



PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

PTA PROGRAM UPDATE

Perkins Grant Funds

We have such good news to share with you! The PTA Program has been approved for ALL Perkins grant requests this year! All current faculty and learners have been provided access to PhysioU and Jan Davis' Learning ICE Center. These online resources provide supplemental videos, case studies and instruction using animation and real patients. Twenty-eight ipads complete with a ton of physical therapy applications (apps) will be arriving to the lab soon. Learners will not have to choose the *one* app they can afford anymore. Each ipad will contain apps related to anatomy, physiology, goniometry, manual muscle testing, special tests, gait, ICD-10 codes, medical Spanish, and therex. We are very excited to be getting not only a Saunders Cervical HomeTrac traction system, but also a brand new traction table for the front of the lab! You may not recognize the lab when you come to visit, because we will also be receiving a new Mr. Superskeleton, new wheelchairs, abduction pillows, overbed tables, foot stools, hand bells, standing table, mechanical floor scale, fitted sheets and a hi-lo table. To assist our learners in developing therapeutic exercise skills, we will have a Theraband wall station, BAPS board, cuff and dumbbell rack, weight box and an Airex balance pad. Lastly, we are getting hand held dynamometers, digital and bubble inclinometers, volumeter sets, goniometers, reflex hammers and pulse oximeters. We cannot wait for the "goodies" to start arriving!



PTA PROGRAM NEWS



Standard Lab Uniforms Utilized for all PTAP Labs:

Starting with this current cohort (PTA Class of 2020), all learners were required to purchase a standard lab uniform to be worn to all labs. The students appear professional and faculty members who have seen our students participating in lab activities on campus have known exactly who they were!

PTA PROGRAM CLINICAL NEWS

Awarding Clinical Instructors:

At the conclusion of each clinical affiliation, data is entered into a spreadsheet to track which students had which Clinical Instructors. When entering the data over the summer, it became very clear that we have a few “super star” Clinical Instructors who have hosted a significant number of Mercer PTA students over the years. The Clinical Instructor who had hosted the highest number of students for each practice setting received a plaque to thank them for their continuous support. We would not be here if it weren’t for the support of practicing clinicians who are willing to share their time and energy to mentor PTA students during clinical affiliations.

Take a look below at the “Super Star” Clinical Instructors who received a plaque this summer. Is your Clinical Instructor or co-worker there? Send them a **CONGRATULATIONS!**



PAGE THREE

COLLABORATION WITH RUTGERS

The PTA program has worked with **Rutgers University's** School of Health Professions, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies to establish a relationship whereby our alumni who currently have an Associate's in Applied Science as a PTA can complete a Bachelor's degree from Rutgers, the State University of NJ completely **ONLINE**.

Additionally, Rutgers has agreed to accept the majority of your MCCC credits toward the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences, with tracks in Healthcare Management and Aging!

If you have been thinking about continuing your education to earn your Bachelor's Degree but wondering where to start, this may be an option for you. This agreement ensures that the majority of the credits that you have earned for your Associate's Degree from Mercer will be accepted toward one of these degrees. This means that you will NOT have to worry about having only a small percentage of the credits you have earned "count" toward your next degree. That's typically been the case in the past, but not with this new agreement!

If you are potentially interested, please reach out to Professor Behrens via email. behrensb@mccc.edu. Additional information can be found on the [Rutgers website](#).

RESULTS OF ALUMNI WORK SURVEY

The results are in!

How many times have you read salary and workplace survey results that do not specifically relate to **YOU**? How many times have you looked for PTA salary and workplace data, only to discover the information is lacking or pertains only to physical therapists? The summer alumni newsletter contained a survey created solely for **YOU**. Unfortunately, only nine alumni participated in the survey. However, I promised to share the results and here they are:

Demographics:

50% were male, 50% female; 3 are between 35-44 years of age, 4 between 45 & 54 years and 2 between 55 & 64 years of age; 5 participants have between 0 & 5 years of clinical practice experience, 2 have between 6 & 10 years and 2 have between 16 & 20 years of practice; 5 have an AAS degree, 3 have a Bachelor's degree and 1 has a Master's degree. One has a yoga certification and 1 is a golden heart senior fitness instructor.

Work:

75% are happy with their choice of physical therapy as a profession; 7 are practicing in outpatient settings and 2 are in sub-acute settings. All have a current role as clinician. 6 work full-time (30-40 hours/week) and 3 work part-time (15-30 hours/week). 3 have a second job as a PTA, 1 has a second job not as a PTA and 5 do not have second jobs. None of their employers require overtime. 1 employer requires 90% productivity, 1 measures productivity by CXL rate and 4 do not have productivity standards. 50% of employers provide mentorship to new therapists, 2 employers allocate time for non-patient care duties and 100% of employers have the same productivity standards for new therapists as experienced therapists.

Salary & Benefits:

1 earns between 43k & 35k, 1 earns between 45k & 50k, and 6 earn between 55k & 60k. 50% have received a raise within the past year. 5 are hourly employees, 2 are salaried, 1 is contract, 1 in an independent 1099. 75% of the employers offer paid benefits, including medical/vision/dental/prescription, retirement savings, continuing education & tuition reimbursement, HSA, life insurance and short & long term disability insurance.