

Candidate Name: Marcela Criado

Nomination Position: Early-Career/Student SIG Chair

Degrees Earned & Certifications:

- Doctorate in Physical Therapy, PT, DPT at Boston University
- Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, CSCS
- B.S. Kinesiology, Minor in Nutrition at The Pennsylvania State University

EXPERIENCE:

Clinical/Current Employment:

- Staff physical therapist at the Maine Strong Balance Center, outpatient neurologic clinic
 - o Developed “Brain Gains”, a weekly newsletter sent to interested providers in the clinic with an article, study, or podcast with the goal of promoting continuing education and providing an opportunity for providers to learn and discuss new knowledge.
 - o Contributed to the following clinic resources: Fall Recovery packet for patients, NMES guidelines for providers
- Co-founder of Bloom Community, LLC
 - o Co-founder of Bloom Community, a virtual community for Latina women striving to build strong connections, open spaces to practice vulnerability, and provide educational workshops to drive personal, professional, and spiritual growth.

Research/ Professional Contributions:

- August 2023 - Translated Fact Sheets on Autonomic Dysreflexia, Bowel Management After SCI: Overview, Orthostatic Hypotension, and Integumentary Changes and Considerations Impacting People with Spinal Cord injury from English to Spanish (to be published).

Teaching:

- July 2024 – Guest speaker at University of New Hampshire Doctor of Occupational Therapy program presenting “An Introduction to the Vestibular System” to first year students
- Fall 2023 – served as an ICE instructor for 2 UNE DPT students
- December 2022 - Academic practicum: Impact of Language Discordance on Physical Therapy Outcomes

- Conducted a literature review regarding the impact of language discordance on clinical outcomes, the therapeutic alliance, and the use of interpreter services to breach this gap

Professional Awards:

- Nominated for the APTA MA Ruth P. Hall Clinical Fellowship Award in 2023

APTA Service History:

- APTA Member since 2021

Please explain how your experience and expertise could be utilized in the nomination position applied for to further the objectives of the Chapter:

I understand that one of the main goals of the chapter, specifically to this SIG, is to increase member and student engagement. I believe that my current role as a Social Media Manager has helped me build strong communication skills – using different language and strategies depending on the target audience, and accountability as this is a self-led role where expectations are set by self. I have been fortunate to bring the perspective of being a student on rotation, a new graduate, and now a relied upon teammate all within the same organization. With the continuity and lessons learned in the process, I aspire to bring my perspective to young professionals at all stages navigating the healthcare landscape as best I can. Ultimately, I have had the opportunity to work on my community building skills while co-founding Bloom Community: creating authentic connections via shared experiences, active listening, promoting inclusivity and I plan to apply these skills while working towards developing a stronger, devoted, and committed community of early professionals and students.

Explain your perceptions regarding the direction the Chapter should take in the future and how your goals for the nominated position will affect this change:

I believe that improving member and student engagement specifically, is a goal I feel passionate about. The future of the APTA and our profession as physical therapists will rely on upcoming professionals, current students, therefore starting the conversation of how they play a role in this community as early as possible, will be key.

My goals in this role would include to continue the work that has been paved by previous SIG members, host more consistent events for early professionals and students to promote community building and networking opportunities, and host round tables to open discussions regarding member concerns, goals, ideas to build agency and collaboration between APTA leadership and members.