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**ORAL HISTORY SNAPSHOTS**

**Reflections of Key Leaders Across Time**

*Dr. Rethorn, thank you for helping to document the early history of ACAPT through your perspectives as one of the first student representatives to the ACAPT Board of Directors! How did you become involved in the ACAPT Board?*

I ran for the Student Assembly (SA) Board of Directors in 2016 and was not elected. To remain involved, I looked at the SA liaison positions open in the APTA and decided that working with ACAPT would give me an opportunity to “peek behind the curtain” and see a different side of academic physical therapy. I have a long-term goal to move into academia and was honored to be selected for the position; I served for 2 years in that role.

*How did you develop your interest in academics?*

I have been interested in teaching for a long time and have enjoyed giving presentations and teaching throughout graduate school. In PT school I presented at national conferences and did several presentations with my older brother (who is also a physical therapist) at NEXT. I enjoy developing content and strategies to present material in a way that makes sense to others and getting feedback to improve my teaching ability. My passion - my calling - is to move into an academic role in the fture – after I take a few more steps to get to that point.

*What were your assignments or responsibilities on ACAPT’s Board?*

I worked on anything where student input and a student voice was needed! With Dr. Jeff Konin, the Chair of the Communications Committee. I worked with the National Student Honor Society Task Force and have worked on developing resources beneficial to current PT and PTA students.

*What have you learned about ACAPT that is memorable?*

I have been most impressed by how smoothly and efficiently the Board runs! This efficiency points to a great depth of preparedness on behalf of the Board members, the staff and everyone involved in the meetings. Also impressive is the depth of discussion and how much Board members really care about the issues they address. As students, we may get frustrated and not understand the larger picture of how much work is behind everything ACAPT does and how that work benefits the individual academic institutions. I gained a deep appreciation for both the operations and outcomes of ACAPT’s work. It was very eye opening for me!

*In these discussions, what did you learn about current and future ACAPT’s priorities?*

I heard major discussion about standardizing the educational process and how institutions could develop the criteria, definitions and processes that produce a similar quality of performance upon graduation. The Board discussed terminology for education, terms that can lead to standardizing clinical education, and how clinical education can operate in a more standardized way. I learned how CIs work behind the scenes to get students from different schools placed on clinical rotations and that an initial clinical experience and a terminal clinical experience can be very, very, very different. I now know that having some level of standardization is very important to maintain the quality and consistency of our education and ensure the future of our profession. Another ACAPT priority is the production of future faculty. The concern is that as current faculty gets older, we will not be able to fill their roles. ACAPT is working to promote policies and procedures to avoid a dearth of high-quality faculty members. Also important is the credentialing processes through the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE). Along with many other students and recent graduates. I feel that the exam questions do not promote evidence-based practice. ACAPT must promote high quality clinicians who pursue practice with the most up-to-date evidence; the NPTE should reflect this evidence. ACAPT also is looking at the resiliency of students and the risk of burnout, as well as the student loan and student debt issue. More serious work needs to be done to address the significant burdens on new graduates and new clinicians so that we continue to attract intelligent people to become clinicians and to pursue PT as a profession.

*Do you remember any memorable people or events that would demonstrate how the culture of ACAPT and its Board have emerged?*

**Tim:** One of the things that I remember about the Board meetings was the camaraderie among the members of the Board and how well everybody worked together. The joking and kidding about Jim Farris as a new board member going to fetch coffee or food, for example, was a sign that everybody was not only committed to a common goal but also to enjoying each other as well. This is a light- hearted and jovial group that works hard to get things done but has a good time along the way.

*Is there anything else you would like ACAPT to do soon?*

**Tim:** I believe that a lot of people are needed to provide feedback and insight to our professional organization. ACAPT is working hard to track down people who do not normally speak up and to get their input. The clinician working in practice is a very under-represented voice when it comes to academic and clinical problems, and ACAPT is also working to reach out to those people who are not represented. Finally, a lot of older people I see in conferences and meetings have a lot of wisdom and experience to share, but I do not as often see students or new professionals represented. Thus, working to get those voices represented in important discussion is something ACAPT can continue to strive for and achieve.

*Dr. Rethorn, thank you so much for your insight, your involvement and your leadership! We are looking forward to seeing you being a leader throughout your career.*