



the 2026
EXTRA MILE
CONFERENCE

Making the journey to a better physical therapy practice!



UNION JUSTICE CONFIDENCE

February 27-28, 2026
DoubleTree Hilton Lafayette
Lafayette, LA

WELCOME TO THE EXTRA MILE CONFERENCE



Charlotte F. Martin, MPA

The 2026 Extra Mile Conference is designed to help Louisiana physical therapy professionals go further—professionally and personally. Attendees will receive essential national and state regulatory updates, hear directly from state health and welfare leaders, and engage with experts on the workforce and economic forces shaping healthcare in Louisiana. The program also looks ahead to the future of physical therapy, offers practical guidance to help protect your license as technology evolves, and emphasizes practitioner wellbeing—because going the extra mile starts with taking care of yourself.

ABOUT US

The Louisiana Physical Therapy Board is a state agency established by legislation to license qualified individuals and regulate the practice physical therapy in Louisiana. The Board's primary mission is to safeguard the well-being of the state's citizens. The Board office staff are always available for questions from licensees and the public.

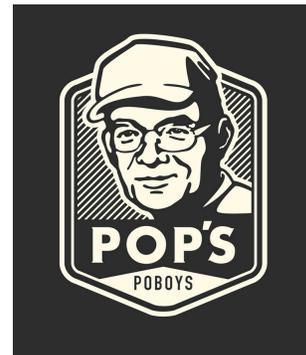
Charlotte F. Martin, MPA
Executive Director

Danielle Linzer
Licensing Analyst

Jessica Alwell, MHRE
Assistant Executive Director

Stephanie Boudreaux
Compliance Officer

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CE INFORMATION

Attendees will be given a continuing education (CE) credit verification form at registration. It is every attendee's responsibility to accurately fill out and return their form to the registration desk upon the completion of their attendance of the conference. Failing to turn in a form will result in the attendee not receiving CE credit. Should you leave the conference with your form, the form can be scanned and **emailed** to **Jessica Alwell at Jessica@laptboard.org**. However, please be aware that forms not returned at the conference may result in a delay of certificates being issued. Emailing a form should be a last resort.

Certificates for completing the conference will be emailed to the email address on the attendee's CE verification form **within 14 business days**. Licensees may renew their license, if they are within their eligible renewal cycle, prior to receiving their certificate.

Course entries on the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board's website will be listed under the Board as the course sponsor. The reporting period for the 2026 and 2027 renewal cycles is as follows:

2026: Licensees may report courses taken from February 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026.

2027: Licensees may report courses taken from February 1, 2025 to April 30, 2027

Licensees may not reuse the same course completion on multiple renewals. "Course completion" is identified by the course certificate with the date completed (ex: January 1, 2025). Licensees may retake a course on a different date to be used in their next renewal period.

SCAN FOR CE RESOURCE CENTER



SCAN FOR DIGITAL PRACTICE ACT



FEBRUARY 27, 2026

Check In

12:00PM - 1:00PM

Registration desk opens at noon.

Welcome

1:00PM - 1:15PM

Welcome remarks and introductions.

Speaker: Charlotte F. Martin, MPA

Legal, Ethical, and Regulatory Updates for PTs and PTAs

1:15PM - 3:15PM - 2 Hours Jurisprudence

This session reviews updates to the Louisiana Practice Act, anticipated rule changes, national APTA Code of Ethics revisions, and regulations governing legend drugs and medical devices, followed by audience Q&A.

Speakers: James "Jim" Raines | Nancy Kirsch, PT, DPT, PhD | George Lovecchio

Break

3:15PM - 3:30PM

Louisiana Legislative Update: Health and Welfare

3:30PM - 3:45PM - 0.5 Hours Administrative

Members of the Louisiana House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees will provide attendees with an overview of recent legislative activity impacting health and welfare in the state. This session will highlight key issues addressed over the past year, explore current priorities, and offer insight into the legislature's focus and expectations for 2026.

Speakers: Rep. Annie Spell | Sen. Brach Myers

Economic and Policy Outlook for Healthcare in Louisiana

4:00PM - 5:30PM - 1.5 Hours Administrative

This moderated panel will explore the current economic landscape of healthcare in Louisiana. Panelists will examine key trends, emerging challenges, and opportunities shaping the healthcare economy, as well as discuss public policies designed to address these issues. Attendees will gain insight into how policy, regulation, and market forces intersect, and leave with a deeper understanding of strategies and initiatives that may impact healthcare delivery and practice across the state.

Moderator: Stephen Barnes, PhD

Speakers: Drew Maranto | Sec. Susana Schowen

Attendee and Speaker Reception

5:30PM - 7:00PM

FEBRUARY 28, 2026

Check In

7:00AM - 8:00AM

Registration desk opens at 7:00am.

The Future of Physical Therapy: Ethical Considerations, Regulatory Challenges, and Preventative Strategies

8:00AM - 11:45AM 2 Hours Ethics, 1.5 Hours Administrative

This interactive, moderated panel uses a real-world case to explore the future of physical therapy and its evolving regulatory environment. Expert panelists will examine ethical considerations, regulatory risk, and preventative strategies, with opportunities for guided table discussions, report-outs, and audience Q&A. The session is designed to foster practical insight, collaboration, and meaningful application.

Speakers: Meg O'Connor | Gabriela Mustata Wilson, PhD, MSc | Nancy Kirsch, PT, DPT, PhD | Drew Contreras, PT, DPT

Lunch and Peer Perspectives

11:45AM - 12:45PM

Lunch will be provided as we hear from two Louisiana licensed physical therapists who have each dedicated more than 10 years to regulatory service on the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board advisory committee. They will share firsthand insights, reflections on leadership, and the value of professional engagement through long-term service.

Ethics, Wellbeing, and Regulatory Considerations

12:45PM - 2:15PM 1.5 Hours Administrative

This session will review recent updates to the APTA Code of Ethics related to practitioner wellbeing, followed by a real-world account highlighting challenges that can arise when support is not sought due to regulatory concerns. Attendees will be guided in identifying personal and professional risk factors, with facilitated discussion and audience Q&A to support reflection and practical awareness.

Speakers: Nancy Kirsch, PT, DPT, PhD | Stefanie Simmons, MD

Break

2:15PM - 2:30PM

Practitioner Wellbeing: Interactive Roundtable Discussion

2:30PM - 4:30PM 2 Hours Administrative

This session creates a space for open discussion on practitioner wellbeing through real-world scenarios and facilitated table conversations. Participants will gain practical insight and will also be introduced to a free, board-approved CEU self-reflection tool designed to help identify personal risk factors and support healthy practice.

Speakers: Stephen Curley | Sherri Paru, PT | Kristina Lounsberry, PT, AT

Criminal Consequences of Misconduct in Healthcare

4:30PM - 5:00PM

Case review highlighting how bad decisions of healthcare providers have led to criminal penalties, including jail sentences.

Speaker: Jennifer Semko

SPEAKERS



Stephen Barnes
Louisiana Economist

Stephen Barnes is Executive Director of the Kathleen Blanco Public Policy Center and Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He serves as the independent economist on the Louisiana Revenue Estimating Conference, which sets income projections for the state budget. Dr. Barnes has collaborated with federal and state agencies, industry partners, advocacy groups, and scholars across multiple disciplines on research examining Louisiana's economy and population. He is leading development of LA FIRST, a new state data center that will use administrative data to support public policy research. Previously, he spent 10 years on the LSU economics faculty, where he directed the Economics & Policy Research Group.



Drew Contreras
APTA

Drew Contreras is a Board-certified sports clinical specialist and retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel with extensive experience in military physical therapy. He deployed to Iraq in 2006-2007 as the first physical therapist with the 82nd Airborne Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team. He served as Director of Wellness and Physical Therapy at the Pentagon and consulted for the White House Medical Unit. He was selected by President Obama as the first full-time White House physical therapist. Now retired from the military, Drew continued clinical practice in Washington DC and served as consultant and physical therapist for President Biden. Currently, he serves as Vice President of Strategic Affairs for the American Physical Therapy Association, overseeing Strategic Alliances, Business Development, and APTA Events, and leading the APTA Artificial Intelligence Task Force.



Stephen Curley
FSBPT

Stephen Curley is the Executive Director for the Kentucky Board of Physical Therapy (KBPT). Stephen has been in this role for the last 4 years. Stephen's background and education is in investigations. He has been an investigator in both the private and public sector for over 19 years. He has been an investigator for the KBPT as well as 11 other Board's during his 15 years with the state. He has been a speaker at several national conferences on topics ranging from investigations, disciplinary actions, board processes, public protection, addiction, documentation and several other topics. Stephen also serves as the Secretary on the Board of Directors for the Federation of state Boards of Physical Therapy.



Nancy Kirsch
Rutgers University

Nancy Kirsch serves on the New Jersey Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. She previously held leadership roles including President of the FSBPT Board of Directors and President of the New Jersey Chapter of the APTA. She has served on the APTA Ethics and Judicial Committee and participated in Code of Ethics revisions for both 2010 and 2026. Her research interests focus on professional development, practitioner remediation for ethical concerns, and prevention of ethical and professional errors.



Kristina Lounsberry
Industrial Strength Work Rehab Center

Kristina Lounsberry is the Owner and Clinical Coordinator of the Industrial Strength Work Rehab Center in Sulphur, LA. A former member of the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board, she also chaired the FSBPT Sexual Misconduct and Boundaries Committee and served on the Informed Consent Task Force. Kristina has presented at state and national levels on topics such as total worker health, workforce data, informed consent, and professional boundaries, demonstrating her commitment to enhancing workplace health and safety.



George Lovecchio
La Drug & Device Distributor Board

George Lovecchio has served as the Executive Director of the Louisiana Board of Drug and Device Distributors since 2017, bringing extensive industry knowledge and regulatory expertise to the position. His career with the Board spans nearly two decades, beginning as an Inspector in 2007. Prior to his tenure with the Board, Mr. Lovecchio spent 16 years working as a Wholesale Drug and Device Distributor. He is a supply chain champion keeping drugs and devices safe for Louisiana.



Drew Maranto
Louisiana Department of Health

Drew Maranto is a former congressional staffer, campaign advisor, and small business owner based in Baton Rouge. He has worked with three of Louisiana's U.S. Senators, serving in a number of roles, including deputy chief of staff, campaign manager, and senior advisor.

Drew has visited all 64 of Louisiana's parishes and has worked to earn the trust and respect of many Louisianans. He has consistently fought for resources and solutions while working side by side with leaders in the public and private sector. Drew has a history of working alongside federal, state, and local officials to make sure our communities are heard.



Brach Myers
Louisiana Senate

Senator Brach Myers serves the Louisiana Senate for District 23. His committee assignments include Environmental Quality, Insurance, Labor and Industrial Relations, and Retirement. In his role outside of public service, Brach serves as Senior Vice President of Corporate Development for LHC Group providing post-acute healthcare services in more than 40 states and employing more than 30,000 clinicians and healthcare professionals across the U.S.



Meg O'Connor
University of New Orleans

Meg O'Connor is a data analyst and researcher pursuing her PhD in Applied Science and Engineering at the University of New Orleans, where she applies data science to study the hydrology of the receding Mississippi River delta. Originally from Connecticut, she studied at Williams College before moving to Louisiana a decade ago to focus on the river and delta. During her time in Louisiana, she has also been a long-time physical therapy patient. She brings both a scientist's perspective on evolving technology in healthcare and a patient's experience navigating rehabilitation, and is grateful to share her insights with this community.



Sherri Paru
Oregon PT Board

Sherri is a Physical Therapist, graduating from Ithaca College in 1991. After practicing many years specializing in spinal cord and brain injury rehab, she has been the Clinical Advisor/Investigator for the Oregon Board of Physical Therapy since 2002. Sherri served on the FSBPT Sexual Misconduct and Boundaries Committee for three years. She has presented extensively on the topics of ethics, professional boundaries and trauma. Sherri was awarded the FSBPT Outstanding Service Award in 2021 and received the FSBPT Richard McDougall Long Term Service Award in 2024.



James R. Raines
Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson

James R. Raines is a partner in the Baton Rouge office of Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson, L.L.P. and serves as the Recruiting Partner for the firm. His principal areas of practice include real estate matters, including landlord/tenant and Fair Housing Act litigation and compliance, administrative law, municipal law, workers' compensation, and compliance with the Medicare Secondary Payer Act.



Jennifer Semko
Baker & McKenzie

A native of New Iberia, Jennifer Ancona Semko is a partner in the Washington, DC office of the global law firm Baker McKenzie, where she chairs the office's Litigation and Government Enforcement practice. Jennifer has more than 25 years of experience litigating disputes in state and federal courts across the country and internationally. She has also guided clients through investigations by the Department of Justice, Securities and Exchange Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, United Nations and other agencies.



Stefanie Simmons
Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation

Stefanie Simmons, MD is the Chief Medical Officer at the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation and a board-certified emergency medicine physician. She was the primary advisor to NIOSH for the Impact Wellbeing™ guide for healthcare leaders, leads multi-state programs to improve the operational environment of care and remove barriers to mental health care, and serves as a national thought leader in healthcare worker well-being. Stefanie served as the Vice President of Patient and Clinician Experience for Envision over 7 years, serving 26,000 physicians and advanced practice providers with a focus on professional well-being,



Annie Spell
Louisiana House of Representatives

Dr. Annie Spell represents District 45 in the Louisiana House of Representatives, where she serves on the Health & Welfare; Transportation, Highways and Public Works; and Retirement Committees, as well as the Children's Cabinet and Teacher Retirement System Board. A clinical child psychologist and business owner, she has been recognized with numerous awards including the Blue Cross Foundation's Angel Award, the Junior League of Lafayette's Nedra Andrus Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Louisiana Hospital Association's Legislative Leadership Award. Dr. Spell is committed to improving healthcare outcomes and administration for all Louisianians.



Susana Schowen
Louisiana Works

Susana (Susie) Schowen serves as the Secretary of the Louisiana Works. She was appointed by Governor Jeff Landry in January of 2024. Prior to joining the LA Works, she spent two years as the Vice President of Education at the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, and before that, she was at LED FastStart, the workforce development division of Louisiana Economic Development, for over ten years. Through all these roles, Susie has focused on building coalitions of industry partners, economic developers, and educators to align education and workforce development efforts with the needs of employers and the economy, increasing the prosperity of our people and our communities.



Gabriela Mustata Wilson
Louisiana Center for Health Innovation

Dr. Gabriela Mustata Wilson is Director of the Louisiana Center for Health Innovation and Professor at UL Lafayette. An internationally recognized leader in health informatics, she brings a multidisciplinary perspective to advancing technology-driven solutions for resilient health systems. Her work spans pharmacoinformatics, public health, and AI applications, shaping global education and innovation. She is a HIMSS Changemaker in Health and a Fellow of HIMSS, AMIA, and the International Academy of Health Sciences Informatics (FIAHSI).

