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**ORAL HISTORY SNAPSHOTS**

**Reflections of Key Leaders Across Time**

*Dr. Konin, thank you for participating in the initiative to tap leaders’ perspectives about ACAPT’s evolution and current status! What factors do you think ACAPT precipitated that evolution?*

Before ACAPT, we had the Education Section to drive the needs of individual members interested in education and we had CAPTE to establish the minimum standards for curriculum. But there was a gap - something missing that could help programs not only meet CAPTE standards but think proactively and be the voice that helps improve curriculum planning for the future. The gap ACAPT filled is to be a collective group that helps us achieve excellence.

*Do you have a specific example of how ACAPT has filled this gap since its inception?*

I call these examples “ACAPT deliverables”. One deliverable involved the admissions process in which traffic rules were designed to achieve a more stream-lined and efficient application and enrollment process. ACAPT also considered how to measure the impact of academic scholarship and pedagogy. Although impact factor of scientific journals historically is used for this purpose, there is a limited number of publications about research on curriculum and pedagogy on physical therapy. To strengthen academic pedagogy, ACAPT looked at models to best deliver curriculum, help programs develop scholarly agendas, design funding for grantsmanship, and develop potential fellowships and mentoring routes that enhance scholarship. The Benchmarking Project is one piece of ACAPT’s global aim to have a better measure of scholarship and a comparative vehicle for programs to assess the impact of their work.

*You assumed several roles in the years that ACAPT was growing. What did you personally experience and learn in these roles?*

My first role was to be the Chair of the Communications Committee, which was initially focused on the ACAPT website. However, it quickly became clear that our job was much larger than developing and managing a website. We needed to brand ACAPT beyond the website and demonstrate value added to member institutions. Very early, we involved community members like Scott Burns, Debbie Anderson, and Ann Dietrich to enhance the branding presence and help create a two-way street for communication to flow to and from the Board, the consortia and the membership. We also developed a newsletter and a social media presence - the credit for which goes to Scott Burns for his technical expertise, and his eye for content that catches member interest. Other committee members took project ownership in other areas. Debbie Anderson played a major role in constructing the benchmarking taskforce, and I worked with Kirk Peck and Jim Farris to develop a national Student Honor Society that recognizes excellence in DPT education. With participation from many others, the Committee worked simultaneously on several projects, always giving feedback to the Board to keep it abreast of our deliverables. Tim Rethorn, a DPT student from Ohio State, was extremely helpful to our committee.

*In view of all that activity, what impact do you feel ACAPT has had thus far in the academic community?*

ACAPT has made tremendous strides, but we have a long way to go for ACAPT’s message to get out to others. Communication through the institutional representative to the rest of the stakeholders is the key. Once we can identify effective vehicles to achieve that, more individuals will know and appreciate what ACAPT does and will contribute to the success of future ACAPT deliverables. Regardless, the responsibility for successful communication will still fall on the institutional representative to be the conduit to share information.

*Are there interesting anecdotes that capture your personal experience with ACAPT as it grew?*

As the Communications Chair, it has been tremendously fun and enlightening to be at the leadership table! My experience provided a great personal learning curve. I was asked my opinion about decisions and how we can best deliver messages to membership, and I have increased my friendships by working with these outstanding, talented and expert individuals who are also wonderful human beings!

*Do you think ACAPT’s existence shifted the view other professions have about PT education?*

I certainly believe PT now has a solid seat at the table and is well respected by other disciplines, but it is too early to tell how much of this has been fostered by ACAPT. Slowly increasing ACAPT’s presence and brand will catapult ACAPT toward its next set of initiatives that will move programs forward.

*What does your crystal ball say ACAPT might do in the next 3-5 years?*

I believe the two most important priorities are to 1) better manage student debt and 2) address the on-going and potentially increasing shortage of qualified faculty. The transition to the DPT came with additional cost and we now have graduates who are balancing their interest in career growth with needing to re-pay bills. Our ability to excite graduates to achieve an academic doctorate and enter the profession of teaching has waned, possibly because of debt accrued during DPT education. It was right to raise the bar of expectations for faculty and program directors, but we have created our own challenge of preparing qualified individuals to fill these positions. If we do not address these issues yesterday with some practical solutions we will not need a crystal ball to know that we will face these concerns five years from now. There is no quick fix for this situation, but we must identify ways to interest people and enable them to follow a pathway to academia. There are many outstanding entities in academic physical therapy, and although ACAPT can suggest solutions implementation will be left to the programs to decide what works best for them.

*Thank you so much for sharing your perspectives about ACAPT and telling us about your role on the Communications committee. You have made a key contribution to ACAPT!*