

2023 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Nominating Committee



Matthew Downey, PT, DPT Board-Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist

Question: What is your role as a member of the Nominating Committee to cultivate a pool of qualified potential candidates that inspires inclusive representation of a diverse membership?

Response:

The membership of APTA represents an increasingly diverse breadth of individuals from varying backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, and practice settings. The growth and advancement of our association and profession relies on the APTA Nominating Committee facilitating inclusive representation of this diverse membership in our current and future leadership. I am a strong candidate for the APTA Nominating Committee because many of my leadership roles in our association have focused on not only finding leaders but also on creating a self-sustaining culture to develop emerging and current leaders. As a member of the APTA Nominating Committee I would: 1) create and maintain pathways for leadership to reduce barriers for involvement for both APTA members and potential members and 2) focus on collaborating with APTA components and other organizations to grow our pool of potential leaders.

The APTA Nominating Committee should continuously reflect on and update its processes for cultivating the pool of candidates to identify how it can reduce barriers to involvement and leadership. My service as a member of the Nominating Committee at different component levels reflects my expertise in this area including in California's Student Special Interest Group, in my local San Jose District of the California Physical Therapy Association (CPTA), and as part of a large, diverse component with the CPTA. As chairperson of CPTA's Nominating Committee I helped to update the nomination processes and strategies we used to cultivate candidates by expanding the breadth of our potential candidate tracking documents. We tracked additional information about these individuals including tracking previous position interest, previous nominations and elections participation, geographic location in the state, and having the "green, yellow, and red light" for readiness for leadership. This improved the ease with which our committee could identify and assess each potential candidate's readiness for leadership. We also analyzed the needs of our chapter leadership, gathered feedback from potential leaders and voting members on the election process, and improved access and transparency of the opportunities for leadership in our chapter. These have all led to an increase in member engagement in our elections process and with member interest in leadership positions leading to a more diverse leadership in our chapter's Districts and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) all the way up to our elected Chapter Board. These are strategies that I intend to bring with me if I were to serve on the APTA Nominating Committee. Improving our Nominating Committee's processes and strategies to decrease barriers to leadership will expand our association's ability to identify and cultivate our leadership.

It is essential that the APTA Nominating Committee collaborate with the components to build every pool of candidates and to share resources to successfully guide future leaders through their leadership journeys. As chair of CPTA's Nominating Committee I organized meetings with our local District and SIG Nominating Committees to learn what barriers their members faced in getting involved. These conversations helped us develop resources to share with our Districts and SIGs to help them identify local leaders that we could inspire and cultivate to one day hold chapter-level leadership positions and beyond. This helped us to identify new

graduates, early professionals, and even more seasoned clinicians who were not highly involved in our association for future leadership roles. We can improve the utilization of the APTA Nominating Committee Hub in a similar fashion to help the components communicate and share resources facilitated by the APTA Nominating Committee. I have also engaged and fostered relationships with strong leaders in other organizations and areas outside of the APTA that the APTA Nominating Committee can collaborate with to expand its pool of potential candidates. There are many leaders in our health care systems and non-profit organizations who can bring their experiences and knowledge to our APTA leadership.

My leadership journey has focused on engaging others and I aspire to continue this work as a member of the APTA Nominating Committee. The success of the APTA relies not only on the dedicated work of its leadership and membership, but also on its ability to consistently motivate and develop future leaders who will move the APTA and our profession forward. I feel my journey has provided me with the skills and experiences that contribute to the APTA Nominating Committee's incredibly important mission to create an inclusive slate that represents all facets of our diverse membership. I am honored and excited to be slated as a candidate for the APTA Nominating Committee and I humbly ask for your vote.