February President's Message

Greetings. If you are reading this, you are a member of the APTA/MNPTA and already see the value of ongoing strength in numbers of our profession. I feel like I am preaching to the choir, but sometimes the choir needs a pat on the back and encouragement to keep on singing! So thank you for being a member of APTA/MNPTA! We are better together.

We have **great news** from the Minnesota State Capital. On Tuesday February 4th, over 240 PTs, PTAs, and students descended on the Capital for MNPTA’s Day on the Hill. According to our lobbyist, Tom Lehman, constituent visits and conversations are the most powerful tools PTs/PTAs have to influence their legislators and we did a great job. **More exciting news** from the Capital - MNPTA has proposed a bill that authorizes PTs to certify patients to qualify for a disability parking permits. On February 4th, Kathleen Picard, (pictured at right, seated left) Co-Chair of MPTA’s State Government Affairs Committee testified before the House Transportation and Finance Policy Committee. The bill was unanimously approved and sent to the House floor for a final vote.

Next, Co-Chair Anne Johnson (left) testified on February 5th before the same Senate Committee where Dr. Matt Klein, Senator from Mendota Heights, told the Committee that PTs are better prepared to make disability qualifications because of their familiarity with their patients and their training. The bill was approved unanimously and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Finance and Policy.

And finally **the best news** - on Thursday February 14, the House voted to pass HF 211. In addition, SF 653 passed out of the Senate Health Committee. We are well on our way to passing these bills. Stay tuned!

I had the privilege of participating in APTA’s Component Leadership meetings
while attending Combined Sections Meeting in Washington DC. Last month. These are meetings in which all the State Chapter Presidents, the Section/Academy Presidents, and the various Association Directors along with the APTA Board of Directors and staff come together for strategy and planning sessions. Looking at these key leaders, our Profession is in very good hands.

Here I am with MNPTA Member Holly Clynch, member of APTA’s Nominating Committee, at the Component Leadership Meeting!

APTA had two important announcements. First, the Strategic Plan for 2019-2021 was revealed that consists of Relevance, Stewardship, Quality, and Value. We will see new benefits emerge from APTA’s work in these areas. Second, APTA is going to build a new headquarters building in Alexandria, VA, not far from the existing headquarters. The plans and drawings were shown and we will have a new state-of-the-art building representing the field of physical therapy.

The MN Board of Physical Therapy made changes effective January 1st, 2019 requiring 2 credit hours of Ethics Education in order to renew your license. MNPTA has developed an Ethics Course that meets the requirements for renewal, and we would urge all PTs in MN to take our course. However, there was some confusion and many individuals took our course prior to the year the requirement was due for their licensing cycle. If that were the case with you, you can take the course from MNPTA again at no charge.

Paul Niemuth
MNPTA President