In The News: faculty interviewed 4 times by local news station
The Department of Rehabilitation Sciences has continued to have a presence in the University Community and Southwest Florida through all of our programs: Athletic Training, Exercise Science, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy.

In this newsletter, we have a student athlete spotlight as well as a staff spotlight. Our website has spotlights from many other of our alumni.

Fall 2019 will be the last class for students earning their Bachelor’s degree in Athletic Training. Athletic Training will be now be offered as a Master’s degree.

Our students and faculty have been active in the community and profession. Our students and faculty have been recognized for their scholarly achievements. Many other faculty and students presented at local and national conferences.

We hope that you enjoy reading about the exciting things happening in our programs! We look forward to the upcoming semester and more news to share. If you have anything you would like to see featured, please email slevy@fgcu.edu and you may just see it in our next edition.
This month, our student athlete spotlight goes to Exercise Science major and member of the FGCU’s Women’s Golf Team, Ailsa Clark. Back in June, Ailsa made it to the Elite 8 in the State Conference! Congratulations Ailsa! She also holds the VP position in her association- Exercise Science Student Association. She says that “no matter where you are in your life, take the time to appreciate you and all that you have to offer this world”.

Ailsa at the Florida State Golf Association State Conference

Ailsa taking victory at her first college tournament!
Nate Garcia and Kevin Varitek, are finishing their experiential learning internship with the Red Sox. They both have learned so much and gained an amazing amount of knowledge from this organization. Below is some knowledge and advice from Nate. “Training real people will never follow a textbook. In a team environment, especially a professional team environment, you have to build relationships - from the players to the baseball staff, and everyone in between. In order for a program to work, you must have total commitment from the entire organization. The science behind strength training is fun, but it means nothing without buy-in.”
This edition’s staff spotlight goes to Dr. Denise Allen, for her recent publication in the Journal of Occupational Therapy Education on the “Use of Case Studies to Promote Critical Thinking in Occupational Therapy Students”. Dr. Allen is an assistant professor here at FGCU and focuses her research on teaching and learning with an emphasis on critical thinking.

“Critical thinking is a necessary component of clinical reasoning…” Dr. Allen states that for students to apply critical thinking in practice, they must also have confidence and minimal anxiety about their abilities. The purpose of this study was to evaluate student performance, confidence, and anxiety in applying critical thinking skills in a clinical setting.

Confidence and anxiety levels were measured using a Likert confidence and anxiety scale at the beginning and end of the study.

Results of the pilot study suggested that case studies using progressively independent engagement may help improve critical thinking, confidence, and reduce anxiety. The qualitative content analysis indicated that students found the case studies helpful to develop and apply critical thinking to their fieldwork experiences.

Click Here to read the entire article.
IN THE NEWS

Dr. Sillevis was interviewed by NBC 2 on the topic of cervical spine self manipulation. Click on the picture to read about how a gentleman suffered a stroke after self manipulating his neck.

Brenna Weick from NBC2 news interviewed Athletic Training faculty Irelia Guadalupe about crash dieting.

“Dr. Sillevis has made me think outside the box orthopedically and has kept me from becoming just another cookie cutter physical therapist.”

- JP Speare, Physical Therapy Student, Second Year
IN THE NEWS

Dr. Sillevis being interviewed by NBC2 about spinal cord injuries. A gentleman suffered from a spinal cord injury after diving into a shallow lake.

NBC2 News came to interview one of our faculty, Dr. Bauer, about the physiological differences between weight loss in males and females! She covered the current research and recommendations on the subject in order to try to help those who may be struggling to implement a healthier lifestyle.

“Dr. Bauer-she makes classes more relatable to us instead of just telling us what we need to know. She makes it more interactive”. –Ally Rugarber, Junior, Exercise Science

Who is your favorite professor and why?
Why did you choose to pursue physical therapy?
I chose to pursue physical therapy during high school. During my junior year in high school I suffered a sprained ankle and then an MCL sprain while playing football, which required me to spend a lot of time in the training room with the head athletic trainer. I was fascinated with how exercise and rehabilitation worked. This really sparked my interest in athletics, rehabilitation, and strength/conditioning.

What is your favorite part about being a physical therapist? Helping people transform their lives and improve. From helping people out of constant pain, to teaching stroke victims how to safely walk again, to seeing an orthopedic client regain mobility. Seeing the gratitude in the patient’s faces, or having part of their lives returned to them, is a feeling that cannot be replicated.

What are your hopes/goals for the future with your DPT degree? I hope to open up my own sports rehab/personal training/wellness clinic by the age of 30. I want to work and dictate my own schedule and work with the clientele that suits me best. The idea of becoming an entrepreneur and creating an awesome self-sustaining business excites me. I am a lifelong learning and am also interested in continuing pursuit by obtaining certifications including such as OCS (Orthopedic Clinical Specialist), SCS (Sports Clinical Specialist), manual therapy, dry needling, cross fit, and weightlifting over time.
If you could go back to change anything about your experience, would you?
I wouldn’t change a thing. I believe everything happens for a reason and life is not about finding yourself but becoming yourself.

Do you have any specific certifications in addition to your DPT degree? What are they and how have they positively impacted your career? Yes, I have my Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist certification through the NSCA. I earned this during my 2nd year of DPT. This certification is a requirement for any individual who wants to work with athletes in the college (NCAA) or professional setting. It has positively impacted my career and has made a positive impression on every single PT job interview I have ever had. It has helped improve how I work with patients in designing exercise prescription programs as well as working with athletes in designing higher level strength and conditioning programs. It also provides a great foundation for nutrition, anatomy and physiology, exercise science and much more. I highly recommend pursuing this certification for any DPT student who seriously considers becoming a strength coach and working with athletes.

Do you have any advice on how to choose a certification for recent graduates wanting to further their education? Go with something that holds a lot of weight in the PT/rehabilitation community. There are a lot of scam certifications out there that don’t mean anything. Patients usually don’t know what the extra letters behind your name mean, so choose something that will teach you real practical knowledge and skills that are backed by science. And finally, choose something that interests you.

Do you have any words of wisdom for current DPT students? The most important things you can become good at, are practical skills and confidence. The knowledge will always be there, but skills must be practiced, practiced, practiced.
We would like to congratulate the following students and faculty from the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences for receiving the 2019 Marieb College of Health & Human Services Awards.

Adeline Warren, an Occupational Therapy student, won the Marieb College of Health & Human Services graduate student of the year award.

Alexis Gann won the First Place Undergraduate Student Poster Award for the Marieb College of Health and Human Services at FGCU Research Day.

Dr. Russell Hogg was awarded the MCHHS Faculty Senior Teaching Award. He teaches both undergraduate and graduate programs and crosses over all programs teaching Anatomy & Physiology.
Dr. Annemarie Connor, assistant professor in the FGCU Occupational Therapy program, has been awarded a 2019 American Occupational Therapy Association Intervention Research Grant.

This grant will fund faculty and student involvement in the implementation of the Assistive Soft Skills & Employment Training (ASSET) program, a vocational social skills program for adolescents and young adults with high-functioning autism. This project builds on Dr. Connor’s dissertation work with the Supporting Transition & Employment Preparation (STEP) Lab at Michigan State University.

For more information on this line of research, please see our latest publication in the Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders), which found ASSET to be associated with statistically significant improvements in social cognition, social function, and social confidence, as well as statistically significant reductions in anxiety, and a trend toward lessening depressive symptoms.

This latest iteration of the program extends previous work by examining the effects of having occupational therapy master’s students run the group sessions, making this a “near peer” approach. ASSET groups will be held on the FGCU campus this fall and will be run again in spring. The program is comprised of 13 sessions, each followed by a social hour and dinner in which participants apply skills learned in group. Participants will also receive incentives for completing assessments.
DPT student Kaylee Fichthorn presenting her results of her undergraduate research at the American College of Sports Medicine Annual Conference

Exercise Science students representing FGCU at University of Florida for the NSCA Florida Clinic

Katie & Megan, two of our Exercise Science seniors presenting at FGCU’s Honors Symposium

FGCU representation at the American Physical Therapy Association 2019 House of Delegates. Pictured left to right: Dr. Eric Shamus, Chief Delegate Dr. Arie van Dujin, Dr. Jacqueline van Dujin, DPT student Jennifer May, and Dr. Kathy Swanick
Our students in the Rehabilitation Sciences department not only like to remain active by participating in different walks and runs, but they also enjoy supporting different groups or individuals.

Exercise Science students and alumni participated in the Run to Home Base at JetBlue Park to support the Veterans Homebase program. The 2019 Run to Home Base Florida honors and supports Southwest Florida Veterans and their Families. All Proceeds go directly to Home Base’s Southwest Florida initiatives, including our Warrior Health and Fitness Program and the two-week Intensive Clinical Program. The Warrior Health and Fitness Program is hosted at the FGCU Department of Rehabilitation Sciences labs.

“Our professors really care about us. We were really stressed the other day in class and our professor literally sprayed lavender around the class to ease our anxiety.”

-Melissa Guigliano, Occupational Therapy Student, First Year
Our Physical Therapy students participated in a local Walk to Unlock ALS and raised $500 towards a cure.

FGCU Exercise Science students volunteered at the Out of the Darkness Community Walk at FGCU. This walk raises awareness for suicide prevention resources.

Our Exercise Science students also volunteered at the FSW Pancreatic Cancer Research Walk.
We really value our relationship with FGCU," said Director of Programs, Kim Weisberg, LCSW. "The kids learn a lot and they really enjoy spending time with college-aged students." Faculty Assistant Collette Krupp explains the OT students choose age-relevant activities that teach socially appropriate group interactions. These activities serve as "building blocks" for necessary life skills.

"Through active communication and collaboration, I hope to determine how OT can establish a foundation within each individual to not only overcome hardships, but to thrive in their futures," said OT student Savannah Bakotic. "I am looking forward to creating an intervention/activity that will assist the children in reaching their greatest potential and engage them in therapeutic interaction," added OT student Abigail Bizub.
Our Doctoral Physical Therapy students having fun in the Hydroworx and learning about Aquatic Therapy.

FGCU Physical Therapy students from each cohort attended the FPTA Student Conclave.
The first year Physical Therapy students hosted the first FGCU National Advocacy Dinner which promotes and educates the physical therapy community on the importance of advocating for national initiatives.
Two of our Physical Therapy Eagles flew to D.C. for the Combined Sections Meeting hosted by the APTA! They were able to sit in on educational sessions regarding how we can manage post-concussion, tactical athletes, pediatrics, women’s health, orthopedics and even equine and canine therapy.

Dr. Swanick presented in the early professional Special Interest Group at APTA CSM Conference in Washington DC.

What is the best piece of advice anyone ever gave you?

“Stand up for yourself. Be the athlete you are today, not the one you are in the future or the past.”

- Maddy Ursillo, Exercise Science Student, Junior
Several of our Occupational Therapy Students and faculty attended the AOTA Conference in New Orleans.

Many students at the AOTA Conference had the opportunity to present their research.
**Who is your favorite professor and why?**

Dr. Connor. She always goes out of her way to make sure everyone is doing their best. She will even email you to check in on you if she thinks you were having a bad day. “-Melissa Guigliano, Occupational Therapy Student, First Year

**What is your favorite memory from your program so far?**

“We went to a rope course, as a part of our curriculum, and it was a really bonding experience with my cohort. It served as a way to practice client centerness, and it was an interesting way to challenge that and discover different approaches to meet different patients needs.”- Shannon Miller, Occupational Therapy Student, First Year

**Who is your favorite professor and why?**

“Before entering the ES program, Dr. Reuter and Dr. Amy Lehigh have been the most impactful in my education at FGCU. They really helped prepare me for the ES program’s intensive courses.”- Kailee Claustro, Exercise Science Student, Junior

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**How have your experiences and your education at FGCU shaped you as a person?**

“They have made me understand the value of other professionals and how they can contribute to my own knowledge and career development. For example, we conducted a health screen with physical therapy students, and it was a great opportunity to experience their approach to evaluation and compare it to ours. We definitely learned a lot from each other during this project.”- Danielle Hennessy-Wack, Occupational Therapy Student, First Year
CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our Doctorate of Physical Therapy class of 2019!

Congrats to our 2019 Exercise Science graduates!

Congrats to our 2019 Athletic Training graduates!

Congratulations to our Masters of Occupational Therapy class of 2019!
This fall, FGCU will open their very first Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Clinic. The Florida Gulf Coast University Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Clinic will serve for the education and training of students, clinicians, residents, and fellows to promote clinical reasoning and decision making within a whole-body approach. The clinic will provide high quality and effective services for individuals of all ages promoting recovery, personal growth, stimulating wellness, and work towards an improved quality of daily living.

The Department of Rehabilitation Sciences offers metabolic testing, VO2 Max testing, and other performance measurements. Additional services included unweighted walking and running in the Alter G treadmill or in the Hydroworx pool (feat. on page 17). Training sessions can be purchased for different levels of customized exercise training. Visit our store front website by clicking here.
Check us out Online!

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 15  
Exercise Science Orientation
August 15-16  
Physical Therapy Orientation
August 15-16  
Occupational Therapy Orientation
August 19  
First Day of Classes Begin
September 17  
Medical Errors Course
October 19  
Eagle Expo- Open House
November 16  
Upper Extremity Manual Therapy Course
November 21  
Rehabilitation Sciences Job Fair
January 25  
Lumbar Spine/Pelvic Course

If you would like, check out our department websites:
- Physical Therapy (DPT)
- Occupational Therapy (MSOT)
- Athletic Training (MSAT)
- Exercise Science (BS)

If you’d like to see something featured, email slevy@fgcu.edu

Thank you to all of our students, faculty, clinical instructors, and community partners for making this semester so great!