

APTA Virginia Student SIG Newsletter

APTA Virginia SSIG Q&A

As we step into summer and look towards transitioning into this upcoming academic year, fresh classes, and an abundance of new professional opportunities, there is no better time to reintroduce and get well acquainted with who we are and what we do! Please take a minute or two to read through this Q&A, you certainly won't regret it.

What is the APTA VA?

The APTA Virginia is a state-level chapter of the national organization, the APTA. It is a membership-based professional organization consisting of PTs, PTAs, PT Students, and PTA students. The APTA Virginia fosters relationships throughout the commonwealth and seeks to connect professionals and students together. The organization serves to represent its members and advance the physical therapy profession through advocacy, fundraising, and continuing education.

What are Special Interest Groups?

Special Interest Groups, in general, can be found throughout the APTA and APTA Virginia. They are subgroups of the overarching organization intended to serve individuals with common interests. Special Interest Groups have most commonly been formed around practice specialties (pediatrics, orthopedics, acute care, etc.), but have in addition been formed for clinicians in private practice, those who are "early professionals," and those promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion in the field, just to name a few. Within the Virginia chapter there are six SIGs: Early Professionals SIG (EPSIG), Geriatric SIG (GSIG), Pediatric SIG (PSIG), Physical Therapy Assistant SIG (PTASIG), Private Practice SIG (PPSIG), and the Student SIG (SSIG).

So what exactly is the SSIG then?

The "SSIG" is the Student Special Interest Group. The Student SIG of the APTA Virginia Chapter can best be described as an organization which serves PT and PTA students in the Commonwealth through enrichment of the student experience. The APTA VA SSIG provides access to educational content outside the realm of traditional PT/PTA curricula, raises student awareness of policies and issues impacting the physical therapy profession, and encourages continued involvement in the APTA VA and APTA alike, upon graduation and entrance into the workplace.

Who serves on the SSIG?

All PT and PTA Students who are active APTA VA members are automatically a part of the APTA VA SSIG. Nine current DPT and PTA students representing programs from across the Commonwealth have been elected by their peers to be a voice for the student body; they currently comprise the Executive Committee of the APTA VA SSIG.

What is the importance of the SSIG to me?

The APTA VA SSIG can be extremely valuable to PT and PTA Students. Thoughts of "professional advocacy" through state and nationwide organizations can seem rather intimidating. Finding space within a student-oriented sub-organization that focuses its efforts on reaching students and providing them concrete ways of getting involved in professional advocacy makes this experience a lot more tangible and much less intimidating. So if you are like many students in that you KNOW you want to get involved (no matter your reason), but you don't know HOW to do it, active participation in the APTA VA SSIG and any of the events it puts on is a great way to do so!

What can I look forward to this upcoming year?

This year, we're holding a T-shirt Design contest & fundraiser for this year's APTA VA SSIG T-Shirt; Fall Summit (a great continuing education opportunity); a monthly Zoom Lecture Series featuring various PTs/PTAs who want to share their experiences/wisdom with us, & so much more!

How can I get involved?

Keep an eye out for emails that come from the APTA-VA SSIG, follow us on social media (Facebook: @vpta.ssig, Twitter: @VPTAStudentSIG)! We'll send information on all events we're hosting this year—the most important thing to do is to step out of your comfort zone and dive in! You may also want to consider running for a position on next year's APTA VA SSIG Exec Board—this is a fantastic way to learn more about the APTA VA and really get involved!

APTA Virginia SSIG Spotlight



Paxton Helmer
Roanoke, VA
VCU 2021

Why is your membership important to you?

"My membership to the APTA Virginia chapter has helped me become more involved in promoting advocacy and facilitating educational experiences while affording me the opportunity to connect with other students across the Commonwealth; I have come to recognize its value as a student. By actively involving myself in the APTA VA chapter, I am exposed to a broader group, allowing me to extend beyond my local community and connect with others with different perspectives. This is crucial to developing relationships with future colleagues and actively learning about the future of our profession."

Please list any current and past leadership roles (school, VPTA, APTA, etc.) and what has made them meaningful

"Currently, I serve as the President of the Class of 2021 at Virginia Commonwealth University. This leadership role has presented challenging issues but also has been rewarding; it has provided me with a breadth of experience, teaching me how to work with a variety of people originating from unique cultural backgrounds. In this role, I have had the experience of serving others. I have learned to be receptive to feedback, developed professional skills, and have ultimately become more culturally aware and sensitive making this a truly meaningful opportunity.

Additionally, I am the Chair of the APTA Virginia Student Special Interest Group. This opportunity has allowed me to step outside of my comfort zone and become involved on a larger scale. It allows me to connect with other students and clinicians while taking a step forward and leading by example. I look forward to learning more about APTA and APTA Virginia during my time in this role. Both leadership experiences have given me numerous opportunities which has made my time as a DPT student exceedingly valuable."

Are you an APTA Virginia student member and want to be highlighted on the SSIG social media AND featured in the newsletter? Fill out this form here! We encourage nominations for enthusiastic and inspiring student leaders to be featured in our newsletter. Our hope is to feature a student once per month!

T-Shirt Design Contest

Each year, the APTA Virginia Student Special Interest Group (SSIG) hosts a variety of fundraisers to support the goal of funding scholarships for PT and PTA students in Virginia to attend the annual Fall Summit event, hosted by the APTA Virginia chapter.

This year, one of our major fundraising efforts will be the sale of a uniquely designed T-shirt that represents the APTA Virginia SSIG! Before we can sell a T-shirt, **WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH A DESIGN!** Design and submit an original graphic or design for a T-shirt that will be well liked across PT and PTA students of Virginia! If your design is selected, you'll be awarded a free T-shirt and the pride of having your design on a shirt worn by students across the Commonwealth for years to come!

FEELING CREATIVE?

T-SHIRT DESIGN

CONTEST

Hosted by APTA-Virginia's
Student Special Interest Group
Submit by: Friday, July 15, 2020
Submit to: aptavassig@gmail.com
Follow link for submission guidelines.



More Info

Monthly Virtual Lecture Series

The APTA Virginia SSIG is hosting a monthly virtual lecture series aimed at starring unique lecturers to supplement information obtained in the classroom! We are excited to host this program for APTA Virginia Student members. The first lecture was held on Thursday, June 25th and we will be continuing the series with monthly lectures! *Stay tuned for more details about the July date, topic, and speaker.* We look forward to continuing this series and staying connected virtually with the APTA VA student members!

If you have any questions, please contact aptavassig@gmail.com.