



What This Award Means to Me

By Drew Bossen, PT, MBA

MR. PRESIDENT, PPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND AWARDS Committee, past Dicus Award recipients, fellow section members, and guests, it is with an immense dose of humility and gratitude that I accept the 2013 Robert G. Dicus Award. For those of you who know me, it is not often that I am short for words or that I don't have a strong opinion on a topic, but upon learning of the award I was truly taken aback, as if I were transfixed in time, reflecting on the character and, perhaps more importantly, the spirit of the past recipients and how they have ultimately shaped the profession of physical therapy as we all know it today. This is such an honor for me to be considered within the ranks of these individuals. This is an honor I will treasure for the rest of my life.

One goes through an interesting metamorphosis upon hearing that you have been honored with the Dicus. You can't help but become a bit introspective trying to gain some level of perspective of the significance of the award and how you fit into that broader equation.

Several weeks ago, I was in Reno, Nevada, and much to my dismay, my travel plans were crushed at the hands of the airline. I ended up with a full day in Reno without any pressing deadlines in front of me. I took the opportunity to reflect on the Dicus Award and read the speeches of the prior Dicus recipients, all 28. They are posted on the PPS website. Consider it a great read someday when you are stranded in Reno! What I can tell you is, that morning led to lunch and that lunch led to mid-afternoon. The more I read through their collective experiences, the more I understood their communal disposition and the makeup of these individuals. I landed on three basic threads that were repeatedly woven into the fabric of these leaders:

- To Me
- By Me
- Through Me

Robert G. Dicus Award Recipients

- 2013 Drew Bossen, PT, MBA, Iowa City, IA
- 2012 Lawrence Benz, PT, DPT, OCS, ECS, MBA, Louisville, KY
- 2011 Jim Milder, PT, Carol Stream, Illinois
- 2010 Stephen Anderson, PT, DPT, Seattle, WA
- 2009 Samuel Brown, PT, DPT, CSCS, Monticello, KY
- 2008 Peter McMenamin, PT, MS, OCS, Chicago, IL
- 2007 Louise Yurko, PT, MAEd, Newport, NC
- 2006 Connie Hauser, PT, DPT, ATC, Barbourville, KY
- 2005 Randy Roesch, PT, MBA, Steamboat Springs, CO
- 2004 Francis J. Welk, PT, MEd, Bloomsburg, PA
- 2003 Marilyn Moffat, PT, PhD, FAPTA, Ludlam, NY
- 2002 No recipient
- 2001 Jayne Snyder, PT, MA, Lincoln, NE
- 2000 Michael Weinper, PT, Calabasas, CA
- 1999 Florence P. Kendall, PT, Severna Park, MD
- 1998 Helene M. Fearon, PT, Phoenix, AZ
- 1997 Peter A. Towne, PT, Hamilton, OH
- 1995 James A. Gould, III, PT (Posthumous), La Crosse, WI
- 1994 Ernest A. Burch, Jr., PT, Baltimore, MD
- 1993 Robert L. Doctor, PT (Posthumous), Englewood, CO
- 1992 Charles H. Hall, Jr. PT, Dayton, OH
- 1991 Jack D. Close, PT, Las Vegas, NV
- 1990 Alphonso Amato, PT, St. Louis, MO
- 1989 Peter J. Lord. PT, Jacksonville, FL
- 1988 Francis X. Guglielmo, PT, Baton Rouge, LA
- 1987 M. Tom Carlson, PT, Wharton, TX
- 1986 Lucy Buckley, PT, Chatham, MA
- 1985 Royce Noland, PT, Alexandria, VA
- 1985 Clem G. Eischen, PT, Gresham, OR
- 1984 Jay M. Goodfarb, PT, Phoenix, AZ
- 1983 James B. McKillip, PT, Black Butte, OR
- 1982 Ben E. Johnston, PT, Knoxville, TN
- 1981 Charles M. Magistro, PT, Upland, CA

DICUS SPEECH, continued on page 73

Let me explain. As many of you know, I love to cycle. A few weeks back, I wrapped up my day a bit early with the intention of taking on my 20-mile loop. The forecast called for a large front to move through the area late in the afternoon so I took a look at the radar, and I was convinced I could make the loop before the storm front moved through. Nineteen miles later, the skies were beginning to darken.

About a half-mile from home, the winds picked up, a minute later the rain began, and an instant later it was a hard, pelting rain. The winds were coming from my left, but I was blocked by a home and a stand of trees. As I turned the corner, the wind caught me, and I was literally lifted me up off the ground.

I like to control my choices, so I go to my drops, I lean forward, and power through with everything I have in the tank.

I swear to God, I was in flight. I later learned that gust of wind exceeded 80 mph.

That is **To Me**. At that moment, I was a victim of my circumstances.

So goes the early adopter of providing physical therapy in a private practice setting; the Robert Dicuses, the Florence Kendalls, the Charles Magistros. And I quote,

“The idea of an enterprising, money-making private practitioner wreaked havoc with the traditional image of the physical therapist as an angel of mercy tending to the battle scars of veterans and victims of polio.”

To Me. These leaders were the victims of the status quo of our profession in the 1950s, but these individuals were unwilling to stand by and accept their circumstances.

Back to biking. I am in a dilemma. I am airborne on my bicycle. My choices were to do nothing, not knowing the outcome, or call upon all the cycling knowledge, experience, and technique I have learned over my lifetime of biking. Now, I like to control my choices, so I go to my drops, I lean forward, and power through with everything I have in the tank.

That, my friends, is **By Me**. I will not settle for my circumstances. I will not settle for the status quo.

By Me. It was embodied in Lucy Buckley, the first female recipient of the Dicus in 1986. And I quote,

“But I think the biggest personal achievement of my life has been raising five children ... all of who went to college, were not maimed by a working mother of divorced parents. They are independent, self-reliant, dependable, and caring individuals with a zest for life. Women of this profession ... We have come a long way baby!!” To the women in Private Practice today, Lucy Buckley was a game changer. She laid the foundation for the successes you are enjoying today.

Finally, **Through Me**. I want to tell of one of my favorite bike rides of all times. In 2006, you may recall the Institute [for Private Practice Physical Therapy] Fund Raiser in Miami. We offered up a bike ride across the state of Iowa, [known as] RAGBRAI. My good friends, John Lockard and Terry Brown, donated a ton of money and joined us the following July for an epic ride.

The third day into the ride, the weather was perfect, we were enjoying great tail wind, we were on a stretch of new highway, and there was even a downward grade on the road. It can't get any better! That morning, Ann and I were riding our tandem with the Browns, our friends Charlie and Cindy. We were riding side by side, absolutely cruising down the highway 23, 25, 28 miles per hour. As we rode onward, Charlie leaned in toward me and motioned to me to take a look at what was happening behind us. As I looked back, no less than 60 people had tagged onto our draft, all with a huge smile on their faces. That only made Charlie and I push all the harder and enjoy the ride even more!

Through Me ... Things we do for the greater community. Not because we want to be in the spotlight or for the recognition. We do because it is the right thing to do. It turns into our mission. It becomes our passion.

- **Through Me ...** It was Louise Yurko's legal battle with her local hospital administrator, which ended in Joint Commission AHO's revision of their accreditation standards to allow physical therapists to have practice privileges.
- **Through Me ...** It is the placard Peter McMenamin has carried in his fight against physician-owned practice in his teaching, his lecturing, his education to us all. All for the greater good of the community, our community, the physical therapy community.

To Me ... By Me ... Through Me ... Frankly, this is leadership. It is not meant or owned by the few. It is a choice. It is your choice.

Over the next few days you are going to be challenged with a multitude of “Asks”: The PT-PAC, the Institute for Private Practice Physical Therapy, the Foundation for Physical Therapy. So I challenge you to consider what is it going to be for you? To Me? By Me? or Through Me? It is time to consider your place.

This was going to be the start of my finishing comments. I had this talk scripted to the “T.” It was a huge close. I swear to God you would have loved it. That was until late last week; Thursday, to be exact. Thursday afternoon, I had a revelation. Despite my greatest effort, my over-the-top tenacity and all the skills, knowledge, and technique I could muster, I was failing to achieve an important goal.

- To Me ... By Me ... Through Me ... It wasn't working.
- To Me ... By Me ... Through Me ... It wasn't enough.

There are times in life, and I re-learned it AGAIN last Thursday, that sometimes you can't do it alone. Sometimes you need to ask for help. Yes: Help Me ...

We moved my mother into an assisted care facility last week. Thursday afternoon, I was in the midst of the details for her transition, canceling services, adding services, and re-routing services. It came [time to address] to the telephone, of course, a landline. You would think it would be simple enough. She was

There are times in life that sometimes you can't do it alone. Sometimes you need to ask for help.

moving within the same area code, 40 miles to the south to be central to my sisters and I. The service provider was more than happy to assist. That is, they were willing to assist me in providing my mother a new phone number. Different than the number my mother had used for the past 60 years.

I respectfully told the representative that this was not an option as mother was a bit forgetful, nor was it an option for my mother's friends, those who were, in fact, still living, as they would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to call my mom.

It was important to me to limit those barriers. It was important to keep my mother in contact with her lifelong friends. I tried to reason with the individual on the other end of the

bodyCushion™ CONNECTED

Find out more:
www.bodysupport.com
Call (541) 488-1172
or (800) 448-2400 toll free



Developed in 1986, the **bodyCushion™** is now used by more than 100,000 professionals worldwide: Physical Therapists, Massage Therapists, Chiropractors, Rehabilitation Specialists and other medical and therapeutic professionals. The **bodyCushion™** affords pain-free positioning, relieves stress, and allows for total relaxation in any position. Ideal for multi-user settings, the **bodyCushion™ CONNECTED** features additional webbing connecting each piece of the unit to the next, making it extremely easy to move room to room or on and off the table.



phone. The representative again read from the prepared script, I am sorry Mr. Bossen but ... blah, blah, blah. I tried once more. Please, you have to help me. To no avail ... It was time to escalate this call. Round Two ... Second rep ... Same outcome ... blah, blah, blah.

I sat back, and I decided that I needed a new approach. I figured I had but one last shot at this and that I needed to pull the next representative into my vision. I started out by telling the new representative that I had been on the phone for the past 20 minutes, and I was seeking the individual who was there to provide extraordinary service. Not ordinary service, but over-the-top extraordinary service. "So, is this the person I am speaking to?" He wasn't about to tell me "no," but he wasn't ready to commit. "Perhaps. What is the issue?"

It was time to lay the vision to this young man. I spoke to him about a cool woman who has been his customer for the past 60 years; through de-regulation, merger, acquisition, and consolidation, my mother has always been your customer. Through party lines, private lines, teen lines, rotary phone, wall phones, cordless phones, she has always been your customer. All I need for you to do is to figure out when someone calls her, [the call] finds her in her new home. I closed with, "Honestly, I just need your help." After a rather long pause he responded, "Let me see what I can do."

I'm on hold for about 20 minutes when the representative came back on, "Mr. Bossen, I have a lead, but this is going to take some work." My response, "GREAT, from here on out, I am no longer Mr. Bossen, my name is Drew, and yours?" I had connected with David, a 26-year-old middle manager from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. "David, you're my guy. I know that you are going to figure this out. You take as much time as you need. Me, I'll be here on hold."

Three hours later, David comes back on the line, "Drew, we have done it. Your mother's friends can call her old number, and it will find her." I can't tell you how charged up this guy was. He had seen my vision, and he had made it his mission. Asking for help, and then framing your vision with your passion can create extraordinary outcomes! David and I chatted a few more minutes, and before he signed off he told me something rather amazing. He told me that this had been the most important thing he had done since going to work for the company 3 years ago. "Thank you for the opportunity." Go figure, this kid is thanking me.

To Me ... By Me ... Through Me ... and Help Me ... Leadership at its best!

I would like to close this evening with one last story, and it relates to my late father-in-law, Robert Gibbs. Bob was a pharmacist who served in many roles within the national pharmacy association. He was a pharmacist, but beyond that he was an advocate, politician, author, and a thoughtful, tutoring father-

in-law. It was from his counseling and prodding that I stepped forward to volunteer to what I recall was the PPS membership committee, oh, so many years ago.

I would like to share a passage that Bob wrote on professionalism:

"The fact that you have a degree doesn't prove your ability to be a true professional—only by your continued efforts can you prove your worth and gain the respect of your peers."

Bob often lectured to pharmacy classes across the nation and spoke of the three levels of professionalism. The first was being awarded your professional degree and licensure, certainly an important step in becoming a pharmacist or physical therapist. Second was when someone noted your good work. Perhaps it was a patient, a physician, or a manager. The deed was beyond the routine; in fact, it might be extraordinary, much like David did for my mother. The third and highest level of professionalism was when your peers, collectively, acknowledged you. Tonight, as I stand before you, I understand that level of professionalism, and I am forever humbled by your support. Thank you. ■

Sponsor a Student member

Make a difference for a lifetime! Make
a difference for your profession! Put your
money where your heart is!

Student membership is only \$50/year!

