity to serve diligently as Director and contribute to APTA's vision, mission, and strategic plan.

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