

## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

# ***Belmont Shore Physical Therapy Is Just a Walk Away on Broadway***

By Donna Sievers

**W**riting an article about Belmont Shore Physical Therapy, located at 4028 E. Broadway, may seem like a strange topic for our newsletter, but this is a very unique establishment! Because it is so close to our neighborhood, I wanted to share my experiences with you.



Dr. Parisa Refaat (PT, DPT, CLT) is the owner of Belmont Shore Physical Therapy and has a fascinating story of how she got here. She opened the clinic in 2008 and she and her husband, Ali, shared the space on Broadway for several years until Dr. Parisa eventually took over the entire area. Ali is a kitchen and bathroom designer and general contractor who opened his showroom on Broadway several years ago. About five years ago, Dr. Parisa needed all of the space and Ali graciously supported her by working with her to design the Physical Therapy clinic. As a matter of acknowledgement, I want to say that I have been a patient of Dr. Parisa several times in the past and I am grateful for her expertise and dedication to her patients.

Dr. Parisa's story is similar to many immigrants in that she focused on her education and on becoming self-reliant when she arrived in her new country. She immigrated from Iran when she 19 years old to attend the University of Maryland, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. Dr. Parisa shared that she always knew she wanted a career in medicine and that she was considering pharmacy, dentistry, and physical therapy. Her father, who is a pharmacist, convinced her that physical therapy would suit her best, so she took his advice and earned her Doctorate in Physical Therapy from Nova Southeastern University in 2007.

While going to school, Dr. Parisa determined that she wanted to focus on lymphedema management, orthopedic treatments, and women's health issues. She met her husband, Ali, in college and they moved to his hometown of Long Beach, where she has established the Belmont Shore Physical Therapy office.

Dr. Parisa collaborates with her patients to create a plan to increase strength, restore



function, and relieve pain. She is not only a “hands-on” practitioner, but she also creates a positive environment where patients feel empowered to participate in their recovery. When Dr. Parisa opened her clinic, she had one receptionist and she was the only physical therapist. She now has eleven employees including a second physical therapist, several assistants, and two employees who manage the front desk and insurance claims.

Belmont Shore Physical Therapy is also unique in that several languages can be accommodated in the clinic. Dr. Parisa speaks Farsi as well as English, and others in the clinic meet the needs of Spanish and Vietnamese speakers. From scheduling appointments to assistance with exercises and especially to Dr. Parisa's stretching and “hands-on” therapy, the team at Belmont Shore Physical Therapy is outstanding. All of the clinical assistants who help patients with their exercises are knowledgeable and are applying for PT school, having graduated from college already. In fact, last year, four of Dr. Parisa's clinical assistants were admitted to PT schools to further their education.

In addition to supporting her patients and employees, Dr. Parisa is also a clinical instructor of physical therapy at CSULB, USC, and St. Augustine College. She is a busy woman, balancing her work with her hobbies of hiking, yoga, cooking, and gardening.

What I appreciate most is that Dr. Parisa's employees follow her leadership in a welcoming manner and that Dr. Parisa's expertise supports her patient's positive outcomes. Physical therapy is restorative and I am so glad I found Dr. Parisa and the Belmont Shore Physical Therapy team. If you are a senior, an injured athlete, or healing from surgery or an injury, I would highly recommend you call Belmont Shore Physical Therapy. It's just a walk away (or a short drive) on Broadway.

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*Donna Sievers is a Board Member of the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition (LAAHNC). She was raised in Long Beach and taught at Stanford Junior High, Bolsa Grande High, Pacifica High, and CSULB before leaving the classroom for administrator duties in Garden Grove USD. She and her husband live in Bluff Heights, where their retirement activities include volunteering for the Joyful Child Foundation in Memory of Samantha Runnion, gardening at the Bembridge House, bike riding, walking to the ocean, and maintaining a 107-year-old house and garden.*