

Candidate Statement – Candidate for Director



Kim Nixon-Cave, PT, PhD, MS, FAPTA Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Pediatric Physical Therapy

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:

My name is Kim Nixon-Cave, and I am excited to have the opportunity to serve on the APTA board of directors. For any of you who do not know me, my professional development has been a journey of professional formation that has uniquely prepared me to serve on the board of directors and to facilitate the achievement of the APTA's mission, vision, and strategic plan. My journey has been multidimensional, always practicing as a clinician while developing as an educator, researcher, and mentor. Along my journey, I developed the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that transformed me into a competent, reflective physical therapist with strong professional core values. The opportunity to serve on the board of directors will allow me to bring my unique perspective based on my professional journey and lived experiences, along with my leadership skills, professional values, and success as a professional.

As a physical therapist, I believe it is important to continue to practice as a clinician. My clinical practice focused on pediatrics, has included being the manager of a large pediatric academic health system which positioned me to influence PT practice, and to develop PT professionals and students as future clinicians. My goals have included sharing the value of good clinical decision-making and clinical reasoning, increasing the use of clinical practice guidelines and the prevalence of board specialty certifications, as well as demonstrating the need for cultural diversity, cultural competency, and humility with the PTs I have supervised and mentored. My many years of clinical experience allow me to bring perspective on the best approaches to patient care along with the importance of ensuring equitable, quality care for all patients and clients.

My extensive academic experience as an educator includes holding various leadership positions including being interim chair, DPT and residency program director, and director of clinical education. I have developed both academic and clinical PT programs including clinical treatment and research programs, entry-level DPT, transitional DPT, residency programs including pediatric, neurologic, orthopedic, and a neonatology fellowship program. These experiences have provided me the knowledge and leadership skills for program development as well as the development of PT students, faculty, and clinicians to help shape PT practice and contribute to their professional formation.

I have been a member of APTA since my early career, which has afforded me the opportunity to be actively involved at many levels of the association, from the chapter, section/academy, and national levels. My journey has included serving on the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties, and the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education. These experiences helped me develop value as an influencer and change agent with a commitment to excellence and forward-thinking to have a broader influence on the PT profession and the future of APTA.

The experience of being the only minority student in my PT class opened my eyes to the lack of diversity in PT. Just as Kermit the frog says, "It's not easy being green". I became committed to increasing diversity so that no student would ever feel green. I have infused the goal of increasing diversity in all aspects of my

career including teaching, clinical practice, community service, and publishing on issues focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion to better serve patients, clients, students, and colleagues. I became involved in initiatives focused on increasing minority awareness of the PT profession. As a faculty member, I worked to increase the diversity of students in PT, which resulted in recognition by APTA for minority achievement and retention. I served on APTA committees focused on minority initiatives, such as supporting the Diversity 2000 scholarship fund. I helped develop pipeline and mentoring programs for students and clinicians. A measure of my success is supported by a student's comment, "When I saw you, I knew I could become a PT." As healthcare professionals, it is important to provide an environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive for patients, clients, students, and colleagues regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other such factors. Focused efforts on increasing diversity and striving for equity and inclusion will allow full achievement of the APTA vision: "Transforming society by optimizing movement to improve the human experience" for all patients, clients, students, and colleagues.

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Contact: governancehouse@apta.org