

## **RIPPT Secretary Bio and Candidate Statement**

Stacy Fritz, PhD, PT, received her Master of Science in Physical Therapy from the University of Kentucky and her PhD in Rehabilitation Science from the University of Florida. She is a licensed Physical Therapist, Associate Professor and Director of the Doctoral Physical Therapy (DPT) Program and Rehabilitation Sciences Division of the Exercise Science Department at the University of South Carolina (USC). Dr. Fritz's main research focus is physical activity promotion and intensive interventions for individuals with chronic neurological disability and the use of walking speed as a vital sign. Her work has been funded by NIH, Department of Defense, American Heart Association, South Carolina Spinal Cord Research Fund and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She has more than 45 peer-reviewed publications in a variety of journals including: Stroke, Physical Therapy Journal, Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy, Journal of Geriatric Physical Therapy, Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Neurorehabilitation and Neural Repair.

### **CANDIDATE STATEMENT:**

Rehabilitation will continue to evolve and advance when supported by evidence-based research. As a researcher, I pursue this philosophy; as an educator, I instill this philosophy in my students. My goal as an educator is to introduce my students to the link between the clinical and research world, emphasizing the need for scientifically-based treatment and evaluation techniques. I equip my students with both the hands-on knowledge they will need as PTs, but also the theoretical background to make appropriate clinical decisions.

I want to continue my involvement with the RIPPT consortia as this offers a platform to encourage and support more programs to pursue scholarly activities that support research for our profession; thereby enhancing our graduates experience in their respective DPT programs. RIPPT's goal is to promote the importance of organized research, but I believe we could offer a better forum to provide mentoring for new and aspiring RIPPT programs, offering connections for PhD students as they transition to post-doctoral positions, or offer networks to establish larger research enterprises across multiple DPT programs. As part of the leadership team, I can help to move RIPPT forward to support and encourage programs to conduct research and connect this with student education.