

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Consortium Slate of Candidates 2020

Director at Large

1. Matthew Nuciforo (matthew.nuciforo@rosilandfranklin.edu)
2. LaDarius Woods (lwoods@alasu.edu)

Nominating Committee

1. Carla Huggins (chuggins@gsu.edu)
2. Casey Uverzagt (casey_unverzagt@baylor.edu)

NAME: Matthew Nuciforo

POSITION: Director at Large

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Dr. Nuciforo received his Master’s degree in Physical Therapy from Marquette University. He subsequently completed a DPT from the University of Indianapolis and is currently a PhD doctoral candidate in Educational Policy and Leadership at Marquette University. He is a Board Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist through the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists. He is a recognized leader and researcher in physical therapy admissions and holistic application review as well as an advocate for the admission of a diverse and inclusive student community poised to meet the physical therapy needs of our nation. He has published in the Journal of Physical Therapy Education, the Journal of Orthopedic and Sports Physical Therapy, Physical Therapy (PTJ), and presented at various national American Physical Therapy Association and the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions meetings. Dr. Nuciforo previously served as Chair of the American Council on Academic Physical Therapy Admissions Task Force and was instrumental in passing national admissions Traffic Rules for programs and applicants</p>	<p>It is my pleasure to submit a statement for consideration for the DEI Consortium Director-at-Large position. My previous service to the ACAPT Admissions Task Force and scholarship are well aligned with the Consortium’s goal of supporting and promoting the value and importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the profession. Although engaging educational programs in conversation related to increasing underrepresented student enrollment is only one area in which we must work to support real change, it is nevertheless a crucial one and directly connected with my experience. My current research and prior experiences with programs have focused on revealing the normative assumptions and biases inherent in the social construction of merit. These experiences and perspectives will enable me to serve in this role. As a profession we must develop tangible strategies and tools for programs to broaden the pipeline for careers in physical therapy if we are to fully achieve ACAPT’s mission of excellence in physical therapy education. I have observed the positive and powerful impact our profession</p>

	<p>can have on the health and well-being of our entire nation if we empower ourselves to advance the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. I look forward to this opportunity to serve.</p>
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NAME: LaDarius Woods

POSITION: Director at Large

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>LaDarius “LD” Woods is an assistant professor at Alabama State University (ASU) in Montgomery, AL. LD has been at ASU since 2017 and teaches content related to neurological rehabilitation along with assisting in the foundational and research courses. LD currently holds certifications as a Strength & Conditioning Coach, Aerobics Instructor and Personal Trainer, USATF Level 1 Track and Field Coach, Blaze Sports America Certified Disability Sport Specialist, Integrative Dry Needling, Level II Selective Functional Movement Assessment, and Vestibular Assessment & Management. LD’s clinic interests are health & wellness, vestibular rehabilitation, and general orthopedics. LD's research interests are critical methodology, active learning strategies, and admission practices. LD is currently completing his PhD in Adult Education at Auburn University with his dissertation titled, An Examination of Diversity and Inclusion in Physical Therapy Programs’ Admissions.</p>	<p>I am running for Director-At-Large (DAL). This is a position where the officer is asked to provide broad-based input, disseminate information to membership, and serve any additional duties the board deems fit. I am uniquely qualified to serve in this capacity due to my current experience as the Director-At-Large for the APTA Alabama Chapter, past experience as the Secretary of the Student Assembly, and a multitude of additional positions I have held within our profession ranging from Vice-President of the Alabama Early Professionals SIG to Social Media Task Force Member for the APTE. Each of those positions has uniquely prepared me to serve in the role of DAL. I would argue one of the most pressing issues ACAPT and the DEI Consortium should address is the inclusion of the minoritized voice. From a minoritized perspective, our profession is dominated by non-minoritized ideas, perspectives, and philosophies with minimal focus on social justice and critical perspectives. Within these spaces, minoritized voices are not seen as valuable or credible. ACAPT and the DEI Consortium have an opportunity to begin to shift the paradigm of how the profession sees academic innovation, knowledge to elevate health care, and academic leadership and advocacy. Thanks for your time and consideration</p>

NAME: Carla Huggins

POSITION: Nominating Committee

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Dr. Carla Huggins is an Assistant Professor and Director of Clinical Education, for which she supervises/coordinates all aspects of physical therapy clinical education, at Georgia State University. She has served in this role for nearly 7 years. She also teaches the first of the series of Professionalism courses, Documentation and assists with content in several other courses in the program. Dr. Huggins' research interests have included documentation in the clinic, smartphone and technology usage in the classroom and clinic, and most recently, innovative methods to improve students' preparedness for clinical education experiences, including a skills day, integrated clinical experiences and cultural competency. Additionally, Dr. Huggins found the program's Diversity Group that has been in existence since 2017. Dr. Huggins has practice physical therapy for nearly 25 years, primarily in the acute care hospital setting but has experience in both outpatient and home health clinical settings. Having spent over 11 years in management, she has progressed from supervisor to director of both physical therapy and occupational therapy departments. In this role, she has mentored many students and therapy staff. She has been an APTA Credentialed Clinical Instructor since 2008.</p>	<p>I would be honored to serve as a Nominating Committee Member for the ACAPT Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consortium. As a practicing PT for nearly 25 years and as an academician at Georgia State University for nearly 7 years, I believe that I have the experience, passion and enthusiasm to serve in this role, seeking leaders to move the initiatives of the ACAPT DEI Consortium forward. As the founder and co-chair of our department's Diversity Group, our mission and vision, along with the progress we have made with preparing our students for a diverse workplace, I believe that I have demonstrated that our initiatives align with ACAPT's strategic plan for establishing a framework needed to transform clinical education in physical therapy. My other qualifications are as follows: <u>On a national level:</u> ACAPT voting representative (2014 – Present); Educational Leadership Conference (ELC) attendance (2014 – Present); Chair, GSU's ACAPT National PT Student Honor Society with four inductee in 2019 (2019 – Present); Presented two podium refereed presentations at ELC in 2017 and 2019 (specifically supporting the initiatives to increase DEI in the physical therapy profession). <u>On the state level:</u> Nominating Committee Chair, Physical Therapy Association of Georgia (2018 – 2019); Nominating Committee Co-chair (2017 – 2018); Director, Georgia Consortium of Clinical Educators (2014 – 2019); and Secretary, Georgia Consortium of Clinical Educators (2019 – Present). I value your support.</p>

NAME: Casey Uverzagt

POSITION: Nominating Committee

Brief Bio	Candidate Statement
<p>Casey Uverzagt is a Clinical Assistant Professor and Director of Admissions for Baylor University’s DPT program. Dr. Uverzagt received his Bachelor of Science from the University of Puget Sound (2003), DPT degree from Slippery Rock University of PA (2006), and his Doctorate of Science in Orthopaedic and Manual Therapy from Andrews University in Michigan (2014). He completed a sports residency in the state of Washington and is an ABPTS board certified Orthopaedic and Sports Clinical Specialist. Dr. Uverzagt also completed a fellowship in Orthopaedic and Manual Therapy from the Evidence in Motion Institute of Health Professions. He currently teaches for EIM’s sports residency program as well as Scorebuilders. His research interests include ACL return to sport testing, concussion management, and cognitive psychology as it relates to examination preparation.</p>	<p>As Director of Admissions for the Baylor University DPT program, I am keenly aware of the challenges and opportunities non-traditional or racially diverse students face when applying to physical therapy school, not to mention the challenge to thrive in the program once accepted. One of the many reasons we implemented a novel approach to DPT education, and why our admissions process is equally unique, is an attempt to reach out to these underserved populations. While there were great risks to many of our initiatives, the rewards have been bountiful; we have benefited immensely from racially, geographically and socioeconomically diverse cohorts. Unfortunately, in my 9 years of teaching in residency education, and after working with ABPTRFE as a site visitor, it has become clear that we have a long way to go in order to make post-professional education equitable for all individuals. In order to address the challenges facing entry-level and post-professional programs, and fall further in line with ACAPT’s strategic plan, we must look beyond antiquated methods of assessing and recruiting diverse students and instead push the envelope in order to ensure our entry-level and post-professional graduates represent the diverse patient population they have the honor and privilege to treat.</p>