

2022 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Nominating Committee



Tracy Porter, PT, DPT, EdD

Question: The main charge of the Nominating Committee is to slate the right people at the right time for the right leadership position in order to best serve APTA and its needs. What processes would you use to accomplish this charge?

Response:

I am humbled to be a candidate for a position on the Nominating Committee of the American Physical Therapy Association. I have been a member of APTA and the Iowa component since 1995. My professional life has been enriched by the resources, connections, and opportunities APTA provides. Serving on the Nominating Committee is an excellent opportunity for me to support the work of APTA by assisting in identifying the right people at the right time for the right leadership positions.

The processes I would bring to support the Nominating Committee charge have been informed and developed through various roles and experiences. I served as APTA Iowa secretary from 2013-2016, vice president from 2017-2019, and president from 2019-2021. I participated as an Iowa delegate from 2018-2020. I am Des Moines University's Physical Therapy Club advisor and faculty mentor for our APTA Iowa student representatives. My professional responsibilities also include serving as assistant director clinical education.

During my terms as vice president and president of APTA Iowa, I reviewed the makeup of our board and identified key voices and stakeholders missing from service and leadership at the component level. I facilitated board discussions regarding potential barriers to service, then developed a process which included making personal invitations, building relationships, and connecting those invited with other members of the board. During my terms, the diversity of our board increased significantly. We added new delegates representing rural and underserved areas, as well as critical access hospitals. We added new board members and committee chairs with diverse practice interests. Our board was enriched with varied perspectives guiding decisions, and our membership and financial position remained strong, even during the pandemic.

My role as Des Moines University's Physical Therapy Club advisor highlights another process I would use to meet the Nominating Committee charge: regular engagement with diverse communities. Key roles of the Physical Therapy Club include community service and advocacy for the profession. It has been critical for me to foster and maintain relationships with partners such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Anawim Housing (which provides supportive housing for individuals struggling with mental illness or addiction), and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Developing and maintaining these relationships requires me be present in various communities. On the Nominating Committee, I will strive to find ways to do the same, by attending a variety of conferences and meetings and networking within special interest groups. As I do so, I will focus on listening for barriers to service and offering resources needed to equip members to serve.

As a mentor to APTA Iowa student representatives, I employ another process which I will bring to the Nominating Committee: investment in developing future leaders. I encourage student APTA Iowa representatives to attend meetings and conferences. I regularly invite them to participate in APTA and APTA Iowa initiatives and opportunities. I strive to personally welcome their involvement and connect them with key individuals to build their broader professional network.

Finally, in my role as assistant director of clinical education I communicate regularly with physical therapists and physical therapist assistants across much of the United States. This role offers valuable insights on unique challenges and opportunities in different regions and practice settings. Exploring these varied perspectives may inform the Nominating Committee in how to reduce barriers to service and facilitate its charge to slate the right people at the right time for the right leadership positions.

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