

I am one happy woman tonight! Happy because when one puts their heart, reason and soul towards making something better it only becomes real when it is recognized as having happened!

Wm. Blake once said that a bird who soars on his own power, can never soar to high. Tonight I am definitely soaring higher than I could possibly go on under my own power. And it is because of all of the love, support and enthusiasm in this room. For this I thank all of you and promise that it only will make me continue to soar!

I accept the Robert G. Dicus Award in honor of my mom, Marynell and my dad Jack who raised me to believe in myself and to do for myself what others couldn't do for me. Because of this independent spirit I grew up around I know I could accomplish whatever I put my sights on if only I would concentrate on that goal.

I am happy to have my mom here tonight to mix it up with my friends. And if there are holes in the floorboards in heaven, I know my dad is peaking through with a smile and a wink for me.

I accept this award in honor of my 7 brothers and sisters, sister and brother-in-law , nieces and nephews some who are here tonight some that could not be who if asked would nod in agreement when I say I agonize over being in the spot light but never miss my chance to get a word or two in....and usually the last word!

I accept this award in honor of Connie and Frank Fearon and my 8 brothers and sisters-in-law who have given me one of the greatest gifts in my short life, thus far...their son and brother Tim.

I accept this honor on behalf of my husband Tim and our children Madeline and Jack. They are my constant source of inspiration and motivate me to do my very best. Jack's humor and interesting perspective on life, Maddie's sense of style and caring soul and Tim's love and his way of making what's important to me ...important to him, refresh me no matter what the work world may offer. Yes, next time you wonder how I do it all you only have to look that far!

Finally, I accept this award in honor of all of you! My friends and colleagues in the private practice of Physical therapy, who without your continued enthusiasm for our profession and persistence in the pursuits of independent practice, as we know and love it, I would not be here tonight.

It is gratifying to look around the room and see many of the faces that were such an inspiration to me as I entered into private practice and are still successful today in how they continue to contribute to the professions future. As the evening continues, I hope to be able to let as many of you as I can, know how much you as individuals had to do with making a difference in the course of my professional development not to mention the friendships that continue to make a difference.

Some say immortality lasts only as long as people remember you...Robert "Bob" Dicus is a man I never met but one whom I know shared my enthusiasm for the profession of physical therapy. The Private Practice Section has helped to make him immortal through this award that honors his memory and the impact he had on Private Practice physical therapy.

I challenge everyone in this room to look for their own immortality as demonstrated through making a contribution to your profession....do something memorable and make a difference!

We make a living by what we get in life, but we make a life out of what we give... Giving back to the profession is what makes it's blood circulate. Success in that pursuit is probably due mostly to zeal for the pursuit of making things better. But, we will know we've really been successful in attracting people to give back when we also see an enthusiasm in the pursuit of the common goals we set as an organization, for zeal can be simply fire without light.... The light comes on when you bring the reality of that enthusiasm to others through your actions as a physical therapist. All of us can do this in our daily routine as private practitioners without even going far from our homes! Spend that extra 15 minutes with your student who is wondering whether they made a good decision when choosing to go into physical therapy as a profession. Take five minutes to spend walking a patient out to their car to meet their darling grandchild , that they are so very proud of and want you to meet. Spend a Saturday giving back to your staff in recognition of all the hard work they do to make the practice and you, a success. This profession of ours can only be a reflection of the activities that we participate in and therefore a reflection of all of our collective efforts as we pass through and make our mark. The evidence of our efforts that is left behind is what those coming into the profession pick up and make their own and continue to strengthen.

Evidence of physical therapists in private practice actually touching their patients each and every visit. Evidence of physical therapists in private practice being involved in research and publishing of information that shows physical therapy as delivered from the hands of a private practitioner makes a difference. Evidence that physical therapists in private practice know the difference between skilled and unskilled care when it comes to billing for their services. I say we must be the ones to raise the bar for higher standards because only then will we hope to stop playing limbo with the payers and regulatory agencies.

That is why it is so very important for us as a profession to develop our leaders. I enjoy reading from native American philosophy. We can learn from their perspective on leadership.

There are leaders and there are rulers. When leaders don't lead, we walk away from them, when they lead we stay with them. Calenders can't tell us when a leader should be doing his job or for how long. A leader is a leader as long as the people believe in them and as long as they are the best person to lead. Simple as that. That is what makes greatness...not ruling but leading. Leadership should not be burden, but an opportunity to leave your unique footprint on the future.

Those among us who gain knowledge to help our collective move forward are only as strong in our leadership as the whole of those who follow.

When new knowledge is gained new leaders are born and the cycle continues. But the bottom line is that, knowledge without action is like snow on a hot stove!

We cannot be passengers in life because there are others in the healthcare arena who share our interest in keeping the word function in front of the public and the payers.

Let's make them as well as the public look to physical therapists first for the standards of care and more important let's help the public look to physical therapists as the first choice not only for their needs but for their families as well. Wouldn't it be great to have people pounding on the doors of the various agencies that regulate payment policy, saying they need greater access to physical therapy... Well, Our practice is not that unusual and I know we have had our share of patients that have carried the torch to the payers door in pursuit of having access to physical therapy as provided in our private practice.... In other words we made the difference in these patient's minds.

If it has happened once in your practice you have the potential of having it happen again and again. If it hasn't happened then make it happen. Make a difference and raise the bar!

By nature as Private Practitioners, we are risk takers. Sometimes calculated, other times not and it is not always comfortable. Right now, even with all of the things going on around us in the healthcare environment, it is the time to take advantage of being one who takes risks, because I believe in the proverb that Fortune sides with he who dares! Now more than ever we have made ourselves known to those we interact with, when providing our physical therapy services.

Examples are many and include, the increase in the recognition and use of "The Guide to Physical Therapist Practice" by Payers, legislative bodies and regulatory agencies, the active role the section and its' leadership has had with APTA in commenting on HCFA payment policy, the public relations efforts of PPS including participating at other healthcare professionals meetings and contributing to their knowledge of physical therapy as provided by the private practitioner. All things that should

encourage us to return to our roots of being risk takers, not slaves of the ordinary.

I am continually roaring like a lion out of pride in my profession. My hope and I guess my request from all of you is that we work hard to keep the profession something to be proud of.

Pie in the sky? Words conveniently said when one is accepting an award?
NO.

I may have made a difference here and there by some of the things I am being honored for tonight, but none of that would have happened if the fire wasn't burning brightly in here and the light was clearly at the end of the tunnel! This desire to make a difference is the key to making this motor run!

Actually, it was at my first PPS meeting in 1981 when many of you were busy getting fires lit that my enthusiasm began burning brightly.

You see you never know when something you say or do will inspire another to action. It's the American way, leading by example, McGuire and Ruth, Jordan and

Dr. J, Rothstein and Rose, Fearon and Buckley!.....

And hopefully it is the very lifeline that our profession will use to carry itself through each period of change and transition to get to a different sometimes better, but always different place. With change comes fear, perhaps uncertainty and sometimes even dread, but I look at change as an opportunity...to examine what we are doing as a profession and the spirit in which we are delivering our services. As it goes, often times we are inundated with terrific opportunities, that are brilliantly disguised as unsolvable problems. But really these are opportunities to move in new directions and to constantly be thinking of a better way.

A quote that I always have visible and reflect upon often is this, that the difference between knowledge and wisdom is experience.

I feel very wise tonight because of all that I have been able to learn through the experiences our profession of physical therapy has afforded me. And many of you had a lot to do with making me this wise! And for that I am very thankful. Join me in looking forward to continued growth in our collective professional lives, remembering the great thing in this world is not so much where we are , but in what direction we are moving!. I have a short piece of prose that I carry around and read when I need a little vitamin to keep my perspective on my busy life;

A master in the art of living

Draws no sharp distinction between her work and her play

Her labor and her leisure

Her mind and her body

Her education and her recreation

She hardly knows which is which. She simply pursues her vision of excellence through whatever she is doing and leaves others to determine whether she is working or playing. You see, to her she always seems to be doing both.

Thank you for this great honor and this wonderful celebration and I look forward to celebrating the profession of physical therapy with you for years to come.