

Rebecca K. Ferris, CPO

Rebecca Ferris, CPO, lives by the motto “Do good.” Born into a large Irish family with relatives in the United States and abroad, she was exposed to an expansive world view from a young age. Her awareness of the needs of those less fortunate inspired her to join the Ghana Medical Rehabilitation Group (GMRG), through the University of Michigan (U-M), Ann Arbor, while attending graduate school at Eastern Michigan University (EMU), Ypsilanti. Ferris and her husband, Kirk, CPO, attended GMRG meetings during the nonprofit’s infancy to provide the O&P perspective—GMRG formulates plans to provide healthcare services to Ghanaians and has now been incorporated into the International Rehabilitation Forum. Ferris also established a relationship between her employer, Ability Prosthetics & Orthotics (Ability P&O), headquartered in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and Physicians for Peace. Through her employer, Ferris says she has also “been given opportunities to support what we do as healthcare providers and what our patients need by speaking with U.S. government representatives and visiting Washington DC to speak with senators and their aides.”



1. How did you become interested in/involved with O&P?

I first encountered orthotics while working as a special education teacher’s assistant. I also had my share of orthotic needs as a Division I collegiate and international-level athlete. I encountered prosthetics while working as a research assistant during my undergraduate years as a kinesiology student at Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania. During my internship, I assisted in fitting a transtibial prosthesis for a high school cheerleader. She and her mother had tears in their eyes when she walked again for the first time, and her smile marked my heart.

2. Who has motivated or inspired you in your life and/or professional pursuits?

My parents, John and Kathleen Rogers, helped me develop my talents to promote both success in my life and to lead a life of serving others. My mother, a special-education teacher and former Olympic-caliber athlete, helped mold my artistic and athletic abilities that eventually led me to this career path. My father, an electronics engineer, encouraged my focus on a career that is stable enough to support a family. My husband supports me in my career and life as well.

3. What are your personal and/or professional goals?

To harness all of my gifts and talents to do good for people wherever and whenever possible, thus improving their state of mind and quality of life. In my practice, I aim to develop and apply techniques in O&P management that improve the field via research and evidenced-based background information.

4. Describe your approach to patient care.

Being of a biomechanical mind and having a touch of artistic passion, I aim to achieve optimal function and efficiency in gait and/or performance with both my prosthetic and orthotic patients.

5. How do you set yourself apart from competing practitioners in your area?

I keep a positive attitude and maintain happiness in my life so that this is reflected into my patient’s experience. There is nothing like walking into an examination or hospital room to a patient’s frown and walking out seeing his or her smile or tears of joy. I am determined to have a positive impact and come to a solution with all my patients. I work as a team player, providing support to my colleagues and co-workers, so that we all enjoy and are successful in helping our patients. **O&P EDGE**

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