

Jennifer Blackwood, PT, PhD, Board Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist

Brief bio statement:

I am a physical therapist and associate professor at the University of Michigan-Flint. My area of practice is in geriatric physical therapy and I still continue to see patients in addition to my roles as a researcher and educator. I am the faculty liaison for the DPT Advocacy SIG at our University. For five years (2014-2019) I served as the MPTA Eastern District Chair where we engaged over 200 PT, PTAs and students/year in district activities. During that time, I also served as a Delegate from Michigan to the APTA's House of Delegates and on the Board of Directors of APTA-MI. Previously, I served on the Nominating Committee of APTA-MI. At a national level, I currently serve as a member of the APTA Geriatrics work group that is writing a Clinical Practice Guideline for falls. I am a career-long member of APTA and of the Geriatrics and Oncology Academies. Lastly, as it is relevant to my practice, I am a member of the Balance and Falls SIG for Geriatrics and Oncology and am a member of the Geriatrics Practice Group.

Candidate statement:

I am sure most of us can agree that 2020 has been a weird year. Beyond the changes that this pandemic has forced all of us to make, life became different for me professionally. This was a year when I found myself standing outside looking in as I no longer held a volunteer position in APTA-MI, and this felt different. I realized that my role as a Delegate was one that I missed. For five years, I had served the PTs, PTAs, and students in Michigan as a Delegate representative from the Eastern District. As a Delegate, in preparation for the House each year, I was keenly in tune with motions that were developed, discussed, and voted upon. In retrospect, I realize that I enjoyed sharing the voice of Michigan's PT professionals as a Delegate as well as educating others about developing motions and their potential impact on PT practice.

But this year was different. Although I didn't have to, I still remained engaged in reviewing the progress of potential motions that were being brought forth to the 2020 House of Delegates. I continued to read the discussion and debate of motions and the background papers. I also introduced some of these timely topics within a course that I was teaching, had the students discuss their perspectives of the motion and provided their consensus on specific motions to Michigan's current Delegates. Then on the day those motions were being addressed by the House, I hosted a virtual House of Delegates watch party with my students. Yes, something was missing in my professional life at that time.

Michigan's Delegation is well respected, forward-thinking, and engaged. I have chosen to run for a Delegate position, to continue to serve the PT professionals in Michigan as a member of that team. My professional position as an educator and researcher who still sees older adult patients in a home health setting will allow me to share the perspectives of those that I work with as various motions are brought forth at the House. I would be honored if you would consider electing me as one of your Michigan Delegates. Thank-you.