

2025 Candidate Statements
Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy

Candidate for President Position: Ruggie Canizares



Current and past work experience:

- Clinic Owner, E&R Health and Wellness dba Physical Therapy Services, Eugene, OR (2008-present)
- Home Health Physical Therapist, PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Home Health, Eugene, OR (2008-present)
- Manager, Cottage Grover Community Hospital Rehabilitation and Wellness (9/2003-3/2008)
- Program Coordinator: PT Satellites, Out-patient Services, Sacred Heart Medical Center, Eugene, OR (10/1994-3/1997)
- Physical Therapist: Clinical practice in various settings – acute care hospital, nursing home contract work, and out-patient services (6/1985-10/1994)

Licensure experience:

- President, Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board (April 8, 2025 – present)
- Vice President, Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board (January 21, 2024 – April 7, 2025)
- Public Member, Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board (July 1, 2020 – January 22, 2024)
- Chairman, Oregon Board of Physical Therapy (May 18, 2018 – December 31, 2019)
- Vice Chairman, Oregon Board of Physical Therapy (April 11, 2014 – May 17, 2018)
- Professional Board Member, Oregon Board of Physical Therapy (December 1, 2011 – April 10, 2014)

FSBPT experience pertinent to position:

- Treasurer, FSBPT Board of Directors – October 2018 – October 2024
 - Collaborated with CFO, provided relevant accurate financial data and budget reporting to inform the FSBPT board of the impact of fiscal and financial policies and decisions
 - Finance Committee Chair
 - Investment and Compensation Committee – October 2018 – October 2024
- FCCPT Board Liaison – October 2022 – October 2024
- FSBPT webinar presenter and facilitator
- Finance Committee Member, FSBPT (12/2014-10/2018)
- Delegate and Alternate Delegate, Oregon

Other experience pertinent to position (e.g., same position with another organization):

- Chairman, Oregon Board of Physical Therapy
 - Vice Chairman, Oregon Board of Physical Therapy
 - Professional Board Member, Oregon Board of Physical Therapy
 - President, Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board
 - Vice President, Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board
 - Academic Advisory Board, Western University of Health Sciences, Lebanon, Oregon
 - Initial advisory role for foundational program development and CAPTE accreditation
 - Current advisory role for academic development
 - Primary author for CGCH wellness center business plan (January 8, 2008)
 - Feasibility study and strategic alternatives that included financial analysis and constructing a complete budget ledger
 - Northwest Christian University (July 2007), School of Graduate Studies, School of Business and Management, Master of Business Administration
 - Master's Thesis Research: "A Quantitative Analysis of Physical Therapy Trends"
 - MBA Sigma Beta Delta International Honor Society, Northwest Christian University Chapter
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Candidate Statement:

I have had the honor of serving as Treasurer of the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy, Board of Directors from October 2018 – 2024. During my tenure as Treasurer on the Board, I was privileged to work with colleagues who are passionate about public protection through safe and effective physical therapy practice, reducing barriers to access to care, and the regulatory challenges of providing that care.

If elected President, my priorities are to ensure continuity in our collaborative work with our very accomplished committees and the Board of Directors to sustain the defensibility, security, and validity of the NPTE; the continued growth and reliability of the ELDD; and address the challenge of clinician burnout. In addition, consistent with our mission, I foresee continued Board of Directors strategic and innovative efforts to conceptualize and deliver products and services by supporting HRRI to address the opportunities and challenges of AI and workforce that promote access to care. Additionally, I will support augmenting access to care by continued collaboration with the PT Compact and FCCPT.

My work as Treasurer and in the Finance Committee allowed me a thorough understanding of the broad depth and width of the financial architecture of this organization. Having organizational financial awareness allows the fundamental ability to sustainably execute my goals and continue FSBPT's mission and vision.

I deeply appreciate the Nominating Committee for considering me for the office of the President.

Candidate for President Position: David Relling



Current and past work experience:

My experiences as a physical therapist have occurred primarily in the acute care setting. At the same time, I have experience in cardiac rehabilitation, geriatrics, and general orthopedics. Currently, I am associate dean for health sciences and professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of North Dakota

Licensure experience:

I am a licensed physical therapist in ND and MN. I completed two appointments to the North Dakota Board of Physical Therapy from 2010 to 2020. During my time on the ND board, we revised the rules and regulations, aligned the North Dakota Century Code to the

FSBPT Model Practice Act, implemented workforce data collection and reporting, and revised our jurisprudence assessment. I have held the positions of Vice President and President of the ND Board of Physical Therapy.

FSBPT experience pertinent to position:

I began volunteering for FSBPT as an item writer in 2005 and again in 2008. I served on the exam development committee for 3 years, including 2 years as co-chair. I was initially appointed as a director to the FSBPT Board of Directors and subsequently was elected or re-elected by the Delegate Assembly as a director, vice president, and president.

As a member of the FSBPT BOD, I have had the opportunity to serve on the compensation, audit & investment committees, exam security subcommittee, bylaws subcommittee, and the BOD for King West, Healthcare Regulatory Research Institute. I have also served as the Ex Officio member to the PT Compact Executive Board and LCASO director. Liaison experiences include FSBPT Exam Committees, FCCPT, APTA, ACAPT, CAPTE, Collaborative for Physical Therapy Education, 6-8 FSBPT jurisdictions, three NPTE Standard Setting and practice analysis committees, and the NPTE eligibility task force. In 2010, I was inducted into the Academy of Advanced Item Writers.

Other experience pertinent to position (e.g., same position with another organization):

As associate dean for health sciences at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences, I oversee six departments and the Healthcare Workforce Group. I previously served as chair of the UND department of physical therapy from 2014 to 2021. I have had the opportunity to serve and lead departmental, school, and university committees where I developed skills to work effectively with others, to communicate clearly, and to seek optimal outcomes for the group and entire organization.

Candidate Statement:

I am honored to be considered for the position of President for the FSBPT BOD. The Federation is an organization of exceptional individuals, dedicated to achieving the mission of protecting the public. I am grateful and humbled to have the opportunity to interact, learn from, and serve the many people associated with the jurisdictions and their Federation.

My experiences with the Federation began as an item writer and progressed to an appointment as an exam development committee member and eventually co-chair of the EDC. As a member of the FSBPT BOD, I have been able to capitalize on the knowledge of exam development during the practice analyses and exam content outline adoption. I believe my experiences as FSBPT president, vice president, and director provide a strong knowledge of the organization and demonstrate my ability to help lead the organization. While my state board experience is from a less populated jurisdiction, I believe my experiences within FSBPT, HRRI, the PT Compact, FCCPT, and participating in FSBPT meetings, have provided an understanding of the complexity of supporting the various member jurisdictions and the issues facing physical therapy regulation.

I believe that the characteristics of integrity, hard work, humility, and accountability are integral to an effective leader of the Federation. I believe my interactions with members, volunteers, staff and leadership have demonstrated these characteristics during my previous service for the Federation. I truly appreciate your consideration of my candidacy for another term as President.

Candidate for Vice President Position: Michele Thorman



Current and past work experience:

- University of Wisconsin-La Crosse PT Program (2002 – 2019)
 - Clinical Professor Emeritus
 - Program Director and Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education
 - Served on multiple Department, University, and System committees
 - Extensive engagement with Wisconsin Physical Therapy Examining Board, FSBPT, and CAPTE
- University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Health Professions Department (2019 – present)
 - Served as a standardized patient for Health Profession programs emphasizing affective behaviors feedback. Provide invited lectures to PT and OT students
- MJ Care, Inc., Vice President of Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living Facilities (1993 – 2002)
 - Budget and personnel management expertise while supporting associates and customers in seven states
- St. Joseph's Hospital, Director of Physical Therapy Services (1989 – 1993)
- Zablocki Veterans Administration Medical Center, Progressive clinical and leadership roles (1978 – 1989)

Licensure experience:

- Wisconsin Physical Therapy Examining Board (Member, 2009 – 2012; Chair, 2012 – 2016)

FSBPT experience pertinent to position:

- Vice President, FSBPT Board of Directors (2022 – present)
- Contributor to Strategic Planning meetings:
 - FSBPT Board of Directors (2023-present)
 - Healthcare Regulatory Research Institute (2024)
 - Physical Therapy Compact Commission (2023-present)
- Leadership Issues Forums and Annual Education Meetings speaker and participant (2017 – present)
- Member, Licensing Compact Administration Services Corporation (LCASO) (2022 – present)
- FSBPT Board of Directors liaison to the following committees, task forces, and organizations:
 - Physical Therapy Compact Commission Executive Board (2022- present)
 - Ethics and Legislation Committee (2023, 2025)
 - Cross Professional Minimal Data Set Task Force (2024)
 - PT Compact Cross Professional Minimal Data Set Task Force (2025)
- Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) – attendee at international conference in Dublin, Ireland (3/2023), Annual Education Conference in Salt Lake City (9/2023) and virtual meetings (2024, 2025)
- APTA/ FSBPT Joint Board of Directors meeting participant (2024, 2025)
- Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) meeting participant (2023)
- Member, Sexual Misconduct and Boundaries Committee (2022)
- Member (2015 – 2017) and Chair (2017 – 2021), Continuing Competence Committee
- Co-presenter at the International Network of Physiotherapy Regulatory Authorities (INPTRA) conference in Geneva, Switzerland (2019)
- FSBPT President's Award (2018)
- Participated in an international "think tank" on prevention of public risks and harms with FSBPT leaders and representatives from Canadian, Australian, and British PT regulatory agencies. (2016)
- Wisconsin Voting Delegate at Annual Meetings: 2010, 2013, and 2014
- 2010 NPTE Summit participant

Other experience pertinent to position (e.g., same position with another organization):

- APTA – Wisconsin
 - Chapter President (2001 – 2007)
 - Vice President (1997 – 2001)
 - Board of Directors (1995 – 1997)
 - Recipient of the Otto Cordero Lifetime Achievement Award (2017)
- University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Foundation Board of Directors
 - Scholarship Committee Chair (2008 – 2016)

- Investment Committee (2007 – 2009)
 - Executive Committee (2008 – 2016)
 - YMCA LIVESTRONG Instructor – Promote fitness and wellness for cancer survivors (2019 – present)
 - Fitness coach and member of local dragon boat team (2017 – present)
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Candidate Statement:

Three years ago, I was humbled when the FSBPT membership elected me to serve as Vice President to the Board of Directors. Since “jumping into the deep end of the pool” as a new Board member, I have dedicated myself to more fully understanding the breadth and depth of this complex and far-reaching organization. As a result, I stand prepared to continue to demonstrate the mission-driven leadership that this great organization deserves. I understand the expectations of an effective Board member and hope that I have proven myself to be a servant leader, a critical thinker, and a collaborative partner. As FSBPT prepares to hire its next Chief Executive Officer, I seek to contribute my leadership skills and promote organizational stability through this important transition.

Just as importantly, I wish to utilize a second term on the BOD to nurture our volunteers to become future leaders who are capable of advancing FSBPT’s mission for decades to come. I believe with all my heart in the “power of the nudge” and helping peers appreciate their potential for larger professional service. I wish to pay forward the blessings of my rich career by lifting up others to realize their potential.

Thank you for your consideration and support as I seek to continue my service as Vice President, to promote leadership stability during transitional change, while “nudging and nurturing” others towards the rewards of professional service.

Candidate for Vice President Position: Deanne Grier Yates



Current and past work experience:

- Program Coordinator – Physical Therapist Assistant Professor, Kansas City Kansas Community College, Kansas City, KS (2012 – present, Program Coordinator 2020 – present)
- Assessment Specialist, Academy of College and University Educators (ACUE) (2017 – 2023)
- Physical Therapist Assistant, Mid-America Rehabilitation Hospital, Overland Park, KS (2010 – 2014)

Licensure experience:

My licensure experience has continued to grow through professional leadership, clinical practice, and involvement with regulatory processes. As a licensed Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) and CAPTE reviewer, coupled with my FSBPT and American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) involvement, I have cultivated a deep understanding of licensure processes, reinforced by my participation in FSBPT Annual Meetings and Leadership Issues Forum (LIF).

FSBPT experience pertinent to position:

My involvement with FSBPT demonstrates my dedication to its objectives. I began as a member of the PTA Standard Setting Taskforce (2017) and progressed to Item Writer, earning the Advanced Item Writer Award in 2019. I served on the PTA Exam Development Committee (2019–2021) and as EDC Co-Chair (2022–2024), collaborating with other committee members to ensure the National Physical Therapy Examination reflects current practice standards. Currently, I serve on the Scenario Task Force, contributing to the development of items designed to assess critical thinking. These experiences have equipped me with a comprehensive understanding of FSBPT's governance, operations, and strategic priorities.

Other experience pertinent to position (e.g., same position with another organization):

- Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC)
 - Co-Chair of the Academic Strategic Planning Committee (2022-present). Led efforts to set long-term priorities and align resources.
 - Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee (2017-present). Guide faculty governance, shape policies, and foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders.
- APTA of Kansas Board of Directors
 - Contributed to policy advocacy and mentorship programs, refining my ability to lead with a focus on advancing professional standards.
- Vice Chair, APTA Academy of Education TPA SIG (2024-present)
 - Support the Chair in leading educational initiatives and advocating for PTA standards.
- Inaugural Member, APTA PTA Council
 - Served on the transition steering group, tasked with leading national advocacy efforts and coordinating with APTA leadership.
- CAPTE reviewer
 - Evaluate PTA programs to ensure they meet accreditation standards.

Candidate Statement:

I am eager to serve as Vice President of the FSBPT Board of Directors. My experience in physical therapy education, governance, and regulation equips me to excel in this role. As Program Coordinator and Professor at Kansas City Kansas Community College, I align curricula with CAPTE standards, preparing students for licensure. My role as a CAPTE reviewer sharpens my ability to uphold rigorous standards, while my clinical work as a licensed PTA grounds my commitment to safe practice.

My FSBPT experience demonstrates my understanding of licensure processes. Leading KCKCC's Academic Affairs and Strategic Planning Committees, I've sharpened strategic thinking and collaboration skills. My APTA roles, including Vice

Chair of the PTAE SIG and eight years on the APTA of Kansas Board, developed my ability to advance and uphold professional standards.

With a collaborative and adaptable approach, I am dedicated to serving with integrity and supporting the Federation's initiatives, and mission.

Candidate for Nominating Committee Member Position: Mario Baker



Current and past work experience:

- Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy, The University of Findlay, Findlay, OH (7/2021-present)
- Full-time physical therapist/PRN physical therapist, Concept Rehab, Inc., Toledo, OH (Full-time 2/2008-7/2021, PRN 7/2021-present)
- Part-Time Instructor, University of Toledo, Toledo, OH (1/2019-4/2021)
- Associate Part-Time Instructor, Professional Skills Institute, Maumee, OH (4/2010-12/2021)

Licensure experience:

- Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Athletic Trainers Board (2019-present)
 - Physical Therapy Section Chair (2024-present)
 - Joint Board President (2023-2024)
 - Joint Board President-Elect (2022-2023)
 - Physical Therapy Section Secretary (2022-2024)
 - Board Liaison to the Joint Board for Orthotics, Prosthetics, and Pedorthics Advisory Council (2021-2022)
 - Joint Board Correspondence Committee (2019-2022)
 - Physical Therapy Section Correspondence Committee (2019-2022)

FSBPT experience pertinent to position:

- Continuing Competence Committee (Member 2023-2024, Chair 2024-present)
- Minimum Data Set (Physical Therapy) Task Force (2023-2024, Chair)
- Ohio Delegate to FSBPT (2021-2022)
- Ohio Alternate Delegate to FSBPT (2019-2020)

Other experience pertinent to position (e.g., same position with another organization):

- PT Faculty Member Search Committee, University of Findlay College of Health Professions (Member, 1/2024-5/2024 & 1/2023-12/2023)

Candidate Statement:

I am honored to express my willingness to serve as a member of the Nominating Committee for FSBPT. With a strong background in PT practice, education, and leadership, I am confident in my ability to support FSBPT's mission of protecting the public by promoting safe and competent PT practice. My experience as a PT instructor, coupled with my active involvement in various professional organizations, has equipped me with the skills necessary to relate well with peers, network within the FSBPT community to identify talent, and embrace innovative ideas.

Throughout my career, I have demonstrated a commitment to advancing the field of PT through service, regulation, and leadership. As a member of the Continuing Competence Committee and Minimum Data Set Task Force at FSBPT, I have worked diligently to uphold the highest standards of excellence in regulation. My roles on the Ohio Physical Therapy State Board and the Ohio Joint Board have further honed my ability to collaborate with diverse teams and drive strategic initiatives. Additionally, my experience on search committees at The University of Findlay has provided me with valuable insights into identifying and recruiting top talent, ensuring that our team is composed of highly qualified and dedicated professionals.

If elected, I look forward to partnering with the FSBPT staff liaison and Nominating Committee members to implement effective strategies for placing the right people in the right roles. My experience in talent identification, combined with a strong commitment to FSBPT's mission, uniquely positions me to contribute meaningfully to this work.

I am committed to serving as a member of the Nominating Committee for the FSBPT Board and will devote the time and energy required to fulfill the responsibilities of this position.

Candidate for Nominating Committee Member Position: Anne Thompson



Current and past work experience:

- Adjunct Associate Professor, Health Professions Education, Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions (current)
- Associate Professor and Chair Emerita, Georgia Southern University, Rehabilitation Sciences and Physical Therapy (previous)
- Clinical practice, Memorial Health University Medical Center, Savannah, GA (retired)

Licensure experience:

- Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy (Member since 2016; Chair since 2022)

FSBPT experience pertinent to position:

- Georgia's Delegate to FSBPT (2023-present)
- Georgia's Alternate Delegate to FSBPT (2019-2022)
- FSBPT Continuing Competence Committee (Member – 2019-2021; Chair – 2022-2024)
- FSBPT Artificial Intelligence Task Force (2019-2020)
- Georgia's Delegate to the PT Compact Commission (2019-2022)
- PT Compact Rules & Bylaws Committee (Member – 2021-2024; Chair – 2025)

Other experience pertinent to position (e.g., same position with another organization):

- American Council of Academic Physical Therapy Nominating Committee (2016-2018; Chair in 2018)
- Board Member and Scholarship Chair, Georgia Foundation for Physical Therapy
- Member of APTA Georgia since 1979, including roles as Chief Delegate, Legislative Key Contact, and President

Candidate Statement:

I am honored to be a candidate for the Nominating Committee. This committee is essential to the sustainability and success of our organization, ensuring a strong leadership team that embraces our mission of public protection through safe, competent, healthy, and effective practice. We must encourage and nurture our talented membership to consider leadership positions, both for the annual slate and for future offices, building those relationships for ongoing possibilities. We will seek diversity in all of its rich dimensions, so that our leadership is truly representative of our organization and the constituents that we serve.

I learned many valuable lessons as a member and chair of the ACAPT (then Academy of Physical Therapy Education) Nominating Committee during its formative years. We worked together to get to know our members, identify potential candidates, encourage newcomers, clearly articulate position requirements and policies, communicate with our Board and staff, and manage the process to ensure that election schedules were met. Those same skills served me well as an academic administrator and in various professional organizations. As a member of FSBPT for almost 10 years, I've been fortunate to meet exceptional colleagues and develop friendships that can support our committee's work to seek and develop our future leaders. I am eager to bring my skills, dedication, and enthusiasm to this position and appreciate the opportunity to be a candidate for the Nominating Committee.