

# DIVISION OF PHYSICAL THERAPY NEWSLETTER

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

MaryBeth Mandich

Well, it's been awhile since you have had a newsletter and the reason for that is we have all been even busier than usual covering new roles and learning new things. Part of the reason for that is the resignation of two faculty members last summer. Dr. Scott Davis left WVU to assume the chairperson position of the physical therapy education program at Marshall University in Huntington, WV. Although it was a huge loss for the program, it is nice to have him in West Virginia. Dr. Erickson left for a faculty position at Midwestern University in Phoenix, Arizona. Dr. Erickson's departure created a second large gap for the

program. Of course, the remaining faculty have "done their thing" and stepped up and into new roles. Professor Timko coordinated the first orthopedics course and the second procedures course. Dr. Mancinelli coordinated the second orthopedics course. Dr. Swisher took over evidence based and niche content. Dr. Evans took additional responsibilities in the roles courses and coordination of the comprehensive examination. Dr. Jones took over the first evidence based course. Professor Rice coordinated the evidence based course, took over as chairperson of the curriculum committee and

is responsible for the publication of this newsletter. We called upon Dr. Chang's experience as an orthotist to teach prosthetics and orthotics. Dr. Utzman assumed responsibility for all full time clinical education. So, we survived the year and I believe the students got the excellent education they expect from WVU.

A year later, we have a lot of exciting news to announce. First and foremost, we have new faculty members. On the clinical side, joining us in early fall 2016 are two faculty who are primarily in the clinic but who have teaching responsibilities in their areas of expertise. Dr. Kristin Phillips joined us

as the women's health expert and is currently primarily working at the WVU Medicine outpatient clinic at the University Town Center. Dr. Phillips is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh. She finished a fellowship in women's health and obtained board certification before she moved to California where she practiced for a year before joining us. Dr. Megan Burkart joined the faculty to start a new clinical program in oncology physical therapy. Her position is supported in part by a grant obtained by Dr. Swisher as a co-investigator which focuses on lung cancer survivorship. Dr. Burkart is a graduate of our WVU physical therapy program and practiced in Annapolis, Maryland, continuing to develop her interest in acute and cancer care before joining us. Both are

contributing valuable input and their energy and enthusiasm to the education program while providing clinical physical therapy services that are not otherwise easily attained in the state. We have another faculty member joining us in August, 2017, Cheryl Brandmeir. Ms. Brandmeir is a graduate of Ithaca College and is coming to work as a part-time clinical and research physical therapist in movement disorders.

I am also pleased that we have successfully filled the two full time faculty positions. In April, Dr. Muhammad Arlwayly joined the faculty and is already immersed in teaching the statistics course for second year students. He received his entry level education in Saudi Arabia and master's and PhD degrees from the University of Pittsburgh, with a minor in clinical and translational science. He is

also first author on a recent publication in *Physical Therapy* regarding treatment based classification of low back pain. Dr. Renee McGinnis will join the faculty in July, taking over much of the professional roles track previously taught by Drs. Erickson and Utzman. However, she is a board certified orthopedic clinical specialist, so she will also have some teaching responsibility in that content during spring and summer. Dr. McGinnis is a graduate of our program with both master's and doctoral degrees and is currently the academic coordinator of clinical education at Pierpont Technical College in Fairmont.

In addition to all of that excitement, a few other things are of note. We had another year with 100% first time board pass rate, with two graduates earning perfect scores!

Our fellowship in neonatal physical therapy, which is in partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital was accredited and the first fellow finished at the end of June. The current students did an amazing array of community service projects through inter-professional education and Dr. Evans' course Professional Roles II. One of our current students, Christa D'Egidio represented physical therapy on a panel presentation with Senator Manchin about the opioid crisis.

Finally, we are busy working on a curriculum modification to make sure our entry level curriculum is in alignment with contemporary trends in the profession. A brief summary of changes are as follows. First and foremost, we want to change terminology and focus to align with APTA's movement systems model.

Second, we want to evaluate efficiencies in terms of course offerings, and we want to make sure we are building content in nutrition and health promotion. Third, we want to make sure students are learning things in an appropriate and efficient sequence. Finally, we want to increase our total full time clinical education experiences and place them later in the curriculum, in accordance with national trends. Stay tuned on our web page for further details as they start to emerge.

## 2016 DIVISION EVENTS

Kimeran Evans

### Clinical Pathways Ceremony – Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

On Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016, we celebrated the WVU PT Class of 2017 as they completed the majority of their didactic work in the curriculum and were about to embark upon their first full time clinical experience. Dr. Aaron Hartstein was our invited speaker as the 2016 recipient of the Mary Lou Barnes Award for Distinguished Professional Service. This award recognizes a WVU Physical Therapy alumnus who has made a significant contribution to the physical therapy profession through excellence in teaching, research or service. Mary Lou Barnes was the founder and first Chair of the WVU PT program. Aaron graduated from our program in 2003 with a Master's in Physical Therapy and has worked at PRO PT in Front Royal and Winchester, VA. Following graduation he became board certified in Orthopedics (OCS) as well as completed an extensive

fellowship in manual therapy (FAAOMPT). He was instrumental in forming the Virginia Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapy Institute (VOMPTI) and, as of fall 2015, he is a full time faculty member at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA.



Three students from the class were recognized. The *Clinical Pathways Scholar Award* is awarded each year to the student with the highest GPA throughout the first two years in the program. This year's recipient was **Alana Gillenwater**.



**Carly Caldon** was awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Emerging Young Professional Award* which was developed to recognize the student who best exemplifies the combination of academic and professional behaviors that are the foundation of a successful, well-rounded clinician.

**George (Matt) Yasenovsky** was also recognized and awarded the Divisional Graduate Assistantship for the 2016-2017 academic year.



It was a banner year for pathways sponsorships with over 50 alumni and friends sponsoring students and even the students of the Class of 2016. After signing the code of ethics and donning their embroidered white coats, the students found cards in their white coat pockets with inspiring notes from their sponsors: some from their hometowns, some from their potential places of future employment, some from clinical practices in the tri-state area, some from family members who are practicing physical therapists, some from passionate graduates who wanted to give back to the program to support the student's professional growth without even knowing or being linked to the student. On behalf of the students and all of us in the Division of Physical Therapy, we sincerely thank those who contributed to over \$4,000.00 to this annual sponsorship event.

### **Graduation Weekend – May 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

The second weekend in May consisted of various

celebrations for the WVU PT Class of 2016. On Saturday afternoon, we had our first WVU Division of Physical Therapy Hooding Ceremony in our Okey Patteson Auditorium in which faculty members hooded their student advisees. The ceremony also recognized Dr. Justin Eisenhofer as the recipient of the Sandy Burkart Outstanding Clinical Instructor Award. This award acknowledges exceptional service to our students by a clinical instructor. Justin was nominated for this award by one of his students from this graduating class. Justin graduated from our Master's program in 2002 as well as our Transitional Doctorate program in 2008. Justin has been employed with Mountain River Physical Therapy since 2002 and has obtained various credentials and certifications over the past 14 years. These include the Certified Strength and Conditional Specialist (CSCS) as well as a board certification in Orthopedics (OCS). In Justin's absence, Dr. Sandy Burkart provided an inspirational message to the

graduates. Dr. Burkart, the namesake of the Outstanding Clinical Instructor Award, was a founding faculty member and former chair of our program. Valerie Knupp, a 2001 graduate of the WVU PT Program, provided a beautiful musical selection for the students and audience.

Following the Hooding Ceremony, an Awards Reception was held at the Alumni Center. This ceremony recognized five students for their excellence in the classroom and clinic.

**Emily Hargreaves** and **Bethany Gaston** were awarded the *Outstanding Academic Achievement Award* as the students' with the highest GPA throughout the entire three years of the program. **Bethany Gaston** was also the recipient of the *John J Petronis Award for Outstanding Performance on the Comprehensive Exam*. This award recognizes the student with the highest score on this examination. The *William T Stauber Student Research Award* was given to the group of students with

the best overall research project during the third year of the DPT curriculum. This years' recipients included **Chelsea Anderson, Stephen Armitage, Emily Hargreaves, Shane Platt and Michael Priestas. Caleb Dodd** was awarded *the Dave Pariser Leadership Award* which was created several years ago in memory of Dave Pariser. The recipient of this award exhibits strong mentorship of other students, strong leadership skills both professionally and academically, a strong interest and participation in our professional organization, and, above all else, is a

friend to all. These are all characteristics that Dave exuded. **Rebecca Rohanna** was recognized as the *Outstanding Student Clinician Award* recipient. This award is given to the student who excels in clinical practice during full time clinical experiences. To close the evening, Jenna Hejlik, Class of 2016 Vice President addressed her classmates.



Pathways Ceremony Class of 2016

# WVU Physical Therapy students earn perfect first-time pass rate on national board exam

All 38 members of the West Virginia University Doctor of Physical Therapy Class of 2016 passed the National Physical Therapy Examination on the first attempt. Two earned perfect scores on the examination.

"The expertise of the WVU staff, the rigor of the didactic course work, and the constant correlation of course work to clinical scenarios are what I feel prepared me for the both the exam and the work place," Emily Hargreaves, DPT, said. "The comprehensive review and comprehensive exam during the fall semester of your third year give a great idea of what your strengths and weaknesses are as a student so that you can optimally prepare."

Passing the National Physical Therapy Exam is a requirement for licensure to practice physical therapy in all 50 states. The 250-item, computer-based examination tests graduates on their knowledge of patient/client management, including examination, evaluation, diagnosis and prognosis, and physical therapy interventions, across all body systems.

"As Emily said, this is a team effort between faculty and students," MaryBeth Mandich, Ph.D., D.P.T., vice dean, Professional Programs and chair, Division of Physical Therapy. "We are proud of the students we get and their performance. I am also proud of the dedication of the faculty who go above and beyond every day to assure excellence in physical therapy education."

The national first-time pass rate this year was 94 percent. The mean scaled score of WVU physical therapy graduates was 18 points higher the national average. WVU graduates exceeded the national average in the following content areas: patient examination, evaluation/differential diagnosis/prognosis, non-system domains, cardiovascular/pulmonary system, and other body systems.



# WVU Division Events 2017

Kimberan Evans

## **Clinical Pathways Ceremony – Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

On Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017, we celebrated the WVU DPT Class of 2018 as they completed a majority of their didactic work. The students signed the APTA Code of Ethics prior to donning their embroidered white lab coats, symbolic of their upcoming clinical experiences. Dr. Claudia Gaszi was our invited speaker as the 2017 recipient of the Mary Lou Barnes Award for Distinguished Professional Service. This award recognizes a WVU Physical Therapy alumnus who has made a significant contribution to the physical therapy profession through excellence in teaching, research or service. Mary Lou Barnes was the founder and first Chair of the WVU PT program. Dr. Gaszi is a 1983 alumnus of our physical therapy program and is currently an associate professor and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education at Lebanon Valley College in east-central Pennsylvania.



Our Clinical Pathways Sponsorship program continues to be a successful addition to this program and we remain greatly appreciative of those who support our students through this process. This was the second year that our alumni provided upwards of \$4000 in student sponsorships. Our pathways program culminates with the recognition of students through awards and assistantships. The *Clinical Pathways Scholar Award* was awarded to **Lucas Viglianco** as the student with the highest GPA throughout the first two years in the program. **Lucas Viglianco and Christa D'Egidio** were awarded the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual *Emerging Young Professional Award*, which was developed to recognize the student(s) who best exemplify the combination of academic and professional behaviors that are the foundation of a successful, well-rounded clinician. **Lucas Viglianco** was also recognized and awarded the Divisional Graduate Assistantship for the 2017-2018 academic year.

**Thank you to this year's Clinical Pathway Sponsors!**

PT Class of 2017  
Al Casini  
Steven George  
Patricia Downey  
D. Scott Davis  
Kimeran Evans  
Tracy Rice  
Ralph Utzman  
YuJen Chang  
Anne Swisher  
Dina Jones  
Michael Timko  
Chad Micucci  
Brook Browning  
Joseph Rodriguez  
Andrea Rodriguez Karrs  
Kyle West  
Kristi Hardesty  
Mark Karnoupakis  
Jody Bowser Varda  
Chris Unger  
Shaun Snyder  
Ryan Santangelo  
Marisa Thalman Caputo  
William Stauber  
Teri Blake Cohagan  
Stacey Reid  
Leigh Ann Hewston  
Tina Saseen Dowdy

Jason Posey  
Emily Hargreaves  
Mindy Hull  
Suzie Luikart  
Corrie Mancinelli  
Mark Taylor  
Sarah Mayle  
Steve Roth  
Michael Staggers  
Valerie Knupp  
Edward Hardy  
Monica Cook  
Michael and Lisa Conaway  
Cheryl Quinlan  
Judy Clevenger  
Kara Stauffer  
Dennis Bongiorno  
Chris Whiteman  
Ryan Dante  
Michael Priestas  
Jennifer Moore  
Tyler and Natasha Wamsley  
Kristin Phillips  
Carol Waggy  
Megan Burkart  
John Petronis  
Jodi Kelly  
Gabe Wilson  
Emily Hayes

### **Graduation Weekend – May 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

The second weekend in May consisted of an awards dinner and graduation ceremony for the WVU PT Class of 2017. The Graduation Awards Reception was held at the Alumni Center on Saturday evening May 13<sup>th</sup>. This ceremony celebrates the work of our graduating students while also recognizing the contributions and support of friends and family members in the successful completion of this graduate program. Students were recognized for their excellence in the classroom and clinic. **Alana Gillenwater** was awarded the *Outstanding Academic Achievement Award* as the student with the highest GPA throughout the entire three years of the program. **Sarah Griffin** was the recipient of the *John J Petronis Award for Outstanding Performance on the Comprehensive Exam*. This award recognizes the student with the highest score on this examination. The *William T Stauber Student Research Award* was given to the group of students with the best overall research project during the third year of the DPT curriculum. The recipients this year included **Sarah Griffin, Alana Gillenwater, Arielle Baker, and Jessica Brotherton**. **Kristen McWhorter** was awarded the *Dave Pariser Leadership Award*, which was created several years ago in memory of our alumnus, and nationally renowned Dave Pariser. The recipient of this award exhibits characteristics of Dave including strong mentorship of other students, strong leadership skills both professionally and academically, a strong interest and participation in our professional organization, and, above all else, is a friend to all. **Nathan Stiffler** was recognized as the *Outstanding Student Clinician Award* recipient. This award is given to the student who excels in clinical practice during all four full time clinical experiences. **Kristen McWhorter**, DPT Class of 2017 President, concluded the ceremony with an address to her classmates and a class presentation.



The Professional Programs Graduation Ceremony was held on Sunday afternoon May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the WVU Coliseum with Dr. MaryBeth Mandich, Chair of Physical Therapy and Vice Dean of Professional Programs, presiding. In addition to our Doctor of Physical Therapy graduates, graduates from Occupational Therapy, Exercise Physiology, and Medical Lab Sciences were also recognized. The commencement speaker was Ali Stroker. Ali is the first actress who uses a wheelchair for mobility to appear on Broadway. She has also had roles in Fox's Glee and ABC's Ten Days in the Valley. She provided a motivating speech to graduates, many of whom who were about to embark upon a career in rehabilitation.



The 2017 Graduates at the Erickson Alumni Center

### **Orientation – June 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017**

On Thursday and Friday June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, we welcomed our newest group of physical therapy students to campus. The WVU DPT Class of 2020 was welcomed to campus by various physical therapy students and faculty members, including their class advisor Dr. Eugene Chang. They also had the opportunity to see the exciting learning opportunities that lie ahead at the Health Sciences Center. This class consists of 41 students, of which 24 are from West Virginia and 17 from various other states including Virginia, Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Florida. Welcome Class of 2020!

## Welcome Class of 2020



Natalie Adams  
Christina Angelus  
Jenna Bailey  
Alyssa Benincosa  
Jennifer Brewer  
Jacob Carney  
Abhi Dave  
Evan Eich  
Jonathan Gainer  
Kelsie Gillespie  
Emma Grose  
William Harriman  
Paul Hercules  
Madalyne James  
Kelsey Johnson  
Jacob Kitchen  
Hallie Kreuzer  
Nicholas Landry  
Elizabeth Langlois  
Sydney Lavengood

Kaitlin Lowery  
Christopher Martinelli  
Rebecca Mason  
Mark Matruski  
Evan Miles  
Johna Miller  
Taylor Miller  
Anna Pirl  
Jonathan Potter  
Gabriel Pou  
Kirsten Rayner  
Elena Romanek  
Victoria Rovello  
Cole Salmons  
Emma Schleucher  
Gage Swartz  
Brittney Thomas  
Tyler Thornburg  
Mary Tout  
Victoria Travis  
Ashley Woolpert

# Dr. Swisher First US Physical Therapist to be Awarded Prestigious Fulbright Scholarship

Anne Swisher PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA was awarded a prestigious scholarship from the William J. Fulbright commission to be the Educator-in-Residence at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) in the fall term of 2015. She is the first physical therapist in the US to have been awarded this honor. While in Dublin, Ireland, she consulted with the physiotherapy program to help develop the use of medical simulation in physiotherapy education as well as creating an online module about physical activity counseling to be used by all the health professions students at the university.

During her time in Ireland, she traveled extensively, meeting physiotherapists and giving talks on the role of physical activity in the health of cancer survivors. She was accompanied by her husband and 12-year-old son. The family also took advantage of this time to travel to Wales, Normandy, and Northern Ireland.

Fulbright awards are considered one of the most prestigious scholarships available to faculty and serve to share educational practices between countries. Dr. Swisher remains in contact with her colleagues in Ireland and hopes to have more collaborations between WVU physical therapy and RCSI physiotherapy in the future, especially involving students.



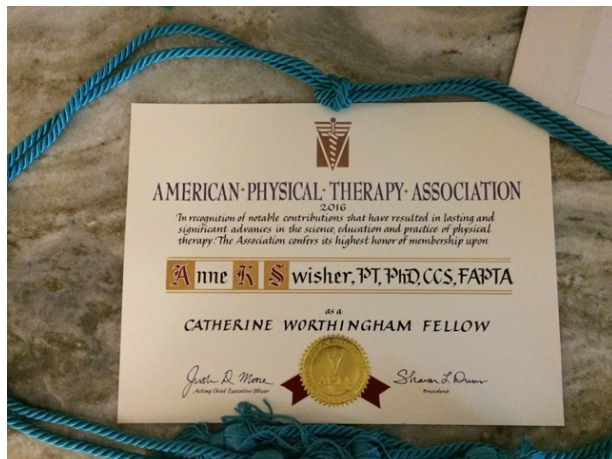
Dr. Swisher with host, Professor Marie Guidon (chairperson of RCSI's physiotherapy school) and physiotherapy students learning to use manikins to improve team-based care and communication in the [simulated] critical care unit.

# Dr. Swisher Awarded APTA's Highest Honor

Anne Swisher PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA, professor, was awarded the Catherine Worthingham Fellow of the APTA honor at the NEXT conference in June of this year. This honor is given to APTA members whose contributions have resulted in lasting and significant advances in the science, education and practice of physical therapy over a period of at least 15 years. Dr. Swisher has been a proud and active member of the APTA, Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Section, Academy of Acute Care, and Oncology Sections for nearly 30 years, since starting PT school at WVU. This award is signified by the letters 'FAPTA' in her credentials and the wearing of teal blue cords at APTA events.

Dr. Swisher was recognized for her contributions in promoting physical therapy for people with cystic fibrosis, serving as the Editor-in-Chief of the Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy Journal for the past 8 years, and significant scholarship of her own regarding exercise and physical activity in cancer survivors. According to her nominator, Dan Malone (President, Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Section), she has been a leader not only in the Section, but outside of the APTA, through her work with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and internationally as well.

This honor is awarded to a very select few leaders in the APTA each year and Dr. Swisher is very honored to join this elite group.



Dr. Swisher, shown here with dear friend Steve Tepper PT, PhD, FAPTA, at the Awards Ceremony. Note the teal cords as the symbol of the fellowship status.

# Cancer 'Moonshot' Funding Received by WVU Cancer Institute Team

In his last State of the Union address, President Obama appointed Vice-President Joe Biden to lead a national initiative to cure cancer. This so-called 'Cancer Moonshot' has resulted in significant funding being awarded to Dr. Anne Swisher PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA and co-investigators at the WVU Cancer Institute. An award of \$730,000 was made recently by the Bristol Myers Squibb company to support the development of a cancer survivorship program for lung cancer patients statewide.

According to the press release: The WVU Cancer Institute's Program, "Bridge to Good Living: Thriving beyond Lung Cancer," is designed to provide interdisciplinary, patient-centered survivor care services to all lung cancer patients who complete active treatment. This includes monitoring and managing physical and psychosocial symptoms; health promotion counseling, including smoking cessation, stress reduction, diet, and exercise; surveillance for cancer recurrence; development of treatment summary and care plans; navigation to community-based resources; and, educating providers to improve the care delivered to lung cancer patients across the continuum of care.

Principle investigator, Stefanie Kennedy is partnering with co-investigators, Patrick Ma, M.D., associate professor and Eminent Scholar in Lung Cancer Research, and Anne Swisher, PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA, professor in the Division of Physical Therapy, to institute the program.



Dr. Swisher (far right) is shown with WVU Cancer Institute team members, Dr. Patrick Ma, Sara Jane Gainor, Jim Keresztury, and grant principle investigator, Stefanie Kennedy.

## Welcome New Faculty-



Physical Therapy



# Welcome

## Kristin Phillips, DPT

**Kristin Phillips, DPT** has joined WVU Medicine as a physical therapist in women's care. She completed her physical therapy residency in women's rehabilitation at the UPMC Centers for Rehab Services.

Kristin specializes in urinary and fecal incontinence, pelvic floor dysfunction, pregnancy-related low back, hip, and pelvic pain, pediatric bowel and bladder dysfunction, and lymphedema. She will be seeing patients in the WVU Medicine Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic at the University Town Centre.

For more information:  
**855-WVU-CARE**

[WVUMedicine.org](http://WVUMedicine.org)

## Oncology Physical Therapy Practice Takes Leaps Forward with New Faculty Member



For the last nearly 12 years Anne Swisher PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA has sought to advocate with physicians, nurses and other team members of the WU Cancer Institute for physical therapy as a key partner in helping people with cancer live strong, healthy lives. Recently, these efforts led to the approval of a new faculty position within the Division, dedicated to oncology practice.

In September, we were joined by Megan Burkart DPT, CLT to spearhead these clinical services. Megan, a 2013 graduate of the program, and daughter of Sandy Burkart (former Chairperson) has a passion for oncology care, beginning in her former career as a veterinary technician for an animal oncology practice. She brings extensive experience from her work as a physical therapist at Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis MD, where she was instrumental in revamping the inpatient program for patients with lung cancer and an advocate for optimal care of oncology patients.

She is lymphedema certified and the first STAR (Survivorship Training and Rehab)-certified practitioner at WVU, and is currently pursuing a graduate certificate in oncology rehabilitation through Oakland University. She has already begun expanding services and becoming an integral part of the WVU Cancer Institute survivorship program efforts. We are thrilled to have Megan come 'back home'!

# WVU School of Medicine names low back pain specialist in physical therapy

Muhammed Alrwaily, Ph.D., P.T. recently joined the West Virginia University School of Medicine's Division of Physical Therapy as professor of physical therapy. Dr. Alrwaily has extensive clinical, research and teaching experience in musculoskeletal physical therapy, particularly in the evaluation and treatment of people with low back pain.

"We are very pleased to have a physical therapy clinician and scholar of Dr. Alrwaily's background," MaryBeth Mandich, Ph.D., D.P.T., vice dean of professional and undergraduate programs and chair, Department of Physical Therapy, said. "During his doctoral and post-doctoral experience, he worked with some of the national thought leaders on physical therapy in conservative management of low back pain. He will join a group of clinician scientists to further elaborate upon and refine these clinical decision pathways."

In 2016, Alrwaily was the lead author on a research article that updates a clinical algorithm used by physical therapists to determine the best treatment approach to use with patients who have low back pain. The study was published in the journal *Physical Therapy*, which is the second-highest impact rehabilitation journal in the world.

Alrwaily holds a Bachelor of Science degree in physical therapy from King Saud University in Saudi Arabia, a post-professional master's degree in musculoskeletal physical therapy and a doctoral degree in rehabilitation sciences, both from the University of Pittsburgh.

In addition to continuing research in this area, he will be teaching in the musculoskeletal and evidence-based practice tracks of the School of Medicine's doctor of physical therapy curriculum.



## School of Medicine names orthopedic physical therapist



MORGANTOWN, W.Va. – Renee McGinnis, PT, DPT, OCS, COMT, an accomplished orthopedic physical therapist, joined the West Virginia University School of Medicine's Division of Physical Therapy as assistant professor. Dr. McGinnis has a ten-year board certification in orthopedic physical therapy and recently earned her certification in orthopedic manual therapy from the NXT Gen Institute of Physical Therapy.

"The addition of Dr. McGinnis continues a long-standing tradition of our alumni returning 'home' to teach the next generation of physical therapists," MaryBeth Mandich, Ph.D., D.P.T., vice dean of professional and undergraduate programs and chair, Division of Physical Therapy, said. "Dr. McGinnis has distinguished herself clinically and has demonstrated a commitment to a career in academic physical therapy. Our students will benefit from her

expertise, and we are excited she has chosen to join the faculty."

A graduate of WVU, McGinnis earned a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology and a clinical master's degree and doctoral degree in physical therapy. She has practiced at Tygart Valley Hospital, Monongalia General Hospital and Mountain State Physical Therapy, where she served as a clinical director and provided clinical education experiences for numerous WVU physical therapy doctorate students.

For the past year, she has served as assistant professor and coordinator of clinical education for the physical therapist assistant program at Pierpont Community and Technical College. As an adjunct faculty member at WVU, she was a lab instructor for courses in musculoskeletal physical therapy. In her new role as assistant professor at WVU, she will be teaching in the professional roles and musculoskeletal physical therapy tracks.

## WVU names first therapist with music, health focus



MORGANTOWN — Amy Rodgers Smith, assistant professor in the WVU School of Medicine's Department of Physical Therapy, was recently named as the university's first healthcare-focused music therapist.

She will be implementing music therapy services at J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital and at WVU Medicine Children's in Morgantown. She will also provide clinical supervision to the WVU Music Therapy degree program students and will be collaborating with the Center for Excellence in Disabilities to provide music therapy to individuals with disabilities. Smith will also continue her research projects.

Smith is a Board-certified music therapist with additional certifications in neurologic music therapy and neonatal intensive care unit-music therapy. She received a bachelor's degree in music therapy from Ohio University and a master's degree in music therapy from Colorado State University. She completed her internship at Palmetto Health Baptist Hospital in Columbia, S.C.

Upon moving to Morgantown, she established the On A Better Note music therapy program and serves as adjunct professor for the WVU Music Therapy program.

## WVU DPT Student Community Involvement

Throughout this 2016-2017 academic year the physical therapy classes of 2018 and 2019 have been very active in promoting the role of physical therapy in the community. Last fall, the WVU DPT Class of 2018 participated in eight community health promotion projects as part of their second year coursework. These projects included fall prevention screening at a local respite care group, presentations at breast and lung cancer survivor groups, campaigns to increase awareness of alternatives to opioid use, assisting with a nationally-funded balance intervention study, conducting balance screenings at the annual NIOSH Health Fair, participating in the Physical Therapy Day of Service (PTDOS) by providing yard work assistance to community members who were unable to perform these activities on their own, and health information and screening sessions at a local transitional housing facility. This spring, first year students participated in eight additional projects, some of which were a continuation of the fall projects initiated by second year students. These projects included balance and activity interventions with music therapy students with the respite care group at Suncrest United Methodist Church as well as expansion of the alternative to opioids project both at the Health Sciences Center and within the community. New projects included interprofessional health and activity promotion at Stepping Stones as well as fall prevention education and activities to Sundale Nursing Home staff and residents, both with WVU pharmacy students. Students were mentored by several physical therapy faculty members throughout the planning and provision of these projects but were required to complete much of the project planning themselves.



Students from the Classes of  
2017, 2018 and 2019  
participating in PTDOS, October  
2016.

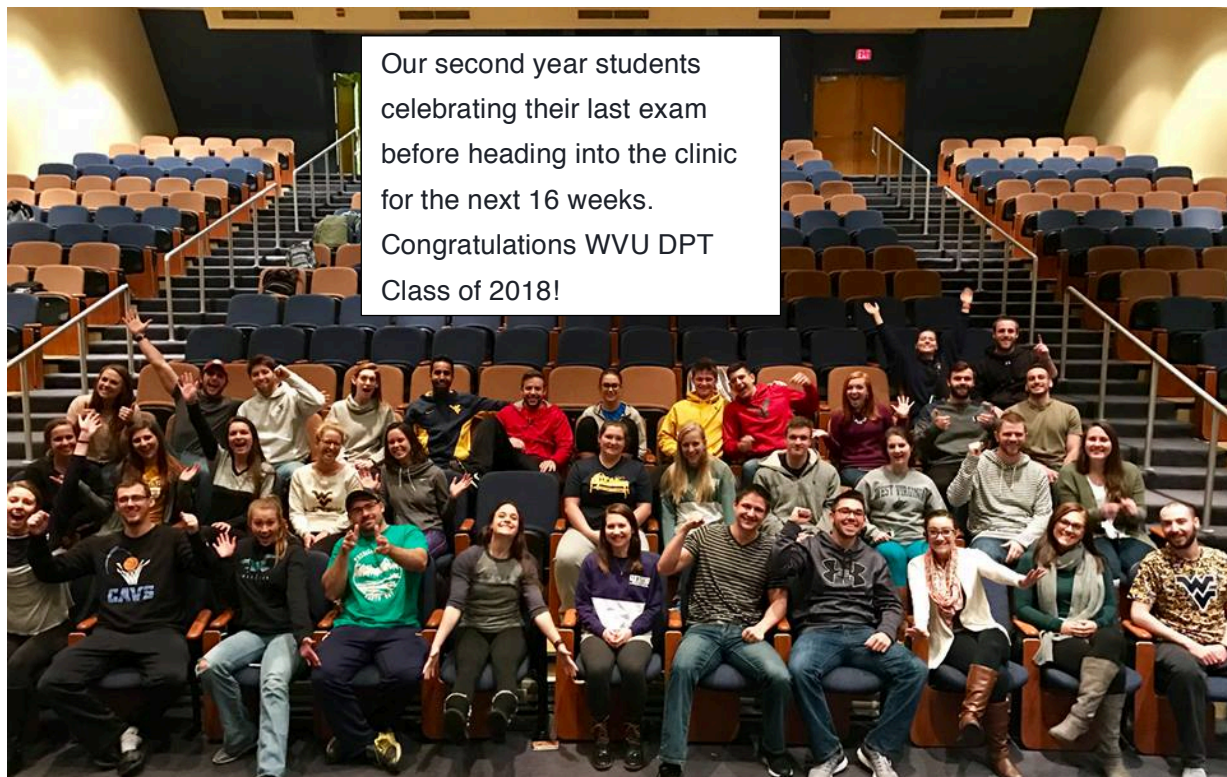
WVU DPT students promoting nonpharmacological approaches to pain management as part of the Inaugural HSC IPE Week [#ChoosePT](#)



## RECOGNITION OF CLINICAL INSTRUCTORS FOR 2017

The Division would like to recognize the physical therapists who provided clinical learning experiences for our students this year. Due to changes in the healthcare system, plus expansion of other PT education programs in the region, clinical placements become more difficult to find each year. We are thrilled that so many of our CIs are WVU alumni!

As a way to thank our clinical instructors (CIs) and provide them with tangible benefits for their service to the program, we instituted an incentive rewards program in 2016. All CIs who supervise 1 student per year are eligible for a formal adjunct faculty appointment, which will allow access to WVU Libraries' physical and online resources. CIs who supervise 2 students during the calendar year will receive paid registration for the APTA Advanced Credentialed CI course (at the member rate), or \$100 off registration for a continuing education course offered by the Division. CIs who supervise 3 or 4 students per year will receive paid registration (at the early bird APTA member rate) at a state or national conference, or paid registration for a continuing education course offered by the Division. If you are a current or future CI and would like to receive more details regarding the incentive program, please contact Ralph Utzman at [rutzman@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:rutzman@hsc.wvu.edu).



Our second year students  
celebrating their last exam  
before heading into the clinic  
for the next 16 weeks.  
Congratulations WVU DPT  
Class of 2018!

Our 2017 clinical instructors are listed below, arranged by levels. WVU physical therapy alumni are marked with an (\*).

**Level 1:**

Ray Adams*	Rebecca Frashure*	Robert Lough	Valerie Rohrbaugh*
Jason Anders	Erin Fulmer*	Matt Madrid	Michael Ross
Rebekah Aranda*	Lori Good*	Richie Martin	Sara Sabo
Crystal Ardo	Laruen Graham*	Richard Martin	Ivan Salazar
Haley Ashley*	Kayla Greene	Robert Martin	Kristi Scott*
Shelly Black*	Tim Guiden	Sara Mayle*	J. Eric Shaw
Lauren Blowers*	Erin Halpin	Lisa McCune*	Katherine Sheils*
Emily Bosley*	Lara Hartzell*	J. Chris Mercer	Wendy Shipley*
Nikki Bostic	Emily Hayes*	Patricia Michael*	Chris Simons
Morgan Boulware	Suzanne Helphinstine	Andi Mills*	Tracy Simpson*
Heather Bowles	Meredith High	Tracy Minor*	Brandon Sisco
Marcella Breazile	Mark Hose*	Ashley Mitchell*	Jessica Snoberger*
Melissa Burkovich*	Lauren Hovermale*	Matthew Morgan	Jenna Snyder-Futton*
Lesley Cain*	Brandy Hudson	Kami Morris	Julian Spraggins*
Lacey Cline*	H. Jason Huffman	Adrian Moses*	Kristen Stewart
Maggie Cooper*	Cheryl Hull*	Megan Mowrer	Amanda Stuchell*
Steve Crawford	Stacie Hummel	Miriam Nanartowich	Trevor Swan
Jennifer Davis	Kristen Hussar	Vanessa Nosse	Travis Tarr
Toby Dengenhardt	Doug James*	Terri Nuccio-Young	Angela Teachout*
Marissa DePaola	Jamie Johnson	Leslie Ober*	Laura Teschke
Justin Deskovich*	Joe Johnston	Robert Oliverio*	Megan Thomas
Kelly Dlogos*	Hana Jones	Thomas Ott*	Jody Varda
Yvonne Donley*	Ashley Jose*	Nicole Papageorgiou	Tyler Wamsley*
Carrie Dunfee*	Seegee Kisner	Jason Posey*	John Weber
Emily Eberle	Valerie Knupp*	Joseph Potesta*	Jaime Weckesser*
Ryan Evans	Kelly Kuchinski	Madeline Powell*	Adam West*
Shannon Farley	Vasil Kuchma	Jill Prezzia	Aaron White
Jordan Feathers	Michael LaMothe	Amy Queen	Stephanie Whiteman*
Holly Fell*	Amy Lancaster*	Billy Racer*	Michael Winfrey*
Rebert Festa	Karrie Lang	Eli Rhodes*	Benjamin Wolford*
Brandon Fink*	Eric Lawrence*	Lisa Rhodes*	Theresa Wright*

**Level 2:**

Christopher DeMaria\*  
 Justin Eisenhofer\*  
 Cynthia Fox  
 Candice Gustafson\*  
 Cody Hartley\*  
 Melissa Henry\*  
 Nick Kyle\*  
 Ashley McClain\*  
 Anne Riccelli  
 Ryan Ruben\*  
 Christopher Unger\*  
 Trent Walker\*

**Level 3:**

Rock Bartlett\*  
 David Bradley  
 Paul Calvert\*  
 Heath Owens

## WVU PT Participates in “Go Baby Go”

Go Baby Go is a program that began at the University of Delaware in 2009 under the direction of Dr. Cole Galloway. The program aims to provide modified, ride-on cars for children with disabilities to increase their independence in moving around and exploring their environments. The founding premise of the program is research which shows that children not only need to learn to move, they need to “move to learn”. There are now over 40 programs at universities and rehabilitation centers across the country participating in the program.

Power mobility for children with disabilities can be out of reach for many children and families due to cost, which can range upwards of \$25,000. If there are available 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers, they want to be sure the child can use the power device before they approve reimbursement; however, young children need opportunities to practice. In order to address this problem, the Go Baby Go program begins with a power ride-on toy — which is purchased from a toy store and is used by able bodied children. The toy is then adapted by volunteers to run from an electric switch pad. Positioning support is provided by strategically placed PVC pipes and cut-up pool noodles. The total cost for these modified cars is around \$250.00.

Drs. Cronin and Mandich have led an effort to bring the program to WVU. So far, almost \$5,000 has been raised. Several cars have been built, including “Steve McQueen”, “Sponge Bob” and Disney’s “Frozen”. One car can be used therapeutically, because it will only advance when the child stands up off of the seat.

If you would like to donate to this fund, please send a check made payable to the WVU Foundation, Go Baby Go program, c/o Julie Peasak, WVU Division of Physical Therapy, PO Box 9226, Morgantown, WV 26506.



# PT STUDENTS AT CAMP GIZMO

Camp Gizmo is an annual five day, hands-on camp where parents, professionals, and students learn how assistive technology can help young children (birth-8 years) with significant and multiple developmental needs. Typically camp is held in July on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, WV. The camp is funded by the WV Dept of Ed/Office of Special Programs, WVDHHR/Bureau for Public Health/Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/WV Birth to Three and WVDHHR/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education and in-kind support is provided by WVATS, WVU Center of Excellence in Disabilities, National Seating and Mobility and Assistive Technology Works, Inc. Support and coordination is also provided by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources.

Families, professionals, college students, and others who want to learn more about assistive technology come to the camp every summer. A limited number of "focus" children are accepted and assigned a team of professionals who help families identify and apply new strategies for solving their multiple assistive technology needs. Professionals and students attend workshops of interest that meet professional/educational needs or assist the "focus" family. Teams meet daily to observe, discuss and implement strategies for the "focus" child.

WVU third year physical therapy students have begun participating in the camp. This year, four students, including some who have been awarded graduate assistantships through the WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities attended the camp from July 8<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup>. The students are Taylor Croft, "Bobbi" Phillips, Brooke Susyneski, and Anna Wortner. We are happy to have our students participate and learn through this wonderful camp. By the looks of the photo below, the students are having a great time too!



# NEONATAL FELLOWSHIP ACCREDITED

The WVU Division of Physical Therapy has collaborated with Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, to develop an ABPTS accredited fellowship in neonatal physical therapy. West Virginia University is providing the online didactic coursework for the fellowship, as well as an observational rotation through WVU Medicine Neonatal Intensive Care Units at Ruby Memorial Hospital and WVU East at Berkeley Medical Center. The goal of the Neonatal Physical Therapy Fellowship Program is to educate and train physical therapists with advanced clinical competency in neonatal physical therapy. Through the fellowship, trainees are expected to learn how to contribute expertise to the comprehensive care of premature or medically fragile infants as a member of a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) team, participate in evidence-based practice and research and provide education to a diverse array of constituents including parents and other members of the health care team, including other physical therapists. The fellowship consists of twelve months of clinical training includes the online coursework through WVU. Application to the fellowship requires a minimum of 3 years of pediatric physical therapy clinical experience OR completion of an accredited pediatric residency program with eligibility for the Pediatric Clinical Specialist (PCS) exam. The program was notified of 5 year accreditation on May 31, 2017. This program is only the third physical therapy neonatal program in the country, with the others being at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Rocky Mountain University/University of Washington with Dr. Jane Sweeney.

The first fellow, Dr. Kaitlyn Brown graduated on June 27, 2017. Dr. Brown is a graduate of Boston University and completed a pediatric residency at Boston Children's Hospital. She took the risk of coming to a developing fellowship program and was an enthusiastic and patient learner. All of her efforts have been rewarded because, upon graduation, she accepted an adjunct faculty position at American International College teaching pediatrics and a clinical position in the NICU within the University of Massachusetts hospital system.



Dr. Brown (center) receiving her certificate of completion with Dr. Kimberly Scott, DPT, PCS, fellowship director at Nationwide Children's Hospital (left) and Dr. MaryBeth Mandich from WVU (right)

# Student Features and Student Messages

## **MEET THE GRADS: Former army ranger's accident helps him discover a career in physical therapy**



Growing up, Benjamin Ray wanted to become an Army Ranger to fulfill the strong duty he felt in serving his country. A native of Fairmont, West Virginia, Mr. Ray was honored to be able to serve in the military for six years during which he participated in

seven combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. An accident helped point him to his future career in physical therapy.

"In March 2006, between my second and third deployments, my unit was conducting training in Louisiana," Ray said. "One of the several training missions was to fasten rope onto a building rooftop and clear the building from top-down. As it was my turn to descend from the MH-6 Little Bird helicopter, an error was made by the flight crew, the rope was released, and I fell about 20 feet to the concrete rooftop below with the rope in my hands. The rest of that night and the following 48 hours are hazy at best."

Refusing to let his multiple injuries slow him down, Ray spent the next six weeks resting before returning to his home base. He credits physical therapy with playing a major role in his recovery.

"During that time, the seed for physical therapy was planted," Ray said. "I became very interested in anatomy and kinesiology; however, my main concern was returning to duty to do the job that I had dedicated my life to at this point. With diligent work and the reassurance of my physical therapist, I made a full recovery and was cleared to return to duty, and I served for another four years and participated in five additional combat deployments with my unit."

Contemplating his long-term goals, Ray decided to leave the military in 2010 and pursue a college education. As a proud West Virginia native, the state's flagship university was his first and only choice. WVU's Exercise Physiology program echoed Ray's interest and catered to his aspirations and professional needs.

“As I scoured the course catalog, I found Exercise Physiology,” Ray said. “A bit of further research showed me this degree would allow me to study topics that I was interested in. With the Exercise Physiology degree, you can get into an array of graduate programs and pursue a career in medicine, dentistry or physical therapy. I have been afforded several opportunities to volunteer and shadow physical therapists in a variety of settings. This is when my prior great experience with therapy began to resurface, and I knew for certain what I wanted to do.” Speaking of his experience at WVU, Ray describes it as inspirational. The robust support system, the resources available to students and the exposure to many different teaching styles and professors who are masters in their fields paved the way for a valuable educational journey.

“The entire faculty has made a great impression on me, and all of them have inspired me in one way or another,” Ray said. “I think Dr. (Scott) Davis, one of our former professors, made a big impact on me. He led the bulk of our orthopedics and therapeutic exercise courses, which are at the core of physical therapy knowledge. He brought out every student’s best performance.”

Ray was on the fence about which professional route he will take. He recently accepted a full-time staff physical therapist position at Mountain State Physical Therapy, which has a number clinic locations serving north central West Virginia.

“I have kept an open mind and positive attitude about every setting a physical therapist can work in. I feel my best interests lie in orthopedic physical therapy, and I see myself practicing in rural West Virginia,” he said. “If I go this route, I would like to eventually pursue an orthopedic clinical specialist (OCS) certification and possibly a certification in orthopedic manual therapy.” Ray strongly recommends the exercise physiology and physical therapy programs to prospective students. He also emphasizes the importance of investing in your education and reaching your full potential while also being actively engaged in diverse activities. For him, it was the WVU Fishing Club that resonated with his love for fishing and outdoor activities.

“I am so glad that I was admitted to the WVU Physical Therapy program and completed my education here,” Ray said. “You will realize when you begin your full-time clinical rotations how valuable it is. Working through this program will fill your head with knowledge that may seem overwhelming, and you may forget small things that you had just studied for long periods of time and were tested on. However, this knowledge will come back to you when you begin to see it in real clinical experiences, and you will also be glad that you received a top notch education from the best faculty around.”

## **Student Feature**

Stephanie Magnone always envisioned herself as a West Virginia University student. Growing up in Weirton, West Virginia and motivated by her alumni parents and her brother, a current medical student at WVU, Stephanie chose to follow the same path.



“WVU was the only school I applied to because it was the only school I wanted to be at,” Stephanie said. “Both of my parents are alumni, and after seeing the success my brother had here, I couldn’t imagine being anywhere else especially when I came to my first football game. The atmosphere was unlike anything I have ever experienced, it was amazing and from that point on I said I need to be here as a student.”

Choosing a major can be challenging, but for Stephanie, the decision was prompted by a casual conversation with her mother, and it echoed her lifelong interest in sports.

“I wasn’t really sure what my future held, and for the longest time I told myself I wasn’t even going to enter into any kind of sciences, especially not the health sciences,” she said. “As I was looking at the list of majors on the website, my mother suggested that I check out programs that incorporate exercise, since I like that so much. With her encouragement, I found the exercise physiology program, and I thought physical therapy sounds like a track I can see myself doing.”

For students like Stephanie, the School of Medicine’s exercise physiology program can be an excellent pathway to other health professions programs such as physical therapy and medicine.

Stephanie’s life then took a detour, one that could have changed the path she had been set on. Yet, against all odds, it further reinforced her decision to pursue an opportunity with the physical therapy program. “In my senior year of high school, during the third game of basketball season, I jumped up and then landed completely on my left side,” she recounted. “The shock of landing was too much on my cartilage to absorb, and it just exploded. I had to have a micro-fracture procedure done. I had to go through physical therapy rehab, and something just clicked. I thought this is definitely the track I need to take with my life. Once I got here and started the exercise physiology program, I had no second thoughts, I loved everything about it.”

As an undergraduate student, Stephanie praised the exercise physiology program for the numerous opportunities it has to offer. "I completed the health professions emphasis in aquatic therapy, and a lot of the professors I got to work with in some of those upper level biology and organic chemistry classes have really opened my mind to what is so awesome about sciences and health sciences," she said. "I am really glad I did that, and I like that exercise physiology offers that option. The aquatic therapy emphasis was one of the best things I have ever done; it opened so many doors for me between job opportunities, internships and experiences."

Stephanie ultimately decided to apply to the physical therapy at WVU. In her first year as a PT student, she explains how shadowing ignited her passion for this career path and equipped her with the skills and knowledge to help patients.

"I have done a lot of shadowing and just watching someone who never thought he could walk again take his first steps, seeing someone in chronic pain and doing anything you can to relieve that pain, just having the ability to make someone's quality of life better amazes me," she said. Having lived in Morgantown for a few years now, Stephanie labels it as unique.

"The community here is unlike anything else, everyone is proud to be a mountaineer," Stephanie said. "Coming to WVU changes your perspective on the state and what it means to be a West Virginian." Stephanie strongly recommends exercise physiology to prospective students who are interested in pursuing a health sciences program for the compelling role it had in shaping her future. She also emphasizes the importance of being involved as a student in an array of activities.

"Exercise physiology gives you not only a strong background in the sciences, but it also gives you a lot of hands-on clinical experience that you won't get with other majors," she said. "We have a required internship where you have to work with patients and that was a huge part in preparing me for my future. As a student, I had the chance to be part of WELL WVU. I was a member of their student ambassadors team, educating others in the different aspects of wellness. I was also heavily involved in the Exercise Physiology Club, and it was a great way to get community service, as we have a community service requirement in the program."

Asked about her future plans, Stephanie said that it's hard to tell what opportunities may come down the road; however, the exposures and the breadth of knowledge she gained while at WVU have broadened her horizons.

"My vision, originally, was maybe orthopaedics," Stephanie said. "That was until I had my internship at HealthSouth Mountainview, where I was an aquatic therapy intern and in charge of the therapy in the pool for the inpatients. Now I am torn, and I don't know what I am going to do. I got so many great experiences with so many patients that made tremendous progress after having a stroke, and it was really amazing. It makes me feel that I want to work more with neurologic rehabilitation, so right now I am up for anything."

## The West Virginia University Doctorate of Physical Therapy Class of 2018

We spent an exciting summer in the clinic full-time providing patient care under our gracious clinical instructors. After a taste of the real world, we are now back in the classroom for one last semester of didactic coursework, which includes completing research projects, working on group projects, and preparing for the upcoming comprehensive exam. Then, we will be gearing up to move on to our final clinical placements in the spring to apply the skills and knowledge we've gained over the last few years. Following this, we are excited to announce our graduation in May of 2018 and move on to taking our licensure board exams to become practicing physical therapists. We are ready to advocate for our patients and our profession and lead the charge to #ChoosePT.



President: Brooke Mangold; Vice President: Kari Sims; Secretary: Christa D'Egidio; Treasurer: Lyndsay Whetzel; Curriculum Representative: Lucas Viglianco; APTA Representative: Anna Wortner

## The West Virginia University Doctorate of Physical Therapy Class of 2019

The DPT Class of 2019 had a summer of all work and no play as we delved into our second year of the program headfirst in May! We had a brief chance to refresh and come back for the fall semester, excited to engage in more specialized areas of the profession throughout this year after the solid foundation of skills and knowledge that was built in our first year. We are also very excited to continue with our part-time integrated clinical experiences in clinics and hospitals of the Morgantown area, as well as our interprofessional community health projects this semester! It's a busy time for PT students everywhere, but we're taking on the challenges with a smile and a "let's go Mountaineers" chant!



Class Officers: President: Stephanie Magnone; Vice President: Kristen Zirkle; Secretary: Caitlin Warner; Treasurer: Caleb Rhodes; Curriculum Representative: Kyle Blair; APTA Representative: Danielle McGinnis; Technology Liaison: Vivek Patel

## The West Virginia University Doctorate of Physical Therapy Class of 2020

The DPT Class of 2020 is off to a great start! We finished off the summer session anxious for a break following an intense few weeks of advanced anatomy. After some rest and relaxation, we were excited to get back to school to see our new classmates and to get to work. Having just completed our first round of exams, we are all starting to get into a groove and find a balance between studying, more studying, and taking some time off here and there (especially to cheer on the Mountaineers!). This is such an exciting period in our lives and, while we may occasionally feel overwhelmed with information, we are learning so much that we can't wait to one day use with patients!



Class Officers: President: Emma Grose; Vice President: Alyssa Benincosa; Secretary: Hallie Kreuzer; Treasurer: Kaitlin Lowery; Curriculum Representative: Kelsie Gillespie; APTA Representative: Cole Salmons