

2022 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Vice Speaker



Kyle Covington, PT, DPT, PhD

Question: What is your vision for the future of APTA, and what knowledge, skills, and abilities do you possess to help us achieve that vision?

Response:

My vision for the future of APTA is that our association fully achieves its potential to provide a dynamic, progressive, and responsive home for each of its members, so that they can develop as individuals through pathways matched for their unique needs while also collectively moving our profession forward.

The needs, interests, and challenges of our members and potential members are changing rapidly. During our first century, the APTA was successful in providing a place for members to learn, grow, network, and advocate, while advancing the profession forward. Our second century will be different. Now, PTs and PTAs can find infinite ways to learn and advance their skills and knowledge for practice. Our members and potential members can easily network through technology, social media, and other mechanisms in ways previously impossible. We must find ways to address these changing expectations in order to maintain APTA's relevancy.

We have the ability to be an organization that meets members where they are in their career trajectory by individualizing their education, experiences, networks, and professional development. Through the use of data we can better understand what an individual's specific needs are, and target opportunities and resources to optimize their experience as a member. Recent changes in our membership policies and bylaws revisions afford us key opportunities to re-imagine the future of membership and how members engage with each other and the organization. We should carefully consider opportunities to package membership in ways that honor the different needs of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants at various places and stages of their career development and personal life. To achieve my vision for the association we need shifts in our systems and historical assumptions to meet individual needs instead of an organization that leaves it up to individuals to figure out their place within it. In essence, no one should ever question that they belong in the organization if we are effective in meeting each individual's needs.

However, we must not lose our ability to be a strong cohesive voice for the profession in an effort to meet individual needs. These two concepts should not be mutually exclusive, but rather by ensuring each member feels a sense of belonging and has the opportunity to develop along personalized pathways, we strengthen our collective resolve as an organization and better achieve the profession's vision to "Transform society by optimizing movement to improve the human experience." Achieving this vision is a challenge, but one that we are poised to achieve in the face of current uncertainties of practice. The complexities of fair reimbursement for our services, the increasing needs to reduce unwarranted practice, and the rising costs associated with education, pose significant challenges to our profession as we enter our second century. In order to address these challenges, we must rely on the expertise and engagement of our members to act as ambassadors and advocates, not only for the profession, but also for the APTA. We can make progress in these areas which threaten our profession by empowering each and every member to see themselves as leaders.

The APTA's Board of Directors has the responsibility to ensure success in our mission by shepherding the association's resources and focusing on the needs of members and potential members in an effort to help them find their unique and purposeful role in "Building a community that advances the profession of physical

therapy to improve the health of society". The APTA's House of Delegates has an equally important responsibility to fix its sights on the horizon of our future and seek ways to move the profession towards our vision through high level and innovative policy that sets our direction. With the foresight of our Board and the leadership of our House, we have the potential to ensure an organization where everyone finds a place to belong, develop, and contribute.

It is an honor to be slated for a second term as a member of the Board of Directors and the Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates. I am deeply committed to collaborating with others to find progressive solutions to the challenges we face. With my background as a component president, my sustained service to the House of Delegates, and the knowledge and experiences gained in my first term as Vice Speaker, I am eager to address the needs of our members, build inclusive pathways for development, and in turn, advance our profession forward. I am enthusiastic about playing a role in helping these visions come to fruition.

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