

Meet Our NEACSM Past President



NEACSM's 28th President: Patty Freedson

Education: B.S., M.S. & Ph.D., University of Michigan; Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Institute for Environmental Stress, University of California Santa Barbara

Current or most recent affiliation: Department of Kinesiology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Honors & Awards: University of Rhode Island Fredrika Wild Schweers Lecturer, 1986; Recipient of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance President's Award, 1996; Pioneer Valley Girl Scouts, Woman of Merit in Science and Technology, 1996; McCloy Lecturer for the Research Consortium of AAHPERD, 2000; President's Lecturer for the 2001 ACSM Annual Conference, 2001; Cureton Lecturer for the 2003 ACSM Annual Conference, 2003; University of Massachusetts Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, 2004; 2007 University of Massachusetts Outstanding Accomplishments in Research and Creative Activity Award; American College of Sports Medicine Citation Award, 2009; Margaret Safrit Lecturer, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2009; Dill Lecturer for the 2011 ACSM Annual Meeting, 2011

Professional Interests: physical activity measurement, wearable sensors

NEACSM Service

1. What first inspired you to enter the exercise science field? What made you decide to pursue your advance degree and/or line of research/service?

My love of sports and science. I was inspired by my undergrad exercise physiology professor, Dr. Vic Katch who took me under his wing as an undergraduate and mentored me through my M.S. and Ph.D. degrees.

2. As a student, who were your mentors and what role did they play in your professional development? As a professional, was there anyone who was also instrumental in your career development?

Vic Katch was truly an inspirational advisor to me and in the early 1970s he was an extremely active researcher. He gave me numerous opportunities to work in the lab and with his guidance I was able to develop research ideas. He challenged me to think creatively and how to build my work on previous discoveries which at the time was very young field.

Priscilla Clarkson served as mentor to me in the early stages of my professional career and I will always remember her for the many pearls of wisdom she offered to me throughout my career at the University of Massachusetts.

3. What is it about exercise science/sports medicine that still inspires you today?

The amazing positive effects that can be realized by physical activity participation. It is also inspiring to see the number of other disciplines that intersect with exercise and physical activity research. Finally, the direct translation of research discoveries that are of high value and make a difference in the lives of people.

4. Why and how did you decide to get involved with NEACSM? How did your service help you grow as a professional?

My involvement with the national ASCM organization led me to become involved with the New England Chapter. I also saw it as a way to involve both undergraduate and graduate students in our primary professional organization.

5. What are your most memorable moments from your service to NEACSM?

Participating in our annual conference, serving as president and playing a key role in planning some of the conferences.

6. What were some of the main issues confronting NEACSM at the time of your presidency?

At the time the management of the organization was not well developed and managing the budget was particularly a challenge. Also figuring out how to best serve the research and practical needs of our members.

7. What do you think are your most meaningful contributions to NEACSM?

Serving in leadership role in the organization and working to add valuable and cutting-edge conference content.

8. What do you think are your most meaningful contributions to the field of exercise science/sports medicine?

My research on wearable sensors to detect and monitor physical activity. I have been working in this area for over 25 years, much of the time, under the radar. Now the field is much larger with many groups interested in having objective tools to assess physical activity and sedentary behavior. I am watching the consumer wearable market with much interest and I am stunned at the lack of concern for monitor accuracy and precision.

9. What advice would you have for future leaders of NEACSM?

Serving the regional chapter is a great way to participate at the grass roots level, in the region of the country in which you live. Making a difference and contributing time and effort to sustain an active regional chapter of ACSM is very important for future leaders and can serve as a stepping stone towards leadership in the national ACSM.

10. What advice would you give to students who are looking to pursue a career in exercise science/sports medicine?

Find a faculty mentor who can help guide you in the right direction for careers in research, allied health, or health/fitness/wellness. Volunteer, participate in lab experiments and health related community service events. Do well in school, make friends with fellow students in your field and take the time to develop exceptional communication and writing skills.