Message from New President: Paul Niemuth, PT, DSc, OCS

I have loved physical therapy all of my adult life. I love talking about physical therapy, teaching physical therapy, legislating physical therapy and caring for patients. My 39 year career in PT has been split between 20 years of clinical practice at OSI Physical Therapy and 19 years of academic teaching at St. Catherine University. I am honored and humbled to have been elected as President of the Minnesota Physical Therapy Association. I am grateful to those who have preceded me in this position and thankful for their trailblazing work.

The fact that you are reading this means you have made the decision to join or maintain your membership with MNPTA. For this I say thank you! There are often debates and discussions, about membership and I would like to share my philosophy on the importance of involvement. Those who join and maintain have made a commitment to support the organization that supports our profession. That is a great start, but, I’ll bet you also love physical therapy and talk about it daily with your friends, family, employers, physicians and patients. This makes you an ambassador for our profession. An ambassador is defined as “a person who acts as a representative or promoter.” You already carry our message to a wide audience and I’d like to challenge you to use this same passion when talking with MNPTA non-member peers. Encourage them to join and attend an MNPTA continuing education course, committee meeting or simply check out the MNPTA website. With 2189 members, we have work to do to reach the 7,083 professionals in the state. Every member plays a role in recruiting new members. Under the leadership of our Membership Committee Co-chairs Kayla Findlay and Mike Tague, we have a solid foundation to build our membership.

Ambassadors not only represent or promote, but they also get involved. How and where? This is an area I want to improve. Too often I hear our members state they’d like to get involved, but don’t know how to do it. So, I’ll offer a few very concrete suggestions. First, join a committee. I consistently hear from those on our committees that they enjoy the networking, meeting new colleagues and knowing they have the ability to shape the direction of the Chapter. If you are interested in gaining more information about joining a committee, visit our MNPTA Committees pages on our website and fill out a “contact the co-chairs” form. The following is a list of Committees and Chairs:

Education Committee: Rachel Galligan, Lana Krumweide, Amanda Simone, and Becky Vogsland.
Membership Committee: Kayla Findlay and Mike Tague.
State Governmental Affairs: Kathleen Picard and Anne Johnson.
Federal Governmental Affairs: Eva Norman.
Student Special Interest Group: Megan McCarthy and Amanda Whiting.
Research Committee: John Schmitt and Jennifer Sherman.
Payment Committee: Lori Froehling.
Health and Wellness Committee: MarySue Ingman and Ali McNulty.
Peer Review Committee: Dave Thoreson.
Ethics Committee: Deb Madanayake and Jessica Scholl.
Political Action Committee: Craig Johnson.
Human Resources Committee: Joan Purrington.
Nominating Committee: Brittany Dressler and Judy Hawley.
Athletic Training Advisory Workgroup: Anne Johnson.
Chiropractic Advisory Workgroup: Liz Schorn.

All of these committees are doing very important work for the association and provide an opportunity for you to volunteer in any capacity you are able.

Another opportunity to help build and grow our Chapter is to work on our Strategic Plan. Two members of the Board of Directors, Jason Kalecic and Katie Bloyer, are leading this project. We are in need of members to join one of four workgroups focusing on the Chapter’s Strategic Plan; Advancing the Clinician, Advancing the Association, Advancing the Profession, and Advancing our Society. For more information about the strategic plan and to contact the co-chairs of this committee, [click here](#).

Many PT/PTA professionals are looking for leadership opportunities. Members of a committee can lead or chair a sub-committee or task force and eventually become a committee chair. Need more opportunities? Here are a few other examples of involvement: Jaynie Bjornaraa is the PT representative on the MN Board of Medical Examiners Athletic Trainers Advisory Council. Jennana Neher serves on the Department of Human Services Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Committee. Dan Wolfe represents MNPTA on the Worker’s Comp Medical Services Review Board.

Consider running for the MNPTA’s Board of Directors. Each position is a three year term. We will have openings next year for VP of Professional Affairs, Secretary, and three Board positions as well three Delegate positions.

Beyond Minnesota? There are many opportunities to become involved at the National APTA level. For example, Holly Clynch is a member of the APTA Nominating Committee. Lyndsey Vandenberg serves as our Chief Delegate for the APTA House of Representatives. Kathy Cieslak serves on the Orthopaedic Section Board of Directors as the Practice Committee Chair. Aaron Rindflesch is a member of the APTA Finance Committee. There are many other individuals that serve as Delegates or members of section SIG’s.

I love our profession and the people we are privileged to serve. As your President, I’ll carry that passion in all I do and strive to represent and promote MNPTA at every opportunity. I’d like you to join me on this journey by getting involved. I’ll continue to provide regular communications about the Chapter and look forward to hearing from you as well.

Sincerely,

Paul Niemuth, PT, DSc, OCS
MNPTA President