

Letter From the President

Jenna Encheff, PT, PhD, CMPT, CERP

Meet the President



It is my honor to introduce myself as the recently elected President of the ARSIG, but before I do that, let me thank Kirk Peck for his 6 years of service as President. Under his leadership, our special interest group has made tremendous strides in reaching many goals related to our mission. Most recently, he and Stevan Allen, our current Vice President, have completed a Practice Analysis to assess current practice patterns among licensed physical therapists who are currently treating animals

in the United States. Concurrently a Clinical Practice Standards Document was drafted. These two documents are currently under review by the Academy of Orthopedic Physical Therapy Board with the ultimate goal of these documents leading to development of an official *Description of Practice* for Animal Physical Therapy. Kirk has graciously volunteered to continue to be the driving force in progressing these documents forward along with Stevan, so I thank him for his continued service!

As for me, you may be wondering a little about me and my background—I will keep it as brief as possible! I graduated from the University of Toledo (UT) in 1995 with my Bachelor's in physical therapy and worked at The Medical College of Ohio (now University of Toledo Medical Center) for 9 years in in-patient rehabilitation, primarily with patients with spinal cord injury. After serving as a lab assistant for UT's PT program and then teaching for two years part-time in a PTA program, I decided that teaching was definitely what I wanted to do full time. I earned my Master's in Exercise Science in 2002, and then my PhD in Biomechanics with a minor in Research and Measurement from the University of Toledo in 2008. I taught for 11 years in the DPT program at the University of Findlay in Ohio, and have been full faculty at Trine University in Indiana in the DPT program for the past 4 years. I currently teach Anatomy I/II, Musculoskeletal PT I/II, and Neurorehabilitation I, and have taught our Research series along with a few other courses including Geriatrics and Therapeutic Exercise. Very varied! I completed my manual physical therapist certification (CMPT) through the North American Institute of Orthopaedic Manual Therapy (NAIOMT) and my Equine Rehabilitation Practitioner Certification (CERP) through the University of Tennessee/Northeast Seminars. I have practiced in orthopedics for the past 13 years and see a few patients as needed for manual and dry needling at my brother's OP clinic near Toledo, OH (he's a PT too!). I see horses for rehabilitation/therapeutic exercise (along with the occasional cow or mini donkey!) and I also perform evalu-

ations/hippotherapy as needed for a local hippotherapy/therapeutic riding center. I am a Barefoot/Natural Trimmer on the side, so I also have several equine clients to whom I give "pedicures." I have been riding pretty much my entire life and have three off-track Thoroughbreds (Mishka, 18, Jazz, 15, Keno, 3). I keep in shape by riding, stacking hay, trimming hooves, and shoveling pool! I also have one dog (Jemima) and 6 (yes, 6) cats. Everybody is/was a rescue or stray including the horses who I adopted through New Vocations Racehorse Adoption.

Although training horses, working with horses on exercises for conditioning or certain events/activities, hoof trimming, rider biomechanics, etc. have long been a part of my life, it was not until a couple years ago, that I became "serious" about merging 3 of my passions: physical therapy, horses, and biomechanics of riders. After attaining my CERP, becoming more active in the ARSIG was a natural next step and I welcome the challenge!

For our current members and prospective members, I want to assure you that the intention of our special interest group is to continue to grow the awareness and support of physical therapists practicing in the animal domain. We will stay focused on continuing to be a benefit and resource to our members. I look forward to a productive, successful year and invite each of you to become involved. Meanwhile, the officers of the ARSIG are here to help you. If there is anything we can do for you, please do not hesitate to contact us!

CSM 2019 Washington, DC

Stevan Allen, MA, PT, CCRT

For the fifth consecutive year, our ARSIG had an excellent turnout for our two-hour programming at this year's CSM in Washington, DC. At the publication deadline, we do not have the actual numbers from the APTA, but it was estimated to be well over 400 attendees. We had THREE overflow rooms required to accommodate all the growing interest in animal physical therapy.

This year's presentation, "Manual Therapy for Equine and Canine Clients: Different Species, Same Concepts" was very well received. This session used multiple video demonstrations (over 60) on manual therapy techniques to address soft tissue and joint dysfunctions in equine and canine mammals. A specific focus on joint biomechanics in relation to restoring functional movement was addressed. Our 3 instructors offered a lively presentation to show the general audience how all of their physical therapy skills can be used to advance the care of our 4 legged mammal patients.

Presenters at this year's event were:

- Karen Atlas, MPT, CCRT, founder/owner and Director of Rehabilitation at Atlas Rehabilitation for Canines (ARC) in Santa Barbara, California.
- Sharon Classen, PT, ATC, CERP, from Omaha, Nebraska. Sharon provides physical therapy to Olympic and elite level horses and riders in International Equestrian Federation (FEI) division at major international shows. Sharon is the Owner and Director of Serenity Physical Therapy in Omaha.
- Kirk Peck, PT, PhD, CSCS, CCRT, CERP, from Omaha, Nebraska. Kirk is the past President of the ARSIG and is

currently the Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy at Creighton University in Omaha.

In addition, two of our presenters, Sharon Classen and Kirk Peck, also participated in a panel discussion on “Clinical Practice Guidelines Management Following a Concussive Event.” Sharon was part of a panel of 5 physical therapists across a broad range of practice experience from pediatrics, to sports medicine, to show jumpers in equine athletics.

What can YOU do to help support the ARSIG’s Mission and Vision?

Mission: To lead and innovate in the art and science of physical therapy in animal rehabilitation.

Vision: Serve as the premier resource for excellence in practice, education, research, and advocacy by physical therapists in animal rehabilitation, fitness, and performance.

Each year there are literally thousands of hours contributed by dedicated individuals who are passionate about animal rehabilitation and progressing the mission and vision of the ARSIG. However, we have many hurdles, tasks, and challenges ahead of us! We need your HELP! Please consider volunteering for a task force. We will have many upcoming opportunities for you to serve YOUR special interest group and we really need your support. Your membership in the Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy and more specifically, the Animal Rehabilitation Special Interest Group is an indication that you are committed to making a positive difference, not only in your own community, but throughout your state and the country.

Keep your eyes on your email in the next several months for blast emails as we put forth calls for volunteers for support! This support can range from submitting an article for OPTP, to serving as a State Liaison for the ARSIG, to aiding in development of resources such as articles or general home exercise plans that our members can access on our website. Whether you are a PT, a PTA, or a PT/PTA student, we can use your talents to support our mission and vision!



Kirk Peck, Sharon Classen, Karen Atlas present at CSM in Washington, DC.



A packed house for the ARSIG programming at CSM.

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ANIMAL REHABILITATION LEADERSHIP

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