

## Alumni Panel Portfolio Project

When listening to the alumni panel from 1990 in October respond to our questions, I noticed a lot of similarities to my own thoughts. One similarity being the reasoning why they wanted to get into the profession of physical therapy. Some had responses that they thought they were going to go to med school and one stated that they thought they wanted to be an athletic trainer. The answer that I can relate to the most was that they did not want to sit at a desk all day. I love how much of the profession is physically engaged in their work, and the majority is in patient care not behind a desk in one spot all day.

One of the most intriguing topics that everyone discussed was how our profession has changed since 1990. It was very interesting to hear their point of view on the evolution of the physical therapy profession, whether it be good or bad. There were two points made with this topic that really stuck out to me. The first is that hospitals are going to transition to ICU and ER, where everything else is going to be more community based. As an acute care therapist, this is quite alarming, especially if you strive for the variety of patients in a general hospital. The second and most powerful statement made was the point that Dr. Baker spoke on. He was very adamant that the direction of care is changing in health care and that the consistency of health care has changed as well. As our health care changes, we can either choose not to change and fall behind, we can choose to change but only be a follower and just keep up, or we can choose to anticipate the change, really becoming a leader in our industry and helping to drive it in the right direction. As leaders in our profession and in health care in general, we have to advocate for our patients, especially as many patients feel that they are not being listened to. We have a great platform to combat this as our time with patients tends to be longer duration than most other professions.

This leads me to my final take away from this discussion, the most rewarding part of their job. It was evident that everyone still loved what they do. Many commented on how this profession allows you to always engage and challenge yourself, and if you get burned out, there are always other opportunities in a different setting. One statement that I can really relate to was that you never stop learning. Even with 30 years of experience, they can confidently say that. That is what drives me, the desire to learn information to better benefit my patients. That is one of the biggest reasons I decided to continue my education, and has led me to where I am today.