



### ***Past President***

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Greetings to all Hand Therapists.

I considered myself privileged to have served as your leader in 2009. I'm eternally grateful to the dedicated board members and volunteers who contributed over the past year.

Despite difficult economic challenges, we were able to manage the organization "in the black," a feat not accomplished by many professional organizations. I think it is incredibly important for members to know how seriously board members took into consideration that your money was "tight". ASHT Board members do things that are unparalleled in other professional association activities, such as sharing rooms, hosting meetings in their own homes, covering association activities at their own expense, and committing substantial volunteer hours away from their families and paying jobs because of their commitment to the hand therapy profession and ASHT. I want you to know about this commitment so that you will be confident that your membership dollars are valued and respected.

Professional associations are dependent on members to provide the real value in advancing the profession and so I invite all ASHT members to contribute in some way. There are many diverse needs and skills within our association, and we recognize that members vary in their ability to contribute. But please continue to think about ASHT and how it might help advance the ability of hand therapists to provide high quality evidence-based care that is recognized within the healthcare system as crucial to patient outcomes.

The board embarked on a difficult process in 2009 that was based on our commitment and responsibility to ensure that the organization is managed in a way that provides high-caliber cost efficient service. So despite the difficult economic times, we decided to spend money on future cost efficiencies in management. The board started January 2009 with a task force that was focused on ASHT management and overseeing the

request for proposals process. Over much of the year we conducted a very thorough review of our management needs and went through a multistage process where we critically reviewed more than 25 potential management companies, conducting prioritization exercises and investigating those companies' track records and skill sets. In September 2009 the task force met in Texas with four different companies that we were confident could provide high quality management services to ASHT at substantial savings over our current management costs. It was difficult to choose between the four high quality, enthusiastic organizations, each of which offered different strengths. After deliberations, further investigations and negotiations a final decision was made.

Association Headquarters is the new management organization for ASHT effective 2010. We made this selection based on our confidence that this organization was innovative and would help move the organization forward in developing more innovative member products and services. Equally important we felt this organization understood and shared our commitment to reduce the percentage of association dollars required to manage the organization. We started the transition process in December 2009 and are now close to completion. Members can expect some small "hiccups" during the transition process but we are working to ensure the process is seamless. During this year, I expect members to see early signs of innovation we expect this new relationship to bring. We hope that savings in management will allow us to engage in additional important efforts that support the profession in terms of advocacy, education and research.

We appreciate the collaborative work and success achieved during our long-standing relationship with Smith Bucklin. ASHT has grown substantially as an organization with their assistance.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your 2009 President. I look forward to continued support of ASHT in hand therapy in other roles. I am incredibly proud to be a hand therapist, knowing that we assist people in bringing meaning to their lives despite upper extremity injury or impairment. Despite challenges in the healthcare system or within our own lives, we are fortunate, since helping others always enriches our own lives. I wish you the best for 2010. Please stay engaged in ASHT activities, I know that even though I am no longer your president I will continue to do so. So I hope to see you at our annual meeting, work with you on professional resources or support you in using evidence in your practice. Thanks for your support this past year and I am sure we are set for a great year this year under Peggy Boineau's leadership.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy MacDermid  
2009 ASHT President