



Physical Therapy

ANNUAL BULLETIN 2021



Physical Therapy
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
physical therapy program



our ongoing commitment to
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program aims for transparency in communicating our current efforts, while continually striving to address disparity, in healthcare.

**Current faculty, student,
and staff involvements include:**

Dawn Magnusson, PT, PhD

Program Representative, APTA/ACAPT, DEI Consortium Meetings
Board Liaison, HPA The Catalyst (Section of APTA)
Social Justice in Health Catalyst Group
Chair, CU PT Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Lisa Dannemiller, PT, DSc, PCS

Program Representative, University of Colorado School of Medicine Diversity and Inclusion Council

Michael Harris-Love, PT, MPT, DSc, FGSA

Member, NABPT Education Committee
Mentor, Each One Reach One Mentorship Program
Vice Chair of Learning, Development, and Inclusion, Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
Co-Chair, APTA CO Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Students

Anschutz Medical Campus Health Equity Circle
Student Leadership: **Leah Calderon, Louise Fix, Chloe Graves, Margaret McCandless**

CU PT Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Student Representatives: **Chloe Graves, Graciela Salinas, Zachary Sperry**

Staff

Melissa Ishida

Staff Representative, CU PT Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

CU PHYSICAL THERAPY

Michael Harris-Love
Associate Dean for Physical Therapy Education
Director, Physical Therapy Program
Joanne Posner-Mayer Endowed Chair
in Physical Therapy

Editor
Natalie Ianniciello, MA

Design and Production
CU Design & Printing Services

CU Physical Therapy Program
13121 E. 17th Ave, Room 3106
Aurora, CO 80045
www.cuphysicaltherapy.org
(303) 724-2878

a letter from **THE DIRECTOR**

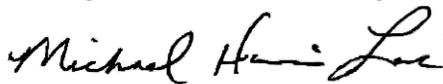
We find ourselves in extraordinary times. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a contentious general election season, and the call for policing and criminal justice system reforms have reverberated across communities in Colorado and across the nation. While the pain continues to linger from the indelible marks left behind by the year 2020, we will experience healing with the passage of time.

The University of Colorado Physical Therapy (CU PT) Program has prevailed through other periods of national discord during its 73-year history. We have withstood the cyclic upheaval of civic discourse and economic security over the years through the values that bind us to one another. These values include: respect, integrity, altruism, diversity, accountability, quality, passion, collaboration, and leadership. Our stated values are not simply aspirational. CU PT students have demonstrated these values by making their collective voices against racial injustice heard through participation in the **“White Coats for Black Lives”** event at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus that was held during the summer. Our faculty and staff have demonstrated these values in their tireless effort to suddenly transition our curriculum to a virtual learning format to ensure the education of our students during the onset of the pandemic. Our CU Anschutz clinical partners, including UCHHealth, Children’s Hospital Colorado, and others, demonstrated these values by standing in the gap when the effects of COVID-19 resulted in a decrease of available clinical education sites.

The resiliency that is woven into the fabric of our program is reflected in our ability to progress and grow during times of uncertainty. Nowhere is this spirit more apparent than in the establishment of the **Student Support Fund**. Honoring the life of former CU PT student, **Lauren Klein**, MS, who earned a Master’s in Rehabilitation Science in 2019, the fund provides support to students experiencing unanticipated events that result in financial hardship. The strength of the program also lies within our alumni. 2019 CU PT Alumni Achievement Award recipient, **Kenda Fuller**, Class of 1979, made a gift to the CU PT Program to enhance cultural balance and inspire future generations from diverse backgrounds and historically underrepresented communities to pursue degrees in physical therapy. Other supporters generously contributed to the program and will soon invest in both aspiring DPT and PhD students in the name of our former Director, **Margaret Schenkman**, PT, PhD, FAPTA. Each of these philanthropic initiatives will help CU PT reach new, extraordinary heights as an internationally known program and transformative institution.

Our program welcomed 67 new students who comprise the Class of 2022 and recognized the achievements of the 65 students in the Class of 2020 who graduated in December. Important milestones were reached by our faculty as **Lisa Dannemiller**, PT, DSC, PCS and **Tami Struessel**, PT, DPT, OCS, MTC were recently promoted to Associate Professor. The depth of our faculty is apparent given the recent designation of Professor **Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley**, PT, PhD, FAPTA as a Catherine Worthingham Fellow. The FAPTA designation is the highest membership category within the American Physical Therapy Program (APTA). Both longtime and new members of the CU PT faculty have contributed to our program accomplishments this year. We welcomed current NIH R03 grant holder, **Andrew Smith**, PT, DPT, PhD, to the CU PT faculty as an incoming Assistant Professor, while bidding a heartfelt farewell to our faculty member, **Sharon Jordan**, PT, MA, as she retires after 26 years of service to the program. CU PT Clinical Professor, **Colleen Kigin**, PT, DPT, MS, MPA, FAPTA and alumna of the Class of 1970, is the recipient of APTA’s highest honor, selection as a Mary McMillan lecturer. Kigin will give the 52nd McMillan lecture during the APTA’s centennial year in 2021. Her professional accomplishments range from being elected as Vice President of the APTA to serving as a founder of the APTA Frontiers in Science and Rehabilitation Council. Kigin has led a professional career worthy of admiration and respect from all CU PT students, faculty, and alumni.

Finally, the challenges of the pandemic do not alter our requirements as a physical therapy program. Our sincere gratitude goes out to colleagues, alumni, students, faculty, and staff who worked together to submit our Self-Study Report for our decennial review and subsequent accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Thanks to the remarkable strides taken by CU PT this year, we will not only remember 2020 for its serious national challenges, but also for how our program endured by adhering to our values and remaining fixed on our mission.



Michael Harris-Love, PT, MPT, DSc, FGSA
Associate Dean for Physical Therapy Education
Director, Physical Therapy Program
Joanne Posner-Mayer Endowed Chair in Physical Therapy





thank you **SHARON!**

After 26 years with the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program, Sharon Jordan, PT, MA, will be retiring effective January 1, 2021.

Jordan came to the Program initially as a consultant in 1994. In 2000, she moved to an Instructor, and was promoted to Senior Instructor in 2003. She also served as Assistant Director of Clinical Education from 2000-2004.

Jordan was heavily involved in the Scholarship & Awards committee, dedicated to providing students with more affordable offerings for their education, as well as recognizing contributions and nominating worthy students and faculty for Program, University and National recognition.

Jenny Rodriguez, PT, DPT, DCE, a longtime colleague of Jordan's, noted that Jordan was most passionate about teaching students correct positioning and body mechanics to keep them safe while learning physical therapy techniques. "Sharon was always teaching our students about vacuuming and shoveling which got some giggles and eye rolls," said Rodriguez, "but then on clinic visits, students regularly tell the Clinical Education Team that they actually taught their patients how to vacuum or shovel and it made a big difference!" Jordan is a master clinician, and passionate about teaching patients how to manage their pain through positioning and safe movement during daily activities.

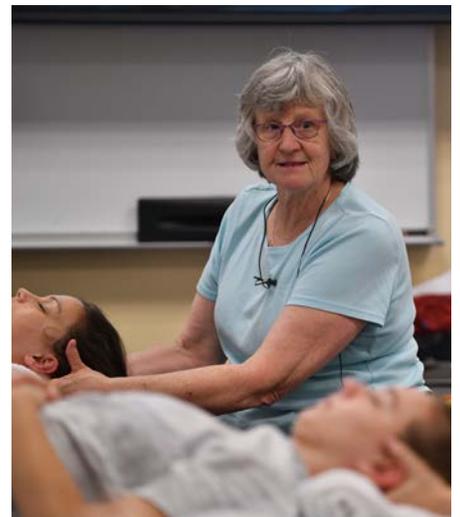
University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program Director, Michael Harris-Love, PT, MPT, DSc, FGSA added, "Sharon was vital to my orientation to the campus. In many ways, she holds the institutional memory of the program and has been instrumental in helping me to better understand our organizational history. Additionally, she has also helped us to look to the future by working with Office of Information Technology to modernize our clinical instruction facilities. Everyone will greatly miss Sharon's contributions to CU Physical Therapy."

Jordan received her Bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy from State University of New York in Buffalo in 1972. She also completed a Master's degree in Anthropology in 1990 from University of Colorado Denver. Jordan started her career spending time in Switzerland and West Germany prior to coming back stateside.

A true outdoor enthusiast, Jordan has long enjoyed hiking with her dogs, skiing and snowshoeing and many of her colleagues have fond memories of those activities with her. We certainly hope that retirement allows more time for those recreation adventures!



Jordan is all smiles at the finish line of the Fund the Future 5K.



Jordan in a lab course with DPT students.

in remembrance **PHIL E. STONE**

The Physical Therapy Program offers condolences to the family and friends of Phil Stone, Class of 1973, who passed on September 23, 2020.

Phil was a dedicated member of the Physical Therapy Alumni Association for many years. Early in 2020, he made an incredibly generous \$300,000 legacy gift commitment to the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program. He treasured the

opportunity to participate in an annual ice cream social for the students, seeing new faces and the growth of the profession. Per his preplanned wishes, his body was donated to science.

Phil was born to Victor and Margot Stone on August 3, 1950 in Fowler, Colorado. He was a graduate of CU Boulder and the CU Medical Center in Denver to obtain his Bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy and certificate in Athletic Training in 1973. He started his career in Hiawatha, Kansas, before taking a job at as an athletic trainer at United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). He took a brief leave of absence to complete a Master's degree in Physical Therapy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1980. It was there he met his wife of 39 years, Mary Kay. Phil spent the better part of four decades at USAFA and retired in 2012.

welcoming ANDREW SMITH



The University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program welcomed Andrew C. Smith, PT, DPT, PhD to his appointment as Assistant Professor on August 17, 2020. Smith is currently completing work on his R03 grant from the NIH National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research concerning the use of MRI images and machine learning in the management of spinal cord injury. He will continue to participate in clinical research at Craig Hospital and also assists CU PT in strengthening ties with the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center Spinal Cord Injury and Disorder Center.

Reflecting upon his recent academic appointment, Smith says, "It is an absolute honor to be a part of the CU PT family. I am impressed with the level of excellence that the CU PT program embodies on all fronts: DPT and PhD education, research and scholarship, clinical practice, and service to the local and global community."

Smith comes to the University of Colorado from Regis University School of Physical Therapy, where he was an Assistant Professor. He was awarded the 2019 Regis University School of Physical Therapy Excellence in Teaching Award and 2020 Regis University Rueckert Hartman College of Health Professions Junior Faculty Teaching Award. Smith obtained his Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Washington, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Neuroscience from Northwestern University. He has 12 years of experience as a physical therapist.

CU PT Program Director Michael Harris-Love, PT, MPT, DSc, FGSA noted, "Dr. Smith has a great mix of skills that include conducting innovative research within the field of neurorehabilitation and establishing genuine connections with entry-level students. I look forward to his contributions to our DPT and PhD Programs, as well as our efforts to promote diversity and inclusion within the profession."

GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ANDREW SMITH

Where are you originally from? As a U.S. Air Force kid, I moved around every 1 to 2 years growing up, but the State of Washington is where I spent the most time, collectively.

What are you most looking forward to in becoming a part of the CU PT family? I am most looking forward to learning from the quality faculty, staff, and students here at CU PT.

What is your specialization/interest? I have practiced clinically and been involved with research with individuals with spinal cord injury since 2010.

What are your hobbies? I am a self-professed Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu nerd and a novice mountain biker.

Any family/pets? My wife, Hana, is a CU School of Medicine faculty as well, and we have two daughters and a son (7, 5, 3 years old). No pets yet, but a dog is in our future.

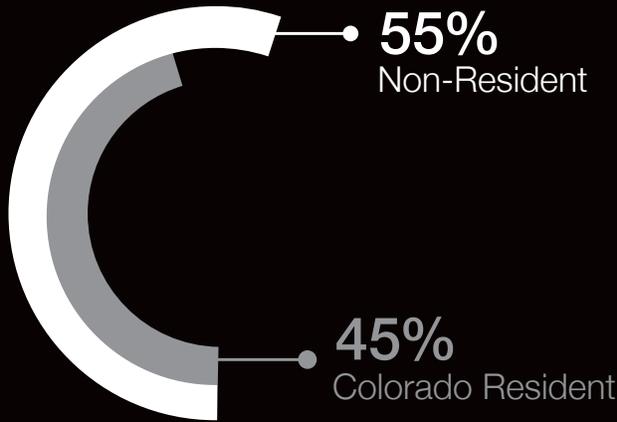
Phil enjoyed reading, listening to classical music, sports, and traveling. During the pandemic lockdown of 2020, he and Mary Kay often discussed how lucky they were to have been able to see many parts of the world and learn about new cultures. The only continent not visited was Antarctica. He never took himself too seriously, had a quick wit, and was a fun-loving guy who enjoyed a good beer and a big hug. He will be greatly missed.

Phil is survived by his wife, Mary Kay, sister Helen Stone of Boulder, sister-in-law Ann (Bill) Mikyska of Wisconsin, and nephew Aaron Crooks of Phoenix. He was predeceased by his parents Victor and Maragot Stone, and a sister, Esther Crooks.



class of 2022

DEMOGRAPHICS



20%
First-Generation



38%
Rural

AVERAGE AGE
24 YEARS OLD



3.66
Cumulative GPA



*reflects total cohort on first day of program

WHEN PERSONAL *leads to professional*



Shafer in attendance at a CU Physical Therapy Scholarship Reception.



Shafer at Shriners' Hospital in Salt Lake City, UT.

For many who pursue healthcare professions, especially physical therapy, their initial motivation often lies with a personal experience. For Class of 2020 graduate Kylie Shafer, her personal experience goes far beyond a traditional rehabilitation experience.

Shafer has Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI), a genetic disorder that mainly affects the bones. People with this condition have bones that fracture easily, often from mild trauma or with no apparent cause. Growing up, Shafer received care at Shriners' Hospital in Salt Lake City, UT, where she had some strong physical therapists. "At age 13 I had my spine fused from T2-L4 (which are the thoracic nerves into the lumbar nerves)," said Shafer. "The PTs who helped me in the inpatient stay were amazing and led to a realization that I wanted to be able to help kids like me someday since I can relate to them so uniquely."

While Shafer had many positive experiences early on, she also became aware of limitations in rural areas. From Cheyenne, WY, Shafer had to go out of state for specialty care. "I had good PTs and orthopedists in Cheyenne, but for the most part, resources were really limited," she noted. It left a lasting impact on her, lighting a spark to help individuals in rural communities in the future.

Shafer went on to earn an Associate's degree in pre-PT from Northern Wyoming Community College and a Bachelor's degree in Kinesiology from the University of Wyoming.

The proximity to home was a primary motivation factor for Shafer when choosing PT schools, but her interview process at the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program further influenced her decision. "I realized how amazing the faculty is and how they are leaders in their fields, so my education would be unlike anywhere else," she noted.

While in the PT program, Shafer volunteered with several local pediatric physical therapists in the Denver area and was involved in the Night Owls program, an evening respite opportunity for parents of children with special needs and their siblings. Faculty mentorships also served to be incredibly impactful during her time at CU. "Being 5'1 and less than 100 pounds makes manipulations hard," Shafer said. "Dr. Amy McDevitt gave me so many tips and tricks, I truly feel like I made a friend and colleague out of her." Shafer also expressed appreciation for Dr. Mary Jane Rapport and Dr. Lisa Dannemiller, who lent guidance around her pediatric pursuits, as well as her clinical education advisor, Dr. Catherine Bilyeu, who was instrumental in guiding her to clinical experiences that would set her up for her desired career path.

Following graduation and having just passed her boards, Shafer hopes to find a job in pediatrics, working with children with disabilities and functional impairments. "CU Anschutz has put me in a good position to provide for children in any location, rural or urban, and has allowed me to be well-rounded and diverse," she said. Shafer is considering pursuing a pediatric residency and likely becoming a Pediatric Certified Specialist.

Prior to graduation, each student completes a final 16-week clinical rotation. Shafer was fortunate enough to come full-circle and complete her rotation at Shriners' in Salt Lake City, where her connection to physical therapy first began.

student profile

RYAN MACNEILL

Ryan MacNeill was born and raised in Helena, Montana. After beginning his undergraduate degree in Journalism at the University of Montana in Missoula, MT, MacNeill started exploring physical therapy when he switched his major to Exercise Science.

Having developed an interest in exercise and weightlifting in his later years of high school, MacNeill found himself regularly watching YouTube videos and reading blogs to learn more about exercises and movements to train specific muscle groups. "I began to learn anatomy and physiology through my coursework, which only increased my interest in the exercises I performed," he said. "Through developing this passion for human movement and my desire to pursue a career where I worked with people to solve problems, physical therapy seemed like an excellent path."

When the time came for MacNeill to select a school for his Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree, he was drawn to CU's interdisciplinary campus and the emphasis that CU PT places on high-quality education as well as the importance of life balance for student success.

MacNeill was a part of the leadership team for the manual therapy student interest group. The group would meet for skills practicing and invite experts in orthopedic manual physical therapy to share their knowledge and experience with students. "I have gained some excellent mentors and colleagues in both the program faculty and some amazing clinical instructors," he commented.

Adjusting to virtual learning and guidelines related to COVID-19 was certainly difficult rounding out the curriculum. "At the end of the day, I was just happy that our faculty and the university were able to keep our curriculum and graduation on track," noted MacNeill. "It was undoubtedly a challenging task for our educators to accomplish and I applaud them for their excellent work in uncertain times."

"During my time at CU, I have received a top-notch education while making amazing personal and professional relationships and some wonderful memories," said MacNeill. "To anyone who wants to become a part of a wonderful community and move the field of physical therapy forward, I recommend CU PT."

MacNeill was recognized as the recipient of the Richard D. Krugman Award by his peers in the graduating Class of 2020. Richard D. Krugman, MD, served as Dean of the University of Colorado School of Medicine for 24 years. Fondly known as the "Dean of Deans" across the nation, Dr. Krugman established this award to honor an individual who portrays the spirit of service to individuals and the community, fostering caring and quality of life for people at all levels of society. This individual is compassionate toward others, creates connections and values ongoing innovation. The recipient of this award mirrors Dr. Krugman's leadership through excellence, integrity and high quality work.

In his nomination, MacNeill's tremendous passion and positive attitude not only towards the physical therapy profession, but to every other aspect of life that he engages in, was recognized. "He sheds light on situations and topics in desperate need of attention and is willing to openly have real, and sometimes uncomfortable, discussions about them because he understands the importance," said a classmate. It was noted that MacNeill raises the bar academically with authentic interest and continuous engagement throughout the DPT education.

"Ryan is a tremendous ambassador and leader for our program, the profession, and healthcare as a whole," said a colleague, "but most importantly, he is an exceptional human being that remains humble, practical, and ambitious for more."

Despite the adaptations needed for physical therapists across the country, the future of the profession remains bright with new opportunities. MacNeill added that delivering physical therapy services in a telehealth or remote-format is only going to continue to grow and adapt. "We will occupy the health and wellness and preventative healthcare space more as our healthcare system becomes more proactive in nature," he said. "One of our largest roles as physical therapists is to address the growing epidemic of chronic diseases and pain."

Following graduation, MacNeill plans on becoming a board-certified orthopedic specialist and has a special interest in treating conditions within the craniofacial and cervical regions including headache disorders and temporomandibular disorders.

"What the future holds remains uncertain," said MacNeill. "However, I know that CU Anschutz and CU PT has given me the skills and experience to succeed anywhere!"



MacNeill at a clinical rotation.

in remembrance **LAUREN KLEIN**

It is with great sadness that the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program mourns the loss of former student, Lauren Klein.

Lauren entered the University of Colorado Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program with the Class of 2019 and then returned to join the Class of 2020 following a medical leave of absence. Her return to the PT Program was interrupted again, and she was awarded a Master of Science in Rehabilitation degree in December 2019. The faculty and staff of the PT program fondly remember Lauren and the excitement she had when she entered the program, ready to fulfill her dream of becoming a DPT.

During her volunteer and physical therapy aide experiences at University of Colorado Hospital (UCHealth), Lauren's passion and dedication to become a physical therapist was evident and continued as she matriculated into the DPT Program.

After her medical leave, Lauren exhibited a newfound resilience and passion for being part of an individual's rehabilitation journey. She was truly a shining light of fortitude and determination to those who knew her.

Her continued care for others was displayed throughout her life, and the program is pleased to announce the establishment of the **Student Support Fund in Physical Therapy**. This fund is established in memory of Lauren Klein, to honor her compassion towards everyone she met and to recognize her resilience and perseverance.

The Student Support Fund will provide financial support to CU DPT students who experience unanticipated events such as accidents, medical emergencies, natural disasters, temporary emergency housing needs, food insecurity, and other unforeseen circumstances. Priority is given to those students who have exhausted most other means of financial support (familial support, financial aid, student loans, etc.). The funds will be provided in the form of a one-time allocation, which does not need to be repaid.

We are appreciative to an anonymous alumna of the PT program who generously contributed \$2,000, and to Dr. Harris-Love, who developed an opportunity whereby the PT program will match all gifts up to \$5,000. It is with great humbleness and love that we recognize Lauren's legacy of generosity and kindness through this fund.

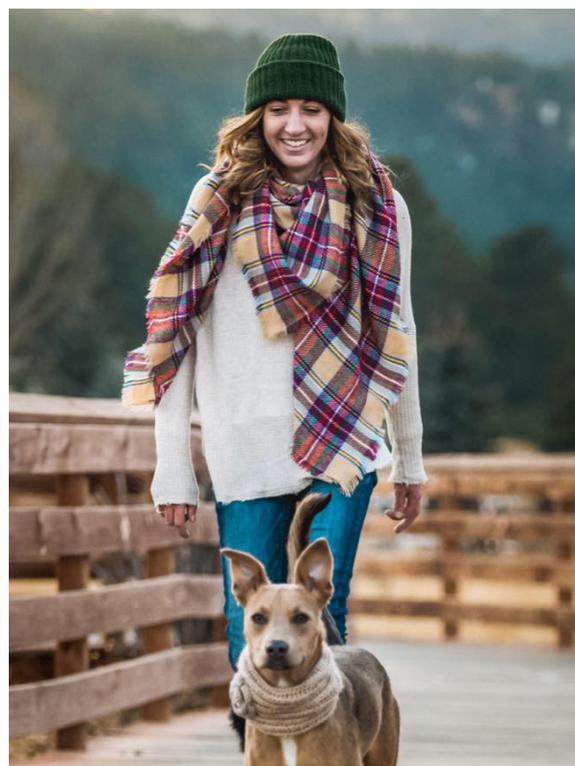


There are several ways to support this fund.

To make a gift by check, mail to the following:
University of Colorado Foundation
PO Box 17126
Denver, CO 80217-9155

Make Checks Payable to:
University of Colorado Foundation
Memo Section: 0223396

To make a gift in support of this fund online,
visit the following link: <https://giving.cu.edu/fund/student-support-fund-physical-therapy>





congratulations, CLASS OF 2020

On December 12, 2020, the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program celebrated the Class of 2020 with a virtual graduation ceremony for 65 graduates.

Students were able to hear remarks from University leadership, Class President Aimee St. Martin and Associate Professor Dan Malone, PT, PhD delivered the convocation address. Malone referenced a speech by comedian Will Ferrell, where he encouraged people to “Keep throwing darts at the dartboard.” Malone noted how important it is to embrace opportunity, to evolve, and to welcome a different path than what was originally planned.

Current Professor and Pediatric Residency Program Director, Mary Jane Rapport, PT, DPT, PhD, FAPTA, was presented the Cerasoli Award for Outstanding Contributions to PT Education. The award recognizes significant contributions toward the academic or clinical education of student physical therapists at the University of Colorado. Rapport has distinguished herself in her professional career as a leader, educator, practitioner, and mentor, but particularly shone throughout the uncertainty of 2020. She has worked tirelessly with students and faculty to ensure that students could continue to learn effectively and safely. As other physical therapy residency programs around the country were forced to shut down their programs this year, she found creative and innovative ways to ensure the pediatric residency program could continue effectively and safely.

The Class of 2020 was certainly resilient and adapted to the turbulence that the year brought. Times are uncertain, but there is hope to be found in the innovations that our field is embracing that will ultimately make healthcare delivery more efficient and address the needs of many communities.

A special congratulations to the following graduates who were recognized with program awards:

Herbert J. Levy Humanitarian Award:

Blake Pepper-Tunick

National PT Student Honor Society:

Maggie Burns, Deana Gordon, Jenna Griffith, Tara Loveland, Mariah Rickert, David Romero, Aimee St Martin, Morgan Thonhoff, Claire Zwaan

Mary Gosnell Award:

Lauryn Andre, Kylie Shafer

Outstanding Capstone Award:

John Bercel

Outstanding DPT Student Award:

Aimee St Martin

PT Program Altruism in Action Award:

Claire Zwaan

Richard D. Krugman Award:

Ryan MacNeil

GRANT CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR OPTIMIZATION *of tele-rehabilitation delivery*

Professor Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley, PT, PhD, FAPTA, along with Associate Professor Amy Nordon-Craft, PT, DSc and post-doctoral fellow Jacob Capin, PT, DPT, PhD, received a National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant for COVID-19 related research. Additional investigators include Kristine Erlandson, MD and Sarah Jolley, MD.

The \$523,492 NIH grant, Predictors of Recovery and the App-Facilitated Tele-Rehabilitation (AFTER) Program for COVID Survivors, focuses on investigating the practicality and initial usefulness of a multicomponent tele-rehabilitation program during COVID-19 recovery.

The work of Stevens-Lapsley's group will directly translate to other medically complex populations who can benefit from innovative tele-rehabilitation. The use of telehealth and tele-rehabilitation has certainly increased over the years, but in most cases these populations are high functioning. This study uniquely helps to provide an understanding of how to apply tele-rehabilitation in medically complex, rural, and underserved populations, which will inform clinical practice for a variety of populations.

Long-term consequences of COVID-19 show ongoing physical and neuropsychological impairments and when combined with immobility, limited in-hospital interventions, and heightened inflammation, results in detrimental effects. All of that has been further exacerbated by more limited opportunities for post-hospitalization rehabilitation with 'stay-at-home' restrictions.

There's a great need to identify predictors of multisystem recovery and long-term health in COVID-19 survivors, and to deliver safe and effective rehabilitative care to medically complex patients, especially when they face post-hospitalization barriers to in-person care.

The research team includes cross-disciplinary expertise in Infectious Diseases, Geriatrics, Critical Care Medicine, Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation, and Statistics, and leverages both previous collaborative experiences and innovative new collaborations to enable success. Stevens-Lapsley has more than 20 years of clinical research experience in working with medically complex patients and interdisciplinary teams in implementing rehabilitation programs, with prior experience in implementing a tele-rehabilitation platform. Additional expertise is provided by

Nordon-Craft, who has overseen multicomponent rehabilitation programs in hospitalized patients receiving intensive care as well as home health. As a postdoctoral fellow and primary interventionist, Capin helped develop the treatment protocol, created the database, and is helping coordinate the logistical aspects of the research study. The team began enrolling patients in December.

Current research on tele-rehabilitation services is incredibly limited, with no published studies following a critical care hospital stay and only one other trial developing multi-disciplinary telehealth strategies in addition to in-person care.

Individuals who were hospitalized with COVID within the past month and are still experiencing functional decline are currently being recruited for the study. All tele-rehabilitation services are free.

The program was developed around key elements of rehabilitation that patients and providers have identified as important aspects:

1. social component
2. ability to communicate with healthcare providers
3. ability to monitor response to exercise and progress
4. individualized care that changes based on a person's response.

Furthermore, a unique feature of tele-rehabilitation involves the Blue Marble Health Platform, which contains avatar-led standardized tests, personalized exercise programs, activity monitoring and educational modules for disease surveillance and rehabilitation.

Aiming to determine predictors of improved post-hospitalization recovery, this study will immediately contribute to what is known about the course of recovery for survivors of COVID-19, as well as predictors for prolonged impairment during recovery.

Overall, development of effective tele-rehabilitation programs as alternatives to delivering rehabilitation to medically complex populations could transform the way in which acute rehabilitation and post-hospital care for all patients is delivered. This will aid in preparing for anticipated future needs and facilitate applications to other populations.



Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley, PT, PhD, FAPTA



Amy Nordon-Craft, PT, DSc



Jacob Capin, PT, DPT, PhD

FACULTY *achievements*

Mike Bade, PT, DPT, PhD, OCS, FAAOMPT and **Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley**, PT, PhD, FAPTA were awarded the Rose Excellence in Research Award from the APTA Orthopaedics Section for their article, *Home-Health-Care Physical Therapy Improves Early Functional Recovery of Medicare Beneficiaries After Total Knee Arthroplasty*.

Lara Canham, PT, DPT, OCS was appointed to the ACAPT's National Consortium of Clinical Educators (NCCE) taskforce on Pre-Admission Observation Hours and Co-Chair of the Colorado Chapter of APTA Awards Committee.

Lisa Dannemiller, PT, DSc, PCS was promoted to Associate Professor. She was also appointed to the Children's Hospital Colorado medical staff as Allied Health Staff along with **Mary Jane Rapport**, PT, DPT, PhD, FAPTA.

Michael Harris-Love, PT, MPT, DSc, FGSA was appointed Vice Chair of Learning, Development and Inclusion for CU Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation. The position will provide strategic vision and leadership concerning the recruitment, development and retention of underrepresented minority trainees and faculty members. Additionally, he was appointed as the founding Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for the APTA Colorado Chapter to promote a more equitable physical therapy profession across the state.

Dawn Magnusson, PT, PhD was granted a 3rd year of funding as a scholar in the Comprehensive Opportunities for Rehabilitation Research Training (CORRT) program.

Mark Mañago, PT, DPT, PhD, NCS was granted his initial CORRT K12 award. He also received a grant award from the Paralyzed Veterans of America Education Foundation to host the 10th Annual International Gait MS Symposium. Mañago was awarded a pilot grant from the Consortium of Multiple Sclerosis Centers to study blood flow restriction training in people with MS.

Amy Nordon-Craft, PT, DSc is a co-investigator on an NIA Grant investigating the feasibility and initial efficacy of a multicomponent tele-rehabilitation program during COVID-19 recovery, along with **Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley**, PT, PhD, FAPTA.

Joe Palmer, PT, DPT successfully completed and defended his first-year PhD synthesis project titled: Using the Partnership Success Theory to Explore Academic Physical Therapy Site Visits on the Academic-Clinical Partnership from the Clinical Instructor Perspective and received a "pass with distinction" rating.

Mary Jane Rapport, PT, DPT, PhD, FAPTA was invited to join the editorial board of the *Journal of Physical Therapy Education* (JOPTE) for a three-year term. She was the recipient of the PT Program Cerasoli Educator Award. She assumed the role of Co-Director of the Teaching Scholars Program in the School of Medicine, and is a co-investigator on the Defining Excellence in Residency Education: The Next Step in Demonstrating Value study funded by the Academy of Physical Therapy Education.

Eric Sawyer, PT, DPT, OCS, STC was accepted into the Teaching Scholars Program. He was also elected to a three-year appointment on the Academy of Physical Therapy Education Awards Committee.

Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley, PT, PhD, FAPTA was recognized as a Catherine Worthingham Fellow. The FAPTA designation is the highest honor among APTA categories. She was also awarded the University of Delaware Physical Therapy Alumni Award.

Tami Struessel, PT, DPT, OCS, MTC was promoted to Associate Professor. She was also elected Delegate at Large for the APTA Colorado Chapter. She and her faculty co-authors **Amy Nordon-Craft**, PT, DSc and **Robyn Gisbert**, PT, DPT, were awarded the J. Warren Perry Award for best reviewed article of the year in the *Journal of Allied Health* for their article, "Knowledge and attitudes of physical therapy students across a longitudinal healthcare systems-focused patient safety curriculum."

Meghan Hernandez, PT, DPT, PCS recently transitioned to a dual appointment with the university, with a primary appointment in PM&R and secondary appointment in the Department of Pediatrics. Also, she was accepted into the University of Colorado Denver Doctor of Education (EdD) in Leadership for Educational Equity program, with a concentration in professional learning and technology.

Amy McDevitt, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT and **Paul Mintken**, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT were invited to be on the authorship team for the *Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy* (JOSPT) Neck Pain Clinical Practice Guidelines revision.

Mike Pascoe, PhD completed his service on the Healthcare Working Group of the Strategic Planning committee for the University of Colorado System. He also served as a co-investigator on a research project that brought practicing clinicians back into anatomy lab for further training with whole-body donors funded by the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

Andrew C. Smith, PT, DPT, PhD recently joined on faculty as Assistant Professor. He was granted a second year of funding for his NIH NCMRR R03 Early Career Investigator Award. He also received a Pilot Grant from the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Finally, he was elected to the nominating committee for the APTA Academy of Neurologic Physical Therapy Spinal Cord Injury Special Interest Group.

ALUMNAE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Associated Faculty Colleen Kigin, PT, DPT, MS, MPA, FAPTA, Class of 1970, will deliver the APTA's 52nd McMillan lecture, which will take place around the Association's centennial gala in September 2021.



The University of Colorado Board of Regents awarded alumna Joanne Posner-Mayer, PT, Class of 1973, with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.



advancing the profession

ESTABLISHING A FACULTY DEVELOPMENT RESIDENCY

The University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program has submitted an application for a non-clinical Faculty Residency Program. Headed up by Professor Mary Jane Rapport, PT, DPT, PhD, FAPTA, with support from Associate Professor Dana Judd, PT, DPT, PhD, the residency is a structured, post-professional education program for licensed physical therapists who aspire to an academic faculty position.

“This isn’t a common residency, so the initiative will meet an important educational need and distinguish us among other institutions in the Rocky Mountain region,” noted Program Director Michael Harris-Love, PT, MPT, DSc, FGSA.

The mission of the Faculty Residency Program is to develop capable faculty who are prepared to engage in innovative education by providing a curriculum complete with didactic and mentored experience that supports excellence in the preparation of future healthcare providers and participation in academia.

There is a shortage of emerging available faculty for physical therapy education programs. The development of new faculty to educate and continue to move the profession forward is essential for continued growth and CU PT is committed to being a part of that charge.

“With only two other non-clinical Faculty Residency programs currently accredited in physical therapist education nationally,” said Rapport, “our exceptionally strong teaching faculty and an array of educational resources associated with medical and healthcare education on this campus, we are well situated to provide this type of residency.”

The program is designed to significantly advance preparation of the physical therapist as a highly qualified educator and productive scholar. Potential as a future leader in physical therapist education is developed through multiple teaching experiences, structured mentorship opportunities, and mentored educational scholarship throughout the program. The program also offers access to the resources of the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program on the Anschutz Medical Campus.

“There are a lot of reasons to be excited as we navigate through this,” said Harris-Love. “Leveraging the expertise of our faculty to help us move forward in terms of post-professional education will be a great way to demonstrate our expertise as a program.”

The Faculty Development Residency is currently in candidacy status, expecting to be fully accredited by the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE) in 2022. The program plans to begin accepting applications for the 2022-2023 cycle in October 2021.



*Mary Jane Rapport, PT,
DPT, PhD, FAPTA*

message from the chair of the **SCHOLARSHIP & ENDOWMENT BOARD (SEB)**

Dear CU PT Program Alumni, Supporters, and Friends,

I am so pleased to be writing to you as we turn the page on 2020 and look to a brighter 2021. Seeing so many of you in Denver at the APTA Combined Sections Meeting (CSM) and our reception back in February 2020 was so heartwarming. Many friends and connections were made throughout the evening and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. Little did we know that such gatherings would not be able to be repeated for the rest of the year. I have been staying connected as much as possible with Zoom and other virtual meeting modes, but it is surely not the same as seeing you at the reception, or passing you at a street corner in downtown Denver en route to a CSM meeting.

My most fervent hope is that you and your families have been well and that your professional activities have continued, albeit often in an alternative mode. Through these months, I have been in contact with many physical therapists, and the dramatic changes in their worlds include added importance to our presence for patients in the ICU or hospitalized with COVID, lack of in-person time for outpatients, but dramatic learnings using telehealth, or real time changes in education including virtual clinical experiences. The list is long and quite telling regarding the importance of our profession in caring for those patients who are so in need of our services. With this in mind, please watch for webinar and other communications in the coming year designed to cultivate meaningful relationships and foster innovation. The Physical Therapy Program, Physical Therapy Alumni Association, and the Scholarship and Endowment Board are committed to collaborating and co-sponsoring events focusing on the different experiences that national and local PT leaders have experienced in recent months and to support each other in these extraordinary times.

While the world changed dramatically, generosity knew no bounds. I cannot tell you how thankful and proud the Scholarship and Endowment Board is to announce that 2020 is one of our best fundraising years since the inception of the board in 2012. We reached new heights in philanthropy and developed new innovative programs because of our alumni and benefactors. Total fundraising reached nearly half a million dollars and we awarded \$225,000 in total scholarship support to our dynamic students. To give this some perspective, eight years ago the PT program bestowed \$1,000 annually in total scholarship support. It is a tribute to you, to those who work with us in the Advancement Office, spearheaded by Travis Leiker, and to the ongoing support you provide to our alma mater and to students who so need our assistance.

Finally, it has been my pleasure to serve as the Chair of the Scholarship and Endowment Board, and to announce that Andrew (Andy) Levy, PT, Class of 1977 and longtime private practitioner in Denver, will be assuming the Chair effective January 2021. Andy is just the right person to take on this role at this time, and his knowledge of the student needs and the program, as well as his long family ties to CU Physical Therapy are so important to the SEB and the program. Andy is the son of Herbert Levy, who graduated in 1948 as part of the first CU Physical Therapy class, and has been highlighted in previous CU communications.

As Andy recently said, "The CU Physical Therapy Program has given my family and me remarkable opportunities. My father had a strong commitment to the program as I also have. I am honored to continue the relationship and take on this role, building upon the success of my predecessors Pat Grant, Joel Larmore, and Colleen Kigin. The PT program has a special place in my family and to give back in this way, is an honor." Needless to say, the program has had an indelible mark on the Levy Family and likewise, their impact on the program will last for generations to come.



Colleen M Kigin

Colleen Kigin, PT, DPT, MS, MPA, FAPTA
Clinical Professor, Physical Therapy Program
Chair, Scholarship & Endowment Board

change my story

PROVIDING LIGHT WHEN THE FUTURE SEEMS DIM

The University of Colorado Office of Advancement and Physical Therapy Program are pleased to announce the creation of the *Kenda Fuller, PT Fund to Enhance Cultural Balance in Physical Therapy*. Fuller is an alumna of the Class of 1979 and has remained deeply connected to the program, taking students for clinical rotations, teaching in the program for 30 years, and through a textbook that is used by the CU PT students and is now in its fourth edition.

Throughout her four-decade career, Fuller significantly impacted the profession, her colleagues and young professionals. Some of her greatest impacts have been on her patients she treated, as a full-time therapist and private practice owner of South Valley Physical Therapy, from where she retired last year.

The Kenda Fuller Fund is designed to support efforts to engage and inspire high school students. The students Fuller hopes to help will be those from diverse backgrounds and historically underrepresented communities. Through the fund, students will learn about the profession, gain self-confidence and excel in the initial steps of pursuing an undergraduate program. Fuller is excited for the fund to ultimately provide support to better position this population of students for a successful application to the program.

“This has been an idea that has formed over the past seven, eight years,” said Fuller. “I started talking to Margaret Schenkman (Former Program Director), and she suggested I talk to Lisa Dannemiller (Associate Professor) who already has relationships with area high schools.”

With her own son going through high school during the time, and seeing his process of exploring college options, Fuller witnessed many inner-city kids not moving forward in their journeys, for a number of reasons, but mostly not knowing how or where to start with some of that groundwork. For many, the expectation of a college degree is absent, as well as family resources. Fuller wants to engage not just with the student, but with the parents as well.

In surveying diversity and equity within the field of physical therapy, Fuller noted that the first step is access to care, from pediatric through geriatric populations across cultural and socioeconomic boundaries. “If we create another professional, then that professional is going to have healthcare and if they have healthcare, then their children will be covered,” she said. As professionals with more diverse backgrounds are created, it enhances the connection to patients in many areas.

The fund has specific objectives, such as:

- Coordinate and implement new community partnership initiatives
- Deliver programming to students enrolled at East High School and other area high schools as deemed feasible
- Explore and generate excitement about careers in physical therapy
- Support students during their final phases of a high school curriculum
- Follow students from the high school program and assist those admitted to CU Downtown campus (where an existing PT pipeline program is underway)

Over the last few years, entry to physical therapy schools and the CU PT program, in particular, has become incredibly competitive. By cultivating students at a younger age, their self-esteem is boosted to give them increased opportunities. Fuller seems to be most passionate about real change taking place in culture. “I’ve had the



Kenda Fuller, PT

opportunity to travel quite a bit and everywhere I’ve gone I learned from seeing the differences in medicine culture, both as a person and professional,” noted Fuller. “If our only culture in PT school is that where the majority of the students are from similar privileged socioeconomic backgrounds, the class itself will lack the access to cultural understanding.” Looking past the numbers, the importance is about the faces you see and the opportunity to embrace and understand cultural difference. “If we don’t have that atmosphere in the classroom, we’re just missing something. It isn’t changing fast enough,” she said.

The importance of buy-in and involvement from current students is critical. “They need to understand the value of being exposed to cultural differences in the classroom before they even get to the clinic,” said Fuller. “The more students in the program with a variety of cultures and colors, the better the classroom environment is going to be.”

Current student David Bruton, Class of 2021, has had the opportunity to get to know Fuller well. He completed his prerequisite observation hours at her clinic, and the two have remained connected since that time, with Fuller tapping him for this new effort. “David had said to me, ‘It is my responsibility as a privileged professional to bring this forward because the people who are underprivileged don’t have the power’ and that’s commanding,” said Fuller.



David Bruton

Fuller plans to be involved in determining benchmarks of success, constantly exploring new opportunities to increase cultural balance, and working with the program's Scholarship and Awards Committee to designate some scholarships to those students from this program who succeed in entering the PT program at CU. "The timing to bring this out is perfect," noted Fuller, "with my recent retirement I can really focus on the work here."

Admittedly, Fuller is connected. "I know a lot of people and my strength is in those numbers," she said. Fuller looks forward to gathering her influence in the Denver metro area with therapists that she has worked with and has taught to increase engagement around this initiative. "When people are more engaged with the actual activity, then they pull it into their world."

Fuller was awarded the 2019 Physical Therapy Program Alumni Achievement Award in recognition of her accomplishments in the

profession, commitment to her patients and community, and ongoing relationship with the program.

Fuller was among the first to take the first APTA neurologic clinical specialty (NCS) exam when there were no mentors, no financial gains, no fame, and she took the exam based on her own commitment. She co-authored *Pathology: Implications for the Physical Therapist*, a text that is widely respected and the first pathology text that was designed specifically for therapists. Kenda has been a strong advocate for the profession, serving as the APTA Colorado Chapter President and recently, being a major contributor to the passing of Colorado legislation that includes physical therapists as providers who are eligible to return adolescents to sport and school after concussion. Additionally, Fuller was recently nominated to serve on the CU PT Scholarship and Endowment Board.

Fuller looks forward to changing stories, providing hope, and observing the positive change in physical therapy and beyond.

a letter from the **PTAA PRESIDENT**

It is hard to believe, and feels like a lifetime ago, that 382 members of our alumni community including: current CU DPT students, CU PT Faculty, clinical instructors, CU PT staff, and 220 alumni from every decade since the 1950s, came together for a celebration at this year's Combined Sections Meeting (CSM) in Denver. It gave us an opportunity to reflect on our past as we celebrated Kenda Fuller's incredible career, as recipient of the 2019 Alumni Achievement Award, and looked toward our future, as we welcomed Dr. Michael Harris-Love as the new CU PT Program Director. Thank you to everybody in attendance and to those who helped behind the scenes. The event would not have been the success that it was without you.

Like most of you, the remainder of 2020 has continued to challenge the Alumni Association and has forced us to evaluate and adapt our engagement processes. We are lucky to have the resources at the Alumni Relations Office to assist us through this tumultuous time. Their team were quick to create initiatives to provide financial assistance for students struggling during the onset of the pandemic and assisted with fundraising efforts to obtain necessary PPE for current and incoming DPT students. I owe a great deal of gratitude for their efforts and for those of you who donated.

While I have also grown tired of "virtual" meetings and lectures, it has brought with it some unexpected benefits. One of these benefits has been the ability to bring together both a diverse panel of speakers and audience with no geographic restrictions. The PTAA, in a joint venture with the program and CU PT Scholarship and Endowment Board, will be taking advantage of this benefit by putting together a COVID-19 Physical Therapy Panel Webinar. We are excited to hear a variety of expert insights on how this pandemic has impacted current clinical practice and how clinical processes will continue to evolve as we move forward, and hope that it will lead to more virtual engagement opportunities for our alumni.

I sincerely hope that you and your loved ones stay healthy and safe. Continue to be good to one another and remember to reach out to your fellow alumni during these stressful times. Please feel free to contact the PTAA at cupt.alumni@ucdenver.edu if you need assistance or would like to find ways to become more involved.



As always, I appreciate the opportunity to serve you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Loar". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Tim Loar PT, DPT, Class of 2016D
President, University of Colorado Physical Therapy Alumni Association

ELIZABETH FONKEN

class of 2016

What's your educational background?

I went to Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington for undergrad and got a BS in Health Science with a Psychology Minor.

What drew you to choosing CU for your DPT degree?

I am originally from Colorado and wanted to move back to the state after undergrad. My older brother got into medical school at CU, so I thought it would be fun to go to grad school at the same place. I also wanted to be on an interprofessional campus because I thought it would be valuable for my future ability to interact with other medical professionals. Lastly, CU had the most beautiful cadaver lab I had ever seen with an amazing view of the front range. If I had to spend hours dissecting, at least I would have a good view.

What is a fond experience you can recall from your time in the program?

I have so many great memories from CU. I think it was the little things that stuck with me the most that really are fundamental to the culture of CU PT. Things like lunch breaks playing volleyball on the lawn, sitting in Fulginiti listening to people play the piano, time spent learning from preceptors at places like Stout Street or DAWN.

I do have a funny story from my second week of school. Dr. Nancy Bookstein was still teaching anatomy. A tornado warning went off. All the students were busily trying to cover up the cadavers and make sure there were no scalpels out before leaving the lab and Dr. Bookstein comes

“The biggest takeaway I have from CU was that it is about the person in front of you. The point of our profession is giving the patients the ability to meet their personal goals. It is about partnering with patients to optimize their quality of life.”

running through the lab yelling, “Leave the bodies! They are already dead!”

How long have you been a CI for the program?

I am a CI for both CU and Regis. I have been doing this for three years. Teaching is my favorite part of my job. I love helping students learning how to think and not just how to memorize facts. I actually enjoy this more than the clinical side of my work. I also am a lab assistant at CU for in foundations of interventions, exam eval, neuromuscular and medical conditions. Last summer, I started doing guest lectures in integrated practice as well regarding the PT role in COVID.

What has your career path been like post-graduation?

I have tried a lot of different things in the last four years. I have worked in acute care, acute rehab and out-patient orthopedics. I started splitting my time between acute care and acute rehab at a level one trauma center. The entire time I was worried about losing my manual skills, so I dabbled in out-patient ortho for a few months. I quickly learned that I do better in environment where there are less protocols, less predictability, and that require constant change and flexibility, so I returned to acute care at the trauma hospital. Over the last year, I have spent most of my time in the ICU's.

I have been at Denver Health for the four years I have been a PT. I have become the main vestibular therapist, one of the ICU therapists, primary coverage for the acute rehab unit. I work with the more neurologically complex patients and was one of the first couple therapists to start seeing COVID patients. My role is to fill in all the gaps and be the best generalist that I can be.

Do you have any particular special interests?

Vestibular rehab is my passion. If I could do that all day long I would. I do mostly neuro. My first month as a new grad, I was covering the acute rehab therapist's vacation and I had never worked in that setting before. Most of



the patients had severe TBI and SCI and I had so much fun learning about that and having an hour to an hour and a half to spend with those patients that I just kept asking to cover acute more often. Before long most of my population was neuro.

Over the last nine months, 75% of my overall caseload has been patients with COVID. I am currently also working toward becoming a neurology certified specialist and will take the boards for that in March.

Can you talk about your role related to COVID patients?

Our census was low due to fewer traumas because people were quarantined, so I had to step it up in the ICU. It was a learning experience and I was scared. But these patients have been some of the most rewarding and life-giving patients for me to work with in my entire career. I got used to it pretty quickly, but it was also a fun cognitive challenge for me because they were the most medically unstable patients I had worked with in my entire career and I had no evidence-based practice to fall back on. We have spread the ICU caseload out across our whole team to prevent burnout. Some of these patients I have worked with for upwards of six months due to complications from COVID, so it is nice to get to be the person that really changes the person's quality of life after they survive this disease.

Where do you see your future career going in the next five years?

I've had my eyes set on trying to get into academics. Teaching and being around physical therapy students has always been my favorite part of my job and it rejuvenates me. Five years from now I hope to have my NCS, to be faculty at a DPT program and to be working on my EdD. I will still maintain clinical hours, but I foresee that more with an outpatient neuro population geared toward vestibular rehab and/or a PRN acute care job on the side.



clinical instructor of the year **REBECCA MEDINA**

For Rebecca Medina, PT, DPT, being a clinical instructor relates to a passion for teaching.

“I feel very strongly that clinical rotations are the students’ few times they get to learn from a practicing clinician and apply their skills and knowledge in a clinical setting before becoming autonomous,” said Medina. “It is my duty to pass along whatever knowledge and skill I can to push them towards being the best practitioners they can be.”

Alumna of the University of Colorado Physical Therapy Program Class of 2011, Medina enjoys the challenge of taking on different students at different levels who all have different personalities and learning styles. “I try to spend the time meeting them where they are at in their learning process and finding ways to progress them forward,” she said.

CU PT Director of Clinical Education, Jenny Rodriguez, PT, DPT, DCE commented, “Since Becca herself graduated from the CU PT Program, it has been especially rewarding to see her evolve from student to graduate to clinical specialist, and now an outstanding clinical educator.”

A clinical instructor for the program since 2013, Medina has mentored numerous students over the years between rotations, fieldwork, and in the curriculum through the acute care elective and medical conditions labs, as well as moving to the 2:1 student model for the past two years.

to find her passion in critical care and providing physical therapy in the ICU.

Medina started her career in a small community hospital (Platte Valley Medical Center) doing both inpatient and outpatient, while also filling in at UCHHealth. Medina said, “I was certainly working a lot! But gaining a large variety of experiences as a new grad which was great.” She transitioned to UCHHealth fulltime in 2015 to be a primary physical therapist for the medical ICU program. After several years treating medically complex patients in the ICU, she has now focused practice in the cardiac ICU and cardiothoracic ICUs. In 2017, she became a cardiovascular and pulmonary certified specialist.

Medina noted that she starts each clinical rotation by telling her students, “If I haven’t convinced you by the end of this rotation that there is more to acute care than walking patients, then I haven’t done my job.”

“I think all of my students would say without a doubt that they knew what I was passionate about and they have all heard my speeches about acute care and our role as doctorate level providers in this setting,” she said.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Medina has worked with patients who have transitioned out of the units, but have prolonged recovery due to high oxygen needs and need for rehab. “It has been interesting to see how COVID can have such a dramatic impact on a patient’s lung function,” said Medina. “With opportunities to co-treat, our relationships with our respiratory therapist colleagues have strengthened.”

“The hospital is in a constant state of change and everyone has had to be flexible and adapt to the ever-changing situation,” noted Medina. “I have spent extra time mentoring my colleagues as our staffing and coverage often has to change on short notice to allow for increased coverage of the COVID-19 ICUs and floors.”

“I think we are all in a time of change currently and one thing that I think will potentially be positive with the pandemic is the increased use of telehealth,” said Medina. “For example, the patients that come from rural areas to be transplanted at UCHHealth and the ability to provide increased PT services potentially via telehealth could be a great way to engage with these patients.”

CONGRATULATIONS!



“One good thing to happen in 2020 for me was getting engaged! I am currently spending a lot of my spare time planning a wedding for next year!”

“I have a great relationship with the program,” noted Medina. “As a graduate myself, there is an ease working with CU students because of my familiarity.”

Recent graduate, Olivia Reed, nominated Medina for the Clinical Instructor of the Year recognition. “Even after my clinical rotation ended, I have maintained a strong relationship with her as I value her and her qualities as a mentor,” said Reed. “She has been a great soundboard as I have deliberated what direction I want to take my career, and has provided excellent advice and support in the process.”

Initially interested in outpatient physical therapy, Medina’s acute care rotations within the program led her

clinical instructor **CHRIS TRAUT**



Nominated by recent graduate Christina Hunt, Class of 2020, Chris Traut, DPT, FAAOMPT, OCS was recognized as a Clinical Instructor of the Year by the CU PT program.

In describing her experience working with Traut at Concentra in Thornton, Colorado, Hunt noted that Traut is committed to preparing students for entry level practice, lending mentorship and guidance, but also encouraging students to be as independent as possible. “He is always asking what the student needs and would like to focus on; he is willing to practice everything from manual therapy to mock interviews to teaching students how to use the phone system,” said Hunt.

“I have been fortunate to work with Chris a number of times as he has mentored several of my advises in clinical experiences and has a long track record of supporting the development of both DPT students and Manual Therapy Fellows in their ongoing education” said Senior Instructor Eric Sawyer, PT, DPT, OCS, STC. “Not only does he seek to foster learning in his students, but also to learn from them as well, receiving feedback that will make him a better clinical instructor.”

Hunt added, “Chris loves learning from students and frequently reiterates the idea that we are not responsible for knowing everything, but we are responsible for creating the best environment and opportunity to share what we all know.”

Hunt also emphasized how Traut advocates for patients in the Concentra system to receive therapy early and frequently in order to improve their outcomes. “When individual patients need care outside the realm of physical therapy, Chris reaches out to other providers to make sure they can receive the care they need.”

GET TO KNOW CHRIS TRAUT, DPT, FAAOMPT, OCS

What’s your educational background?

I pursued my DPT from AT Still University, it was great and enabled me to improve my thinking and treatment as a clinician and have better conversations w/my DPT students.

What led you to choosing physical therapy?

It was the hot occupation when I graduated high school, when I did my volunteer hours I thought, “This is pretty cool, I could do this.”

Can you talk about your current position?

I have been with Concentra for 10 years. I started as a center level leader/clinician, moved into administration, did three years there and decided I liked clinical work better.

How long have you been a CI for CU?

Four years, I take about two CU students a year, they all come in motivated and well prepared.

Why do you enjoy being a CI?

It’s like bringing the University to me for free! I get to improve as a clinician, glean new ideas and techniques from students while I can pass on what I know.

Can you speak to the importance about clinical instructors in DPT education?

I like to think of being a CI as helping a student stand on my shoulders – give them the best of what I know while at the same time learn from mistakes I have made.

Are there any changes you hope are coming to the field in the future?

I think if we have the right leaders we’ll serve in more advanced practitioner role: ordering non-narcotics, x-rays, etc.

What do you do in your spare time?

Making music, hiking, carpentry, and spending time with my amazing family.



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