



MPTA Committee News

Summer 2009 *Shorelines*

Public Relations Committee

Submitted by Aaron Bailey, PT – MPTA Director #4, Public Relations Committee Chair

In an effort to increase consumer and student awareness and decrease the shortage in therapists in the state of Michigan, the MPTA Public Relations Committee, along with volunteers across the state, have been going to community schools to speak with students and their parents about the profession of physical therapy and the expertise that physical therapists offer in helping people to move forward and bring motion to life. Those in attendance are learning that physical therapy is the best option to avoid surgery, avoid unnecessary use of medication, and is the best way to achieve improved health and wellness while preventing injuries and other medical conditions.

The presentations have been well received and the MPTA has begun to compile a list of individuals across the state that are willing to help present this important information. Should any member of the MPTA have a school, chamber of commerce, or any other group interested in learning about the profession, please let the MPTA office know by email or phone call. The Public Relations Chair will handle the coordination of the presentation and if desired, supporting materials can be sent directly to the local contact and they can perform the presentation. If you are interested in volunteering to perform presentations please contact the MPTA and your name will be added to our database and you will be contacted when there is a request in your area. The MPTA would like to thank those of you who have volunteered to assist with the presentations and we would also like to thank those of you who have identified interested groups and schools! During these difficult economic times consumers are much more selective about where their healthcare money is spent. The more informed our consumers are the more they will see the value of addressing their health and wellness needs through physical therapy.

Another opportunity for increasing awareness is National Physical Therapy Month. It is never too early to begin planning events for this coming October. Once again the MPTA will be offering Public Relations Kits for members interested in reaching out to their community. Over the last two years the MPTA press release has been picked up by an increasing number of media outlets and has generated increased interest in the profession. The MPTA will continue to coordinate with the APTA to offer materials, advice,

education, and ideas for its members to make reaching out to the community as easy as possible. The APTA offers a large selection of materials and instructions on their public relations page of their website. The APTA has also begun the Move Forward branding campaign and on their website under Brand Beat you can find a variety of resources and guidelines to help establish therapists as the experts in improving quality of life through helping to regain motion, independence, and wellness.

This year is an exciting time as both your local chapter and your national organization are working very hard to promote and progress this outstanding profession by increasing consumer awareness and developing relationships with legislators, insurance companies, and referral sources. But we cannot do it alone. We need your help. Please contact the MPTA office if you are available to offer assistance in any way. Remember that a lot of us doing a little is much more effective than a little of us doing a lot. Thank you for your consideration and your dedication.