



ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

**JOHN G. RANGOS, SR. SCHOOL
OF HEALTH SCIENCES**



MISSION:

Educating ethical healthcare professionals to engage and serve diverse local and global communities to advance person-centered healthcare.

VISION:

We will be leaders in educational innovation, interdisciplinary research and community engagement.

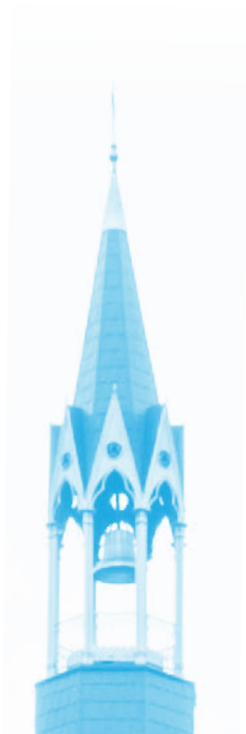


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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

We are delighted to provide you with the first Annual Report of the John G. Rangos, Sr. School of Health Sciences (RSHS) at Duquesne University. With more than 1,000 students and 50 full-time faculty members, RSHS is one of the largest health sciences schools in the country with a national reputation for excellence in clinical instruction, research and advocacy.

This is truly an exciting time for the RSHS! During the Fall 2018 semester, the Rangos faculty, staff, students and alumni have collectively engaged in the development of a comprehensive, innovative and collaborative strategic plan that will serve as blueprint to take RSHS to the next level of excellence. We are confident that the RSHS is poised well to meet the challenges and demands of the fast-growing health sciences field in the next five years.

RSHS's mission is to prepare students to be ethical healthcare professionals who will engage and serve diverse local and global communities to advance person-centered healthcare. The vision statement clearly articulates the school's commitment to being a leader in educational innovation, interdisciplinary research and community engagement. The 13 core values identified in the RSHS Strategic Plan further demonstrate the school's promise to develop practice scholars dedicated to research, service and community engagement. Finally, the six goals and detailed strategic initiatives describe how the school will realize the stated mission and vision moving forward. I invite you to review our strategic planning priorities and welcome your feedback.

In addition to the 2019 – 2023 RSHS Strategic Plan, this inaugural Annual Report includes the new members of the RSHS Advisory Council, key highlights from the six Rangos School departments, scholarly and research accomplishments of the faculty, and success stories of the students and alumni. You will also read about our current efforts to further enhance the RSHS national and global footprint. This is just the beginning of many exciting accomplishments, activities, events and initiatives with the RSHS that we look forward to updating you about in future reports.

As the Dean of the John G. Rangos, Sr. School of Health Sciences, I am deeply appreciative and proud of our dedicated faculty, staff and outstanding students and alumni. With your support, we will continue to work hard to further enhance our national and global reputation.

Sincerely,

*Fevzi Akinci, Ph.D., MHA
Dean, The John G. Rangos, Sr. School of Health Sciences*

RSHS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The John G. Rangos, Sr. School of Health Sciences (RSHS) Advisory Council, composed of leaders from the various disciplines of the School and professionals from different healthcare organizations, was created in Fall 2018 under the leadership of Dr. Fevzi Akinci, Dean of the RSHS.

Current members of the RSHS Advisory Council include:

<p>Joseph Brenc <i>Director, Innovation - Staff Development</i> Allegheny Health Network (Healthcare at Home)</p>	<p>Alex Brennsteiner <i>Regional Network Performance Manager</i> Highmark Home and Community Services</p>
<p>Kenny Erb <i>President</i> Erb Physical Therapy</p>	<p>Ingrid Kanics <i>President</i> Kanics Inclusive Design Services, LLC</p>
<p>Peter M. Houdek <i>Athletic Trainer</i> UPMC</p>	<p>Kevin Monaghan <i>Physician Assistant</i> Advanced Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation</p>
<p>David Tumbas <i>Manager, Business Development, Athletic Training</i> UPMC</p>	<p>Byron Wade <i>Division Administrator</i> UPMC</p>



Inaugural meeting of the RSHS Advisory Council on November 8, 2018 to discuss the School's Strategic Plan

The **Advisory Council** is key to the School and provides expertise and advice in a variety of areas in the healthcare environment, guiding the School towards its stated mission and philosophy and assisting in meeting the goals within the RSHS 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan. The Advisory Council's diverse professional skills, awareness and concern to improve the healthcare needs of the community place RSHS in a unique position for current and future initiatives.

The School is honored to gain the incredible insight offered by this esteemed group of professionals and looks forward to the Advisory's Council experience and guidance to help RSHS move forward in changing the healthcare field opportunities by enhancing the delivery of education to the students and society.

2019 - 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Rangos School of Health Sciences (RSHS) Strategic Plan serves as the blueprint to take the School to the next level of excellence, in conjunction with the initiatives outlined in the University Strategic Plan. The Mission and Vision statements articulate the School's commitment to being educational leaders who prepare students to be healthcare professionals engaged with both local and global communities to advance healthcare. The thirteen Core Values further demonstrate the School's promise to develop practice scholars dedicated to research, service and community engagement. Finally, the six goals along with detailed strategic initiatives and incremental implementation steps describe how the School will realize stated Mission and Vision in the next five years.

MISSION:

Educating ethical healthcare professionals to engage and serve diverse local and global communities to advance person-centered healthcare.

VISION:

We will be leaders in educational innovation, interdisciplinary research, and community engagement.

CORE VALUES

Evidence-based practice	Equity & inclusion
Advancing knowledge through research	Empathy & compassion
Service	Professionalism
Community engagement	Student success
Care for local and global community	Interprofessional collaboration
Patient/Client-centered care	Competency
Ethics	

OUR GOALS

- 1 Increase community-engaged learning and service** by promoting existing opportunities and engaging with University and community partners to expand and diversify experiences.
- 2 Expand dynamic, innovative learning opportunities** across disciplines by creating a comprehensive simulation curricula and integrating additional simulation activities.
- 3 Develop, optimize, and expand educational programs** consistent with our mission and vision where growth potential is greatest.
- 4 Advance school initiatives in research, scholarship, and technology** with the support of new infrastructure and resources.
- 5 Broaden mentorship and professional development** for faculty, staff, students, and alumni to attract and promote dedicated students and professionals that represent a rich diversity of backgrounds.
- 6 Expand interprofessional education (IPE)** and interdisciplinary collaborations to ensure that our graduates have knowledge, skills, ethics, and professionalism needed for the healthcare industry.

RANGOS AT A GLANCE

19:1 STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO

Physical Therapy licensure pass rate was **100%** from **2012 - 2017** (2018 pending); **job placement rate** in 2016 and 2017 was **100%** (2018 pending)

30% of faculty are tenured; **24%** are on tenure track

Planned programs:

Bachelor of Science in **Health Sciences** and Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in **Public Health**
Athletic Training transition from BSAT to entry-level master's

100%
CERTIFICATION EXAM PASS RATE (ALL-TIME) FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

Occupational Therapy Graduation rate from professional phase to graduation is **100%** since 2014; **100% job placement** within **6 months** (no time frame provided); **100% certification pass rate** since 2010

\$1,320,822 in funding was requested;

\$1,041,337
in funding was granted

New **42-credit**, online Master of Health Administration program **approved for fall 2019**

100% **Athletic Training Board pass rate** since 2010 and 98% for the past 27 years

Speech-Language Pathology

3-year **100% ASHA exam pass rate**;
3-year **100% employment rate**

9 grant applications were submitted in 2018; 5 were accepted

New RSHS Strategic Plan

was approved on December 12, 2019

ATHLETIC TRAINING

HIGHLIGHTS

100% first-time passing rate on the national board of certification exam for the class of 2018, marking the eighth time in nine years that the department experienced a 100% first-time passing rate

93% of the class of 2018 secured placement or employment. Seven members secured placement in post-professional graduate programs, and 12 of the 14 graduates also are employed in positions using their athletic training credentials.

The department is in the process of transitioning the existing undergraduate degree program to the graduate level per accreditation guidelines and intends to enroll its first freshmen cohort in fall 2020.

The department maintains student exchange agreements with the athletic and rehabilitation therapy programs at Athlone Institute of Technology and Dublin City University.

For the second time in three years, the department will offer a three-week study abroad experience for health science students in Australia. The course will emphasize global diversity in healthcare, inter-professional patient care and evidence-based medicine.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Faculty, students and alumni provided care at the Pittsburgh Steelers 5k, the Pittsburgh Marathon & Half Marathon and the Serve 2 Cure Tennis Tournament. Under the direction of co-medical directors Dr. Sarah Manspeaker, AT'01 (current athletic training faculty member), and Ellen Wilson-Loaskie, AT'03, students also provided medical services to athletes with intellectual disabilities through a longstanding partnership with the Special Olympics of Pennsylvania Winter Games.

Dr. Erica Beidler and students planned and conducted a nutrition and healthy lifestyle education session for residents at Dave Wright Apartment complex, which offers affordable housing to individuals with diagnoses on the Autism Spectrum. The group also led a meal preparation activity and provided residents with a cookbook of favorite recipes.

Under the direction of Dr. Keith Gorse, students engaged in a semester-long collaboration with Avonworth community parks and facilities to perform a risk assessment. Students developed written and oral reports to help eliminate potentially harmful situations, develop responsive emergency action plans and decrease overall liability.

Athletic training faculty continue to serve in roles including, but not limited to, athletic training education program site visitors and item writers for the national credentialing exam.

GRANTS AND SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENTS

Eight students presented at the National Athletic Trainers' Association Annual Meeting and Clinical Symposium, while an additional five students presented posters at the Eastern Athletic Trainers' Society annual meeting. Four students presented at the Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers' Society annual meeting.

Faculty presented or were co-presenters at both national and regional athletic training meetings, presenting six research or education-based workshops/presentations.

Faculty published (or are in press) six scholarly manuscripts and one textbook. Three faculty members also contributed to the development of a new textbook.

Faculty delivered/contributed to two international poster presentations, seven national presentations and four regional presentations.

Faculty delivered six research or education-based workshops/presentations nationally.

ATHLETIC TRAINING RESEARCH

Dr. Erica Beidler founded Brain Busters, a sport-related concussion research lab involving undergraduate health science students and school psychology doctoral students. During its inaugural year, Brain Busters collected data on four projects, and students from the group presented independent research projects at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and at the Sport Neuropsychology Society Concussion Symposium.

HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

HIGHLIGHTS

85% job placement rate for bachelor's graduates

100% job placement rate for master's graduates

Top employers include Allegheny Health Network, Bayer, Hackensack Meridian Health, Highmark and UPMC

The HMS Department will launch a completely online master of health administration program in fall 2019 so eligible students can further their career in three rising-star areas in just two years. The new program will be coupled with a 4+1 program, enabling eligible HMS undergraduate students to pursue their master's education in health administration.

The department also accepted applications for the public health minor program in spring 2019, which will provide an opportunity for all Duquesne undergraduates to better understand population-level approaches to protecting and improving health.

The department continues to differentiate itself by offering the pre-health degree track, which combines an understanding of the business of healthcare with preparation to pursue medical, dental or other health professional school after graduation.



SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Dr. Joan Kiel co-authored *HIPAA Violations by PA Students: Applying Laws to Clinical Vignettes* for the *Journal of Physician Assistant Education* with Dr. Bridget Calhoun and Allison Morgan from the Physician Assistant Studies program.

Dr. Fevzi Akinci delivered a keynote address at the International Rehab Science and Healthcare Management Conference in China in June 2018.

Dr. Fevzi Akinci delivered an invited presentation titled "Work Place Health and Wellness" at the Innovation Arabia 12 Annual Conference, February 2019, Dubai, UAE.

HIGHLIGHTS

92.86% of graduates passed their certification exam on the first attempt; 100% ultimately passed.

100% of alumni responding to a recent survey reported they took their first job within six months of graduation. Most are employed in adult acute care, pediatric outpatient and school-based settings, and skilled nursing facilities.

92% of OTD students were accepted for presentations at the AOTA Annual Conference.

The program's transition from the MS to OTD continues; the third cohort of OTD students graduated in 2018.

OT developed a successful proposal for an assistive technology minor with the biomedical engineering department.

OT contributed to a successful proposal for a global health minor with the Center for African Studies.

The department held three successful alumni events, including a 25th anniversary celebration at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY RESEARCH

Meghan Blaskowitz earned a *Faculty Development Fund Grant for Vocational Outcomes for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)*.

Amy Mattila, Annie Cook, Ann Stuart and Meghan Blaskowitz earned a Pathways Grant. The Pathways Grant was awarded to the Occupational Therapy Department by the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research (CETR) in July 2017. It is a four-year grant that provides \$3,000 per year to support the establishment of a Community-Engaged Degree Program through the implementation of foundational-level and advanced-level community-engaged learning courses within the curriculum. The Occupational Therapy Pathways Grant Group has established five community-engaged learning courses, two foundational-level and three advanced-level, totaling 14 credits of community-engaged courses. Students engage in community learning during the first year in the occupational therapy program and have the option to continue this engagement through their sixth and final year in the doctoral program through their capstone project.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

OT maintains strong community-engaged learning networks with organizations such as St. Anthony's School, Shepherd's Heart, Renewal Incorporated, Gwen's Girls, Auberle, Vincentian and ACHIEVA.

Dr. Ann Stuart was presented a prestigious Community Heroes Award by community partners Community Living and Support Services.

GRANTS AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Four faculty earned a Pathways Grant and submitted successful proposals to have five courses/14 credits designated as community-engaged learning courses.

Faculty and students had multiple research and program proposals accepted at the American Occupational Therapy Annual Conference and the Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Annual Conference.

- POTA: *African Perspectives on Effective, Sustainable Global Partnerships* - Anne Marie Witchger Hansen EdD, OTR/L, Alexandra Piora OTR/L, Jaime Muñoz PhD OTR/L
- POTA: *Closing the Disparity Gap for Adolescents with IDD* - Meghan Blaskowitz, DrPH, MOTR/L, Lindsay Randall, OTS
- POTA: *Evaluation of Criminal Justice Involved Elders* - Moira Miller, BS; Yinao Wang, MS; Jaime Phillip Muñoz, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA
- POTA: *Closing the Disparity Gap for Adolescents with IDD* - Meghan Blaskowitz, DrPH, MOTR/L, Lindsay Randall, OTS
- POTA: *Perspectives on the Transition Process for Youth with IDD* - Ashlyn Geubtner, OTS; Jeryl DiSanti Benson, EdD, OTR/L
- AOTA: *Closing the Gap: Identifying Quality-of-Life Disparities for Young Adults With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Transition* - Meghan Blaskowitz, DrPH, MOT, OTR/L, Elana Famularo, MS, Megan Lonergan, MS, Erin McGrady, MS
- AOTA: *Building Culturally Responsive Global Partnerships: Addressing the Priorities of Indigenous Practitioners* - Anne Marie Witchger Hansen, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA, Jaime Muñoz, PhD OTR/L, FAOTA, Clara Altemus, MS, Alex Piora, OTS, Quinn Tattersall, MS, Sara Weigand, OTS, Nikki Yeckel, MS
- AOTA: *MHSIS Annual Program: Occupational Therapy in the Criminal Justice System* - Jaime Muñoz, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, Moira Miller, Yinao Wang
- AOTA: *Working It: Occupation-Focused Interventions for At-Risk Youth* - Jaime Muñoz, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, Abigail Catalano, OTD
- AOTA: *Fostering Professional and Legislative Advocacy in Millennial OT Students* - Ann Stuart, OTD, OTR/L, Emily Boring, MSOT, OTR/L, Abigail Catalano, OTD

PHYSICAL THERAPY

HIGHLIGHTS

Locally, students complete rotations within UPMC, Allegheny Health Network, Encompass Health Corporation, Heritage Valley Health System and privately owned clinics.

National rotation sites include Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Downey, CA; Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore, MD; David A. Grant/Travis AFB in California; Touchstone Rehabilitation in Phoenix, AZ; and University of Rochester Sports Medicine in New York.



APPLICANT INFO

Receive an average of **450 applications** each year

4.0 mean GPA for accepted students (represents a mix of weighted and unweighted GPAs)

1250 mean SAT score of accepted student

27 – 28 mean ACT score (composite) of accepted student

FACTS, FIGURES AND ACCOLADES

- Ultimate **NPTE pass rate of 100%**, with an 89% first-time pass rate in 2018
- 2018 **graduation rate of 83.3%** (professional phase graduation rate; years 4 – 6 only)
- **100% job placement rate** for graduates for the last four years (2015 – 2018)
- Program received **full 10-year reaccreditation** from CAPTE

CLINICAL PLACEMENTS

382 active contracts with health care organizations

STUDENT NUMBERS

Continue to enroll a small professional phase class (mean 34.7 students)

PHYSICAL THERAPY RESEARCH



Dr. Regina Harbourne continues to lead national research project *Efficacy of the START-Play program for infants with neuromotor disorders*. The multi-site, four-year project is funded through a \$3.4 million federal grant from the Department of Education.

Harbourne also received a grant from the Faculty Development Fund for *A Mobile Application for Early Quantification of Motor Skill in Infants at Risk*. The mobile application is complete and can be used to measure angles of joints during movement.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Dr. Rob Martin presented *Rehabilitation Considerations* at the International Society for Hip Arthroscopy in Melbourne, Australia. He also co-authored *Current Concepts Review: Evaluation and Management of Posterior Hip Pain* for the September issue of *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons*.

Dr. Diane Borello-France and colleagues were recognized by the American Urogynecological Society for the Conservative Management Award Prize for their paper, *Randomized Trial Comparing Combined Midurethral Sling and Behavioral/Pelvic Floor Therapy to Midurethral Sling Alone for Mixed Urinary Incontinence*. The paper was presented at the 2018 International Continence Society's 48th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia.

Drs. Rob Martin and Chris Carcia co-authored *Achilles pain, stiffness and muscle power deficits: midportion Achilles tendinopathy revision 2018*, which was published in the *Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy*.

Dr. Ken Havrilla was named assistant to the department chair, and he serves as the director of clinical education.

Dr. Matt Kostek was invited as a discussant and content expert to the Future Research Planning Committee of the Parent Project in Muscular Dystrophy organization in Washington, D.C. He also was featured in a podcast on muscular dystrophy hosted by Tim Lightfoot with the Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance.

Dr. Ben Kivlan is a member and contributor to the Multicenter Arthroscopy Study of the Hip. He provides statistical and scientific writing support and served as a co-author on several manuscripts.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A group of students participated in the annual Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) One Walk. The class of 2018 donated \$2,473 to JDRF at graduation.

Students raised more than \$1,600 and participated in the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's.

Dr. Regina Harbourne is partnering with developmental psychology faculty at the University of Pittsburgh to create a learning landscape playground in Wilkensburg. Additionally, she is collaborating with Penn State faculty and the Nwakedem Benevolent Foundation to develop a curriculum and support an inclusive school in Cameroon.

Dr. Ken Havrilla conducted three cardiovascular screenings at the Wilmerding YMCA. He also coordinated a community-engaged learning experience for the class of 2019 at the Vintage House.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY



FACTS, FIGURES AND ACCOLADES

The Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program at Duquesne University is the nation's first guaranteed seat, five year, bachelor's + master's degree program in the United States. Since 2000 we have graduated students who have gone on to productive and successful careers as speech-language pathologists practicing around the world.

Program Outcomes:

- **100% pass rate** on National Certification Praxis Exam in Speech-Language Pathology for 9 of last 10 years
- **100% employment** rate for graduates since class of 2000 at 1-year post graduation (national benchmark)

Initial Employment:

- Class of 2018 **employed in 14 states**, including Pennsylvania
- Class of 2017 **employed in 8 states**, including Pennsylvania
- Class of 2016 **employed in 10 states**, including Pennsylvania
- Class of 2015 **employed in 9 states**, including Pennsylvania

In 2018 - 2019 there are 5 alumni enrolled in Ph.D. programs:

- University of South Florida
- Vanderbilt University
- Ohio University
- Michigan State University
- James Madison University

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES



In 2018, SLP faculty published seven peer-reviewed scholarly papers and gave 33 national and state conference presentations. Importantly, 20 students participated as authors and co-presenters on the majority of those presentations. Together, faculty and student scholarship improved our understanding of the nature of communication disorders and fostered the translation of our understanding into practice that directly impacts peoples' lives.

Sarah Wallace, Ph.D, CCC-SLP

Associate Professor and Program Director for the Adult Language and Cognition clinic

- 35 clinical research peer-reviewed publications since 2005
- Over 70 peer-reviewed clinical research national or international presentations
- NIH R15 NIDCD Grant 2017-2020 – PI
- Five internal grants at Duquesne University

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2018, under the direction and supervision of highly qualified speech-language pathology community-based colleagues and full-time SLP faculty, students delivered over 17,000 hours of assessment and treatment to adults and children with communication and swallowing disorders. Over 3,000 of those hours were delivered on campus in the DU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic in Fisher Hall.

Micco, K., Wallace, S., Neff, A., Rusiewicz, H.L., Snyder, S. Kimelman, M.D.Z, & Wellman, S. (2016). *SLP V.O.I.C.E. (Valuable Opportunities In Community Engagement)*. Community-Engaged Pathways Grant sponsored by the Center for Community Engaged Teaching and Research at Duquesne University. Budget: \$12,000. Status: Funded.

Bulgarelli, R., Moyer, L. Micco, K., and Rusiewicz, H.L. (2018). *Embracing Community Engagement in Speech-Language Pathology Education: An Experience Focused on Movement, Music & Literacy*. Presented at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association annual convention, Boston, MA.

DUQUESNE-CHINA HEALTH INSTITUTE (DCHI)



Delegation of Shanghai University of TCM to RSHS led by Chairman Cao, Xikang (third from the left) and Vice President Wang, Yongjun (second from the left) during August 2018 Commencement

Each year through a partnership with universities in China, Rangos hosts more than a dozen health care professionals and college graduates from China who are taking classes as part of a unique graduate program designed to help them earn a master's degree in occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology.

The arrangement was developed with backing from the Chinese government, and Duquesne is the first American university involved in such an arrangement.

Eighty-seven students have graduated from the program since its inception in 2015. Upon graduation, program alumni work as university instructors or as hospital-based rehabilitation therapists.

Notable DCHI alumni

Dan Wang ('16) – currently pursuing Ph.D. at University of Iowa

Fei Zhao ('16) – currently pursuing Ph.D. at University of New York Buffalo

Zongpan Li ('16) – currently pursuing Ph.D. at University of Hong Kong Polytech

Dr. Jing Xiao ('16) – recently promoted to director of the rehabilitation department at Longhua Hospital, one of the top hospitals in Shanghai, China

Dr. Jia Huang ('17) – recently promoted to associate dean of College of Rehabilitation Medicine at Fujian University of Traditional Chinese Medicine

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

HIGHLIGHTS



Erin Christine Bosch was a 2006 graduate of the department of physician assistant studies. Sadly, Erin died in Virginia on Jan. 17, 2018, after receiving a

heart transplant for hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.

Along with Erin's former classmates, the department established the Erin Bosch Memorial Scholarship. Erin's family, friends and classmates funded the scholarship account, which will provide medical equipment for fourth-year students and \$100 to students who select cardiology for their elective rotation during the final year of the program.

Ana Brandt, a fourth-year physician assistant student, and Dr. Bridget Calhoun presented research at the American Society of Regional Anesthesia conference.



Lauren Hensler, a fourth-year physician assistant student, completed her fellow project. She received a grant of \$4,921 for Dentistry from the Heart, an annual day

of free dental care for the Butler community.



The Physician Assistant Student Association participated in Layups for Lucy, a fundraiser for UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh that was founded by Grace Beal

in memory of her sister, Lucy, who passed away from congenital heart disease in 2009. Taylor Grybowski, a fourth-year physician assistant student, helped organize the event, which raised \$30,000 to support palliative care patients, fund patient outings to area attractions and sporting events, and fund diversion therapy with iPads and XBoxes.

Jennifer Thomas, PA-C, a 2018 graduate, traveled to Guatemala with fellow alumnae Jami Smith, PA-C. Smith is one of the three founders of Mayanza, a group that visits Santiago, Guatemala, several times each year to provide health and dental screenings for children.



FACTS, FIGURES AND ACCOLADES

The class of 2018 experienced a 100% pass rate on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam.

Dr. Bridget Calhoun, chair of the department of physician assistant studies, was named the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants liaison to the PA Department of Health.

Four class of 2018 graduates were accepted into residency programs:

- **Kaitlyn Eagle, PA-C** – UPMC Advanced Practice Provider Neonatology Residency
- **Chase Whelan, PA-C** – Norwalk Hospital and Yale School of Medicine PA Surgical Residency
- **Hayley Barblock, PA-C** – AHN West Penn Physician Assistant Neonatal Intensive Care Residency
- **Taryn Alexander, PA-C** – AHN West Penn Physician Assistant Neonatal Intensive Care Residency

Abby Losco, a fourth-year student, is the leading scorer on Duquesne's women's soccer team with 10 points. She is on the Atlantic 10 Conference All-Academic Team. Losco maintains a 3.89 GPA and is a member of the Dean's List, Atlantic 10 Commissioner's Honor Roll, Director of Athletics' Honor Roll and ECAC President's Honor Roll.

RESEARCH SHOWCASE

3.5 million dollar grant

Multi-state project

40 professionals

EFFICACY OF THE START-PLAY PROGRAM FOR INFANTS WITH NEUROMOTOR DISORDERS

(made possible through a four-year, \$3.5 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education)

"START-Play" stands for "sitting together and reaching to play." The purpose of this project is to evaluate the efficacy of a fully developed intervention designed to target sitting, reaching and motor-based problem solving for infants with motor delays to improve global development and readiness to learn. It is a multi-site, multi-state project involving five sites and approximately 40 professionals.

This project is the first national randomized controlled trial of an intervention targeting the development of early motor skills to advance problem solving in infants. We proposed that this very early intervention targeting basic motor skills not only advances these motor skills during the intervention period, but also provides a boost to associated cognitive abilities after the motor intervention. Data analysis for the post-intervention part of the study is nearly complete, and within the next year analysis will be completed for the long-term follow up of the infants.

Infants under the age of 3 years who have delays in development, particularly motor development benefit. Families of these infants benefit by learning a new approach to advance their child's development in both motor and cognitive skills, which will provide long term benefits.

This project is vital to better understand the best intervention for infants with motor dysfunction or delays. Although early intervention is mandated by law, practices used by early interventionists such as physical and occupational therapists vary widely, and best practice for developmental outcomes has not been determined.

This approach is innovative because it starts with very early skills (sitting and reaching, which start at about 5 months of age), and the approach emphasizes the inter-relationship of several areas: gross motor, problem-solving, cognitive and fine motor, all nested together in the context of the home life of the family.

Preliminary analysis supports the START-Play approach. Moving forward, will teach the concepts at national and international meetings, as well as submit follow-up grants to determine the exact dosage and timing needed to best benefit from this approach.





Dr. Sarah Wallace, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

FACULTY SHOWCASE

Dr. Sarah E. Wallace, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Associate Professor and Program Director for the Adult Language and Cognition Clinic in the Speech-Language Pathology Department

Dr. Wallace has established multiple research initiatives that focus on increasing participation in people with aphasia, a language disorder that commonly occurs after stroke or brain injury. It affects a person's ability to speak, understanding others, read and write, thereby significantly affecting their participation in desired and important life activities.

She is currently involved in two research initiatives:

Strategies to Accommodate Reading (STAR) in people with aphasia is a National Institute of Health funded research project that aims to examine different aspects of text-to-speech technology use to increase the independence with which people with aphasia can experience improved understanding of reading materials. The innovative nature of this project is systematic evaluation of technology to support comprehension of real-life reading materials such as newspaper articles. The STAR team includes talented, multisite collaborators Dr. Kelly Knollman-Porter, Dr. Jessica Brown, and Dr. Karen Hux.

Evaluation of Home Programs for People Post Stroke is a series of interprofessional projects aimed at improving home practice for people with aphasia and upper limb impairments post stroke. By modifying variables in these studies, Dr. Wallace and Dr. Elena Donoso Brown (RSHS OT Department) seek to increase the participation of people with aphasia in research studies and valuable home-based interventions. Additionally, they seek to investigate variables that increase adherence to home programs.

Dr. Wallace's work enriches health sciences education and demonstrates a strong connection to the University's mission. Throughout her research projects, Dr. Wallace mentors multiple student research assistants who gain invaluable experiences related to clinical research and clinical practice. Students have presented at local, national and international conferences and received multiple awards for their contributions. Second, Dr. Wallace's research emphasizes the important of intra and interdisciplinary collaborations. She regularly collaborates with faculty, researchers and students from other health sciences disciplines, education and psychology.

Anna Saylor (SLP class of 2020) said, "I am very fortunate to work very closely with Dr. Wallace and have her as a mentor with both aphasia and inter-professional research. Through a number of projects, I have learned an enormous amount of information about adult neurogenic communication disorders and research itself. Dr. Wallace instills the importance of critical thinking and working hard while ensuring that her students are learning and enjoying the process. She has fostered a love for learning in myself and many other students, for which I am very thankful!"

Learn more about the Communication and Cognition Lab at [facebook.com/ CommunicationAndCognitionLab](https://facebook.com/CommunicationAndCognitionLab).

"I am very fortunate to work very closely with Dr. Wallace and have her as a mentor with both aphasia and inter-professional research."

Anna Saylor, SLP 2020

ALUMNI SHOWCASE



Dane N. DeLozier, AT'06, PT, DPT, ATC, NASM-PES

Co-Founder, CEO and Sports Science Lab Director at Revo Physiotherapy and Sports Performance in Boulder, Colorado

In 2015, DeLozier co-founded REVO Physiotherapy in Boulder, Colorado, with two colleagues. REVO provides therapy, rehabilitation, sports performance training and biomechanics assessments. DeLozier notes that "[they] utilize 3D motion capture technology, force plates and EMG as a way to gain objective data on our patients/athletes movement quality, improve our diagnostic accuracy and speed with movement dysfunction and have created advanced algorithms with the data to improve our return to play decision making process". REVO routinely works with Tour de France cyclists, Ironman athletes, ultra-endurance athletes, NFL players, UCI mountain bike racers and Olympic athletes of various disciplines.



Alex Brennsteiner, HMS '12

Regional Network Performance Manager, Highmark Health, Home and Community Services

Brennsteiner's time at Duquesne included internships at Conemaugh Health System and UPMC Hillman Cancer Center. Brennsteiner earned a Master of Health Administration from Penn State University and was quickly offered a position with Highmark Health/Allegheny Health Network upon graduation.

Brennsteiner has spent his career progressing through the ranks at Highmark Health/Allegheny Health Network. In his current role as Regional Network Performance Manager, Highmark Health, Home and Community Services, he had the opportunity to plan and develop the AHN Medical Respite program. This program provides a safe place for post-hospital recovery for patients experience homelessness and drug addiction and recovery. Brennsteiner leads the business case and project plan development for the initiative. In recognition of his career and personal accomplishments and dedication to the community, he was named as one of the *Pittsburgh Business Times* "30 Under 30" Class of 2017.



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