

**HPA Global Health Special Interest Group**  
*The Dr. Ronnie Leavitt Award for Leadership in the Promotion of Social Responsibility in  
Physical Therapy*

Purpose:

- To recognize a member of the Global Health Special Interest Group (GHSIG) whose contributions and actions have demonstrated leadership in the promotion of social responsibility, locally and/or globally, through service, scholarship, and/or advocacy

Eligibility:

- Current APTA member in good standing
- Current HPA Section member in good standing of at least two years
- Member of the GHSIG in good standing of at least two years
- All APTA membership classes are eligible
- Current members of the HPA Board of Directors are not eligible
- Current members of the HPA GHSIG Executive Committee are not eligible
- GHSIG membership is not required of nominators

Criteria:

- Member has demonstrated leadership in the promotion of social responsibility, locally and/or globally, through service, scholarship, and/or advocacy

Nominations:

- Nominations will be accompanied by at least one letter of recommendation specifically addressing the eligibility and criteria for this award

Deadline:

- Nominations must be received by the GHSIG Nominating Committee Chair not later than November 1

Where to Apply:

- Nominations and all related materials may be sent electronically or by mail to the GHSIG Nominating Committee Chair (Pat.Cross@usd.edu).

Selection:

- The Nominating Committee will review the nominations and submit the committee's recommendation to the GHSIG Executive Committee for final approval by December 1

Award:

- Recognition plaque plus a one-year complimentary HPA Section membership

Presentation:

- Awarded annually since February 2011 at the Global Health Reception at CSM

Background:

- Ronnie Leavitt, PT, PhD, MPH received her Bachelor's degree in physical therapy from Boston University in 1968, her Masters' in Public Health from Columbia University in 1975 and her PhD from the University of Connecticut Department of Medical Anthropology in 1988 where she conducted her dissertation on the health beliefs and behaviors of families with disabled children in rural Jamaica.

As a Clinical Associate Professor in the University of Connecticut's School of Allied Health Professions for 30 years, she taught in the areas of health care issues, cross-cultural and international health care, and disability studies. She has given numerous national presentations and has numerous publications including articles, book chapters, and three books on the subject of cultural competence.

Internationally, she has served as a consultant or volunteer in numerous countries including Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Ghana, and India. The heart of her work has been in Jamaica where she worked to develop a Community-Based Rehabilitation program and has facilitated University of Connecticut student learning experiences there since 2003.

Dr. Leavitt has served on the American Physical Therapy's (APTA) Committee on Cultural Competency and the APTA's Committee to Eliminate Health Disparities. She is two-time recipient of the Health Volunteers Overseas Golden Apple Award, one time for Clinical Application and another for Service and Leadership. In 2007, she was awarded the APTA Diversity Award in recognition for all she has done to advance cultural competency in the physical therapy profession.

In 1985, she co-founded the Cross Cultural and International Special Interest Group (now the Global Health Special Interest Group) which served to further the physical therapy profession's understanding and commitment to cultural competency and global health and has resulted in the Special Interest Group that we have today. In recognition of all the Dr. Leavitt has done, we hereby name the Global Health Special Interest Group's first award: "The Ronnie Leavitt Award for Leadership in the Promotion of Social Responsibility in Physical Therapy" in her honor.

Past Recipients:

- 2010 Ronnie Leavitt
- 2011 Lana Svien