

2025 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Director



Kendell M. Jno-Finn, PT, DPT

Question: Describe how the core attributes for elected leadership you possess contribute to the fiduciary and strategic responsibilities of a Director on the APTA Board of Directors?

Response:

I believe one of the most important attributes of effective leadership is a strong sense of self as well as the mission of the organization. Strong sense of self allows one to lead with quiet confidence devoid of fear for loss of status, negates power struggles that negatively affect the mission and allows the assumption of “positive intent” in passionate discussions that may contain perpendicular positions to an issue. I possess a strong sense of myself. I have worked hard for 17 years as a PT to broaden my perspective on issues, formulating all the data I can find and finding practical and manageable solutions. Sometimes quick answers are prioritized over thoughtful and thorough problem-solving, but I enjoy a collaborative approach in the pursuit of solutions to complex situations.

The second attribute that I bring to the organization is a strong understanding of the mission of our APTA. The root of the profession is the treatment of the members of our individual communities. This is our “why” as physical therapists. Without them, our profession would not exist, so anything that we do as an organization that is not directly pointed at our “why” is not immediately important. According to Toyota LEAN method, “Anything that does not directly benefit your customers is considered waste”. Having been trained in this method, I will look to focus on those things that directly affect our customers independent of the setting. Mission critical issues such as increased access to care, increased payment, working at the top of our license and solidifying our position as Primary Care Providers for musculoskeletal conditions are all beneficial to our customers and will be my focus as a Director on the APTA BOD.

I have a strong track record of success at the state level, over 14 years of APTA MS service. I have served as Payment Chair, President and am currently the Legislative chair. As Payment chair, I started lecturing to PT schools in the state about payment issues and have done so for 13 years. As President, our organization was able to pass the PT licensure compact and grow the organization membership by 91% over 4 years. In my role as legislative chair, I played a key part in securing the passage of unrestricted direct access legislation in 2024, a major win for our profession and patients. While I understand that we “all stand on the shoulders of giants” I am very proud of my active participation and focus on the success of our organization. Leadership is both a responsibility and a privilege especially at a time when our profession critically reshaped. As the APTA focuses its strategic priorities around payment reform, the role of Director requires more than governance, it demands the qualities of a futuristic, adaptive, inclusive, and strategic thinker, paired with the integrity and courage to serve boldly, listen generously, and lead collaboratively. These core attributes define not just how I show up as a leader but how I live, practice, and serve every day.

My journey began on the island of Dominica, where I grew up experiencing health and community through a different lens one grounded in resourcefulness, faith, and resilience. That foundation carried me from the Caribbean to Alabama, where I attended Samford University and completed my doctoral studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I began laying the groundwork for my current practice in my very first semester of PT school envisioning a company that could help transform healthcare in my community. Today, that vision has evolved into a multi-location, hybrid practice offering physical therapy, performance, Pilates, lifestyle consulting, direct-to-employer programs, and aesthetic wellness.

While owning and operating a growing business, I still carry a full caseload of patients. I remain hands-on because I believe in staying connected not only to the clinical realities of patient care, but also to the pressures that cause burnout, hinder access, and threaten long-term practice viability. This dual perspective zooming in on the daily impact of administrative burden, while zooming out to understand the broader dynamics of payment models and policy is exactly the type of leadership I believe the APTA Board needs at this moment.

Navigating through COVID was a trial by fire. Our business was 18 months old and like many, we had to adapt quickly. Instead of retracting, we leaned in. By pivoting, learning and leading, we grew in revenue, brand position, and market share. That experience strengthened my adaptive leadership, but it also deepened my sense of responsibility to lead through uncertainty. I've carried that mindset forward, whether it's renegotiating payer contracts, advocating for access, or finding sustainable ways to serve the people who trust us with their care.

At the state level, I've served on the Government Affairs Committee in Alabama for over a decade, helping pass two pieces of direct access legislation by building relationships across political lines and mobilizing broad coalitions. My inclusive leadership style, grounded in relationship-building and generous listening has also been key in my work on the nominating committees at both the state level and within APTA Private Practice. There, I've had the privilege of identifying and encouraging future leaders, many of whom are now helping shape the future of our profession.

But leadership isn't always convenient. I've declined previous nominations for national roles knowing that my young family and growing practice needed my full attention. That decision wasn't about avoidance; it was about stewardship. But something changed this year. My experience at the 2025 House of Delegates reminded me that leadership is not always about timing, it's about calling. After deep reflection, I chose to petition onto the ballot. That decision was not made lightly but it was made with full conviction.

This is a pivotal moment. The stakes are high, but so is our potential. I believe the APTA Board needs leaders who can see around corners, communicate transparently, and unify diverse voices around a shared mission. We must move from conversations about "perceived value" to delivering a clear and measurable return on the investment of our education, expertise, and time. We need to connect our 100,000+ members across the association, bridging gaps between clinicians, academics, researchers, and innovators and ensuring that all voices are heard and represented.

We must be courageous enough to challenge outdated systems, yet strategic enough to build the relationships required to drive change. We must steward the profession's resources wisely while investing in initiatives that ensure the next generation of therapists and the patients they serve can thrive.

Whether we've spoken on the House floor, shared a committee call, or met in a hallway between sessions, you know how I lead with clarity, humility, and action. With your vote and the opportunity to serve as your Director, I will bring those same attributes to the Board not just to represent your voice, but to connect our profession's collective strength and shape the future we all believe in.

Thank you for your support and for the work you do. Let's move the profession forward together.