



February 25, 2026 - Vol. 309

Host the 2027 FPTA Student Conclave

FPTA is looking for a host for the 2027 FPTA Student Conclave—the premier event for DPT and PTA students in Florida. This is an incredible opportunity to showcase your program and make a lasting impact on the next generation of physical therapy professionals. Think your school has what it takes? Nominate your program today. Deadline to apply is April 1, 2026.

[View Requirements & Nomination Form](#)

Department of Education releases Proposed Rule on Federal Student Loan Limits Comments due March 2!

On Thursday, January 29, 2026, the U.S. Department of Education released its long-awaited proposed rule that reclassifies what constitutes a "professional degree program" versus a "graduate degree program" for the purposes of new federal student loan limits. Not surprisingly, the Department of Education has maintained the recommendation from this fall's RISE Committee which limits professional degree programs to the following professions:

"We also propose that a professional degree only includes degrees in the following fields: Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Law (L.L.B. or J.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), Theology (M.Div., or M.H.L.), and Clinical Psychology (Psy.D. or Ph.D.)"

As such, if enacted, physical therapy degree programs would be considered 'graduate degree programs' for the purposes of federal student loans and subject to a \$100,000 total lifetime cap, \$20,500 annual cap. The proposed rule has a 30-day comment period.

APTA will be submitting formal comments to the Department of Education and will be coordinating our efforts with the Alliance for Healthcare Access & Workforce Development (AHAWD), which APTA is a leading member.

APTA will provide a template letter for members and programs to submit comments to the Department of Education which should be available next week on the APTA Regulatory Action Center. In addition, APTA has an action alert (link below) for members to send to their House member regarding current legislation in Congress that would override the Department's proposed rule.

Let your voice be heard

Supporting Caregivers Across Florida

The Florida State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Priority Area Workgroup 1 has developed a Caregiver Toolkit to support individuals caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. This comprehensive, Florida-specific resource includes guidance on disease stages, communication strategies, home safety and fall prevention, medication management, caregiver wellness, and future planning.

Physical therapists are uniquely positioned to support both patients and caregivers. We encourage FPTA members to share this toolkit with patients, families, colleagues, and community partners.

FPTA Member, Katherine Calvert, PT, is a member of this workgroup and helped develop the toolkit.

Caregiver Toolkit: **SHIP-PA1-Caregivers-Toolkit_2024.pdf**
SHIP Website:
<https://elderaffairs.org/programs-and-services/state-health-improvement-plan-ship/>

Together, we can strengthen caregiver support across Florida.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED -
Payment Resources Workgroup**



The 2026 Nominations for **Elected Officers** and **Delegates** is now open. Positions available for election include **Secretary**,

FPTA is looking for volunteers to join the Payment Resources Workgroup. This workgroup was established as part of the Strategic Plan to develop resources for members regarding payment policies. If you are interested in joining, please email Michelle Higdon at mhigdon@fpta.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – Co-Pay Reform Workgroup

FPTA is looking for volunteers to join the Co-Pay Reform Workgroup. This workgroup was established as part of the Strategic Plan to research and develop language/legislation related to co-pay reform. If you are interested in joining, please email Michelle Higdon at mhigdon@fpta.org.

**Treasurer, PTA Director,
Nominating Committee Member
and Delegates to the APTA
House.** Submit your nominations today! Deadline is April 17.

Nominate Now

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

**DRY NEEDLING
COURSES IN FL!**

Fort Lauderdale | April 10-12
Jacksonville | June 5-7
REGISTER NOW!



STRUCTURE & FUNCTION[®]
EDUCATION

STRUCTUREANDFUNCTION.NET
In-person (online available)

CALL FOR SPEAKERS

FPTA is currently seeking speakers/presenters for our 2026 Annual Conference in Orlando, Sept. 17-20. Click the link below to submit your proposal.



Deadline is March 13!

[Speaker Application](#)

Upcoming Events



**Two different cities,
two different dates.
Choose your place!**

June 6-7 - University of Miami

LAMP Leadership 101: The Catalyst for Leading Within

Description: The Leadership, Administration, Management, and Professionalism (LAMP) certificate program was developed by the APTA Academy of Leadership and Innovation to address member needs in leadership, administration, management, and professionalism skills. LAMP is focused on leadership development through self-assessments, identification of tools needed to lead successfully, empowerment, and mentoring through practical applications. LAMP is valuable for all PTs and PTAs regardless of their position, managers, practice owners, clinicians, educators, researchers, and students who want to develop their leadership effectiveness.

November 7-8 - University of Central

Florida

FPTA Members \$425

Non-Members \$575

[More Information](#)

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify and discuss the personal characteristics of an effective leader
2. Recognize the importance of accountability, values and their impact on personal leadership;
3. Describe and model leader behaviors and communication styles that influence, align, and empower others
4. Formulate effective responses to conflict in a variety of situations.

Join the Neuro SIG for a CE Presentation titled
**"Rapid Review of Huntington's, Friedrich's Ataxia, CIDP,
NPH: What the Rehab Team Needs to Know"**

Date: Monday, April 6, 2026

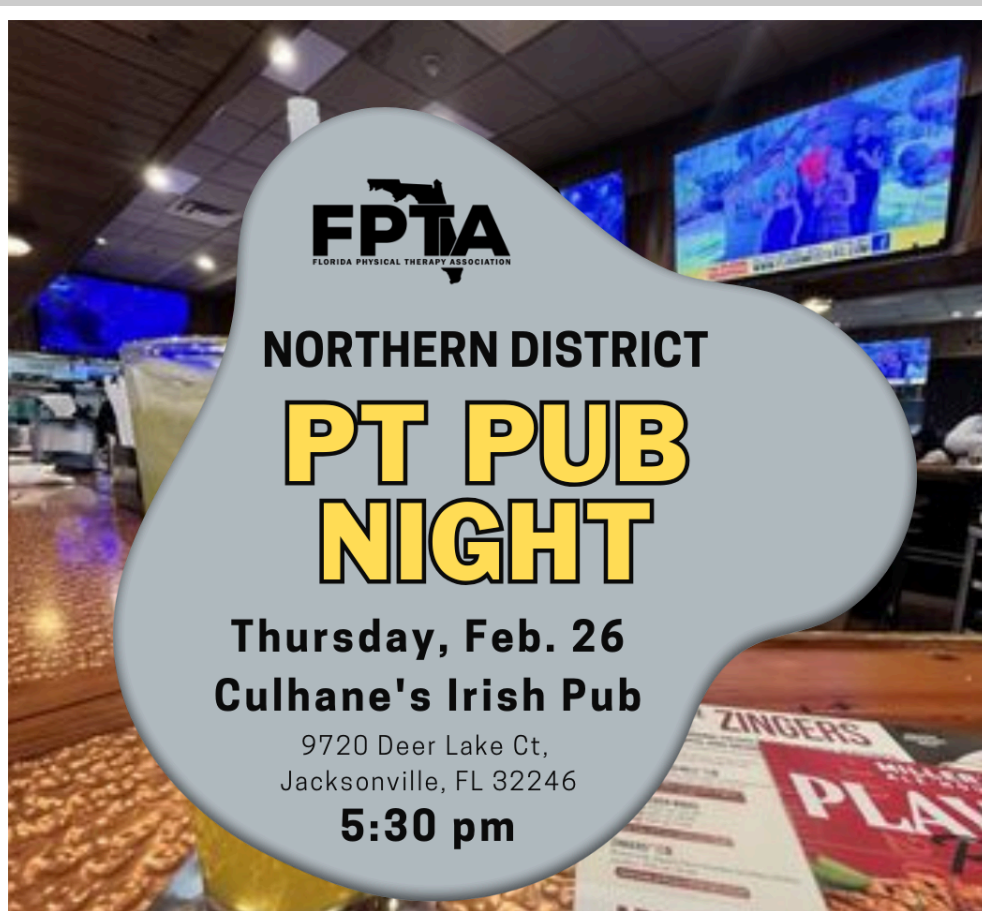
Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Location: Zoom

Cost: FREE

More details coming soon!

NORTHERN DISTRICT



FPTA
FLORIDA PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION

NORTHERN DISTRICT

PT PUB NIGHT

Thursday, Feb. 26
Culhane's Irish Pub

9720 Deer Lake Ct,
Jacksonville, FL 32246

5:30 pm

Other locations:

St. Augustine & Gainesville - TBD

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

SWD PT PUB NIGHT

FPTA Southwest District PT Pub Night!

The FPTA Southwest District is excited to invite you to our upcoming PT Pub Night – a great opportunity to connect, relax, and network with fellow PT students, clinicians, and professors!

 **Location: Palm City Brewing**

7887 Drew Circle, Unit 130, Fort Myers, FL 33966

 **Date: Thursday, February 26, 2026**

 **Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

Come enjoy an evening of great conversation, food, and drinks in a casual setting.

Please note: Food and beverages are not covered by the district.

We can't wait to see everyone there!

WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

BEACH CLEAN UP

JOIN US 3/7

Grab your friends, family, and coworkers and join WCD for a beach clean up day at Davis Island Beach.

SATURDAY MARCH 7TH

START AT 8:30 AM

Davis Island Beach, 864 Severn Ave., Tampa, 33606

Please RSVP to Erica Disbrow; edisbrow1028@gmail.com

WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

PT Pub Night

5:30 PM

Thursday, April 9, 2026

Two Shepherds Tap Room
4813 North Grady Ave., Tampa, FL 33614

Calling all PTs and PTAs! Join us for a fun and relaxed evening of connection, good conversation, and camaraderie with fellow physical therapy professionals. We can't wait to see you there!

FLORIDA PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION

PAC
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The money raised for the Florida Physical Therapy Political Action Committee (FPT-PAC) will be used in our efforts to modernize the Practice Act in Florida. The Florida Practice Act governs every physical therapist and physical therapist assistant in the state. We need your support to modernize the act and remove barriers to providing physical therapy services. [Donate Today](#)

Guardian of the Profession - \$1000+
Catherine Patla

President's Circle - \$500- \$999
Jamie Dyson

Ambassador - \$250-\$499
Mark Bishop
Dan Curtis
Ketul Shah

Century Circle - \$100-\$249
Michelle Higdon
Katherine Kounnas
Kimberly McCloughan
Joan Miller
Leiselle Pilgrim

PAC Friend - \$1-\$99
Jonathan Alicea
Lenis Alicea-Yildrim
Jessica Carter Peer
Sandra Davis
Katie Hockin
John Leschitz
Timothy Leslie
Amada Mendoza
Charles Richardson
Dorothy Santi
Adam Schwinn
Craig Vecchiarelli
Meredith Weiss
Theresa Wilkinson



The FPTA is a component of the APTA. You are receiving this newsletter because you indicated an interest in receiving newsletters through your preferences in your APTA account. Unsubscribing with the SafeUnsubscribe link in this publication will remove you from all FPTA communications sent via Constant You can also go to www.APTA.org/Email to manage your email preferences through your APTA account.

FPTA Paid Advertisement Policy: Acceptance of advertising does not mean endorsement by the Florida Physical Therapy Association of the products or services advertised, the advertisers or the claims made. For questions or additional information on advertising in a FPTA publication, please contact info@fpta.org or call 850-222-1243.



Try email marketing for free today!