

# STUDENT ASSEMBLY PULSE

NEWS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPIST AND PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT STUDENT AND FACULTY LIAISONS



American Physical Therapy Association  
The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.

## THE NEXT EPISODE: PT PROVIDES INSIGHT INTO THE PROFESSION

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### ARTICLES WELCOME!

HAS YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM DONE SOMETHING UNIQUE? DO YOU HAVE NEWS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER

STUDENT LIAISONS? SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO

STUDENT ASSEMBLY PULSE!

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*Eric Anthony Galvez, PT, DPT, CSCS*

I remember being a student like it was yesterday. I graduated from physical therapy school in December 2003 from the University of Michigan-Flint. I worked for 2 years as a physical therapist before I had a life-changing conversation with my primary care physician (PCP). Before I get into that, let me tell you a little bit about myself. I'm the quiet guy that sits in the back of the class and slouches a little whenever the lecturer asks a rhetorical question. I'm also a huge jokester. I would sit in the back with my friends watching one of our classmates doze off, and then call his cell phone. We would try to hold in our laughter watching him wake up and search frantically for his cell phone. I'm also a huge nerd. I used to type out all of my class notes and would carry my clipboard everywhere. For this, I took a lot of verbal abuse from my classmates.

On my last clinical affiliation, I woke up one morning and decided to move across the country to San Diego after graduation. Things were going great and I was on the top of the world. That all changed when I got a call from my PCP. In September 2005 I was diagnosed with a golf-ball sized brain tumor on the tentorial membrane at the base of my cerebrum, between the pons and cerebellum. One month later I had brain surgery to have it removed. I also had radiation therapy and a lengthy dose of outpatient physical and occupational therapy. Like most young people, I thought I was invincible. I found out the hard way I'm not. I'm very lucky.

I somehow ended up in a very strange predicament. As a physical therapist, it is my job to help people regain their function in everyday life. Now I would be on the receiving end of this relationship. What was even stranger to me was that the people with whom I used to work side by side were now working with me as a patient. After my brain surgery, I had impaired coordination, double vision, an extremely weak voice, and I was unable to walk. Fortunately for me, this would all be a temporary inconvenience. My cognition and motivation were 100% normal when I got home, but since I was not perceived by others as "normal," I got peculiar responses from some people. As physical therapists it is ingrained in us to be good teachers. Since I cannot return to my career as a PT yet, I decided to publish a book based on my personal blog about my experiences as a young adult rehab patient and health care professional. I decided that my experiences could be a unique opportunity to teach others.

As a student I was very involved with APTA and the Michigan Physical Therapy Association (MPTA). I loved going to conferences and networking with other students and therapists. I considered it "cool" to meet the "movers and shakers" in the physical therapy profession. They were the people that would affect the direction of our practice. I truly believe that participation in APTA events leads to professional involvement. Involvement leads to activism. Activism breeds leadership, both in one's practice and in extracurricular activities. Leadership will lead to the evolution

of the profession.

Right now one of the hottest debated topics is the entry level Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree. I can understand the concern from some of the clinicians about becoming doctors of physical therapy; however, I believe it is a necessary progression in order for the profession to evolve and gain respect in the medical community. We are not physicians, but I believe we can be qualified as yet another entry point into the medical system. It is up to the new physical therapists to carry the torch. In the past 10 to 20 years some of the programs made the jump to the master's degree. Now more programs are making the jump to the entry-level Doctor of Physical Therapy. I can't stress enough the importance of this new generation of physical therapists in guiding the direction of the profession. Can we step up to the challenge? One of my favorite movie quotes is, "With great power comes great responsibility." As new physical therapists, we are in the driver's seat and control the evolution of the profession.



Please visit Eric's website [www.ericgalvezdpt.com](http://www.ericgalvezdpt.com) for more information about his experiences. Eric's book is titled *Reversal: When a Therapist Becomes a Patient*.

## MGH INSTITUTE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS STUDENTS THROW THEIR EFFORTS INTO THE PITTSBURGH-MARQUETTE CHALLENGE

Laura Doscocil, SPT, MGH Institute of Health Professions

As the first whistle blew and dodgeballs began flying around them, students from the MGH Institute of Health Professions knew that their fundraiser would be a success. Five months earlier, when the board of the Institute's PT Club initially presented its idea for raising money for The Pitt-Marquette Challenge, many were a little skeptical...“Dodgeball? Do people really play dodgeball anymore?” But the convinced few were confident and went forward. After several corporate sponsors were brought on-board, PT Club members were able to garner interest of both the Institute community and the general public. Various entities donated gift certificates for shoes, as well as food, gym passes, Cliff bars, orthotics, and many other items and monetary gifts. These donations enabled the PT Club to award first, second, and third prizes and to raffle off various other items during the tournament.

The per-person fee of \$15 (\$120 for team of 8) guaranteed each team a total of four matches: two each against two different teams. Rules had been posted on the event's Web site [www.mghihpdodgeball2007.50megs.com](http://www.mghihpdodgeball2007.50megs.com), so that players could familiarize themselves beforehand, taking some of the pressure off the four Institute faculty members generously donating time to work as referees.

Over 200 people filled the gymnasium of the Judge Baker Children's Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Spectators and waiting teams in an overhanging mezzanine could cheer for and heckle those playing on the courts below. Seven teams represented the Institute, while Boston University and Franklin Pierce University added three more. The remaining teams were from area graduate schools, were sponsored by taverns, or were friends of participating students.

After the first round, the top eight of the 18 teams would move on to the single-elimination championship bracket. However, six teams were tied for the last two spots and a last minute tie-breaking bracket had to be constructed. As each team was eliminated, the intensity grew as the crowd cheered from above. While the teams with students from the Institute were heavily favored, the Franklin Pierce fan-base grew as people began realizing they drove over an hour from New Hampshire that morning.

Rivalries developed quickly as well. One of the more prominent was between first- and second-year students from the Institute. The students had agreed that the class with the lower percentage of participation would have to bake for the other. The match for third place pitted a team of first-year students against a team of second-year students; it drew attention, as both teams seemed evenly matched. Needless to say—mentioned with no bias from the author—the latter team won. The Franklin Pierce team made it to the final game against Central, a team comprised mostly of spouses and friends of participating students. The last woman left on Central's team put up a valiant effort in the best-of-three series, but in the end the competition and first prize belonged to the Franklin Pierce Physioballers.

After the tournament most participants



walked to a local bar and grill for appetizers and a chance to meet each other in a friendly environment—without dodgeballs zipping past their heads. The Doctor of Physical Therapy students of the MGH Institute of Health Professions were able to raise \$3,600 towards the Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge for the Foundation for Physical Therapy. “It was fun,” said one professor and referee, “to see you all outside of the classroom, conference, and clinic; you were relaxed, having a great time, and all the while supporting the profession of physical therapy.”

Thanks again to all our sponsors, including: Earth Shoes, New Balance, United Prosthetics, Cliff Bar, Boston Ski and Sports Club, Sport Supply Group, Kinesiotaping, Stop and Shop, Whole Foods, Judge Baker Children's Center, and Hot Off the Press.



## THINKING ABOUT PRESENTING AT CSM 2008?

Shaw Bronner, PT, PhD, OCS, Analysis of Dance and Movement Center, Long Island University

Although it seems like we just returned from CSM 2007 in Boston, it's already time to start submitting abstracts for next year's conference. CSM 2008 will be held February 6-10 in Nashville, Tennessee. The period for submitting abstracts opened March 22, 2007, and will close June 15, 2007, at 11:59 PM EST. Go to [www.apta.org/csm](http://www.apta.org/csm) for more information or to connect to Scholar One Abstract Central for electronic submission.

Don't forget that the Orthopaedic Section Performing Arts Special-Interest Group (PASIG) sponsors an annual student research

scholarship. This award is to recognize students who have had an abstract on a performing arts-related topic accepted for CSM for their contribution to performing arts medicine and research. For assistance, please contact PASIG Research Committee Chair Shaw Bronner at [sbronner@liu.edu](mailto:sbronner@liu.edu). For more information on the research award, please check the PASIG Web page ([www.orthopt.org/sig\\_pa.php](http://www.orthopt.org/sig_pa.php)).

Students are welcome to join the PASIG. Membership is free for Orthopaedic Section members. An additional benefit of member-

ship is a monthly e-mail blast of new performing arts research citations. In addition, the PASIG Web page provides for students a list of clinics and hospitals that offer performing arts-related clinical affiliations.



## RUN FOR A POSITION ON THE APTA STUDENT ASSEMBLY BOARD OF DIRECTORS OR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Every year at the APTA National Student Conclave, elections are held for positions on the Student Assembly Board of Directors and Nominating Committee. The Student Assembly is the student voice in APTA. The Student Assembly even has a vote in the APTA House of Delegates. The Student Assembly is governed by a Board of Directors, which consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Director, Student PT Delegate, and Student PTA Delegate, all of whom are available to discuss issues affecting the Association and the physical therapy profession. The Nominating Committee consists of a Chairperson and two additional student members. PT and PTA students may run for these positions. The term of office for each position lasts 1 year. To find out more information about the Student

Assembly, please visit [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org). Click on "Students" on the right hand column of the screen, then "Student Assembly." If you click on "Election Information" you will find a description of the election process, descriptions of the positions, and consent and nomination forms to run for office.

The deadline for running for a position at the 2007 National Student Conclave is July 1. This year's Conclave will be held in October in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Contact the Nominating Committee for more information on elections and nominations. You can also contact any of the current Board and Nominating Committee members for information about their positions. Below is contact information for both the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee.

### APTA STUDENT ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

**President** Evan Nelson, SPT  
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More information about the student assembly can be found at [www.aptastudent.org](http://www.aptastudent.org)

## VOLUNTEERING WITH APTA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Scott McCauley, SPT, University of Southern California, Nominating Committee Chair, APTA Student Assembly



I am treasuring my time as a physical therapist student at

the University of Southern California (USC), but politics is my secondary passion. When I first learned about the Harker internship at APTA, I was eager to combine my love for politics with my love of physical therapy. However, the time slots as a Harker intern did not coincide with my school schedule.

When I visited APTA headquarters in December 2006 for an orientation, I asked what students in my situation could do. I was told how schools like Regis University send a few students out every year for about 3 weeks to volunteer with the Government Affairs Department. I quickly realized that this

would be my ticket to getting involved in this area of the APTA. I have always felt that government affairs is an area of physical therapy that is very important for students to be knowledgeable about, but very seldom is there time for students to get hands-on experience with it. After some negotiations with my school and APTA, I am proud to say that USC has set up a program just like Regis.

When I started volunteering, I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I have a strong interest in lobbying to reform Medicare, increase the number of jurisdictions with direct access, and address referral-for-profit issues. I also am interested in strengthening our PT-PAC (Physical Therapy Political Action Committee) to help us pass legislation on these issues. I have learned so much more

about these issues and have discovered many others that are just as important. The team of people here at Government Affairs works very hard and is constantly pursuing the goal of making physical therapy professional, credible, and reliable in the eyes of politicians and the public. Currently, the Physical Therapist Student Loan Repayment Eligibility Act (HR 1134) is making its way through the House of Representatives. I, of course, have a personal interest in this bill, as should every PT student. During my time in Government Affairs, it was my goal to increase student's awareness of this bill. I have encouraged them to contact their member of Congress and to establish an audible national voice, expressing the desire for this bill to go through. It has become so easy to do this using their Legisla-

tive Action Center; it only takes 2 minutes at most, and it has such a positive impact. In addition to learning and getting involved in important political issues, the job itself has a lot of opportunities, like getting to attend congressional fundraisers, going to meetings on Capitol Hill, and attending congressional hearings, committee meetings, and social events.

My advice to any student or faculty member in the country would be to get a volunteer program set up like this with your school. The experience is amazing, educational and beneficial to the profession and your school. If you are unable to do it here at APTA, perhaps you could do it with your state's physical therapy association. Get involved with the issues locally; this in turn benefits the profession nationally.

## THREE CHEERS!

Megan Henninger, SPT Drexel University

**"Three Cheers"** to all of the students who are registered for PT 2007: Annual Conference & Exposition in Denver, Colorado. The conference will take place June 27-30. Advance registration, \$75, ends June 1. Onsite registration for student APTA members is \$90. For more information about the conference and online registration visit the APTA website at [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org) and click on the link to PT 2007.

**"Three Cheers"** to those who participated in the 2007 Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge! The deadline for submitting donations to support the Foundation for Physical Therapy was April 27. From bake sales to large

university events, every dollar helps to fund research on rehabilitation. Thank you and congratulations to everyone who was able to contribute to such a great cause.

**"Three Cheers"** to those students who are getting ready to graduate from PT school! Found a job but wish you could find someone to help you through those difficult cases? Try APTA's Members Mentoring Members program. Visit [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org), click on "Member Services" and "Mentoring Program" to look for a professional in your area who is waiting to help you.

**"Three Cheers"** to all of the other students working to improve the health of their surrounding commu-

nity. Interested in getting involved, but not sure how? Contact your local YMCA, professors, classmates, or local physical therapists—you never know who might be looking to start something new. Or, help your program organize a health fair—get the word out about wellness and help your school as well!

**"Three Cheers"** to Gretchen Sewczak, SPT from Regis University, who just completed an internship at APTA headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. She worked on a survey to investigate students' knowledge about legislative issues and the PT-PAC. Keep up the good work!



Remember, the "Three Cheers" section of the *Student Assembly Pulse* is all about recognizing you, the student! If you would like to recognize a classmate or friend who has shown extraordinary dedication to the field of physical therapy, e-mail **Megan Henninger, SPT**, at [meh392@drexel.edu](mailto:meh392@drexel.edu), and you may see their name in an upcoming issue of the *Pulse*!