

Meet an IPE Student Champion from Thomas Jefferson University

Jennifer Coviello, PT candidate

Briefly describe your work with/ related to JCIPE:

I participated in the Health Mentors Program during the first two years of my schooling. After beginning the work towards completing the advocacy project with my Health Mentor, my group reached out to SEPTA, in order to advocate for older adults and their ability to access priority seating (that has been designated, but not necessarily enforced). As a result of our project, SEPTA reached out and worked with me and classmate Alison Clodfelter towards brainstorming tangible ideas to raise awareness. This success story led to the creation of an abstract summarizing the experience, which was presented at Collaborating Across Borders VII on October 22nd in Indianapolis, Indiana. This project was awarded second place in the student poster competition. I was also able to participate in an interprofessional student collaborative case presentation while at the conference, and my group was awarded first place for our efforts.

What excites you about this work?

I am extremely humbled that SEPTA was so responsive to our letter and ideas to raise awareness. As a future physical therapist, I am focused and passionate about making the lives of older adults and those with disabilities safer, more independent, and as mobile in the community as possible. This advocacy project has similar goals, so I was excited when the opportunity to move it forward presented itself. This would not be possible without a team effort from multiple professions, which is also exciting because that is a skill that is essential in the health professions workforce. I am also grateful that this work was so well-received at an international conference. It was wonderful to



Jefferson students Alison Clodfelter (left) and Jennifer Coviello were awarded 2nd place in the student poster competition at Collaborating Across Borders VII in October in Indianapolis, Indiana.

see so many health professionals having serious conversations on how to make the medical field more patient-centered and collaborative. This conference showed me just how important our Health Mentors Program is to expose students to the future of health care.

What have you learned that was new?

I have learned the skills it takes to advocate for the community, and how that advocacy is important and can change lives. I believe that these skills I learned in communication, collaboration, and pushing your ideas forward in a productive way to accomplish a task enforce the importance of working together in the health professions field, as well as in physical therapy alone.

Why is IPE/CP important to you?

IPE/CP is important to me because it has been a driving force of collaboration here at Jefferson. Without programs like these, students would not interact with one another, due to the rigors of our respective programs. Fostering relationships early between healthcare professionals can ensure that respect and ease of working together in the future will occur. These interactions were invaluable and helped bring some perspective to how my role as a future physical therapist fits into the scheme of the healthcare delivery system.

How do you think you will apply your IPE/CP learning to your future role?

I will continue to respect all other health professions and always look towards a team approach when treating patients. A patient rarely sees just one healthcare provider, thus further emphasizing the importance of working together for optimal patient-centered care. I hope to be a provider that feels confident in expressing my thoughts and opinions while simultaneously seeking collaboration with others as is necessary.