

NABPT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 4 | APRIL-JUNE 2020



OUR MISSION

National Association of Black Physical Therapists is a nonprofit organization with the primary focus of increasing opportunities for the African Diaspora in the physical therapy network. NABPT's mission is to provide opportunities for increased visibility, networking, community service, career development, and mentorship.

This Newsletter will unify the chapters of NABPT with information that affects us personally and professionally. We want to spark different conversations each quarter and provide ideas to make changes in our communities.

TOPIC 01

Message from
NABPT's President
and Co-Founder

TOPIC 02

Student Loan Debt
Financial Resources

Topic 03/04

Scholarship
Winners and
Mentor Monday

01: Message from Dr. Remi Onifade

COVID-19 has become the focus of our lives this year. Page 3 has a message from our President.

02: Student Loan Debt

Financial hardship and overall health are 2 overarching themes that are paramount in 2020. Check out these two articles on approaches to handle student loan debt (Page 9 and 10). Also check out the COVID-19 resources guide for other tips (Page 4-6).

03: 2019 Scholarships

Congratulations to all of the recipients of the 2019 NABPT Scholarships. Please stay tune to hear about our 2020 NABPT scholarships.

04: Mentor Monday

Mentor Monday occurs every 3rd Monday. Please email membership.nabpt@gmail.com to RSVP. If you would like to be a Mentor, please email us as well.

Find us at www.nabpt.org

Instagram: nabpt_

FaceBook: National Association of Black Physical Therapists

Twitter: NABPT

Email us at info.nabpt@gmail.com



Picture above from 2020 NABPT CSM Happy Hour

Picture below from 2020 Atlanta Fitness Bootcamp



COVID-19 RESOURCE GUIDE

Message from Dr. Remi Onifade

How are you? I think it's safe to assume this has always been a loaded question. Now, take a moment to think about how different your response may be today, than 3 weeks ago. Think of all the changes that may have occurred not only for you personally, but globally. Would your response be different? Would your friends and family members responses be different? If so, there is a chance that what once was a loaded question, has now become a gateway for a quick release of harbored feelings and emotions. We have been presented with a situation that is unprecedented, and the normality of our physical, mental and emotional status' have been threatened.

By now, I'm sure most of us have heard from our family members, friends, and acquaintances both close and afar. They are not only trying to gain reassurance of our well-being during this time, but also informing us of proper preventive measures to ensure our safety. Given our current circumstances, many therapists around the world are suggesting there is a "new normal." And whether you believe this to be true or not, the transition into this "new normal" does not have to alter or deplete our wellness. So again, I ask, how are you?

Writing this letter made me even have to think about asking myself this question. Did I really want to know or was I cringing like others cringe asking that once flippant question. Now this question has opened my eyes to understand my feelings of how I perceive the question "how are you." Well the list of how I am spews out my head as I continued to write this, and now I am going to share. I am worried. I am concerned. I am confused. I am dumbfounded. I am scared. I am hopeful. I am angry. I am petrified to say I am angry. I am faithful. I am ambitious. I am optimistic.

Amidst this life-changing pandemic, I ask you to ask yourself how you are doing. Ask your community how they are doing. Now let us band together. Together as a community, as a people, as one unit and ask, "How are you?" while meaning it. We must be ready for lengthy responses, emotions, tears, mood changing answers and be able to be empathetic, understanding as well as in position with the willingness to help. Help can be given and accepted in various forms including but not limited to being an emotional support, a listening ear, a positive affirmation or through many actions no matter if they are literal or figurative. The key is to be there if you ask the very difficult question, how are you.

We are all in this crisis together. Of course, we all wish that this would stop or never happened but it did. We wish that there were not heartaches, loss, pain, or confusion. Before this time, we had all made plans to do be doing so many different activities, trips, or even careers at this time. However, we are healthcare workers and or aspired healthcare workers that are essential. We are here to do the career we chose or are choosing to do. So, the next time we ask the question "how are you?", Think about the condition of the world in that moment, and take into consideration that a simple question, has much more meaning now.

As the National Association of Black Physical Therapists President, I am asking you, how are you?

Financial Gems from Angelica Trummer

Angelica Trumer, CFP® | Founder & Financial Planner |

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With the entrance of Financial Literacy Month right off the tail of a whirlwind month of March, there are so many opinions being volunteered, and often conflicting ones. It can be tough to discern what kind of money topics we should give our attention to, and what is less urgent “fluff,” but my philosophy is simple: master the fundamentals and stick to the plan. Here I will briefly share three key fundamental financial concepts that will help keep you on the right track.

1. Start with a 20/60/20 budget guideline.

Creating a budget with arbitrary numbers isn't helpful if you don't know if your spending is reasonable and likely to help you reach your long-term goals. A good place to start would be to divide your expenses into three general categories:

Discretionary Expenses like entertainment, clothing, personal care, and the like – these are things that while they may feel essential, are really things we can either reduce or make the decision to go without. Try to allocate no more than **20%** of your income to this category.

Essential expenses like housing, food, loan debt, insurance – these are things that if unpaid or not addressed, would cause some potentially significant negative consequences (please pay your bills!). A good range to stay in for this category is no more than **60%** of your income. This guideline is helpful when determining what housing expenses (rent, mortgage, utilities, etc.) are reasonable for the income you bring in.

Saving and Investing – this is the category that creates long term security and wealth when the right amount of focus is placed here. Unlike the other two categories, the more you can allocate to saving and investing over **20%**, the better. This should NOT be at the cost of foregoing an essential expense.

2. Understand differences between savings options.

Before considering investments at this time (I know, it's tempting), take a good look at your current financial picture and determine whether it's truly a good time for you to invest or not. Be sure you have a solid emergency fund in place, which should ideally be enough to cover 6 months' worth of expenses (but 3-6 months is okay). Those funds should be in a vehicle that will not lose value, which you can access quickly, and will not incur withdrawal penalties. Examples of this would be a traditional savings account or money market bank account.

3. Keep a tight rein on your debt

Don't be in a rush to pay off debts early if there are still other parts of your plan that could use some work. If you have enough discretionary income to take care of your needs and your long-term growth, it will be helpful to put some of that extra cash to extra debt payments. To save money over time, follow this order of priority when applying extra debt payments:

Begin with high-interest rate credit cards

Focus on nondeductible debt next (things like auto loans, personal loans, etc.)

Additional payments on deductible debt come last (mortgages, some student loans – consult with your tax advisor for your eligibility for deductions).

There's no one size fits all to create your successful financial plan, but regardless of what income level or net worth you have, taking a comprehensive approach helps to make sure your plan is well rounded. All the puzzle pieces are important to create the big picture, so avoid neglecting any areas if you have the resources to address multiple at a time. Lastly, once you have your solid plan in place, hold on to it like a precious family heirloom (until your individual circumstances warrant change and your financial professional advises it). The economic environment and financial markets are volatile and unpredictable right now. The best thing you can do for yourself in these times is keep going and see it through.

Angelica Trummer

National COVID 19 Resources

1. Stimulus Package Information
 - People who made under \$75k (based on 2018 taxes) will receive a \$1200 check from the government. The amount is lower if you made between \$75k-\$99k (on your personal taxes). Those filing jointly need to make under \$150k together to receive \$2400 for their household.
 - Self-employed folks can apply for unemployment if their income has been lowered due to the coronavirus.
2. Small Business Assistance
 - <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/economic-injury-disaster-loan-emergency-advance>
 - This loan advance will provide up to \$10,000 for businesses experiencing difficulty. This loan advance will not have to be repaid if certain qualifications are met.
 - <https://www.gravysolutions.io/post/how-your-business-can-take-advantage-of-the-2t-stimulus-package>
 - This article gives information for small businesses as well.
3. Student Loans
 - <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/sarahmimms/coronavirus-bill-ends-student-loan-payments-interest-6>
 - <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus>
 - If you are under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, call your lender. According to the student aid article, your payments will be suspended but it will maintain your monthly on time payments toward your 120 consecutive payments needed for loan forgiveness.
4. US Federal Government Unemployment
 - <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20200312-0>
 - Information on maintaining benefits with a disruption in workflow.
5. Most wireless carriers have stated no disconnects for 60 days and they have waived late fees
6. Uber Eats have waived delivery fees for some restaurants.
 - <https://www.boston.com/food/restaurants/2020/03/16/uber-eats-waives-delivery-fees>

Health Resources from osmosis.org

“Coping with Stress”

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/copingwith-stresstips.html>

“Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19”

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html>

“Taking Care of your Emotional Health”

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

“Helping Children Cope with Emergencies”

<https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html>

RedBook Online COVID-19 Outbreak page

https://redbook.solutions.aap.org/ss/rbo_outbreaks_page_3.aspx

Q&A on coronaviruses World Health Organization (WHO)

<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

Coronavirus & Mental Health: Taking Care of Ourselves During Infectious Disease Outbreaks

<https://www.psychiatry.org/news-room/apa-blogs/apa-blog/2020/02/coronavirus-and-mental-health-taking-care-of-ourselves-during-infectious-disease-outbreaks>

Coronavirus & Emerging Infectious Disease Outbreaks Response

<https://www.cstsonline.org/resources/resource-master-list/coronavirus-and-emerging-infectious-disease-outbreaks-response>

Taking Care of your Family during Coronavirus Fact Sheet

https://www.cstsonline.org/assets/media/documents/CSTS_FS_Corona_Taking_Care_of_Your_Family.pdf.pdf

Five ways to view coverage of the Coronavirus

<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/pandemics>

Speaking of Psychology: Coronavirus Anxiety

<https://www.apa.org/research/action/speaking-of-psychology/coronavirus-anxiety>

Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with COVID-19

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/outbreak_factsheet_1.pdf

Telehealth Resources

<https://www.webpt.com/blog/post/billing-for-pt-and-ot-services-during-the-covid-19-response/>

<http://www.apta.org/PTinMotion/News/2020/3/16/TelehealthCOVID19/>

<https://www.apta.org/PTinMotion/News/2020/03/20/CoronavirusUpdateMarch20/>

<https://ppsapta.org/userfiles/File/Telehealth%20FAQ.pdf>

<https://thenonclinicalpt.com/telehealth-physical-therapy/>

Telehealth is a tool that has passed years of legislation in the past few months due to COVID-19. It is a means to provide healthcare during a time of social distancing. With rapid growth, there will be hiccups along the way. Please use a level of discernment with the information on telehealth and as always please strive to provide quality patient centered care.

2019 Scholarships Recipients

This is what CSM Scholarship Recipient Jessica Thompson had to say about her experience at CSM: “Hi guys, my name is Jessica Thompson and I was the CSM scholarship winner for this year. I've been having a great time. As soon as I walked into the convention center, I met two guys who were really nice. They were students from Brooklyn, New York, two Black males. So it was good to see them and to connect throughout my time. There were some great sessions for women's health and for diversity as well. So it's been a really long time and I honestly wouldn't be able to be here and connect with so many people and learn so much without the scholarship. I just want to thank everybody in NABPT who contributed financially and made it possible for me to be here.”

Continuing Education Recipient-Funds used to further skillsets

Katherine Sylvester

Book Scholarship Recipients- Funds used to buy supplies for school and NPTE materials

LaCorey Cunningham

Jana Burchette

Application Scholarship- Funds used to pay for PTCAS application fees

Schatze Parham

Mayo Onakoya

Please Join Us in Congratulating our Recipients! Read their bios on IG @nabpt_

1st Annual NABPT Conference

We are so excited to share that we have started the process to hosting our very own conference. Date to be announced soon! But we need to hear from you. We want to cover topics that appeal to you. Please fill out this survey so that we can find speakers on the topic of your choice and clear it for continuing education credit.

<https://forms.gle/zAHxr66qjN9gZW9T6>

MENTOR MONDAYS

All members contact membership.nabpt@gmail.com to sign up for Mentor Mondays. **Mentor Mondays** occur every 3rd Monday. The next Mentor Monday will be **April 20th, 2020**. This program is exclusive for NABPT members only. Please state your membership ID in the email.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

NABPT Directory

NABPT has a database of over 300 in our subscriber list and 5 chapters across this nation. NABPT also has nearly 800 followers on Instagram, Twitter, and FaceBook. NABPT has recently initiated a relationship with most PT/PTA programs in the US. NABPT also has access to many PT related groupchats. Joining our database and family will ensure a greater connection with *all* PT/PTAs across this country.

All members have access to the following packages Free of charge. Please email your information to membership.nabpt@gmail.com .

Not ready to be a member yet, but want exposure? Select the package that's right for you and contact us at info.nabpt@gmail.com for the link.

\$25 to add your name and business to the NABPT directory

\$35 for IG and FB post as well as NABPT directory

\$50 for IG post, FB post, NABPT directory, and Business highlight in quarterly newsletter

How One PT Paid off Her Student Loans

The burden of student loan debt is well known in the Physical Therapy community. The excitement of starting our first job is all too soon diminished within 6 months after the student loan grace period is over. Depending on debt burden, that initial bill notice can be quite overwhelming and spur the search for loan repayment programs that can lessen the load.

For several years, I surrendered to this burden and ignored it as much as I could. I paid based on my income-based repayment plan and I kept elevating my skills to take the next job that could increase my pay and experience. I followed this plan for 6 years and didn't make a dent in my debt load. During that time, I did catch a few breaks and make some smart decisions. I won a contest that helped me pay down one of my less than \$3000 loans over the course of a year (the funds were taxed). I also purchased a home in an up and coming neighborhood that I looked at as an investment. I also made some really poor financial decisions during this time frame with bad consumer habits.

In 2019, I was focused enough to look at my entire financial picture in one place. I collected all of my information and was appalled by the debt amount, \$324,000. This amount covered my mortgage, car note, and student loans. I left PT school with \$103,000 worth of student loan debt. Six years later, having never missed a payment, I had \$125,000 worth of student loan debt. Talk about discouraging! Summer 2018, I started an online MBA program that was in the price-range for cash payment to get a break from my student loans and to increase my skillset. I decided to use my degree and pick up a PRN job at a local hospital. I worked every chance I got. Sometimes 14 days in a row and at maximum, 54 days in a row. I was practicing the epitome of a PT grind.

Within 6 months, I was able to bring my student loan debt down to \$109,000. It was at this time that I got an opportunity to move from Georgia and the prospect of selling my home came about. I chose to sell and was able to knock out my mortgage debt and my student loan debt within 24 hours of closing. While this was an exciting accomplishment, I could not resist the urge to dig deep into the details. When it was all said and done, I paid over \$174,000 in student loans in 7 years. As I dug deeper, several of my loans never had single payment distributed into the principal. I had two loans where \$0.01 was paid toward the principal during that time. Student loan interest is a nightmare!! I thought back to all of the decisions I made and how I could have made better choices. I now have solid advice to offer to others who are dealing with this burden.

Do's

- Understand your full financial picture
- Live within or below your means and make room for fun/rewards
- Keep an eye on your student loan interest
- Maximize your earning potential for your 9-5
- Take a PRN job! (traditional and non-traditional work)
- Look for smart investments
- Keep an eye on your student loan interest
- Make extra student loan payments to address principal
- Have multiple streams of income

Don't

- Ignore your student loans – If you can't clear them, reduce them as much as you can!

Dr. Krystol Hines, PT, DPT, CSCS

My Road to Living Debt Free

Unfortunately, having debt is considered “the norm” these days. Whether it be credit card debt, car loans, mortgages, or the ever so dreadful student loans, everyone seems to have at least one of these if not all these. So just pull up your big girl or big boy pants and join in on the monthly payments, right? WRONG! Monthly payments towards debt do not have to consume your life or your paycheck! And let me tell you the joy and freedom you feel once you get everything paid off is amazing!

My goal was to get my student loans paid off within 5 years of completing PT school, seemed a little far fetched at the time but I knew with planning and budgeting it could be done. As a result of life (i.e. buying a house, buying a new car, house needing a new roof, etc etc) it ended up taking me 7.5 years. I know everyone is in different phases of their schooling and careers so I wanted to share with you all some things that I did to help put me in a place to be debt free.

First and foremost, there are scholarships out there for DPT programs. I was blessed enough to have been selected for the Glanton Scholarship for minorities at Des Moines University Osteopathic Medical Center which ended up paying for my tuition all three years. I still ended up having to take out student loans for living expenses, books, supplies, etc. It may take some extra digging and researching but there are scholarships out there for PT school. And when going for interviews don't hesitate to stop by the financial aid office to ask.

Another thing that helped was by having a job while in PT school. I worked as a PT Tech a couple nights a week. It was nice to break up the monotony of classes and studying and to get some practical experience, but it also helped me pay the interest on my student loan.

I did a lot of traveling for my clinicals during PT School (New Jersey, Tennessee, Georgia, St. Lucia) but I did set myself up to do my final clinical in my hometown so that I could live at home with my parents for the duration of the clinical and during the 2 months I was studying for boards. Helped me save a lot of money and having my mom cooking and doing my laundry again was a nice added perk.

Once I did start working and getting a regular paycheck I started paying extra on my student loan whenever possible. It helped to raise my credit score and set me up so that once I did purchase my home I could go a few months without having to pay student loan payments and use the money for all the expenses that come with owning a home.

While I was doing my clinicals, finding short term housing was always a challenge. Another blessing I encountered was PTs renting out their spare bedrooms for student interns to use for their 8 or 10 week internships. Immediately when I purchased my home I furnished my guest bedroom and I started renting it out to PT students who were doing clinicals in the Atlanta area. It was convenient for the students and financially helpful for me.

Another tremendous blessing came from my employer Benchmark Physical Therapy (Upstream Rehab Partners). They give their employees the unique opportunity to partner and become minority owners in the opening of new clinics. This partnership did take a large investment initially, but the return has been tremendous financially and clinically by being able to open clinics in underprivileged neighborhoods and communities.

All this, in addition to budgeting, planning, using Delta skymiles for traveling, couponing, and using Dave Ramsey's Snowball Method for paying off loans helped me to achieve my goal. Was it easy, no. Were sacrifices made, yes. Is it something you can achieve too, absolutely! I hope some of the things that helped me can help you achieve and enjoy debt-free living!

- Kelsey Mims, PT, DPT, OCS, CMT