

American Physical Therapy Association of New Jersey

# Student/New Graduate Mentorship Program

## Program Goals

- Increase networking between APTA members and new graduates /students;
- Gain broader perspective of internal structure of national APTA and the local chapter (APTAnj);
- Discover benefits of APTA membership and the value of maintaining one's membership;
- Become familiar with the Association's advocacy efforts from a "grassroots" perspective.

The American Physical Therapy Association of New Jersey (APTAnj), a state chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), has developed a mentoring program for entry-level students who are about to graduate and new physical therapy professionals to aid in the transition from student to professional within the Association.

This project was created in direct response to APTAnj's strategic plan and the desire to be responsive to the needs of our PT/PTA student members. Through this program, students and new graduates will be encouraged to maintain their APTA membership upon graduation and beyond, taking advantage of APTA's Career Starter Dues Program. New graduates and students will ultimately acquire helpful information to prepare them for their membership in the APTA, as a professional, that includes information on the value of conference attendance, advocacy efforts by the Association, and enhanced participation at all levels of APTA & APTAnj membership.

The PT or PTA mentor will be paired with an interested student/new graduate (i.e., mentee) based on information provided by the mentee. The mentor is responsible for providing useful APTA-related information as well as increasing the mentee's networking opportunities at district, state and national conferences & meetings. Furthermore, this program provides a support network for professional growth that benefits all involved. Finally the mentor/mentee program also serves to bridge the gap from graduation to becoming a licensed professional.

## Mentor Qualifications for PT & PTA Members

- Must be passionate and knowledgeable about APTA membership.
- Must be an APTA/APTAnj member in good standing and be willing to attend appropriate Association meetings.
- Registration fees/travel costs, if any, are the responsibility of the individual.

## Mentee Qualifications for Student & New Grad Members

- Must be an APTA/APTAnj member in good standing and be willing to attend appropriate Association meetings with their mentor.
- Registration fees/travel costs, if any, are the responsibility of the individual.

## "How to" be a Mentor & Mentee

- Touch base with each other on a monthly basis to share & discuss news in regards to APTA/APTAnj and what is going on in the profession via electronic communication (email, FaceBook, LinkedIn, etc), telephone or in person!
- Mentors to provide insight into benefits of being an APTA/APTAnj member.

- Mentors will strive to encourage student/new grad to become involved at some level of the APTA/APTAnj by encouraging participation in the NJ Student Assembly, APTA National Student Conclave, APTA Members Mentoring Members program, joining an APTAnj Special Interest Group (SIG) or a national APTA (special interest) Section, etc.
- Mentors and Mentees must try to attend as many APTA/APTAnj meetings as possible in order to provide multiple networking opportunities for the Mentee.

## Q & A about the Mentor-Mentee Program

### Q: Why the APTAnj mentor program?

A: This program is designed to provide information to the student and new graduate on a wealth of topics such as the benefits of conference attendance, opportunities for professional growth and development, advocacy efforts, etc. Additionally, students and new graduates are encouraged to ask questions and obtain information on topics THEY are interested in. Ultimately, this program is designed to build one's professional network through one's APTA/APTAnj membership.

### Q: Who is eligible to participate?

A: Current APTAnj members who are new graduates (i.e., up to one year post graduation) and students at all levels of their physical therapy curriculum are encouraged to send an email of their interest to [Marissa Furka](#), PT.

### Q: How will this program benefit me?

A: APTAnj member Marissa Furka best explains— *“Like many other new grads fresh out of school, I went to my first APTA meeting after graduation and didn’t know a single person in the room. Not only did I feel very much alone and brand new, I had no idea what the person was talking about at the meeting! This program will give you at least one person in the room to ‘latch onto’ plus, the mentor will send out information about the meeting in advance so you will have an idea of what is going on before you step in the room. Not only will it help you in that regard, but you build resources to obtain information you want on whatever topic you need. For example, as a mentor, I received a question about student loans and scholarships and how the APTA can help. I may not have all the answers but I can certainly get you pointed in the right direction.”*

### Q: Is there any cost involved?

A: There are no additional charges to participate in this program – it is absolutely free for APTAnj members. Only your time is required.

### Q: How much time are we talking about?

A: Typically, two emails a month. You reply, and that is it. Of course, sometimes several emails will get sent back and forth depending on what information you are looking for and what information the mentor may need to guide you along. An example from Marissa Furka: *“I received some great information on how to attend a conference for free and it only took a quick email to my mentee to get them on the right track! A few emails later and the student was on her way to a conference for free!”*

## Contact Information

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