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Reconnect with OHIO Physical Therapy

Connection Form
Update your contact info by clicking here so that we can build a stronger alumni community!

Facebook Group
Join our Facebook group here, a place for students, faculty, and alumni to collaborate and share ideas, news and opportunities. Once you're a member, help others reconnect by inviting your classmates to join!

Connect on Social Media:

Join us for Quad Rugby in September!
Quad Rugby is an event put on by the OHIO PT program that raises money for the Ohio Buckeye Blitz, a semi-professional quad rugby team based out of Columbus. Quad rugby is a wheelchair sport played by quadriplegic athletes.
Our event involves students, faculty, alumni, and community members forming teams of four-to-five players who compete against members of the Buckeye Blitz in 30-minute games. The fundraiser is the largest of the year for the team and helps them purchase wheelchairs and pay for entry and travel fees for tournaments. We would be honored if you would consider being a part of this wonderful event. Gather your classmates and make a team - or just come watch! There will be an alumni social event uptown after the event.

Quad Rugby 2017 will be held from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on September 30. Teams of four or five players can register for $100 per team. We will be making registration and payment available online, so be on the lookout for that in the coming months via email and social media. We would absolutely love to have alumni come to Athens and play! We understand many alumni do not live in the Southeast Ohio region anymore, so if you cannot make it to campus to play but would still like to donate, you can do so online or by sending a check payable to Ohio University Quad Rugby to the following address:

Physical Therapy Dept.
Grover Center W290
Athens, OH 45701
Attn: Connor Moran

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Tyler Veldhuizen, Class of 2019 Quad Rugby President.

Botswana service trip
The countdown has begun for our Summer 2017 trip to Botswana! This year we have a group of 12 students (three PT, four SLP, and five audiology) traveling with three faculty members for the three-week study abroad program. While there, the group will have the opportunity to work with our alumna Matilda Dijeng, Class of 1990, at her clinic in Francistown, as well as at Princess Marina Hospital and the Ambrose Academy in Gaborone. Follow the group’s adventures from July 23-August 11, 2017, on social media by joining the group “OU Botswana” on Facebook or following “OhioUinBOTSWANA” on Twitter and Instagram.
You can also be a part of this year’s trip by helping us bring a special project to fruition! Over the last year, we have worked with a dedicated group of mechanical engineering students to design a stander which will be donated to our colleagues at the Ambrose Academy in Gaborone (formerly known as the Mariri Speech and Hearing Clinic). We are currently raising money to fund the cost of shipping the stander to Botswana so it will be there when we arrive in July. If you would like to learn more about this project or donate to the cause, please visit our GoFundMe page [here](https://www.gofundme.com/donor). Thank you for your support!

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**Alumni spotlight**

**Dr. Nicole Dawson, Class of 2002**

**Dr. Dawson, PT, PhD, GSC,** was recently awarded the Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy’s Distinguished Educator Award. This award recognizes individuals who excel in presenting content on geriatrics in an engaging and dynamic manner, and who have distinguished themselves in academic excellence, publications, and innovative teaching materials or methods development. Dr. Dawson is an assistant professor in the DPT program at the University of Central Florida. She is a Board Certified Geriatric Physical Therapist with more than 15 years of clinical experience along with a PhD in adult development and aging psychology from Cleveland State University.

Her current areas of research include developing non-pharmacological interventions to improve functional and psychosocial outcomes in patients with dementia, identifying predictors of falls in older adults with cognitive impairment and gaining a better understanding of the illness experience of individuals with chronic disease and disability. Dr. Dawson has been published in peer-reviewed journals including the Gerontologist and the Journal of Geriatric Physical Therapy. She has presented at numerous national and
international conferences on the subject. She is passionate about bettering the treatment and care of these patients and is dedicated to assisting students and clinicians in gaining skills and knowledge to better help these patients maximize their potential. Thank you, Dr. Dawson, for your dedication to physical therapy and for representing OHIO PT. Congratulations!

Student spotlight

Jen Semans, Class of 2017, was selected to attend the APTA’s State Payment and Policy Forum in September. The following is an excerpt from an article in the March 2017 OPTA magazine about her experience:

“I, along with other students and representatives from each state, spent the weekend discussing legislation that may affect our profession, reimbursement methods, and the scope of our practice. It was interesting to hear from each state representative, since each state has different laws regarding the scope of physical therapy. States that passed laws important to our practice gave advice and suggested ways that would make passing similar laws in other states easier. Hearing their success stories inspired me to become more proactive in ensuring laws that help protect our practice are passed.”

Congratulations to Jen on being selected for this experience, and thank you for representing OHIO PT!

PT Advocacy Day
Physical therapy students and professionals joined together on Ohio PT Advocacy Day on March 23, 2017, to meet with Ohio Senators and House Representatives to discuss issues related to the physical therapy field, including House Bill 131 and 49. Students served as representatives from our profession to educate those who make important decisions that affect our future patients, while becoming more knowledgeable themselves about the process in which bills are passed. The Class of 2018 is pictured above in Columbus on Advocacy Day.

Alumni reception at the OPTA Annual Conference
After the 2017 OPTA Annual Conference on March 24, students, faculty and alumni gathered at Gordon Biersch in the Arena District of Columbus for food, drinks and socializing! Thank you to the Columbus-area alumni who attended this event. The next alumni reception in Columbus will be on Saturday, October 14, after the ACAPT Conference. Even if you do not plan on attending the conference, please mark your calendar for our Columbus area alumni gathering that evening! More details to come via email and social media.
KidFest!
KidFest is a fun and safe event for children and families in Athens County sponsored by Athens County Children Services. The aim is to create awareness of the people, services, programs, events and projects in Athens County that serve children's needs. At this year's KidFest, Class of 2018 students performed developmental screens on children as part of their pediatrics curriculum. Class of 2019 students encouraged physical activity through play and dance.

Class of 2020
The Class of 2020 had its first day of classes May 15. The class has an average undergraduate GPA of 3.72 and average GRE scores of 154 quantitative and 154 verbal. Students come from 21 undergraduate programs and five different states.

Congratulations to these students—wishing you the best of luck over the next three years!

Help Me Grow playgroup
Class of 2018 students led playgroup activities with the Vinton County Help Me Grow program in McArthur, Ohio, this past spring semester while they completed their pediatrics course. Partnering students with the playgroup has helped the community and provided
students with real-world pediatric experience. In the spring, professors Tobe Gillogly and Michele Courtney required students in the pediatric course to lead the playgroup. The students and professors have developed a strong relationship with the families in Vinton County and the staff at Help Me Grow, and all parties hope to sustain this connection in the coming years.

This experience has been extremely valuable for students and families alike. Margaret Demko, the project manager and supervisor for the Vinton County Help Me Grow program, says, “During the time the students have been coming, the attendance of the families has grown exponentially. The families enjoy the interaction and physical activities that the students bring. The children get to interact with people they would never have met if it weren’t for the playgroup.”

Students also get the chance to meet and work with community members they would never have met otherwise. Vinton County is a rural area of 13,000 residents with a median income of less than $35,000 per year. Margaret notes, “The students, who can only read about the poverty and scenery of Appalachia, get to experience this first hand in the drive over, in the conversations with the young mothers, and with the children who are there to share smiles and laughter.”

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Clay Matthews earns McKenzie Certification

Spring OHIO PT Alumni Board Meeting
Ohio University Therapy Associates (a component of the Division of Physical Therapy) is proud to announce physical therapist Clay Matthews (a 2013 alumnus) recently earned MDT Certification from the McKenzie Institute® USA Center for Postgraduate Study in Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy® (MDT).

Physical therapists must complete a series of advanced postgraduate courses to become certified practitioners of the McKenzie Method® of MDT, an evidence-based patient management system proven to eliminate back, neck and extremity pain in fewer visits compared to traditional treatment.

The key distinction is its initial assessment component—a safe and reliable means to accurately reach a diagnosis that will guide an appropriate treatment plan. Rarely are expensive tests required, as Certified MDT clinicians have a valid indicator to know right away whether—and how—the direction-specific exercise treatment will work for each patient.

Clay works with patients at the PT outpatient facility in the Castrop Center on the OhioHealth O’Bleness campus.

The OHIO PT Alumni Board elected new officers during their spring meeting in Athens on April 14. Congratulations to the new officers:

Michele Courtney, Chair
Leigh Ann Frick, Vice Chair
Karen Green, Secretary

The board also took time out of their meeting to participate in "Speed Networking" with students, who appreciated the insight and advice the alumni provided. Please contact us by email if you are interested in learning more or becoming a part of the Alumni Board.
Students from the Class of 2019 participated in Athens Beautification Day in April.

Scholarship fund donation
Click here for instructions on how to donate to any of the following scholarships. Thank you for your generosity!

- Cynthia Norkin Scholarship (Service and Leadership)
- Joy Boyd Memorial Scholarship (Academic Merit and Professionalism)
- Southpaw Enterprises Scholarship (Pediatrics)
- Carole J. Marchal Scholarship (Pediatrics)
- Po Hickenbottom Scholarship (Pediatrics)
- OUTA Steve Trotta Scholarship (SE Ohio Resident/Nontraditional Student)
- Trotta, Haste, Schulman Scholarship (Faculty Choice)

Nick Bobinger, Class of 2012, gave a guest lecture in March 2017 on throwing mechanics, injuries and rehabilitation to first-year students.

Dawn (Neff) Bookshar appointed OPTA Secretary
In April, the OPTA Board of Directors named Dawn Bookshar, Class of 1987, OPTA Secretary. Bookshar has been an APTA member for 32 years, and her term as OPTA Secretary runs through June 2018. She currently resides in Vermilion, Ohio, and works as a clinical specialist at Genesis Rehab Services.

New issue of Connect!
PT Student Support Fund (Student Research Projects)
PT General Fund (Multipurpose)
Botswana Fund (Yearly Student Study Abroad Trip)

The spring 2017 issue of Connect is now available! Be sure to check out the special section about CHSP's global reach on pages 8–20.

Click here to link to the magazine.

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Combined Sections Meeting 2017 in San Antonio
Thank you to all who joined us at the PT reception at the Combined Sections Meeting in February! About 25 PT alumni attended the reception and conference. Faculty members had a great time catching up with former students. Congratulations to all of our Class of 2017 graduates who presented research at the conference!

50th Annual Athens Marathon
Class of 2018 and 2019 students worked with First Settlement Physical Therapists to massage and stretch runners after the Athens Marathon on April 9. Thank you to Steve Trotta (1986) and Simon Hargus (2010) for organizing this partnership and setting up this
valuable service for runners of Athens.