

Accolades

WINTER 2025

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• **Dr. Samantha Winterberg** (EdD '24) charges students to speak their truth

• **Dr. Kai Williams** (DPT '07) champions student development

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Dear USAHS Alumni,



As we begin a new year filled with opportunity and growth, I am reminded of the incredible impact our alumni community continues to make across the country and beyond. The recent Alumni Reunion and Family Weekend in San Marcos, CA brought together a passionate group of graduates, friends and family, strengthening our bonds and reinforcing our shared commitment to the field of healthcare. Next year, we are thrilled to announce that our reunion will take place in vibrant Austin, TX. Save the dates of April 10-11, 2026—it promises to be another inspiring event!

This issue of *Accolades* features many of our Force for Good Award recipients—individuals who embody the values of service, innovation and leadership that define the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences community. I encourage each of you to consider nominating a fellow alum or a dedicated clinical or community partner who has made a difference. These awards are a powerful way to celebrate and recognize the positive influence we bring to our profession and our communities. In nominating others, we honor not only their contributions but also the shared commitment that strengthens our network.

Our alumni network is thriving, with active chapters in Atlanta, GA, San Diego, CA and Miami, FL, fostering connections, collaboration and support for members. Next up, we are excited to bring Austin, TX, into our chapter roster, offering even more opportunities for you to engage, share experiences and contribute to our collective mission.

For those looking to deepen their involvement, I invite you to explore the resources provided by our Alumni Association Advisory Board at usa.edu/about/alumni/alumni-association-advisory-board. If you feel called to serve, please let us know by filling out the application form on the site. Joining the board is a unique opportunity to play a direct role in shaping the future of our association, expanding our influence and advancing our impact as alumni.

As we move forward together, I am grateful for each of you and the unique contributions you bring to our alumni family. Let's continue to drive progress, inspire change and build upon the foundation of excellence that defines our University. May this year be filled with new connections, growth and inspiration.

Toward a future we shape together,

Stephen Wayne Elam, PT, DPT, EdD (MPT '96, DPT '11)
President, USAHS Alumni Association

Vivian A. Sanchez
CHANCELLOR AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dr. Brian Goldstein
PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

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The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences' University Communications and Alumni Engagement departments publish *Accolades*. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official University policy.

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USAHS is proud to be a Certified B Corp Institution, joining a global movement of people working as a force for good. USAHS has been a Certified B Corp since 2015.



Light the Way to Academic Excellence

The **Lighthouse Alumni Award Program** provides alumni with the opportunity to refer exceptionally talented candidates for the University's occupational and physical therapy programs, lighting the way to academic excellence for future students.

Referred students who are admitted and enrolled with confirmation that program-specific admissions criteria are met and have attended classes past the add/drop date of the first term are eligible to receive a \$2,000 grant (paid to the University account toward tuition and fees). Students are limited to receiving this grant one time for their first term only.

"When I saw this award posted on the alumni page, I immediately knew who I had to nominate," says **Alexis Sepulveda** (DPT '19). "I look forward to having [this candidate] as my future colleague and fellow alum."

Help USAHS develop outstanding OT and PT practitioners with a calling to improve the lives of others. Learn more at usa.edu/alumni/news-and-benefits/lighthouse-alumni-award.



SAVE THE DATE FOR ALUMNI REUNION

The next **Alumni Reunion and Family Weekend** will be held **April 10-11, 2026**, in Austin, TX. The event will include continuing professional

education (CPE) sessions. Please contact alumni@usa.edu with CPE topic requests.

In addition, the Alumni Engagement department is looking for alumni volunteers to assist with the Austin Reunion and Family Weekend. Find out more by contacting alumni@usa.edu.

Mark those calendars now for these dates next year, as this event will be epic and not to be missed!



NEW ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS SET TO OPEN IN SPRING 2025

Construction at the new University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (USAHS) St. Augustine, FL campus is nearing completion, and students and employees will move in during the first quarter of 2025. Watch for an invitation to attend a grand opening event, planned for late spring, at the historic, former *St. Augustine Record* building.

Located two miles west of the current campus, the new campus has 122,000 square feet of building space on 14 acres of parkland, representing an exciting chapter in USAHS history.

"We pride ourselves on innovating and responding to the ever-changing needs of today's healthcare practitioners," says Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer **Vivian A. Sanchez**. "With this expansion, we can continue to fill practitioner gaps and address the diverse needs of hospitals and healthcare facilities in St. Augustine and in the communities we serve."

At Your Service

If you have an idea for a service event or have participated in community outreach efforts that *Accolades* can highlight, please email details and photos to alumni@usa.edu.

Community outreach is an important part of the University's mission, and service learning is a key component of our programs as a **Certified B Corp Institution**. The following is just a snapshot of some of the community service activities that have occurred across our campuses.

CALIFORNIA



■ The University sponsored the seventh annual **U.S. Open Adaptive Surfing Championship, Stoke for Life**, held September 5-7 in Oceanside, CA. This international event brought together adaptive surfing athletes from around the world, with students and employees volunteering to assist athletes both on land and in the water.



■ **Mariah Mendez, OTD, OTR/L (OTD '24)** and **Karina Speck, OTD (OTD '24)** volunteered at **Ronald McDonald House Charities** as part of their Level II fieldwork. They launched a house playgroup for children and caregivers to help teens socialize and learn life skills, which also provided a space for caregivers to find social support.

TEXAS



■ Student Physical Therapy Association (SPTA) members participated in the **Making Strides of North Texas 5K** fundraiser walk. Hosted by Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the American Cancer Society, the students raised \$340.



■ Assistant Professors **Kaelee Brockway, PT, DPT, EdD (EdD '23)** and **Keegan McKay, OT, MOT, OTR** launched the Dallas, TX campus' **mobile Pro Bono Clinic** to address the healthcare needs of the homebound, uninsured and underinsured populations.

In addition, they partnered with **Sixty and Better**, enabling physical therapy and occupational therapy students the opportunity to volunteer with the nonprofit organization's Walk With a Doc program to gain hands-on, interprofessional experience.

TEXAS



■ The **Neuroplasticity Pro Bono Clinic** at the Austin, TX campus was featured in *Yahoo! News* and the *Austin-American Statesman* for its positive impact on pediatric patients. In addition to supporting patients, the clinic provides hands-on experience for students who work directly with pediatric patients under faculty supervision.

**Photo courtesy: Yahoo! News*



■ Assistant Professor **Rosie DeFeo, PT, DPT, EdD, PCS, ATP** led the initiative to bring the **Go Baby Go** program to the Austin, TX campus in partnership with the occupational therapy and physical therapy programs. Designed to empower children with mobility impairments, Go Baby Go provides customized, ride-on cars that enhance children's independence and social engagement.

■ Occupational therapy students partnered with **Joshua's Stage**, a nine-week enrichment program for children with special needs between the ages of seven and 21. As volunteers, OT students are support staff, developing and running their own "OT-informed" activities as part of their Level 1 Fieldwork for their Pediatrics course.

FLORIDA



■ Doctor of Physical Therapy students at the St. Augustine, FL campus collaborated with the nonprofit organization **Steps 4 Love** and local businesses to collect more than 3,200 pairs of new socks during the holiday season. **Wildflower Healthcare Clinic**, which assists individuals experiencing homelessness in St. Augustine, and four additional local clinics received the sock donations.



■ Students volunteered at the **Healthy Athletes Special Olympics State Summer Games** in Orlando, FL, alongside Associate Professor **Christine Salmon, PT, DPT, EdD** and Program Director **Gabriel Somarriba, PT, DPT, EdD (DPT '09; EdD '21)**. The students worked one-on-one with athletes to assess fitness levels, including strength, flexibility and balance, while educating athletes and their families about physical activity.

■ Employees donated food, clothing, cleaning supplies and other necessities to **Port in the Storm**, a nonprofit center for youth experiencing homelessness that provides services that nurture potential, promote self-esteem and support youth in moving beyond the streets.

■ Students lent their skills to **Sabrina's Adaptive Beach Day**, organized by the Sabrina Cohen Foundation, to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to experience the ocean. Using specialized beach wheelchairs and working alongside trained staff, the students helped participants safely navigate the sand and waves.



■ Student organization **NeuroSIG** hosted a **Zumba class** for patients with Parkinson's disease. The activity aimed to elevate heart rates, improve physical well-being and provide exercise opportunities for managing Parkinson's symptoms. Additionally, it offered students experience working with this patient population.

HONORING INTEGRITY, INNOVATION, RESPONSIVENESS, SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

Force for Good Awards Recognize Alumni and Community Partners

Some brands are beloved not only for their excellent products but also for the way they give back to the community. Ben & Jerry's, Patagonia, Athleta and TOMS are *certified B Corporations*,[®] a sought-after designation for companies that demonstrate environmental stewardship and social responsibility, and that "use business as a force for good."

Although less common, a university can earn B Corp™ status from the certifying organization *B Lab*.[®] The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (USAHS) is one of those rare universities, preparing future healthcare clinicians, educators and administrators to be a "force for good" in their careers.

Believing in the power of education to change lives and transform society, USAHS is committed to making a lasting impact in the communities it serves and is proud to be a Certified B Corp institution.

Demonstrating responsibility for social impact, USAHS introduced the **Force for Good Awards** in 2021. This award is presented each term to extraordinary alumni and community/clinical partners who possess the characteristics most supportive of the University's core values and B Corp commitment, and who demonstrate attributes required to continue the University's mission of being a 'force for good.' To date, USAHS' Force for Good Award recipients are:



2021

- Kari Bates**, Executive Director, The Arc of Putnam County, Inc. in Palatka, FL (*clinical partner*)
- Christian Bourgeois, PT, DPT, MTC** (DPT '07), Physical Therapist and Owner: Bourgeois Physical Therapy and Sports Rehab in Los Angeles, CA (*alum*)
- Laura Bunso, PT, MTC** (MPT '99), Founder/Owner, Smart Body Physical Therapy in Jacksonville, FL (*alum*)
- Meredith Castin, DPT** (DPT '10), Founder/Owner, The Non-Clinical PT in Fayetteville, AR (*alumni*)
- Michael Chua, PT, DPT**, Chief Inspiration Officer and Certified Dementia Practitioner, TN Therapy Outsource in Martin, TN (*clinical partner*)
- Sarah Conrad Cumbie** (DPT '15), Physical Therapist, Baylor Scott and White in Dallas, TX;
- Micah Gorena, DPT** (DPT '15), Area Manager at Doctors of Physical Therapy Onsite Services in Farmers Branch, TX (*alumni*)
- James Foster, MS, OTR/L, CBIS**, Director and Associate Professor, Occupational Therapist Assistant Program at Harcum College in Bryn Mawr, PA (*clinical partner*)
- Arlenys Frias, MS, OTR/L**, Occupational Therapy Supervisor, Superhero Rehab Services in Miami, FL (*clinical partner*)
- Genesis Women's Shelter and Support** in Dallas, TX (*clinical partner*)
- Rachel Holmes, MS, CCC-SLP**, Speech Pathologist, Lancaster, CA Unified School District in Lancaster, CA (*clinical partner*)
- Interfaith Community Services** in Escondido, CA (*clinical partner*)
- Theresa Larson, DPT, CSCS** (DPT '13), Founder and President, Movement Rx Physical Therapy PC in San Diego, CA (*alum*)



- Cindy R. Miller**, Sr. Program Manager for Children and Youth Programs, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind in San Antonio, TX (*community partner*)
 - Manuela Perales, MSN, RN** (MSN '20), Associate Director for Patient Care Services-Veterans Administration—Texas Valley Coastal Bend Health Care System in Harlingen, TX (*alum*)
 - Caitlin Perryman, MS-SLP**, Lead Speech Therapist at Beelieve Pediatric Therapy in Fort Worth, TX (*clinical partner*)
 - Lady Michelle Servillas, PT, CADCC, NDCCP**, Physical Therapist, ServCare in Miami, FL (*clinical partner*)
 - Matthew Silver**, VP of Operations and Rehab Director, Equilibrio Home Health in Virginia Beach, VA (*community partner*)
 - Kelly Uanino, OTR/L, CLT-LANA** (MOT '11), Co-Owner and Treating Therapist, Be Strong Therapy Services in Tallahassee, FL (*alum*)
 - Charles 'Chaka' Webb**, Founder: Stoke for Life Foundation in San Diego, CA (*community partner*)
 - James Werling, PT, DPT, MTC** (DPT '07), Owner and Doctor of Physical Therapy at Pro Motion Physical Therapy in Raleigh, NC (*alum*)
- ## 2022
- Cole Health** in Dallas, TX (*clinical partner*)
 - Sandra Dosaiguas, OTR/L**, Occupational Therapy Clinical Manager at West Gables Rehabilitation Hospital in Miami, FL (*clinical partner*)
 - Jon Edenfield, OTD** (MOT '00, OTD '16), Executive Director, Great Strides Rehabilitation in Gainesville, FL (*alum and clinical partner*)
 - John J. Fraser, PT, DPT, PhD** (DPT '18), retired Commander in United States Navy Medical Service Corps; Scientific Program Manager for the Rehabilitation Research, Development and Translation Broad Portfolio at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Research and Development in Washington, D.C. (*alum*)
 - George C. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Centers, Inc.** in San Diego, CA (*clinical partner*)
 - Yousef Ghandour, PT, DPT, MOMT** (DPT '21), Co-owner and Director at PRN La Jolla; Vice President of Physical Therapy for All in Santee, CA (*alum*)
 - Carolina Hoires, LCSW**, Director of Social Services for the Brain Center in Miami, FL (*community partner*)
 - Meredith Kapchinski, PT, DPT**, Executive Director, Fortis Therapy Center in Dripping Springs, TX (*clinical partner*)

- Robert W. Kentner, DNP, RN** (DNP '21), Quality and Infection Prevention Manager at Sidney Regional Medical Center in Kimball, NE (*alum*)
 - Alice Kraus, MEd, OTR/L**, Manager, Brooks Rehab Adaptive Sports and Recreation, Brooks Rehabilitation in Atlantic Beach, FL (*clinical and community partner*)
 - Deborah Mock**, Director, Day Services, Arc of St. Johns, Inc. in St. Augustine, FL (*clinical partner*)
 - Guillermo Paiz, PT, DPT, CSCS** (DPT '19), Board Member, Tesoro Project in Austin, TX (*alum*)
 - Karen Roy, LCSW**, Brand Ambassador, Numotion in Brentwood, TN (*community partner*)
 - Kelly Twichel, OTL, OTR** (MOT '17), CEO and co-Founder of Access Trax in San Diego, CA (*alum*)
 - Stan Wedel**, retired in Austin, TX (*community partner*)
- ## 2023
- Jill Flores-Beraldi, MOT, OTR/L, INPP** (OTD '24), Department Head, Occupational Therapy, Crystal Academy in Coral Gables, FL (*alum and clinical partner*)
 - Monique Brown, OTD, OTR/L** (OTD '21), Founder/Owner, Starr Quality Home Health, LLC in Middletown, DE (*alum*)
 - Sabrina Cohen**, Founder / President of the Sabrina Cohen Foundation in Miami, FL (*community partner*)

- Barbara Freeborn**, President and Director, The Clubhouse for Special Needs, Inc. in Bedford, TX (*community and clinical partner*)
- Ryan James, RBT**, Pre-Release Case Manager/Group Home Supervisor, Operation New Hope in Jacksonville, FL, and Registered Behavioral Analyst, St. Augustine Youth Services (Sayskids.org) (*community partner*)
- Hiral Khatri, OTD, OTR/L** (OTD '17), CEO and Founder at OT Park in Morgan Hill, CA (*alum*)
- Joshua Levy, MEd, MBA**, Executive Director, Joshua's Stage in Austin, TX (*community partner*)
- Blake Lindsay** (*deceased) Outreach Manager at Envision Dallas in Dallas, TX (*community partner*)
- Melanie Lomaglio, PT, DPT, MSc, CNS** (DPT '17), Board Certified Neurologic Specialist, St. Augustine Rehabilitation Specialists: STARS Rehab in St. Augustine, FL (*alum and clinical partner*)
- Naval Medical Center San Diego Fisher House** in San Diego, CA (*community partner*)
- Kelcey Parker Storkersen, OTD, OTR/L** (OTD '20), Adjunct Professor and Occupational Therapy Consultant, Biola University; Occupational Therapist at Sunny Days and Mental Health occupational therapy at Community Mission of Hope/Rancho Damacitas in San Diego, CA (*alum and community partner*)

Continued on page 18



Force for Good Award Criteria:

RESPONSIVENESS: Display examples of service and action of transformational change to society to build stronger communities



INTEGRITY: Demonstrate work for social good and a positive commitment of purpose that seeks to find a balance between profit, sustainability and social impact toward wellness and a healthier environment



INNOVATION: Exemplify creative and critical thinking processes to implement collaborative and innovative business practices that improve access to and availability of healthcare



SUPPORT: Empower a Student First approach to enhance student access to the field of healthcare and/or promote excellence and innovation in healthcare education



ADVOCACY: Promote and enhance opportunities for underserved populations in the field of healthcare

SERVICE IN MOTION

PT Alum Is a Force to Advance Patient Care, Research and Education

An officer and physical therapist in the U.S. Army Reserves, **M. Jason Highsmith, PT, DPT, PhD, CP** (DPT '03) also serves as national director of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Orthotic, Prosthetic and Pedorthic Clinical Services in Washington, D.C. He is a board-certified prosthetist, dual-licensed in physical therapy and prosthetics.

Through his extensive and impactful service, Dr. Highsmith addresses the critical needs of veterans, improves wellness for individuals with limb loss and drives transformational change within the community.

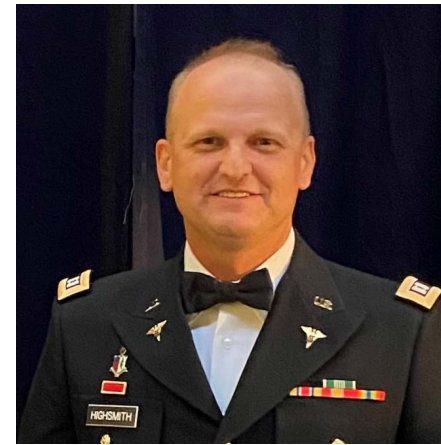
“Dr. Jason Highsmith exemplifies exceptional responsiveness and has shown a proactive approach to ensure veterans receive the highest quality care. His role requires swift and effective responses to evolving challenges to improve service delivery and outcomes for veterans nationwide,” states his Force for Good award nominator.

Commitment to Community

In addition to his professional work, Dr. Highsmith has implemented innovative programs to enhance the quality of life for various underserved populations in the Florida community. This includes facilitating team-building and activity days at Camp No Limits for children with limb loss and their families, as well as organizing and

delivering pro bono clinics for homeless individuals in Tampa, FL.

“His pro bono work and involvement in efforts such as the American Physical Therapy Association’s Hooked on Evidence initiative further illustrate his dedication to advancing the field while prioritizing patient care and community well-being,” says Associate Professor **Dr. Scott Love**. “Through



Dr. Highsmith’s inspiration in helping underserved populations, USAHS alumni and students developed a limb loss/limb difference support group two years ago. To this day, we work with amputees, many with low socio-economic backgrounds. Dr. Highsmith is always available to give our group wisdom and insight on amputee clients.”



Dr. Highsmith (fourth from left) poses for a quick photo during a training mission with his U.S. Army Reserve physical therapy and occupational therapy colleagues.

Commitment to Fostering Knowledge

As a mentor, advisor and educator for several colleges, universities and army medic and nurse courses, Dr. Highsmith has contributed to the development of current and future healthcare professionals, emphasizing the importance of social responsibility in medical and rehabilitation practices.

Dr. Highsmith is a past president of the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (AAOP). He manages a considerable research portfolio and has published numerous peer-reviewed scientific manuscripts. He has also been invited to present on prosthetic and amputee research in clinics, community events and national conferences, including with AAOP, the Amputee Coalition of America, the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association and the American Physical Therapy Association. In addition, Dr. Highsmith is engaged in research mentorship, serving on three dissertation committees across prestigious institutions.

“Throughout his career, Dr. Jason Highsmith has consistently responded to the needs of veterans, students



Dr. Love presents Dr. Highsmith with a Force for Good award during the summer 2024 St. Augustine, FL campus commencement ceremony.

and the broader community. His contributions have led to significant advancements in patient care, research and education, ultimately building stronger and more resilient communities,” says his nominator.

“Dr. Jason Highsmith exemplifies exceptional responsiveness and has shown a proactive approach to ensure veterans receive the highest quality care.”

TO BE A FORCE FOR GOOD...

During his summer 2024 address to University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences graduates, Dr. Jason Highsmith shared what it means to be a force for good. Here are excerpts from his speech:

*“To be a force for good starts with recognizing our own power. Each of us, regardless of our background, has the capacity to influence others and the world around us. This **influence** can be small—a kind word, a helping hand or a moment of empathy—or it can be large—a movement, a campaign or a bold stand for what is right. Whether small or large, every action has a ripple effect. We may not see the immediate impact, but rest assured, our choices reverberate through the lives of others in ways we might never imagine.*

*Being a force for good also requires **courage**. It’s not always easy to do the right thing, especially when it goes against the grain or when the outcome is uncertain. But true courage is not the absence of fear—it is the determination to act despite it. When we stand up for justice, for kindness, for the well-being of others, we embody the courage that this world needs. We become beacons of light, guiding others toward hope and positivity.*

*Moreover, being a force for good means embracing **compassion**. It means seeing humanity in every person we encounter, understanding their struggles and offering a hand when they need it most. Compassion breaks down barriers and builds bridges. It reminds us that we are all interconnected, that the well-being of one contributes to the well-being of all.”*



Servant Leader Promotes Quality Care for Veterans

Manuela Perales, MSN, RN (MSN '20) is the associate director for patient care services/nurse executive for the Veterans Administration (VA) Texas Valley Coastal Bend Health Care System in Harlingen, TX. When she was recognized in 2021 as an inaugural Force for Good award recipient, she was the organization's chief of quality, safety and value (QSV) and was responsible for developing plans and guiding the organization in meeting quality metrics that improve patient outcomes and access to care.

Perales began her VA career at Texas Valley Coastal Bend in 2012 as

a care manager, before transitioning into a quality clinician role in 2014. In addition to QSV work, her professional career includes experience in intensive care, cardiac catheterization lab, telemetry, interventional radiology, and primary care and care management.

As a dedicated registered nurse (RN) with more than 25 years of nursing experience, Perales graduated with her master's from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (USAHS) in 2020 with a specialty in Nursing Informatics.

Since graduating, she has used her Force for Good to honor and assist America's veterans by providing

exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

"As hospitals and facilities increasingly adopt healthcare technologies, nurses have become the cornerstone in using and applying technologies to improve patient care. My roles have allowed me to be a servant leader and promote quality care," Perales says. "As an advocate of High-Reliability Organization principles, I always put Veterans first. I did not realize I was a force for good since I truly try to help and love others in the way I would like to be helped and loved."

Perales' work has also included coordination of community care services and specialty services for the veteran population. She has been honored for facilitating the three-year CARF Accreditation for Integrated Community Mental Health-Range Program and for inter-disciplinary team collaboration on multiple projects in the coordination of care and access.

Giving back to USAHS, Perales helps prepare nurse leaders in interprofessional collaboration by spending time and energy with students and serving as a nurse informatics preceptor for the School of Nursing.

"Through Ms. Perales' support and mentorship, a USAHS student was selected to serve on the nurse informatics national advisory council. This committee provides direction for the creation of the new national electronic medical record for the Veteran's Administration," states Perales' Force for Good nominator.

"USAHS students are a great example of commitment, perseverance and love for others, and my challenge to them is to continue to care for others with the utmost love and compassion," Perales shares. "Students' accomplishments don't end when they graduate. These leaders can continue to be a force for a better world, as all of us have been blessed with unique experiences and talents that can be used to bring change and improve our world one action at a time."

Mental Health Psychologist Charges Students to Speak Their Truth

Recent alum and Force for Good Award recipient **Samantha Winterberg, EdD** (EdD '24) is a health psychologist, educator, author and mentor in Colorado with nearly two decades of expertise in integrating mental and physical health. Through many years advocating for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, she drew inspiration from their resilience in overcoming psychological stressors, stigma and inadequate protective policies to enter the integrated health psychology field.

"Witnessing childhood adversity and unresolved trauma of marginalized individuals highlighted the complex interplay between individual challenges and structural barriers that hinder health and mental equity across social and educational domains," Dr. Winterberg states.

Dr. Winterberg maintains a private health practice (Bay Integrative Wellness) while supporting efforts for inclusivity and cultural sensitivity through scholarship and mentorship. She has published 13 books and workbooks on equity and inclusivity, including one intended to assist educators in understanding the current LGBTQ+ position within higher education. She is currently working on a book about the perils and impacts of domestic violence. Her portfolio of scholarship is located at BywoodBooks.com.

"Samantha diligently researched the topic and relevance for higher ed, especially for application to courses where we are increasingly attempting to help students understand a more diverse population of patients," says University Writing Center Coach **Tonya Nagle**. "In addition, she has created workbooks that would help faculty, staff and students to navigate and better



understand others. She has become an asset and mentor to USAHS students. The entire book is geared toward insight and advocacy in a way that allows the reader to learn and apply what they learn today and in years to come."

Speak Your Truth, Even If Your Voice Shakes

"We commend Dr. Winterberg for her service on national, educational committees dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion, and for her continued advocacy work for survivors of domestic violence and the LGBTQ+ community. Bravo to Dr. Winterberg's approach to dismantle discrimination, break barriers and foster a more

inclusive society," states her award nominator.

Dr. Winterberg shared this with graduates: "Historically and currently, LGBTQ+ individuals have faced compounding challenges in healthcare, which makes treatment more difficult for both patients and providers. It is through systemic oppression, not the patients, that these hardships are perpetuated. As healthcare practitioners, it is our social responsibility to help mitigate these disparities. I urge you to advocate fiercely for inclusive policies. Educate your colleagues with passion and persistence. And above all, listen—truly listen—to your LGBTQ+ patients. Validate their experiences, and tailor your care to their unique needs.

"You possess extraordinary power to transform lives and restore dignity to your patients and all the lives you encounter. You have earned this privilege. Embrace it with pride, pursue it with compassion and sustain it with empathy. As Martin Luther King Jr. often proclaimed, 'It is always the right time to do the right thing.' To be a force for good, you must speak your truth, even if your voice shakes."



"I urge you to advocate fiercely for inclusive policies. Educate your colleagues with passion and persistence."

PT Alum's Passion for Student Development Shines as a Clinical Partner



Kai Williams, PT, DPT (DPT '07) has been a practicing physical therapist in Houston, TX for the past 17 years and has a strong passion for the profession, clinical education and student development. She is an outpatient therapy resource for Ensign Services, a nationally recognized organization with a mission to dignify post-acute care in the eyes of the world. Dr. Williams provides clinical and operational support to Ensign.

As a clinical partner, Ensign Services has worked with the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (USAHS) Austin, TX campus since the development of its Doctor of Physical Therapy program. Dr. Williams' dedication to enabling placements in the past three years has given more than 100 USAHS students access to important, inpatient clinical education before graduation.

By offering unique clinical experiences, Dr. Williams' passion for working with students in a skilled nursing facility setting has inspired

many to pursue careers in geriatric physical therapy. She has incorporated telehealth into these experiences and prepares students with dedicated resources and instruction on how to use technology in this environment.

Students praise her ability to teach new skills and provide constructive feedback. "Her expertise and familiarity have truly enhanced students' clinical experiences, as she can bring real clinical scenarios into the telehealth experience," says her Force for Good award nominator.

"I would like to express my sincerest thank you to the entire USAHS faculty for this honorable level of recognition. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge my Ensign-affiliated physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology clinical partners who have played such a pivotal role toward the success of our student program," states Dr. Williams. "A large part of my career has revolved around mentorship. I have had amazing mentors along the way who have taught

"A large part of my career has revolved around mentorship. I have had amazing mentors along the way who have taught me more than they probably realized."

me more than they probably realized. I have also had the privilege to serve as a mentee to some pretty awesome individuals."

During her address to USAHS graduates, Dr. Williams shared a few of her "a-ha" moments she has captured from experiences as a mentor and mentee, which include:

"You can only do for others when you start by taking care of yourself. Patient care is rewarding, and your joy comes from the changes you make in the lives of your patients. You feel eager to push yourself within your career while also balancing the demands of your personal life. Become intentional early on and create a healthy level of balance for yourself."

Practice gratitude! I can never say thank you enough. I am so grateful to the people who have poured into me over the years. It's easier said than done, but I do my best to savor the special moments. Putting pen to paper or verbalizing the experiences that bring you joy feels so good.

Be okay with being a forever student as you navigate through your leadership growth. Allow each direction that you take to be embraced as elevation and opportunities to learn and understand more. Create a space to empower those around you. Any quest to chase societal standards of success will feel never-ending. You will find that the true measure of success is built upon integrity."



Dr. Jannenga Transforms Lives through Innovation and Problem-solving



As a physical therapist for 25 years, **Heidi Jannenga, PT, DPT** (MPT '96) has an ability to identify pain points and devise innovative solutions, which have been a driving force in the industry.

After recognizing the need for a more sophisticated, industry-specific electronic medical record platform, Dr. Jannenga co-founded WebPT, a leading software platform for physical, occupational and speech therapists. Her commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration is evident in the healthcare technology landscape, and her role as Chief Clinical Officer has enabled her to be a strong advocate for the rehab therapy profession on an international scale.

Dr. Jannenga's impact on the healthcare industry is not limited to her professional endeavors. She champions the improvement of diversity in the rehab therapy workforce through a foundation and scholarship program called Rizing Tide, created for students who are completing their doctorate or residency in physical therapy.

"Based on my life experiences, I genuinely believe that with a more diverse workforce, everyone in the physical therapy industry (including providers, patients, vendors and the profession as a whole) wins. That environment doesn't exist today, and I want to change that. In creating Rizing

Tide, my goal is to make a meaningful, generational impact on this amazing profession that has given me so much," states Dr. Jannenga.

Since 2021, the foundation has committed \$1.7 million to advance the education of Rizing Tide scholars across 47 Doctor of Physical Therapy programs. The organization's four cohorts of scholars have achieved a 100% graduation rate!

In addition, Dr. Jannenga is an active member of the sports and private practice sections of the American Physical Therapy Association and an advocate for independent rehab therapy businesses. She serves on numerous healthcare, economic and community boards, foundations and councils, and she is a mentor to physical therapy students and local entrepreneurs. As a dedicated advocate of entrepreneurship and

its power to transform communities, she created an investment fund called Rootstock Ventures that deploys early-stage capital as an LP and directly to founders in the SaaS and healthcare space. She is also a founding member of the Arizona chapter of Golden Seeds, an early-stage investment firm focusing on women founders and leaders.

"Never forget that at the heart of what we do is problem-solving. This has been part of my ethos since my graduation and embarking on a rewarding career as a sports medicine and orthopedic therapist," she says. "Being a healthcare professional is not just about treating patients; it's about being a catalyst for positive change in the world. Together, we have the power to transform lives, to restore hope and to empower individuals to reach their full potential."



Rizing Tide scholars have achieved a 100% graduation rate.



OT Alum Exudes Advocacy, Innovation and Entrepreneurism



Committed to advancing the field of occupational therapy through education, evidence-based practice, research and advocacy, **Hiral Khatri, OTD, OTR/L** (OTD '17) is a pediatric occupational therapist, and the chief executive officer and founder of the OT Park: Pediatric Therapy Services and Sensory Gym in Morgan Hill, CA. Her experience includes providing evidence-based, client-centered and playful interventions

for children with autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, sensory processing disorder and other developmental challenges.

“My mission is to empower children and their families with the tools and strategies they need to overcome their sensory, motor and behavioral difficulties, and to celebrate their unique strengths and abilities. I am passionate about creating a positive and supportive environment for

“I am passionate about creating a positive and supportive environment for children to learn, grow and have fun.”

children to learn, grow and have fun.” In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Khatri serves as a fieldwork educator. “I share my knowledge and skills with aspiring and fellow occupational therapists, and promote the values and principles of neurodiversity-affirming OT,” she says.

Innovation and Entrepreneurism

Dr. Khatri has been recognized as one of the top 100 visionaries in the field by the International Forum for Advancement in Healthcare. She also received the Occupational Therapy Entrepreneur of the Year award from the Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC).

At OT Park, a practice that focuses on children with neurodiverse conditions, one of Dr. Khatri’s innovations was the creation of an activity box that provides children with the necessary items to improve their cognitive, motor and social skills.

“Opening a pediatric occupational therapy clinic was always a dream, and now I am helping many children. Seeing them smile, grow and succeed makes all the demanding work worth it,” she says. “I encourage all students and healthcare practitioners to believe in their skills and bring possibilities to life! In a world full of negativity, it is essential to be the light that shines through the darkness. We all have the power to make a positive impact, no matter how small or insignificant it may seem.”



Leadership

Dr. Khatri is a passionate leader in the field of OT. Current and past roles in state, national and international OT associations include:

- Ambassador for American Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee (AOTPAC)
- Director for OTAC Region Three
- Chair of the membership committee for both the Asian Pacific Heritage OT Association and the Association for Asian Pacific Islanders in Occupational Therapy
- Mentor in the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity

In December 2024, she was appointed to serve a second, two-year term on the AOTPAC board as director for Region Five. “This appointment is a true honor, and I’m excited to continue my work in advocating for our profession at the national level,” she states.

Path to OT

Dr. Khatri says her journey in occupational therapy began with the push and unwavering support of her parents.

“Through my patience, passion and dedication, I pursued a bachelor’s degree in OT. In India, OT was not a well-known field, and I was determined to change that,” she says. “My journey continued with pursuing an OTD program and working as a volunteer.

These experiences allowed me to grow both personally and professionally. I am grateful for the support of my family, mentors and colleagues who have helped me along the way. I am excited to continue making a positive impact in the field of OT.”

Continued from page 9

Ryan Sproull, Director, Outdoor Recreation, Lonestar Paralysis Foundation in Austin, TX (community partner)

Therapy 2000 in Dallas, TX (clinical partner)

Stephen Weyandt, PT, DPT, SCS, MTC (MPT '00, DPT '04), Regional Director/Partner, BenchMark Physical Therapy in Peachtree City, GA (alum and immediate past-president of USAHS Alumni Association)

Kai Williams, PT, DPT (DPT '07), Regional Director of Therapy, Ensign Services in Houston, TX (alum and clinical partner)

2024

Joanne Alicea, Executive Director, Ability Tree First Coast in St. Augustine, FL (community partner)

Austin Speech Labs in Austin, TX (community partner)

Robert (Bob) Ferman, retired Certified Public Accountant in Austin, TX (community partner)

Nelson Gonzalez, OTR/L, RFS, CHHC, CCT, CPMT, Executive Director / Administrator of Rehab Without Walls® Neuro Rehabilitation (Florida Division) in Miami, FL (community partner)

M. Jason Highsmith, PT, DPT, PhD, CP (DPT '03), National Director of Orthotic, Prosthetics and Pedorthic Clinical Services—U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Tampa, FL (alum)

Heidi Jannenga, PT, DPT, ATC, MPT (MPT '96), Co-founder and Chief Clinical Officer, WebPT; Founder of Rizing Tide Foundation in Tempe, AZ (alum)

Steve Long, PT, MPST, Owner, Achieve Physical Therapy and Performance in Dallas, TX (clinical partner)

Kate Metzger, OTD, OTR/L (OTD '22), Program Director and Occupational Therapist, Roots Renewal Ranch in Aubrey, TX (alum)

Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego in San Diego, CA (community partner)

Samantha Winterberg, EdD (EdD '24), Health Psychologist and Author in Castle Rock, CO (alum)



Do you know an extraordinary USAHS alum or clinician/community partner who matches the award criteria? Help continue the University's mission of being a Force for Good and nominate them today!

Dr. Fraser Serves His Country and Profession



Born and raised in Staten Island, NY, **John J. Fraser, PT, DPT, PhD** (DPT '18) was inspired to serve his country following the events of September 11, 2001. He recently retired as Commander in the United States Navy Medical Service Corps.

During his final tour in the Navy, Dr. Fraser served as a research physical therapist, Warfighter Performance department head, and deputy director for operational readiness and health at the Naval Health Research Center. The center's research and development is used to optimize the health and readiness of the more than 95,000 uniformed service members of the nation's armed forces.

A Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine, Dr. Fraser's work and research focused on the neuromusculoskeletal health and performance of military tactical athletes, which required an innovative approach to the care of the men and women serving in the military, especially when deployed to remote and austere locations in the world. This population demands rehabilitation strategies aimed at restoring function and optimizing occupational physical performance and combat readiness.

Innovation and service to the profession and military are further demonstrated through his medical research on optimizing warfighter

"I am truly blessed to have found a position that leverages my expertise while working with an amazing group of motivated and passionate professionals."

performance and readiness through science and partnership. He serves on multiple military and professional committees chartered to improve warfighter performance, prevent neuromusculoskeletal injury and optimize treatment during recovery.

Currently, Dr. Fraser is a scientific program manager for the Rehabilitation Research, Development and Translation Broad Portfolio at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Research and Development in Washington, D.C. He also is an adjunct professor in health sciences at two universities.

"The mission of this position will be to guide research used to inform practice and policy for rehabilitation care of veterans worldwide," he states. "I am truly blessed to have found a position that leverages my expertise while working with an amazing group of motivated and passionate professionals toward this truly honorable goal. I thank my mentors, family, friends and colleagues for their support, and I am excited for what the future holds."



SLP Alum Serves Rural Communities with Care

Kamber Covey, MS, CCC-SLP (MS '21) was in the first graduating class of the Master of Speech-Language Pathology program at the Dallas, TX campus, signaling the end of one transformative chapter in speech-language pathology (SLP) and the start of more to come.

From an early age, Covey knew she wanted to help others but "could not deal with blood," which made her uncertain about pursuing a caring career. She initially thought medicine was the main way to help people, but

in college, a friend introduced her to speech-language pathology. "It lined up with everything I enjoyed in school—English, reading and language," she says.

After beginning her graduate studies at another institution, Covey transferred to the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, finding its flexible program the perfect fit. "Being able to complete coursework online worked so well for how I learned," she explains. "The ability to stay at home and complete rotations in my area helped me figure out where I

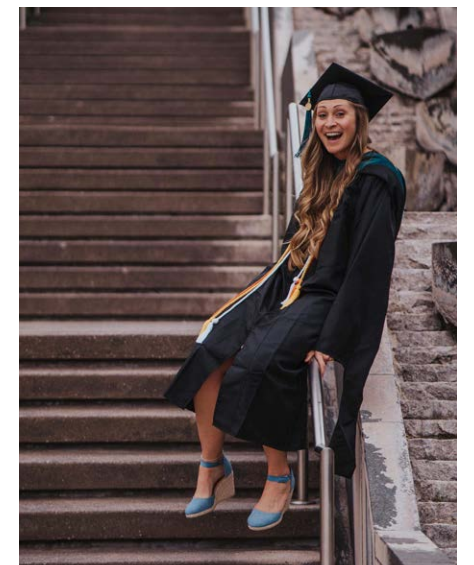
did and didn't want to be."

After working with a focus on geriatrics early in her career, Covey recently switched her interest to pediatrics to share her compassionate care with a different population.

"About five months ago, I took a leap of faith and founded Stellar Speech Therapy, a pediatric private practice in Chickasha, OK, with the support of my husband. He purchased a building to help make my dream a reality," she says.

Serving children with speech, language, hearing, pragmatic, and augmentative and alternative communication needs, Covey says the goal of her clinic is to meet a critical void in her rural community, as nearby clinics often have long waitlists. "I aspire to foster social skills for children with Autism and to create more opportunities for community sports involvement for children with disabilities."

Empathy guides her work as she tailors each session to clients' needs. "If a child has had a hard day at school, for example, their session might be emotional. I always ask myself what they need that day," she explains. "It's important for me to embrace the connections I build with clients. The memories we create along the way, whether I see someone for two weeks or six months, are what matter most."





CPE LAUNCHES HEALTHCARE BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE SERIES

The University's Continuing Professional Education (CPE) team has introduced a certificate series for healthcare providers, educators and operational managers who are moving into leadership.

The "Healthcare Business and Leadership Certificate" is a series of six standalone seminars, each dedicated to a specific leadership skill set. Participants earn an achievement badge for each seminar they complete. These may be shared on social media or added to a résumé.

Each seminar, which may be taken individually, is divided into topics that typically require four to six hours of weekly study, for a total of 20-35 hours. Complete all six to earn the "Healthcare Business and Leadership Certificate." Micro-certificates are also available for leadership and people management.

Special pricing is available to University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences alumni. Contact cpe@usa.edu with inquiries.



Scan to learn more



CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ SHARES USAHS HIGHLIGHTS

In an interview with Invest, Jacksonville, Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer **Vivian A. Sanchez** highlighted the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences' commitment to addressing gaps and shortages of practitioners in the healthcare market. She also emphasized the importance of meeting the evolving needs of students while discussing other key topics including contributions to community health, emerging technologies and initiatives to address the mental health crisis.

In the interview, she discussed major highlights during the past 12 months. "The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is a unique institution, solely focused on graduate health sciences. Founded in St. Augustine, FL, our heritage campus has made an indelible mark in Florida for more than 40 years. We have grown to become the largest provider of graduate degrees in physical therapy and occupational therapy, and now one of the largest in speech-language pathology, all within the field of rehabilitative sciences. Recently, we have expanded into nursing to address critical needs in the healthcare sector.

Our impact lies in identifying and addressing gaps in the market. We move into areas where there are shortages of practitioners and significant needs for clinical expertise. This targeted approach has driven our national expansion. After establishing our roots in St. Augustine, we expanded to San Marcos, CA, then Austin, TX, Miami, FL, and most recently, Dallas, TX. Each move is strategic, aiming to respond and fill essential gaps in the market and enhance healthcare delivery in those regions."



Read the full interview



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES MIAMI CHAPTER

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences Alumni Association celebrated the launch of its newest chapter in Miami, FL with an event November 7 at Bay 13 in Coral Gables, FL, bringing together alumni, prospective students and employees from the Miami, FL campus.

"This event was a fantastic kickoff for the Miami chapter," says Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Assistant Professor **Kellan Quigley** (OTD '22), the Alumni Association's vice president of the Alumni Engagement committee. "The interactions between prospective students and alumni were meaningful for all, and the engagement was just what we hoped for when we began planning our chapter program."

The Alumni Association now has chapters in Atlanta, GA; San Diego, CA; and Miami, FL.



STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS EXPAND AT USAHS

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences' (USAHS) student organizations are vital to campus life and offer significant opportunities and benefits to their members, the institution, the professional network and the community.

Through participation in student organizations, students can develop leadership skills, enhance their understanding of professional perspectives and have a positive impact on their classmates, their profession and the community.

Often, these student organizations seek speakers to share their experiences and answer student questions during regularly scheduled meetings or dedicated events. Alumni who are interested in speaking to a student organization may contact alumni@usa.edu or studentlife@usa.edu.

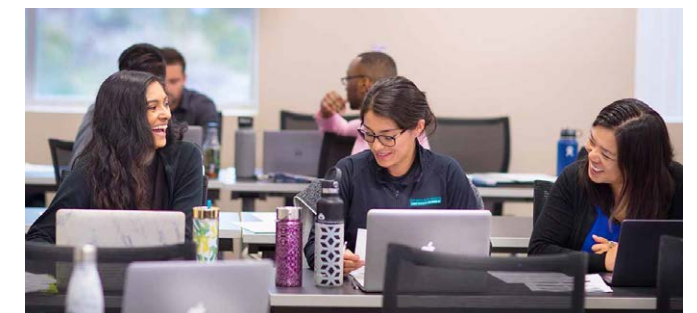
Learn more about the student organizations and clubs at usa.edu/student-services-at-usahs/student-life/.

HYBRID IMMERSION FOR MOT EXPANDS

To provide students with exemplary learning and academic experiences, prospective students have multiple pathways to becoming healthcare practitioners.

After a great start to the new Hybrid Immersion Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) with the first student cohort in fall 2023 at the Dallas, TX campus, the Hybrid Immersion MOT has expanded to the San Marcos, CA; St. Augustine, FL; and Miami, FL campuses.

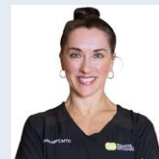
A complement to the University's **Residential MOT** (blended online and in-person coursework/labs on campus) and **Flex MOT** (mainly online, with weekend labs), the Hybrid



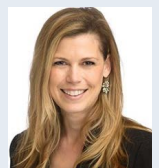
Immersion MOT allows students to earn their MOT in as little as two years (six trimesters) with online learning and on-campus, three- to five-day lab immersions two times each term.



John Allocco, MPT (MPT '99) was re-elected to his third term as commissioner for District Three of Hernando County, FL. A licensed physical therapist and real estate agent, Allocco co-founded and operated a successful physical therapy business in Spring Hill, FL, and Hudson, FL, before selling the practice in 2022.



Nicole Zebrowski, MPT, MTC (MPT '99) has been a dedicated physical therapist for 27 years and currently serves as the Director of Physical Therapy at the Williams Institute of Orthopedics. *Photo courtesy: lakeandsummerstyle.com*



Elisabeth McGee, PhD, DPT, MOT, CHT, MTC, CHSE (MOT '03, DPT '05) was featured on *The Nurse Keith Show* podcast in the episode "Spearheading Innovation and Learning in Health Sciences Education." Dr. McGee discussed how USAHS equips students for the future of healthcare through technology integration and design thinking. Dr. McGee was also highlighted in *EdTech Magazine* in the article "What Classroom Technologies Do Students Actually Like?"



Katie Daniels, DPT (DPT '06) of Chico, CA, recently earned the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Board Certification as a Geriatric Specialist and achieved the APTA Program Level 1 Credentialed Clinical Instructor Trainer Certification. She is also a new member of the USAHS Alumni Association Advisory Board.

Tamra Trenary, OTD, OTR/L (OTD '08) was a speaker for the American Occupational Therapy Association's live webinar series "Accommodations: A 360-degree Approach from Classroom to Fieldwork."



Sara Story, EdD, OTD, OTR/L, BCG, CAPS (OTD '11) presented "Occupational Therapy's Crucial Role in Community Mobility and Driving for Aging in Place" as part of the American Occupational Therapy Association's live webinar series. She also serves on the USAHS Alumni Association Advisory Board and has presented at state and national levels.



Evan Jeffries, PT, DPT (DPT '14) is a licensed physical therapist and the owner of Evolving Motion, where he applies his knowledge of the musculoskeletal system to treat a wide range of orthopedic conditions with a proactive approach to healthcare and lifestyle. Dr. Jeffries has gained recognition as an injury analyst, providing insights on National Basketball Association player injuries through his active presence on social media. *Photo courtesy: evolvingmotionpt.com*



Robert Killebrew, PT, DPT (DPT '16) was featured in the *Houston Chronicle* article "Former Longhorn Football Player Now Helps Athletes as Klein Physical Therapy Clinical Director." Dr. Killebrew serves as clinical director of FYZICAL Klein. A former University of Texas at Austin Longhorns defensive linebacker, his football career was cut short by a leg injury, inspiring his transition to physical therapy to help others recover and perform at their best.



Melanie Lomaglio, PT, DPT, MSc, CNS (DPT '17), founder and president of Rebloom Center, hosted "Knowledge in Motion: Empowering Lives

at the Second Annual Parkinson's Forum for People Living with Parkinson's and their Care Partners" at the St. Augustine, FL campus, bringing together more than 75 community members, student volunteers and area vendors.



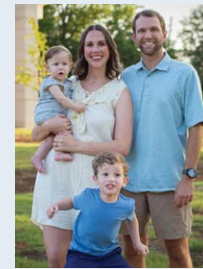
Emma Carroll Rightmire, PT, DPT (DPT '18) co-presented the session "Physical Literacy Pilot Program: Movement Skills Group" at the 2024 Rocky Mountain Annual Conference and PT Expo held through the American Physical Therapy Association of Colorado.



Hannah Oldenburg, EdD, OTR/L, BCPR (EdD '18) was a speaker for the American Occupational Therapy Association's live webinar series "Accommodations: A 360-degree Approach from Classroom to Fieldwork." *Photo courtesy: aota.org*



Marla Davis, OTD, OTR/L (OTD '19) is an assistant professor at Elizabethtown College. She has also launched two businesses: Play for All Consulting, which focuses on inclusive playground design, and Bloom Pediatric Therapy and Wellness, a mobile pediatric occupational therapy clinic.



Dylan Glass, PT, DPT (DPT '19) was featured in *South Huntsville Neighbors* in an article titled "Meet the Glass Family." The piece highlights Dr. Glass and his sports physical therapy practice, Return 2 Sports PT and Performance (R2S). Based in South Huntsville, R2S specializes in helping athletes, particularly runners, recover from injuries and enhance their performance.

Photo courtesy: South Huntsville Neighbors

Colleen Bartlett, DNP (DNP '21) was appointed to the Rare Disease Advisory Council by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Dr. Bartlett, a dual board-certified pediatric and family nurse practitioner, serves at the BayCare Chronic Complex Clinic.



Miguel Garcia, PT, DPT, EdD (EdD '21) authored an article in *South Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report* titled "Fall Risk Evaluations Would Be Game Changer for Medicare Beneficiaries." The article highlighted how a patient recovering from a motorcycle accident benefited from the falls prevention program at the USAHS Miami, FL, campus.



Amy Griswold, OTD, OTR/L, RYT, CBIS (OTD '22) joined the Peace Corps in November 2024 to serve as an occupational therapy specialist in the Republic of Moldova. In her role, she partners with local non-governmental organizations to build capacity and collaborate on shared missions to promote health and wellness in local communities.

Alumni may submit updates about their professional or personal lives to share with fellow USAHS alumni. Use the Class Notes form on www.usa.edu/about/alumni/.



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Lee Ann Hoffman, OTD, ATP/SMS (OTD '22) contributed to a study published in *Heliyon* titled "The Montana Postural Care Project: A Pilot Study Implementing Posture Care Management in a Rural, Low-Resource Region." The study explores how posture care management can address mobility impairments that complicate daily living in underserved areas. Dr. Hoffman also serves on the USAHS Alumni Association Advisory Board.



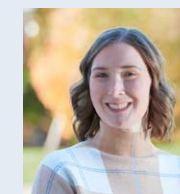
Asiah Wilborn, MS, CCC-SLP (MS-SLP '22) received the Distinguished Early Career Professional Certificate from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), recognizing her impact in leadership, volunteering and advocacy. She owns Expressive Pediatric Therapy, providing speech and language therapy services through teletherapy and in the school setting. Wilborn also organizes networking social events for therapists and clinicians in the Atlanta area.



Inez Esparza, MS, CCC-SLP (MS-SLP '23), of Shreveport, LA, was honored with the Distinguished Early Career Professional Certificate by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). She was also invited to speak at the 2024 ASHA convention, where she presented "Discussing Pediatric Feeding Disorders Through the DEIA Lens: What Does it Look Like?"



Laura Massey, DNP, RN (DNP '23) was named Woman of the Month for September 2024 by P.O.W.E.R. (Professional Organization of Women of Excellence Recognized). Dr. Massey serves as chief nursing officer at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Plano, TX, and has more than 25 years of experience in the healthcare industry. *Photo courtesy: PR.com*



Kelsey Taylor, EdD, MS (EdD '23) serves as the Director of Clinical Education at Endicott College. Previously, she was Clinical Coordinator of Exercise Science, following her initial position as an athletic trainer. *Photo courtesy: endicott.edu*



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