

U N I V E R S I T Y O F P I T T S B U R G H

FACETS

S C H O O L O F H E A L T H A N D R E H A B I L I T A T I O N S C I E N C E S



MAKING OUR MARK

BRINGING TOGETHER PEOPLE
WITH DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS,
IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES

IN SEARCH OF
SOLUTIONS AND
SYSTEM CHANGES

CHANGING HEARTS AND
MINDS TO TRANSFORM
OUR CULTURE

A VISION FOR EQUITY
AND INTERPROFESSIONAL
COLLABORATION

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Pitt SHRS
School of Health and
Rehabilitation Sciences



Greetings,

Time and time again, we have been made painfully aware that inequity permeates all levels of society including these “hallowed halls” of academia. Today, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) have become commonplace in almost every institution, corporation, industry and sector of our society, which I would attribute to the recognition of our past behaviors and a commitment to transforming the future. Without definitive action, however, DEI will be nothing more than a fashionable phrase—a buzzword, if you will. At the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS), this must not happen. In fact, this issue of FACETS outlines and illustrates the decisive steps we are taking to incorporate DEI efforts into our daily methods of operation.

We are committed to action-oriented policies to address inequity including innovative strategies to recruit, develop and retain a diverse body of students, faculty and staff. Simultaneously, we aim to create an academic environment in which our community members’ contributions are sought and valued.

Ensuring that DEI will not be a passing trend, SHRS is committed to taking meaningful actions as we boldly move toward a more equitable future. We started by redefining and broadening our current inclusion efforts by appointing Bernard Rousseau, professor and chair, Department of Communication Science and Disorders, as the new associate dean for Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement. The addition of community engagement to this role is not only a natural fit, but also provides an avenue for action-based initiatives, some of which have already come to fruition under the guidance of Channing Moreland, our Wellness Pavilion director and senior director of Strategic Programs and Services.

We are excited to help make health and wellness services more accessible to Pittsburgh’s underserved neighborhoods through the SHRS Wellness Pavilion at Pitt’s Community Engagement Center in Homewood. There our faculty and students are collaborating with community partners to provide interactive educational sessions, health screenings, community care services and special events. And developing these collaborations is forging new connections. SHRS recently partnered with Pittsburgh Public Schools, offering out-of-school-time programs with our faculty, students and researchers, providing school-age children in under-resourced communities exposure to STEM-related professions.

We also continue our efforts in improving pathways to participation for people with disabilities. In recognition of its 75th anniversary, the PVA (Paralyzed Veterans of America) presented Rory Cooper, director, HERL, and distinguished professor, SHRS, an award of \$750,000 to promote research that will improve mobility and find better treatments for people with paralysis. The University of Pittsburgh and Yale were the only two recipients of the PVA awards.

Another key component of our DEI efforts is our ongoing distance education initiative. By making some of our highly ranked programs available online and in hybrid formats, we are lowering our tuition rates and increasing access to our graduate professional programs. Students from diverse backgrounds and geographic areas will have the opportunity to participate in online training and complete their clinical experiences in their communities. This will not only provide increased health care services to underserved areas but will create more direct routes to permanent employment in these areas of need.

This year, we are revisiting our mission as we move forward with a new five-year strategic plan. DEI must be a more prominent focus of our vision. What will it take to change DEI from an “initiative” into a fully integrated part of SHRS’ culture? In short, sweeping changes. Some are in progress while others are currently being implemented. Still others have yet to be determined. With our action-oriented approach, we can point toward several successes outlined in these pages. However, our work in creating a culturally competent community is just beginning. We know the true measure of our success will be graduating future providers, practitioners and scientists who reflect the same diversity as our patients so we can work more precisely and effectively to eliminate inequities in health care and higher education.

Anthony Delitto
Professor and Dean

giving



Here at Pitt, it is an exciting time to be in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. We are welcoming a host of new hybrid and online degree programs designed to meet the needs of students where they are. Our faculty continue to push the envelope in cutting-edge research and innovation through our state-of-the-art laboratories and centers. Across the school, we are making organizational changes to be more efficient and strengthen the delivery of education to our students. However, our most important work right now is ensuring the diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) plans we put forth are being acted upon and bring about meaningful change.

Advancing our efforts in the DEI space is not an easy task. We must embrace change and elements of successful change management including purpose and direction. Purpose creates a sense of belonging, guides our decision making and inspires us to act. Direction puts our purpose into a plan and provides clarity for where we are and where we want to be. We must be bold and deliberate about our purpose and our direction when it comes to DEI. Our plans include diversifying our faculty ranks by recruiting and retaining underrepresented candidates to teach, mentor and conduct research at SHRS. Similarly, we are looking to attract and admit a more

diverse student body to ensure that future health care practitioners resemble the populations they serve. To do this, we are working to secure and make readily available resources to attract and retain students from a variety of geographic areas and backgrounds.

Through philanthropy, we aim to increase the availability of scholarships and resources to attract and retain underrepresented and underserved students who want to study with SHRS. Our student body is much less diverse than the overall population of our nation. If our goal is to train future generations of providers and clinicians to address inequities in health care, we must address this lack of diversity head on. Furthermore, we will work to engage with our alumni around the world to help us ensure that we are meeting the needs of the workforce of tomorrow. Diversity of thought and perspective enriches our narrative and will help guide our plans. Finally, in the division of philanthropic and alumni engagement, we are actively diversifying our staff to greater reflect our changing student body and future alumni base.

The task at hand is difficult and we cannot do it alone. Your assistance is needed. Several alumni, faculty and a foundation have already stepped forward to provide financial support to make significant and lasting changes in the DEI space. I welcome your thoughts, ideas, perspectives and contributions to address the challenges we face across SHRS and the University. Please don't hesitate to email or call me using my contact information below.

Higher education and philanthropy are the driving force and light that seek to disrupt the status quo ... create change ... impact the world. Together we can realize a more diverse, equitable and inclusive future. Indeed, we must!

Hail to Pitt!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Cancro". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anthony Cancro, MBA
Director of Development



*Scan this QR code to make
your gift to SHRS now!*

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perspective

"Perspective" is written by Natalie Baney, FACETS executive editor and SHRS executive director of Marketing and Communications. This column serves to address topics related to our students, faculty, staff, the school, and local and global communities.

Here at SHRS, we have a long legacy of driving meaningful change. It requires strategic planning, decisive leadership and transformative action. It also requires listening and learning. That's why I reached out to Maurice Goodwin (MS '17) to ask about his experience in higher education and health care. Maurice graciously agreed to share his story with me.

I met Maurice the very first day he visited Pitt in 2014. Working in recruitment at the time, I encountered many students who were enthusiastic about their future and the possibilities that lay ahead. However, meeting Maurice was different. His positive energy had a gravitational pull of its own. I immediately felt like I had known him for years and it was impossible not to smile in his presence. During our conversation, it was surprising to hear him say, "It wasn't until coming to Houston where the patient population is very diverse that I realized that who I am as a person is an asset to the work I do as a therapist."

I had the opportunity to talk with Maurice about many complex and weighty issues that aren't new and that are still very much a part of present-day society. Here's what he said.



Maurice is a speech-language pathologist currently working with Houston Methodist's Specialty Physician

Group in the Texas Voice Center.

He earned his undergraduate degree in music performance at Shenandoah University before completing his post-baccalaureate training and Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology at Pitt, and a one-year voice fellowship at the University of Wisconsin.

Describe your experience during your graduate studies.

"Pitt's SLP program was not very diverse at the time. Neither is the field. I don't think I realized how non-diverse it was until I got there and looked around and realized I was one of the only students in the program who was not White or female. There might have been one or two other students who weren't White, but they weren't Black. Coming into that, I felt the need to be similar to the others. To compete, I felt like I had to be the same.

"As a male speech-language pathologist and then as a non-White speech-language pathologist and then as a gay speech-language pathologist, I often felt like I had to neutralize all of these things to make other people as comfortable as possible."

Did these feelings ever change?

"I was at Pitt during the start of the Black Lives Matter movement and the shooting of Mike Brown in 2014. When you're a student, you think you can just be a student and surround yourself with student things. But that's not how it works. There were all of these events unfolding in Missouri and these big conversations happening. I was trying to pay attention because it was important. At the same time, I had this gigantic exam and I had all of these things I felt I had to consider that no one else had. My brain was not only full of being a student, but full of thoughts like 'How do I not die interacting with police?' and 'How do I be good enough to not be perceived as XYZ?'"

"I was in Amanda Gillespie's (MS '05, PhD '13) lab at the UPMC Voice Center and she, a White woman, was probably the most affirming presence in my life at the time. What was amazing was that one of the

most beneficial and helpful relationships I had was from someone who wasn't Black or queer or a man. Often people just want someone who can listen and empathize. Gillespie did that and through those experiences I started to feel a whole lot more confident. We would just touch base and talk about things that were important to me and to her."

What advice do you have for faculty or students in similar academic environments?

"For faculty, it's not that you have to say all the right things but simply create an environment of openness. For students, it's building relationships with people that you can trust and giving faculty an opportunity to be present. I think a lot of the diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives are positive because they let students know DEI is something faculty are thinking about.

"I also developed really strong boundaries. I've had patients make racist comments to me and I've ended our sessions. I have had other people make comments about queer people and I didn't feel comfortable working with them, so I didn't. We have to let students know they can do this. You have to create an environment that allows people to become empowered clinicians. Now, as a clinician and someone who trains students and future clinicians, I am doing just that.

"I think the reality of most programs in academia, especially in the health professions, is that it's not a wonderfully diverse landscape of faculty. That doesn't mean it can't be a space where people can come in, be who they are and express themselves. You don't have to be diverse to host diverse thought. It seems like right now Pitt is being intentional, and I don't know that you could ask for more than that. Change is not going to happen by accident."

To comment or share your insights on this column, please contact Natalie Baney at nbaney@pitt.edu, 412-383-4138, SHRS, 4033 Forbes Tower, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.



Department News



Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL)

HERL inventors received a U.S. patent for the MEBot (Mobility Enhancement Robotic Wheelchair) that can navigate difficult, uneven terrain, curbs and steps.

Physician Assistant Studies

An inaugural cohort of 61 PAs, nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists and nurse midwives completed the department's Advanced Practice Provider (APP) Leadership Certificate Course in June.

Rehabilitation Science and Technology



Former Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker Ryan Shazier toured the department and UPMC's Center for Assistive Technology (CAT) to discuss opportunities to partner with his foundation, the Ryan Shazier Fund for Spinal Rehabilitation.

Physician Assistant Studies

The Physician Assistant Studies Hybrid Program (PAS-Hybrid)* will accept its first cohort of students beginning August 2022.

The department launched a one-year online Doctor of Physician Assistant Studies program that will begin in May 2022.

Rehabilitation Science and Technology

The department transitioned to a hybrid Master of Rehabilitation Technology program with its first cohort beginning this fall.

Sports Medicine and Nutrition

Athletic Training is now an accelerated program offering entry points for students to earn both a bachelor's and master's degree or for students with an undergraduate degree to earn their master's.

*Accreditation

The University of Pittsburgh PAS-Hybrid program has applied for Accreditation – Provisional from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). The University of Pittsburgh PA Studies Hybrid Program anticipates matriculating its first class in August 2022, pending achieving Accreditation – Provisional status at the March 2022 ARC-PA meeting. Accreditation – Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program's ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding accreditation-provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

In the event that the program does not achieve accreditation all students who have deposited a seat in the program will receive a full refund. The program will not accept the class until which time provisional accreditation has been granted.

Program News

Health Information Management

The Health Information Management undergraduate program is now a Bachelor of Science in Health Informatics.

Physical Therapy

The Doctor of Physical Therapy program is offering a Hybrid option with its first cohort of 22 students beginning this fall.



Faculty News

SHRS welcomes the following faculty who have joined our ranks in the last year, including several of our alumni*:

Communication Science and Disorders

Sarah Wallace, professor and program director, Speech-Language Pathology

Nancy Gauvin, assistant professor

Ali Lewandowski (BA '12, MA '14), assistant professor and director, Communication Science Undergraduate Program*

Melissa Ruscetta (BA '94, MA '96, PhD '05), assistant professor*

Health Information Management

Yanshan Wang, assistant professor

Occupational Therapy

Emily Grattan (PhD '14), assistant professor*

Physical Therapy

Michael Lebec, professor
Kim Nixon-Cave (BS '81), professor and director, Doctor of Physical Therapy Hybrid Option*

Janet Jackson-Coty, associate professor
Kara Kobal, associate professor and director, Doctor of Physical Therapy Residential Option
Kristin Lowry, associate professor

Reivian Berrios Barillas, assistant professor
Pamela Dunlap, assistant professor

Mark Malacarne, assistant professor
Elizabeth Narducci, assistant professor
Bonnie Virag, assistant professor

Physician Assistant Studies

Christina Davis, assistant professor
Tara McSwigan, assistant professor
Kathryn Reed (EM BS '14, MS '16), assistant professor*
Lauren Taylor, assistant professor
Daniel Tolomeo (EM BS '13, MS '16), assistant professor*
Antoinette Wilson, assistant professor

Rehabilitation Science and Technology

Clive D'Souza, associate professor

Julie Faieta, assistant professor
Anand Mhatre (PhD '18), assistant professor*

Sports Medicine and Nutrition

Shelly DiCesaro, associate professor

Devin Kielur, assistant professor
Adam Sterczala, assistant professor

Britney Beatrice, instructor

We recognize SHRS faculty members who were recently promoted to the following ranks:

Professor

Debora Miller, Physical Therapy
Elaine Mormer, Communication Science and Disorders
Sara Piva, Physical Therapy
Michael Walsh Dickey, Communication Science and Disorders

Associate Professor

David Beck, Physician Assistant Studies
Jamie Kulzer, Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
Michelle Schein, Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
Alyson Stover, Occupational Therapy
Goeran Fiedler, Prosthetics and Orthotics
Juleen Rodakowski, Occupational Therapy

Assistant Professor

Trisha Cousins, Sports Medicine and Nutrition



In Memoriam

We mourn the loss of a giant at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Freddie Fu, who transformed Athletic Training, Sports Medicine and so much more. Read the full statement from our programs at shrs.pitt.edu/FreddieFu.



Faculty News

Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling



Kelly Beck, assistant professor, presented “Mindfulness Here and Now: Strategies for helping adolescents and adults with autism” at the Senior Vice Chancellor’s Research Seminar in June.



Laura Dietz, associate professor, delivered a virtual training for Interpersonal Psychotherapy United Kingdom hosted by the University of Edinboro in March.



Quiana Golphin, assistant professor, co-presented “Implementing creative trauma-informed interventions for African American males” at the American Counseling Association virtual conference.

Jamie Kulzer and **Laura Dietz**, associate professors, presented the “Role of Personal Wellness in Preventing Student and Faculty Burn-out” at the 2021 Mentoring and Advising Summit at Pitt in March.



Eric Meyer, professor and program director, and **Thomas Platt**, associate professor and program director, Emergency Medicine, received a University of Pittsburgh 2021 Seed Grant to create the Pitt Center for Emergency Responder Wellness.

Meyer was also selected to serve as a consultant on a VA Health Services Research and Development grant titled “Measurement-Based Transition

Assistance (MBTA): Evaluating the Promise of a Web-Based Approach to Promote Veterans’ Support Seeking.”

Communication Science and Disorders

Michael Walsh Dickey, professor, **William Evans**, assistant professor, **Sarah Wallace**, professor, and **William Hula**, adjunct assistant professor, formed the Pittsburgh Translational Aphasia Research Initiative (PTARI) to enhance and accelerate progress in translational aphasia research.

Chris Brown, associate professor, was accepted into the University of Pittsburgh Innovation Institute’s Ventures First Gear Program for his “Hyfi” entry. **Nicole Corbin**, assistant professor, and **Katie Vellody**, clinical instructor, were also accepted for their project titled “VASM – Virtual Audiometric Screening for the Masses.”

Brown was recently issued a patent for his development of software to improve the performance of bilateral cochlear implants.



Bharath Chandrasekaran, professor, was awarded a \$3.5 million NIDCD R01 renewal for his interdisciplinary project called “Cortical contributions to frequency-following response generation and modulation” to unravel how the brain encodes critical information in speech signals.

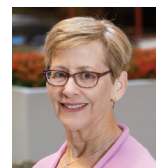
Chandrasekaran and his fellow co-authors were awarded the 2020 International Society for Bayesian Analysis (ISBA) Mitchell Prize for their paper titled “Bayesian Semiparametric Longitudinal Drift-Diffusion Mixed Models for Tone

Learning in Adults.” The paper was published in the Journal of the American Statistical Association.



Will Evans, assistant professor, was awarded an NICHD early career R03 for his project titled “Adapting acceptance and mindfulness-based behavior therapy for stroke survivors with aphasia to improve communication success, post-stroke adaptation and quality of life.”

Evans and his Aphasia Games for Health team recently released three prototype games that people with aphasia can play with each other and with family and friends.



Elaine Morner, professor, and **Lucas Berenbrok**, assistant professor, Pharmacy, launched CHAMP (Championing Hearing Using Accessible Medication Experts at the Community Pharmacy), an online certificate training program for pharmacists to learn about hearing loss and over-the-counter hearing aids.

Sheila Pratt, professor, was awarded a Teaming Grant from the Pitt Momentum Funds for her group’s project titled “Reducing language obstacles that deaf students face when developing scientific competencies.”



Aravind Parthasarathy, assistant professor, received a Department of Defense Hearing Restoration Research Program Focused Research Award for a team project titled “Rapid Triage of Auditory Peripheral and Central Phenotypes Using a Brief but Rich Diagnostic Battery,” a collaboration with Purdue University.



Bernard Rousseau, professor and chair, participated in a panel discussion called “Mission Critical:

JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) Approaches to Dismantling Oppressive Systems and Building Community in the Health Sciences” during the University of Pittsburgh’s Diversity Forum 2021.



Susan Shaiman, associate professor, presented “Generalizing Speech Science Foundations to

Academic and Clinical Curricula” during the ASHA Teaching Symposium on Foundational CSD Science Courses in May.

Emergency Medicine



Thomas Platt, associate professor and program director, was appointed chair of the Advanced Life Support (ALS) Examination Redesign Expert Panel for the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

Walt Stoy, professor, was named to the EMS Hall of Fame by EMS World.

Health Information Management



Bambang Parmanto, professor and chair, and his team, including **Adam Popchak**, assistant

professor, Physical Therapy, received an SHRS Innovation Challenge Award for their project “CuffLink: A safe and quantitative remote rehabilitation system for rotator cuff repairs that will also save significant health care costs.”

Valerie Watzlaf, associate professor, collaborated with **Amal A. Alzubi** (PhD '16) on an article titled “Electronic Health Record Abstraction.” **Watzlaf and Alzubi** also collaborated with **Laura Chau** (BS '18) on an article titled “Clinical Data Abstraction: A Research Study.” Both were published in the spring 2021 issue of Perspectives in Health Information Management.

Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL)



Rory Cooper, distinguished professor and director, received the prestigious IEEE Technical Field

Award for Biomedical Engineering for his extensive contributions to wheelchair technology that have expanded mobility and reduced secondary injuries for millions of people with disabilities.

Cooper also received a 2021 Pitt Seed Grant to help provide students with disabilities the necessary accommodations to actively participate in lab activities along with their peers to the greatest extent possible.

Cooper and **Garrett Grindle**, associate director, received the Pennsylvania Veterans Service Award for their work protecting veterans and their caregivers during the pandemic.



Rosemarie Cooper, associate professor and associate director for Stakeholder Engagement, received the 2021 Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) Clinician Excellence Award in Therapy.

Nutrition



Judy Dodd, assistant professor, retired after 38 years of service to Pitt.

Occupational Therapy



Joanne Baird and **Ketki Raina**, associate professors, presented on “Challenges, Strategies and Changes: Critical Assessment of Professional Graduate Curricula” at the University’s Diversity Forum 2021.



Baird also received the first-place poster award for Innovation and Discussion at the 2021 Association of Standardized Patient Educators Virtual Conference for her entry titled “SP Simulation and Debriefing: What Works?”

Roxanna Bendixen, associate professor, and **Amy Hartman**, PhD candidate, presented a short course titled “Understanding the Link: Sleep and Sensory Processing” at the American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference in April.



Faculty News



Natalie Leland, associate professor, represented the American Occupational Therapy

Association in a Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) meeting with a representative from the White House Domestic Policy Council on March 9, 2021. The group discussed the importance of COVID-19 related rehabilitation and disability research and the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR).

Leland also presented on “Developing and executing stakeholder-engaged rehabilitation research” at Grand Rounds for the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR) and National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) funded LeaRRn: Learning Health Systems Rehabilitation Research Network in April.



Juleen Rodakowski, associate professor, and **Jennie Dorris**, PhD candidate, presented a webinar titled “Project

Unmute: An Intergenerational Music Program” to students at Milton Academy in April. **Rodakowski** also presented “Deciding about the future. Summer Institute for Future Scientists in Occupational Therapy” to members of the American Occupational Therapy Association and American Occupational Therapy Foundation in June.

Rodakowski received \$107,457 in funding from the National Institutes of Health National Institute on Aging to promote diversity and health-related research programs for her supplement titled, “Influence of Strategy Training on Disability for

Older Adults with Mild Cognitive Impairment.” This funding will support Doctor of Occupational Therapy student **Samara Sibblies’** work on the project.



Elizabeth Skidmore, professor and chair, was featured by The Journal of Humanities in Rehabilitation in an article and series of videos titled “Profiles in Professional.”

Skidmore also presented several keynotes this year including a presentation on “Optimizing rehabilitation for people with acquired cognitive impairments” for the Glen E. Gresham Visiting Professor Lecture at the University at Buffalo Department of Rehabilitation Science. She also presented “Building a Rehabilitation Intervention Research Program: Lessons Learned” at the 2021 University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus Rehabilitation Science PhD Research Retreat.

Collaborating with **Emily Kringle** (PhD '19), **Skidmore** gave a poster presentation titled “Stakeholders’ experiences learning new technology to participate in a remotely delivered group-based intervention after stroke: A thematic analysis” at the Occupational Therapy Summit of Scholars.

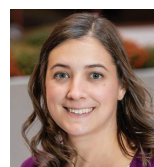


Alyson Stover, associate professor, received the American Occupational Therapy Association’s Lindy

Boggs Award for her significant contributions to promoting OT in the political arena. **Stover** also received the 2021 University of Pittsburgh Ivan and Mary Novick Award for Young Alumni Leadership.

Lauren Terhorst, professor, and **Juleen Rodakowski**, associate professor, gave a presentation titled “Clusters of chronic conditions and associated disability trajectories” at the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS) 10th Anniversary Conference in May.

Physical Therapy

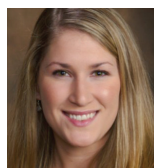


Allyn Bove, assistant professor, was selected for the Comprehensive Opportunities for Rehabilitation

Research Training (CORRT) K12 Scholar program.

Jennifer Brach, professor, received a Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award to collaborate with Katz Graduate School of Business to promote her On the Move: Group Exercise for Improved Mobility in Older Adults® (OTM) program.

Anthony Delitto, professor and dean, **Charity Patterson**, professor, **Janet Freburger**, professor, **Samannaaz Khoja**, assistant professor, and **Michael J. Schneider**, professor, published the paper titled “Stratified care to prevent chronic low back pain in high-risk patients: The TARGET trial. A multi-site pragmatic cluster randomized trial” in The Lancet.



Pam Dunlap, assistant professor, became a member of the Bárány Society, an international

interdisciplinary society that facilitates contact between scientists and clinicians involved in vestibular research. **Dunlap** also received the Fellowship for Geriatric Research award from the American Physical Therapy Association.



Andrea Hergenroeder, associate professor, was appointed director of the

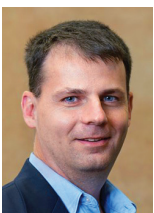
Pitt Interprofessional Center for Health Careers by Provost Ann Cudd. **Hergenroeder** also received a 2021 Pitt Seed Grant to build programs across campus to attract, support and prepare undergraduate underrepresented minority (URM) students who aspire to health-related careers.



James Irrgang, professor and chair, and **David Wert**, associate professor, explained “What to Look for in a Physical Therapist” in an article in The New York Times.

Irrgang also served as the University of Pittsburgh’s 2021 Albert B. Ferguson, Jr, MD Visiting Professor in Orthopaedic Surgery.

Christine McDonough, assistant professor, and **Charity Patterson**, professor, were recipients of a \$21.6 million grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor to the Vermont Retaining Employment and Talent after Injury/Illness Network (VT RETAIN) Demonstration Project: Phase 2 seeks to improve work outcomes for Vermonters with injuries or illnesses.



Patrick Sparto, associate professor, was designated a Catherine Worthingham Fellow of the American Physical Therapy Association.



Susan Whitney, professor, received the International Neurological Physical Therapy Association (INPA) Presidents Award at the World Physiotherapy meeting this spring and the 2021 John H.P. Maley Lecture Award from the American Physical Therapy Association. **Whitney** was also named one of the world’s leading “dizziness” experts by Expertscape.

Physician Assistant Studies

Assistant Professors **Mary Allias** and **Emily Murphy** graduated from the Doctor of Education Program at Pitt’s School of Education in June.



Tara McSwigan, assistant professor, presented “Foresight: Five ocular emergencies not to miss”; “Evaluation and treatment of the red eye”; and “Blink: A rapid review of the PANCE/PANRE blueprint” at the 2021 American Academy of Physician Assistants Conference.

Rehabilitation Science and Technology

David Brienza, professor, **Patricia Karg**, associate professor, **Anand Mhatre**, assistant professor, **Alexandria Delazio**, research engineer, **Amanda Manko** (MSRT ’21) and team received an SHRS Innovation Challenge award for their entry “Cushion Concierge: A comprehensive, web-based information tool allowing health care professionals to efficiently identify appropriate wheelchair cushions to meet their clients’ needs.”

Helen Cochrane, director, Prosthetics and Orthotics, and chair of the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics Education Core Committee, was recognized as one of the 21 Women Who Advance Associations across the international community.



Mary Goldberg, associate professor, was named director of the Master of Rehabilitation

Technology (MRT) program.

Goldberg and the IMPACT Center launched the ImpacTech podcast series exploring stories of assistive technology researchers and entrepreneurs and the journey of taking innovative technologies to market.



Anand Mhatre, assistant professor, and a team of engineering students introduced a first-of-its-kind technology called the “TranquiLift,” making a trip to the barbershop more accessible for wheelchair users.

Sports Medicine



Bradley Nindl, professor and director, Neuromuscular Research Laboratory (NMRL), was

recognized as a leading expert in physical fitness by Expertscape.

Col. Nindl also assumed command of the 139th Medical Brigade in Independence, Missouri, on September 19, 2021.



Alumni News

Communication Science and Disorders

Cara Donohue (PhD '21) started a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Florida in June.

Donohue received the Steven B. Leder Award by the Dysphagia Research Society (DRS) for her first-authored manuscript "A Preliminary Investigation of Whether HRCA Signals Can Differentiate Between Swallows from Healthy People and Swallows from People with Neurodegenerative Diseases" published in the journal *Dysphagia*.

Donohue was also awarded the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD) PhD Scholarship.

Donohue and **Yina Quique** (PhD '20) were accepted into the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Pathways program. The program is designed to prepare early career scientists to become competitive for an NIH R21.

Lindsey Jorgensen (MA '07, AuD '08, PhD '12) was named chair of the Department of Communication Science and Disorders at the University of South Dakota.

Lori Zitelli (AuD '12) was promoted to managing audiologist in the Department of Otolaryngology at UPMC.

Emergency Medicine



Zack Saylor (BS '18) graduated from the Maryland State Police Academy.

Josh Schneider (BS '20) is a Critical Communities VISTA Member in Pittsburgh's Office of Community Health and Safety.

Health Information Management

Amal Nemengani (MS '08), chief executive of Quality and Innovation at Makkah Healthcare Cluster was highlighted in *Faces of Saudi* by Arab News: stories of the Kingdom's most inspiring women.



Shireen Thomas (BS '13), who leads operations for UPMC's Office of the CIO, was recognized as one of the Top 25 Women in Technology by Mission Critical Magazine. She also received UPMC's Award for Commitment and Excellence in Service (ACES).

Physician Assistant Studies



Kathryn Reed (EM BS '14, MS '16) presented on "Transforming the Physician Assistant Landscape" during the inaugural Pitt TEDx event in June.

Physical Therapy

Brandon Rodgers (DPT '17) is serving as a PT for Stanley Cup Champions the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Occupational Therapy



Rachelle Brick (PhD '21) was accepted for a postdoctoral position at the National Cancer Institute Cancer Prevention Program.



Jessica Kersey (PhD '21) was accepted for a postdoctoral position at the University of Illinois Chicago Program for Community-Engaged Scholarship to Improve Community Living and Participation of People with Disabilities.



Elise Krause (OTD '20) was hired in a temporary position as an occupational therapist COVID-19 vaccinator with Advocate Aurora Health in partnership with the Chicago Cubs organization to help vaccinate 2,000+ individuals a day in the greater Chicago area.

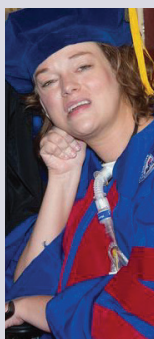
Erin Mathia (MOT '05, CScD '21) and **Kelsey Voltz-Poremba** (BS '11, MOT '13, CScD '19) transitioned to full-time assistant professors in the University of Pittsburgh Department of Occupational Therapy.

Marybeth Moscirella, Courtney Longmuir, Markia Ashe, Megan Szatkiewicz and Claire Dice (OTD '20) led a workshop titled "Aging in PACE: Implementation of a cognition-focused program to enhance participation of community-dwelling older adults" at the American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference in April.

Nikki Rosenbaum (OTD '21) was accepted as a 2021-2022 Johns Hopkins Acute Care Occupational Therapy Fellow.

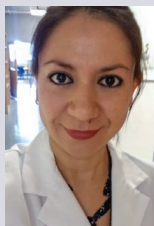
Camarie Shepard (MOT '21) presented a workshop titled "Ableism: Scratching the Surface" at Pitt's Diversity Forum 2021. **Shepard** was also featured in an interview with LifeGlider in February 2021.

Rehabilitation Science and Technology

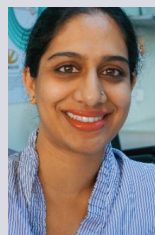


Josie Badger (MS '09) testified at a United States Senate Special Committee on Aging in support of "Building Wealth and Fostering Independence: Creating Opportunities to Save."

Yasmin García Méndez (MS '11) is now working on the assistive technology team with the Pan American Health Organization.



Sandra Guzman (Post-doc) won the National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel's Charlie Lachenbruch Award for her paper titled "Potential Improvements of S3I Body Analog Test Based on Microclimate Coverlet Data."



Padmaja Kankipati (PhD '12) is an assistive technology consultant to the WHO regional office for South-East Asia (SEARO).



Shilpa Krishnan (PhD '14) won the National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel's Young Investigator Award for her paper titled "Facilitators and Barriers to Manage Pressure Injuries in Skilled Nursing Facilities."

Sports Medicine



Troy Blackburn (PhD '00), associate dean for Undergraduate Research, College of Arts & Sciences, and professor and assistant chair, Department of Exercise & Sport Science, UNC-Chapel Hill, received the NATA Fellow Award.



Kevin Guskiewicz (MS '92), chancellor of UNC-Chapel Hill, was inducted into the NATA Hall of Fame Class of 2020.



Joe Myers (PhD '01), director of Baseball Performance Science, Tampa Bay Rays, received the NATA Fellow Award.



Christie-Lee (Miller) Coad (MS '10) provided health care as an athletic trainer with USA Track and Field at the Olympics in Tokyo, Japan.



Student News

Communication Science and Disorders



PhD student **Robert Cavanaugh** was awarded a National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) F31 for his project “Determinants of multilevel discourse outcomes in anomia treatment for aphasia.”

AuD students **Stephanie Hood** and **Patricia Masso Maldonado** were named 2021-2022 Schweitzer Fellows.



Erin Lucatorto, PhD student, was accepted into the inaugural Dysphagia Research Society Institute for Education (DRSIE) Fall Conference.



AuD student **Cecilia (Cece) Lacey** was selected as a T-35 trainee at the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research (NCRAR) in Portland, Oregon.



SLP student **Joshua Peckman** received the Southwestern Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association (SWPSHA) Honors of the Association.



PhD student **Brett Welch** and **Cara Donohue** (PhD '21) launched the Pitt CSD Podcast, an 11-episode series on Apple Podcasts featuring leading scientists and researchers talking about a broad spectrum of aerodigestive topics.



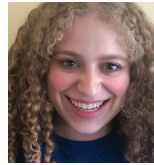
The podcast aims to make current research findings readily accessible to working clinicians.

Nutrition

The Student Dietetic Association welcomed guest speaker **Linda Farr**, president of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, during a spring meeting.

Ava Scarpato, DN Program, was selected as the student liaison for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Women's Health Dietetic Practice Group for 2021-2022.

Bella Sedor, DN Program, was accepted as a 2021-2022 Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Related Disorders (LEND) trainee.



Hayley Tyson, DN Program, received a Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics Foundation Award.

Melanie Wilkinson, DN Program, was selected to serve as a student liaison for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Occupational Therapy

The **Pitt COTAD Chapter** hosted a panel presentation in February titled “Culturally Inclusive ADLs.” Nearly 300 people attended the event which provided an exceptional learning opportunity for health care professionals centered around skin, hair and cultural dress and head coverings that contribute to providing a more culturally inclusive and healing treatment milieu for all individuals.

OT students earned first place in the 2021 American Occupational Therapy Foundation St. Catherine Challenge by contributing over \$5,000 of the total \$43,000 raised for AOTF Intervention Research Grants (IRGs).

Michelle Beck, Meredith Buckbee, Stephanie Caggiano, Alyssa Carson, Cosette Carter, Shelby Cartwright, Joseph Driscoll, Katherine Grunewald, Courtney Holzwarth, Lina Huynh, Lauren Kenney, Bianca Kienzle, Emily Krut, Sara Lessem, Sunny Lin, Victoria Merritt, Cam Phuong Nguyen, Claire Payne, Jessica Penatzer, Lauren Pruyn, Emily Pullman, Nikki Rosenbaum, Nicole Saba Dolcich, Natalie Silverman, Rachel Thomson, Melissa Toth, Julia Vellky, Leighann Warholak, Taylor Wellman, Samantha Whitney and Alaina Wilson (OTD '21) completed the University of Pittsburgh Center for Teaching and Learning Achievement in Pedagogy Badge.



OTD students **Anna Marie Clark** and **Julia Zezinka** were selected as 2021-2022 Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Related Disorders (LEND) trainees.



They are the first students from the entry-level OT program to be LEND trainees.



A systematic review by **Jennie Dorris**, PhD candidate, **Lauren Terhorst**, professor, and **Juleen Rodakowski**, associate professor, was featured in numerous media outlets including NPR's Science Friday podcast, Prevention.com, DailyMail.com, Medical News Today and MarthaStewart.com.



Amy Hartman, PhD candidate, was the first runner-up and received the People's Choice Award in the University of Pittsburgh's Three

Minute Thesis (3MT®) Competition on her dissertation project titled “Sleep Health in Children with Sensory Processing Disorder.”

Hartman also participated in the 2021 OT Summit of Scholars three-minute dissertation competition hosted by Colorado State University where she tied for first place.

The following OTD students were accepted into the Pitt Graduate Certificate in Gerontology program: **Erin Lewis, Natalie Scelsi, Jessica Smith, Amanda Wapinsky and Abby Webb.**



OTD student **Samara Sibblies** received the K. Leroy Irvis Fellowship.

Physical Therapy

Pitt DPT students took third place for raising \$27,436.39 in the Foundation for Physical Therapy Research (FPTR) 2020-2021 VCU-Marquette Challenge. The University of Pittsburgh remains the only school to be named into the “Leaders Society” (the highest honor) for raising more than \$600,000 for the FPTR.

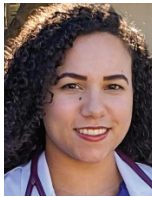
DPT students **Stephen Boettke, Katina Demarchi, Phil Forsythe, Arielle Herzberg, Erin O'Connor and Marie Pelter** presented during the 2021 Virtual Pro Bono Network Conference on the Interprofessional Diabetes Education Program that they developed in collaboration with Nutrition, Counseling and Pharmacy at the SHRS Wellness Pavilion within Pitt’s Community Engagement Center in Homewood.



PhD student **Aileen Chou** was selected to serve on the Provost’s Conflict of Interest Committee

representing all graduate students from the Health Sciences.

Physician Assistant Studies



Cherish Hannah received the Joyce Nichols Memorial Scholarship from the American Academy of PAs.

Hoan Nguyen was named a Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellow.

Rehabilitation Science and Technology

Richard Alonzo, Taychapat Makkong and Olivia Rossi, Rehabilitation Technology students, took second place in the RESNA Student Design Competition with their submission of “The Rod Squad Launcher: An Adaptive Fishing Launcher that Promotes Casting for Individuals with Disabilities.”



Amanda Manko, Rehabilitation Technology student, won the National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel (NPIAP) Student Award and was a runner-up in the 2021 RESNA Student Scientific Paper Competition for her work on the effects of simulated aging on wheelchair cushion performance.



Alivia Reiche, Prosthetics and Orthotics student, received an Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and Research Foundation grant to progress her capstone work titled “Effectiveness of the Wii Fit U system as a virtual reality balance training program for lower extremity amputees.”

Sports Medicine



Major William Conkright, PhD student, was awarded the 2021 Colonel Mary Lipscomb Hamrick Army Medical Specialist Corps New Horizon Research Award.



Nicole Sekel, research assistant and PhD student, was selected to join the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research (ASBMR) Student Cohort Program. She also received a 2021 ASBMR Young Investigator Award covering her cost to attend the European Calcified Tissue Society (ECTS) Digital PhD Trainee Course.

Undergraduate Program in Rehabilitation Science



Jordann Antao won the McMurtry Family Undergraduate Research Award to support her research. Antao’s project aims to identify and develop treatments and services that reduce stroke-related disability and improve recovery among minority populations.



Student-Athlete Advisory Council President **Olivia Miller** presented a talk on community service during the inaugural Pitt TEDx event in June. **Miller** also received the Heart of a Panther Award, given to the student-athlete who best embodies the spirit of service in the community.



BUILDING A MORE ACCESSIBLE FUTURE.

Who you are as a person and who you become as a health care practitioner depends on a complex algorithm of seemingly unrelated factors. Or maybe it's kismet.

Maria Luisa Toro Hernández (MS '11, PhD '15) took inspiration from her father's auto body shop in Medellín, Colombia. "My dad is an engineer, and he told me that everything and anything is buildable," recalls Toro Hernández.

While she was pursuing her undergraduate degree in biomedical engineering at Universidad CES in Medellín, she learned about rehabilitation engineering. She feels fortunate to have participated in two internships during her final year—one at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, formerly the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, and the second at a special education school in Medellín.

"Through these two experiences, I had the opportunity to observe firsthand the immense disparity in access to assistive technology," says Toro Hernández. She used her father's auto body shop to fabricate assistive products for students in the special education school.

"Eventually, people would come to us for this service," she recalls.

"I decided that I wanted to pursue graduate studies to learn more about this field and be able to contribute to better access to assistive technology in Colombia," says Toro Hernández. It was obvious to her that the University of Pittsburgh—and the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology (RST)—was where she needed to be.

"The textbooks that my university had as reference to rehabilitation engineering were all written by Rory Cooper, former chair of the department," notes Toro Hernández. "It only made sense to apply to Pitt."

Photo Courtesy of Universidad CES



In 2009, with a Fulbright scholarship in hand and the support of Pitt's Center for Latin American Studies, Toro Hernández entered the Master of Science in Rehabilitation Technology program. During her first week at Pitt, she met Katherine Seelman, former associate dean and RST professor. During her impactful career, Seelman was co-scientific director of the National Science Foundation-supported Quality of Life Technology Engineering Research Center, served as director of President Bill Clinton's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Institute and was one of nine members of the World Health Organization's committee to guide the first world report on disability.

"Seelman has been such a driver of change," says Toro Hernández. "Initially I was only going to pursue a master's degree. She told me that in order for me to have a strong voice, because I was a woman, I needed to have a PhD. Otherwise, people were not going to hear me or believe me. I was so surprised by this advice. Almost six years after completing my PhD at Pitt, I have to say that I remember this advice more frequently than I would like."

"From day one, I was impressed by Maria's leadership potential to serve her country and internationally," recalls Seelman. "She is sensitive to discrimination and fiercely committed to enabling people with disabilities to pursue a high quality of life."

Toro Hernández has proven herself as a woman scientist. And her voice is certainly heard all around the world.

During her years at Pitt, she immersed herself in a variety of research projects that ranged from product design and quality testing to developing education programs for providers and users and measuring the impact of her work.

"This broad experience allowed me to understand quickly that access to assistive technology is a systemic problem that goes beyond access to the technology itself," says Toro Hernández. "My main interest and driver was, and continues to be, to reducing the immense inequality that exists in access to assistive technology."

"Maria is a natural leader who is kind, engaged and intelligent," explains Rory Cooper, distinguished professor and director, Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL). "As a student, she found opportunities to bring people together to assist each other. She convinced me to focus my wheelchair design class on a project with colleagues in Colombia, establishing a relationship with Pitt that lasts until today. Maria is the type of person who causes others to be successful."

During the past three years, Toro Hernández has served as an assistive technology consultant with the Pitt-incubated International Society of Wheelchair Professionals (ISWP), the Pan American Health Organization and Momentum Wheels for Humanity.



In her current role with Momentum, Maria is part of a five-year USAID-funded global program ReLAB-HS (Learning, Acting and Building for Rehabilitation in Health Systems). It is an ambitious program to strengthen the integration of rehabilitation and assistive technology into the health systems of four countries.

She has also been involved with the World Health Organization and routinely collaborates with different stakeholders to understand the current assistive technology situation in different contexts around the world and participates in the creation of solutions to increase access to assistive technology.

"What I love about my job is that I'm always learning—and unlearning—something new," notes Toro Hernández. "I work with a very diverse team of people from different backgrounds, origins and places of work. I love that my colleagues are motivated, committed to the cause and inspiring."

She says Pitt taught her to embrace and leverage diversity to its fullest potential. "I learned that science, research and innovation are key factors in creating equity." ■



Learn more about Pitt's Center for Latin American Studies at www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas.
Check out the work of ReLAB-HS at www.relabhs.org.



LIVED EXPERIENCES ENHANCE CLINICAL TRAINING



Occupational Therapy student Camarie Shepard

At the core of occupational therapy lies the ability to be flexible and adjust the environment to enable clients to achieve their goals. For occupational therapist Kate Molyneaux, TEIS Early Intervention Provider, the same principles apply to clinical supervision.

This proved especially true during the pandemic when Molyneaux began supervising an occupational therapy (OT) student with disabilities during her Level II clinical rotation.

“It was a time of rapid change for clinicians,” recalls Molyneaux. “We were focused on how to best serve the families and children who relied on us. We were used to going into our clients’ homes, sitting on the floor with children and doing our assessments and interventions. Suddenly, we were in the world of Zoom visits.”

No problem for future occupational therapist Camarie Shepard.

A second-year student in the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program, Shepard lives with spasticity and myopathy, which cause muscle weakness and tightness in her legs. She uses a crutch or a walker to get around. She also has double vision and auditory processing disorder, so she wears both glasses and hearing aids.

Ann M. Marsico, assistant professor and academic fieldwork coordinator for MOT and Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) students, says Molyneaux had the clinical expertise, supervisory experience and willingness to create an individualized Level II fieldwork experience to meet Shepard’s needs.

“In this experience, we focused on innovative ways for Camarie to meet the fieldwork objectives by utilizing her individual strengths,” says Marsico. “She has a keen eye for observing patients and a unique ability to problem solve. This was a perfect placement match, combining telerehab and Camarie’s passion to work with the pediatric population.”

“Telepractice was perfect for Camarie,” agrees Molyneaux. “Her compassion and positive attitude were readily apparent. I immediately realized that she will be a wonderful occupational therapist.”

“One of my biggest concerns with being placed in a traditional clinic setting was my ability to communicate,” says Shepard. “With masks and face shields on, it becomes very difficult for me to hear people. Masks make lip reading impossible and it would have been extremely difficult for me to communicate with clients and supervisors.”

Although she didn’t need to wear a mask for her telehealth visits, there were still communication challenges for Shepard. If a parent turned away from the camera, for example, Shepard was unable to read their lips. Molyneaux encouraged her student to advocate for herself.

“Kate was so supportive of me,” says Shepard. “She connected me with a deaf occupational therapist who observed me for a morning and helped me understand accessibility options for occupational therapists with hearing loss.”

“That’s all Camarie needed,” continues Molyneaux. “She decided to use the closed caption option on the camera and explained the situation to her clients. The families quickly adjusted and her sessions became very productive.”

“Kate is a great supervisor,” adds Shepard. “She ramped up my responsibilities without making me feel like I was in over my head. And she encouraged me to come up with new ways to use household materials in our sessions and redesign activities so that they targeted multiple skills.”

“One of the most valuable things Kate taught me was the importance of using my lived experience as a person with disabilities and applying it to my professional work so I can better help meet the needs of families,” Shepard continues. “She encouraged me to share my own experiences so families would know what they might expect with their child.”

Molyneaux has been a clinical supervisor for more than 21 years and has enjoyed seeing students grow into highly effective clinicians. She expressed satisfaction at helping Shepard discover her true passion for using telehealth to meet the needs of families.

Thanks to her experience with Molyneaux, Shepard has a vision for the future. After she receives her certification and licensure, she plans to open a small independent telehealth company specializing in advocacy and early intervention.

“In occupational therapy we talk about giving our clients the tools they need for success,” says Denise Chisholm, professor and MOT/OTD program director, Department of Occupational Therapy. “In Kate’s case, she and Ann created an innovative fieldwork model for Camarie, which provided her with the tools she needed to succeed as an individual with disabilities in the field of occupational therapy.” ■



TEIS Early Intervention
Provider Kate Molyneaux



CHANGING HEARTS AND MINDS.



*HOW DIVERSE PEOPLE, IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES
ARE TRANSFORMING OUR CULTURE.*

In December 1994, Rory Cooper invited Chancellor Dennis O'Connor to take a tour of campus with him using a wheelchair. The chancellor pushed his way up "cardiac hill" to reach the upper campus. The light snow added emphasis to the challenges. After this experience, the chancellor initiated programs to improve accessibility on campus and expanded efforts to include people with disabilities. "It was an inflection point in campus inclusion and accessibility that continues to this day," recalls Cooper, now distinguished professor, director of the Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL) and chair, Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion.



"Back then, we were instrumental in creating access for individuals with disabilities," notes SHRS Dean Anthony Delitto. "But now the time has come to diversify our diversity."

"SHRS must be a leader, not just in disability, but in all forms of inclusion," he continues. "Our goal is to be transformative, just as we were in our work surrounding people with disabilities nearly 30 years ago. Through our transformative actions, we will change hearts and minds."



Kathryn Reed, associate professor and vice chair for Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement, Department of Physician Assistant Studies

LIVED EXPERIENCES MATTER.

“As an SHRS undergraduate student, I remember feeling like a minority on campus many times,” says Department of PA Studies Assistant Professor and Vice Chair for Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement Kathryn Reed. “I do not remember the topic of diversity being discussed or addressed in a way that made its way to my eyes or ears. That’s not to say that folks were not doing that work, but as my memory serves me, I do not distinctly remember it being a major focus.”

When Reed worked as a paramedic and later during clinical rotations in her PA program, she says she had several experiences that would classify as microaggressions. “My way of processing these experiences was to focus on being the best version of myself. I was conditioned by life to identify these experiences as deeply frustrating but expected, especially in health care and academia.”

In time, Reed’s experiences led her to form the National Society of Black Physician Assistants. She wanted to create a culturally responsible physician assistant workforce that adequately represents the diversity found in our world, and focuses on the eradication of health disparities, especially in Black communities.

Today, Reed sees changes taking place at SHRS.

“Conversations around diversity, equity and inclusion are happening in our classrooms and clinical settings,” Reed continues. “These conversations benefit both students and patients by creating new cultural norms within our programs and in our health care system. Specifically, by validating our lived experiences and ensuring we have created a safe space to learn and discuss health concerns, we are taking steps towards changing our culture.”

Paula K. Davis, associate vice chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences, agrees.

“SHRS is in a constant state of self-examination to determine what its stakeholders need, identifying gaps and taking action to fill those gaps,” says Davis. “I’ve seen it in faculty recruitment and community engagement, and I’ve been fortunate to consult with people from a variety of SHRS departments and programs who are working diligently to establish inclusive excellence in student recruitment and retention. The intentionality is outstanding.”

INTENTIONAL ACTIONS.

Good intentions are one thing. But putting the right leadership in place spurs intentional actions, and that's what makes the difference. Recently, Bernard Rousseau, professor and chair, Department of Communication Science and Disorders, was appointed associate dean of SHRS' Office of Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (OEI&CE) and Channing Moreland, director, SHRS Wellness Pavilion, became senior director of Strategic Programs and Services in SHRS' OEI&CE. They are committed to change.

"We are inviting people to the dance. But more than that, we are encouraging them to participate, to be engaged, to be a part of all we do," notes Rousseau.

He says that four new tenure-track faculty from underrepresented groups will be hired to amplify the work of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI). This cluster of JEDI change agents will collaborate with other faculty to train future generations of health and rehabilitation professionals. "We envision a future in which SHRS leads in the elimination of health disparities, the advancement of health equity and the creation of an equitable health care system. These faculty members will help to accelerate our work in this space," says Rousseau.

"People are more likely to enroll in academic programs when there are faculty that represent their demographic and who can serve as role models and mentors," adds Cooper. "When faculty and students have shared experiences, it increases the likelihood of student enrollment and success."

And when faculty and students have shared experiences and a cultural awareness of their patients, the result is better outcomes. Moreland says the SHRS Wellness Pavilion at Pitt's Community Engagement Center in Homewood offers space for community members and visitors to feel empowered to take control of their health and wellness in a judgment-free environment.

"We know that not everyone is afforded the same opportunities or access to mentors, equitable health and wellness services and networks of support," notes Moreland. "It is critical that we work alongside oppressed and marginalized community members to create health care systems that are culturally responsive and equitable."

"SHRS is in a unique position to mobilize students, faculty and staff to offer our expertise and resources to create a more equitable and inclusive society for all," Moreland continues.



Channing Moreland, director, SHRS Wellness Pavilion,
and sr. director of Strategic Programs and Services,
SHRS OEI&CE

ACCESS IS KEY.

Delitto says the key to creating a diverse and inclusive culture is not by leveling the playing field, as some may think. Instead, what is needed is a series of supports to lift up those who need help to succeed. “Maybe it requires a little extra boost from faculty. Maybe it’s a matter of mentoring or identifying potential students at the undergraduate level, helping with resume building or networking. It’s up to all of us.”

“Being a member of an underrepresented group often includes additional challenges to participating in education, employment and other life activities, so it’s important to provide reasonable accommodations,” adds Cooper. “It is impossible to achieve a stated goal of diversity, equity and inclusion, which is a critical path forward, without providing access.”

ACCESS TO SCHOLARSHIPS WILL HELP FACILITATE DIVERSITY.

Timothy C. Sell, research professor, Atrium Health Musculoskeletal Institute, Charlotte, North Carolina, recognizes the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace. He and his wife created the Timothy C. and Mrs. Cynthia B. Sell Student Award for SHRS students who are committed to diversity and inclusion.

“I know that if we have open and honest conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion, we have a better chance of understanding those we work with and those we care for,” says Sell. “These conversations can be very difficult but are essential. Hopefully our scholarship recognizes those students who share our passion for this work.”



Bernard Rousseau, associate dean of Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT. COMMUNITY OUTREACH.

“Students are playing an important role in transforming SHRS,” notes Rousseau.

At the SHRS Wellness Pavilion, student-led programming reaches young and old alike. “Access to health and wellness literacy, challenges to be heard and not knowing where and how to access health and wellness services has not been easily attained,” explains Moreland. “But at the Wellness Pavilion, students work alongside faculty supervisors in an effort to alleviate barriers, model what health care teams can look and feel like working together and offer resources.”

On campus, many student groups are addressing issues surrounding diversity and inclusion. In the Department of Occupational Therapy, for example, TransformOTive Justice looks at the manifestations of systemic racism in our personal and professional lives, while the Pitt chapter of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) promotes diversity and inclusion within the occupational therapy workforce.

Doctor of Physical Therapy students Hannah Altsman and Madeline Wells serve on the Physical Therapy Student Service Board (SSB). They say their group has worked with community partners to design outreach programs for local Pittsburgh high school students traditionally underrepresented in the physical therapy field. “Representation in physical therapy is important, and students on the front line of those efforts can foster relationships within the community as well as with future physical therapists,” says Wells.



EQUALITY VS. EQUITY



PT students offering interactive workshops at the SHRS Wellness Pavilion

“I think community outreach and interprofessional engagements give students the power to transform the culture of SHRS,” adds Altman. “We have so many opportunities for those kinds of experiences here at Pitt. When we treat patients outside of the usual clinical environment, it opens our eyes to new perspectives on health care as a whole, and the diversity within our community.”

Rousseau says, “The community is where our work as health care professionals begins and ends.”

Through a new partnership with Pittsburgh Public Schools, students in primary and secondary grades will have the opportunity to participate in high-quality after-school programming at the SHRS Wellness Pavilion.

The partnership will give school-age children in under-resourced communities exposure to STEM-related professions and access to mentorship. “It will also create new pathways to our school’s degree programs, research laboratories and world-renowned clinical and research faculty,” says Rousseau.

“We believe our efforts have merit. We have the leadership in place to bring about transformative change and the commitment from every one of our departments to take decisive action,” says Delitto.

According to Rousseau, change requires the commitment and participation of the entire SHRS community. “It will be a marathon, not a sprint. Culture is learned, shared, practiced, integrated and dynamic. Sustainable and long-lasting change does not happen overnight, but we have made a great start and we have a vision of what can and should be.” ■

Read more about scholarships, student organizations, new faculty and community engagement in other stories in this issue.



DIVING INTO SERVICE.

It's a hot July day on Conneaut Lake in northwestern Pennsylvania. The engines of the motorboats are revving up as eager skiers prepare to skim over the water at exhilarating speeds.

Spectators can see the joy on the faces of all participants. It's go-time at the annual Three Rivers Adaptive Sports (TRAS) water sports clinic.

This year, 29 people with disabilities participated in the water skiing event, along with two kayakers.

Robert Maguire, instructor in the Master of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics program (MSPO), was one of 66 volunteers on hand. "This is so much more than just water

skiing," notes Maguire. "It's a chance to provide support to amputees who are eager to take part in a sport they might not otherwise enjoy. It's very fulfilling."

Maguire worked alongside Lauren Casertano (MSPO '20), prosthetics resident at Hanger Clinic in Pittsburgh, and Nick Sposito (MSPO '20), prosthetic resident, PA Artificial Limb & Brace Co. Together they selected the correct cages, riggers and skis for various participants, and created adaptive seating devices to cradle each skier's body.

"We devised something like a specialized hammock that supports the skier's sides and back as well as their bottom," says Maguire.

Using metal tubing to create the infrastructure, the team of prosthetics professionals devised a pad made of pipe insulation before wrapping each device in a special closed-cell fabric. "We had to make sure the adaptive seat provided total body contact," adds Maguire. "The goal was to provide stability and safety while keeping the skier comfortable."

Marcia Logan, outpatient physical therapist at Allegheny Health Network, is treasurer of TRAS and this year's co-chair of the water sports clinic. She expressed gratitude for the participation of Maguire and the SHRS alumni volunteers.

"There are a lot of components to adaptive water skiing that contribute to the success of our clients, but the equipment setup is one of the most critical," says Logan. "Properly assessing the needs of each skier, choosing the correct equipment and making the necessary adjustments not only enhances the performance of the skiers but improves their safety as well."



TRAS member Clark Manny (left) and MSPO instructor Robert Maguire (right)

“It requires creativity, problem solving, determination and the desire to improve the lives of clients,” she continues. “It’s the same skill set necessary for those working in prosthetics and orthotics.”

Tom Furnival, an above-the-knee amputee since 1999, frequently participates in TRAS activities ranging from water and snow skiing to handcycling and bowling. He says, “When professionals like Bob and his team are involved in these kinds of events, they bring the skills and knowledge to make adjustments to equipment right on the spot. It makes for a better and safer experience.”

Casertano said it was a joy to work with the skiers that day.

“I grew up playing sports and have always had a passion for helping others be active and take part in athletics,” notes Casertano. “It is so important to make everyone feel included. When adaptive sports and clinics are available, it creates a community in which ‘disabled’ does not mean ‘unable.’ It means inclusion and allows all people to enjoy their time safely, to get outside, to go water skiing and to create relationships with others.”

Sposito agrees. He says, “My career choice centers around helping individuals with disabilities. Even though I wasn’t out on the water, I could tell by the radiant smiles on everyone’s faces they were having a blast!”

“Events like this show that disabilities are not insurmountable and, with a little ingenuity, anything can be accomplished,” Sposito adds.

For Furnival, the clinic provides a chance to be out on the water and enjoy the ride. He encourages amputees to try adaptive sports. “There are a lot of sports that can be adapted for different disabilities.”

“Sports and recreation are critical to the health and well-being of all,” says Associate Professor Mark R. Schmeler, Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, and member of the TRAS board of directors.

“Bob’s involvement definitely supports the water sports clinic itself,” he continues. “And as more of our young alumni and students get involved with events like these, we hope that will translate to even more volunteerism in their local communities as they advance in their careers.” ■





FREEDOM HOUSE 2.0.

THE LATEST EVOLUTION IN PREHOSPITAL CARE TRAINING.

Today, there is an emergency in Emergency Medicine. Many of our underserved communities are not receiving the type of care they desperately need. But just as in the past, the SHRS Emergency Medicine (EM) program is on call to change things for the better.

In the late 1960s, there was no ambulance service in Pittsburgh's Hill District. "If there was an emergency, either the police or a hearse would arrive on the scene," notes Kenneth Hickey (BS '20), program manager of community services, UPMC Health Plan. "But Freedom House, a community-based ambulance service and training program, changed all that." Using an innovative approach, Freedom House recruited unemployed candidates from the underserved community, trained them in state-of-the-art emergency medical practices, and eventually became a model for Pittsburgh EMS and emergency services across the country.

Today, we take advanced EMS services for granted. And yet there is a dire need to deliver care that goes beyond medical emergencies to address critical non-emergency psychosocial needs.

According to Hickey, only 20% of the current 911 call volume pertains to true life- or limb-threatening medical emergencies, while 80% of calls represent emergencies of a different nature.

“Most calls are for a wide variety of psychosocial problems, including poorly managed chronic medical and mental health conditions and a myriad of social issues that affect health and wellness,” says Hickey.

“Unfortunately, many of today’s EMS providers are not trained to assess or intervene with these kinds of challenges,” adds Dan Swayze, adjunct instructor, EM program, and vice president, Community Services, UPMC Health Plan.

He says that while the curriculum is changing to include more community-based medicine, Freedom House 2.0 provides a re-boot of the original Freedom House concept. It develops future EMT professionals with a broader set of skills to better address the nature of 911 calls today and focuses on the recruitment of providers from underserved areas.

It is the latest commitment by the University of Pittsburgh to address the current and future needs of underrepresented individuals and our underserved communities.

Launched by UPMC and UPMC Health Plan in December 2020, Freedom House 2.0 operates with a grant from Partner4Work to recruit and train cohorts of high-risk youth and nontraditional students as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and in community paramedic skills.

Students participate in a 10-week course taught by faculty from SHRS’ EM program, the Center for Emergency Medicine (CEM), UPMC Community Services and UPMC Prehospital Care. During this time, they learn soft skills and team building and receive didactic training in how to assess and address social determinants of health, and mental health awareness. By the conclusion of the program, they are prepared to take the Pennsylvania EMT certification examination and gain employment.

“This is a true workforce development program,” says Hickey. “As such, there is a strong focus on mentorship, resume building and networking.”

“We know it’s difficult for some individuals to take time off from work or travel to a site for training,” says Swayze. “By selecting a different underserved community for each cohort and adding a \$1,500 stipend for participants and trying to reduce other financial barriers, we can make this program more attractive to nontraditional students.”

“The main idea is to jump-start people’s careers,” says Sarah Johnson (BS ’12), CEM clinical coordinator and EM program adjunct instructor. “But there is also a big win for the community.”



“Because we address many social and behavioral challenges in our curriculum, we know we are training individuals who can go back into their communities and provide the type of help that’s so desperately needed.”

Johnson notes that not everyone who participates in Freedom House 2.0 and passes the EMT exam will become an EMT. “Freedom

House 2.0 provides a solid foundation for individuals who want to go into a variety of different careers in the field of health care. What’s more, the skills these students receive are transferrable to many other jobs,” she continues.

To date, most have accepted positions at UPMC, working in roles such as community health worker. The hope is that many will take advantage of the tuition reimbursement available to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Emergency Medicine or another undergraduate degree.

The majority of program graduates have been women of color. Many are single mothers. “This is a significant change from the past, where EMS providers were predominately White males,” observes Swayze. “We are pleased that this program is bringing much-needed diversity to the field, and training individuals to improve health care in their own communities.”

“EMS response solely to 911 emergencies will soon become a thing of the past,” says Thomas Platt, associate dean, associate professor and EM program director. “Freedom House 2.0 is training people to become community health practitioners who can go into homes and do any assessment rather than just transport people to the hospital. This in turn can help reduce hospital admissions.” ■



SETTING THE TABLE FOR **SOCIAL JUSTICE.**

“Nutrition is a social justice issue. Dismantling the systems of oppression inherent in dietetics care is crucial, and the next wave of dietitians is committed to making this happen.”



Those are strong words from Natalie Colantuono (BS '20), third-year student in the Dietitian Nutritionist (DN) Program and advocacy coordinator for the Student Dietetic Association (SDA). But it's a sentiment shared by national experts.

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals, encourages diversity and inclusion by striving to recognize, respect and include differences in ability, age, creed, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, size and socioeconomic characteristics in the nutrition and dietetics profession.

"As educators of future professionals, it's our job to make this happen," says Trisha Cousins, assistant professor and clinical coordinator, Department of Sports Medicine and Nutrition (SMN). "By looking at diversity through a social justice lens, we will be better able to serve our communities, both now and in the future," she continues.

Cousins says that providing access to nutrition and dietetic services to all members of society has always been an inherent part of the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) practice. But through the new Nutrition Inclusion Initiative, the DN Program at SHRS is going a step further to set the table for a more socially just and diverse profession.

The initiative is multi-faceted, with a focus on educating and empowering both students and faculty in ways to address the social, economic and cultural barriers to nutrition health. It follows a plan of action that includes work toward equity, engagement and evolution.

Associate Dean and SMN Department Chair Kevin Conley says the time is now. "SHRS and SMN recognize the need to honestly and deliberately identify mechanisms to more effectively address the need for greater diversity and inclusion within our programs of study."

According to Cousins, there are many ways the program's education model breaks down barriers to ensure equity. "Our faculty and students regularly provide services directly to underserved communities," she says. "They share their expertise with community partners, such as local food banks and the SHRS Wellness Pavilion, and participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and 'train the trainer' initiatives."

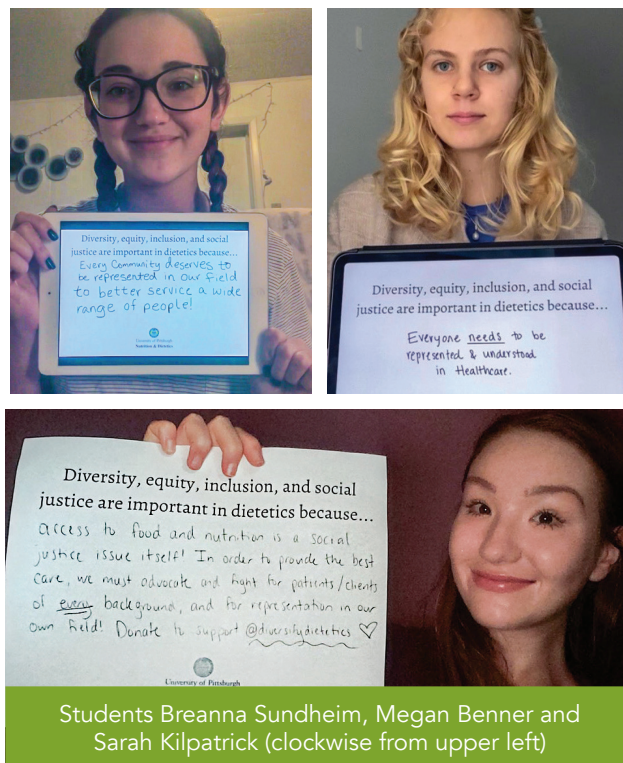
She says more conversations around social justice take place in the classrooms, and a new College in High School Introduction to Nutrition class has just been implemented to connect high school students in the Pittsburgh area to the dietetics profession.

In addition, after the master's-level students complete their experiential practice rotations, they are now asked to identify and implement strategies to address their own cultural biases so they will be better able to apply culturally sensitive approaches in their own practice.

"Natalie is a great example of how our students are more engaged than ever, and more committed to creating a profession that is welcoming and inclusive," says Cousins.

In her SDA role as advocacy coordinator, Colantuono encourages students to get involved in conversations and initiatives surrounding social justice in nutrition care.

She initiated a student Instagram campaign that illustrated the urgency to discuss diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice in the DN Program. Each student created an Instagram post in which they held up a sign that completed the sentence, "Diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice are important in dietetics because..."



"We aimed to share individual voices of our students to show our personal reasons to why we want to have more of these conversations with our professors and with each other," explains Colantuono.

Cousins says it is critical that the curriculum evolve and faculty in the program acknowledge their own privilege in order to strengthen cultural competence and understand cultural bias.

"We are looking at how and what we can do better as educators and health care professionals," adds Cousins. She says the department has added more faculty training on the topic of diversity. "We also talk about how to maintain an inclusive learning environment at monthly faculty meetings."

Students welcome the commitment of faculty. According to Colantuono, "Several of our Nutrition and Dietetics faculty strongly encourage students to follow their passions and use their voices to ask tough questions and push for change."

"Nutrition care is so much more than just food," remarks Colantuono. "It is working alongside clients with an abundance of experiences and considerations that extend far beyond dietary habits. Our profession can't effectively do that without a wide range of clinicians with diverse backgrounds and identities." ■



Sana
Abu-Dahab



Dan
Gealey



Danielle
Gill



Tina
Harris



Jaclyn
Mazza



Tamara
Mills



Janelle
Moody



Yocelin
Hernandez Rojero



Stephanie
Rouch



Amit
Sethi



Spencer
Sutter



Beth
Skidmore

Founding members of the OT Advisory Committee

A PLAN UNFOLDS.

Elizabeth R. Skidmore, chair, Department of Occupational Therapy (OT) and associate dean of Research, SHRS, is passionate about putting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at the heart of the department as well as the occupational therapy profession itself.

“We have a public health imperative to prepare the next generation of health care providers to meet the needs of all people, all around the world,” explains Skidmore.

She is not alone in her passion. OT faculty, staff, students and clinical partners are working enthusiastically to implement a master plan to strengthen the department’s focus on DEI and create more just and equitable occupational therapy services.

“The journey began six years ago,” says Skidmore. “But the progress over the last 18 months is remarkable.”

In July 2020, the department conducted a climate survey of faculty, staff, students, alumni and clinical partners. The goal was to scan the current culture to inform a master plan to create a more equitable and inclusive department.

Three major initiatives took shape: the formation of an OT Advisory Committee of external stakeholders; the initiation of a Curriculum Review Taskforce of committed faculty members, students and alumni to review DEI in curricula; and the establishment of a Journal Club consisting of all students, faculty and staff to discuss opportunities to improve DEI.



Janelle Moody (OTD '20), chair of the OT Advisory Committee, says the action-oriented group provides oversight and recommendations to develop strategies to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the department's educational, clinical, community and research programs.

"We examine the compilation of community partnerships to identify gaps and areas of improvement to serve our surrounding community better," notes Moody. "We then seek to understand what content is already established within the curricula to inform the development of a framework which will be used to improve DEI throughout all programs."

The committee also looks at guest speakers to ensure they deliver lectures that expand upon necessary knowledge for our changing world and profession.

Moody says the biggest accomplishment of the OT Advisory Committee during its first year of operation was its collaboration with the department's Curriculum Review Taskforce.

"We recognized the importance of building a more inclusive and diverse profession," says Taskforce Member and Associate Professor Joanne Baird. "During the fall of 2020, we began developing the review process, including support documents, review forms and training materials so we could evaluate the degree to which themes related to DEI are integrated within our four graduate curricula."

"Upon presentation from the taskforce, we were able to provide areas of strength and areas for improvement related to DEI for each curriculum," adds Moody.

"We discovered that DEI teaching and learning activities are occurring but can be increased and improved and that there are opportunities to incorporate DEI into course objectives, assignments and assessments," notes Taskforce Member and Associate Professor Ketki D. Raina.

Raina continues, "As a result of our findings, we are making big and small changes throughout the curricula. We have reviewed and revised many course objectives and discussed ways to add DEI to our special events, such as the Poverty Simulation, Student Conclave and Colloquium. We are also working to update graphics to include a broader representation of diverse populations and reviewing and revising existing assignments and assessments."

According to Assistant Professor Jennifer White, "In order for graduates to practice at the top of their licenses, become change leaders and provide equitable occupational therapy services, they must have a better understanding of health care inequities in patient populations so they can focus on the person, environment and their occupations to optimize outcomes."

White, along with Denise Chisholm, professor and MOT/OTD program director, began a classroom discussion with second-year OT students during the summer of 2020 after the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor. This evolved into the Journal Club: multiple small groups, each consisting of students, faculty and staff and a student facilitator who meet two to three times each term to view short videos or news clips and discuss questions and actionable steps related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

"We created ground rules to foster a 'risk-friendly' environment to promote learning and resources to facilitate discussions," says White. Topics have included "How racism makes us sick," "Black mothers keep dying after giving birth," "Microaggressions and how to eliminate them," "Confessions of a bad feminist," "Why do we call Asian Americans the model minority?" and more.

"Many of the same topics came up in classroom presentations in my Clinical Conditions class," notes White. "I felt my group held open and honest conversations and that we all learned from each other."

Skidmore says the department is moving the needle in making progress toward educating students—as well as faculty and staff—about the value of DEI. "We established a series of benchmarks at the beginning of this process and will assess our progress as we implement evidence-based strategies over the next few years.

"In five years, I hope that we will see significant changes in our department culture, educational programs, clinical and community activities and research programs." ■



**"THIS IS NOT A TREND,
IT'S SOMETHING WE VALUE."**



A VISION FOR EQUITY AND **INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION**

Programs in the Department of Communication Science and Disorders (CSD) rank among the best in the country. Now new initiatives are underway to ensure they also become leaders in creating inclusive learning and working environments.

“As a department, we are stepping up our efforts to diversify our faculty, staff, students and eventually our professions, so that we’re better able to care for patients of all abilities, identities, experiences, backgrounds and orientations,” says Bernard Rousseau, professor and chair, CSD, and associate dean for Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement, SHRS.



Assistant Professor Nancy Gauvin and student Emma Daly

A key member of his team is Assistant Professor Nancy Gauvin, a speech-language pathologist with a keen interest in voice, resonance, craniofacial anomalies, cleft lip and palate, dysphasia and diversity and inclusivity.

Gauvin comes to Pitt with accolades. And a passion for serving others.

In 2020, she received the Women & Gender Equity Center Outstanding Faculty Award for fostering a diverse and supportive learning environment at the University of Vermont (UVM), where she reintroduced a voice treatment program to address the unique physical and emotional needs of the transgender community.

“All people have a right to equality, care and compassion,” explains Gauvin. “The transgender community is greatly underserved when it comes to voice therapy and there are many



ways in which we can support them. By working with the transgender community, we are also able to broaden our students' exposure to diversity and inclusion."

At Pitt, she plans to continue her work by offering informational meetings and pairing members of the transgender community to clinical resources for voice intervention.

Leah B. Helou, assistant professor, CSD, shares Gauvin's interest in transgender voice. She has published several research papers on the topic and founded the Transgender Voice and Communications Training Program at the University of Pittsburgh Voice Center.

"Gender-affirming voice and communication work requires so much personal work in order for clinicians to engage with true cultural humility," says Helou. "I look forward to learning with and from Gauvin as we try to advance the resources available to clinicians and clients."

Rousseau says Gauvin's experience makes her the ideal choice to serve as the principal investigator of the new CSD Communication Equity Outcomes Research Initiative.

"I envision a diverse undergraduate and graduate program with various scaffolding pathways of opportunities for students and reciprocity between all of the programs within the CSD Department," explains Gauvin. This would include targeting local high schools in the Pittsburgh area, with the intent of reaching underrepresented students who may be open to learning more about careers in the fields of audiology and speech-language pathology and guiding them into the Communication Science undergraduate program.

"My plan includes reaching out to all-male high schools, as well," continues Gauvin. "It's a fact that nearly 96% of speech-language pathologists are women. We need to change that and this is one way to start."

She sees value in a mentorship program that would pair high school students with current undergraduates and incoming undergraduates with master's-level students in the Speech-Language Pathology program.

"Students would learn from one another and broaden their experiences," notes Gauvin. She says in time the mentoring program could cross over various disciplines in the health sciences, creating a strong collaborative culture.

Gauvin believes mentorship has far-reaching impact.

Emma Daly, an SHRS graduate student in the Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program, was an undergraduate research assistant for Gauvin at UVM. Gauvin says it's fate that brought the two of them together at Pitt.

"Gauvin is an excellent mentor. She always welcomes questions and takes time to review materials and share the research she has been doing," recalls Daly. "She encouraged me to pursue graduate programs that had medical focuses, my main interest as an undergraduate student, and set me up with the foundation to be a successful and well-rounded research assistant."

To help Pitt students understand the global need for SLP services, Gauvin would like to explore the development of a diverse international experience for students to work with underrepresented clients in different parts of the world.

"Service learning and advocacy are always a part of my coursework and clinical supervision," notes Gauvin.

Gauvin says there is a great need for clinicians and their students to visit underserved areas and assess and treat children with or at risk for developmental disorders such as swallowing disorders, speech and sound disorders, motor speech, Autism Spectrum Disorders, craniofacial anomalies and more. An international service program could be multi-disciplinary and would allow Pitt students and faculty to help train community volunteers on speech-language therapy to ensure follow-through for these children.

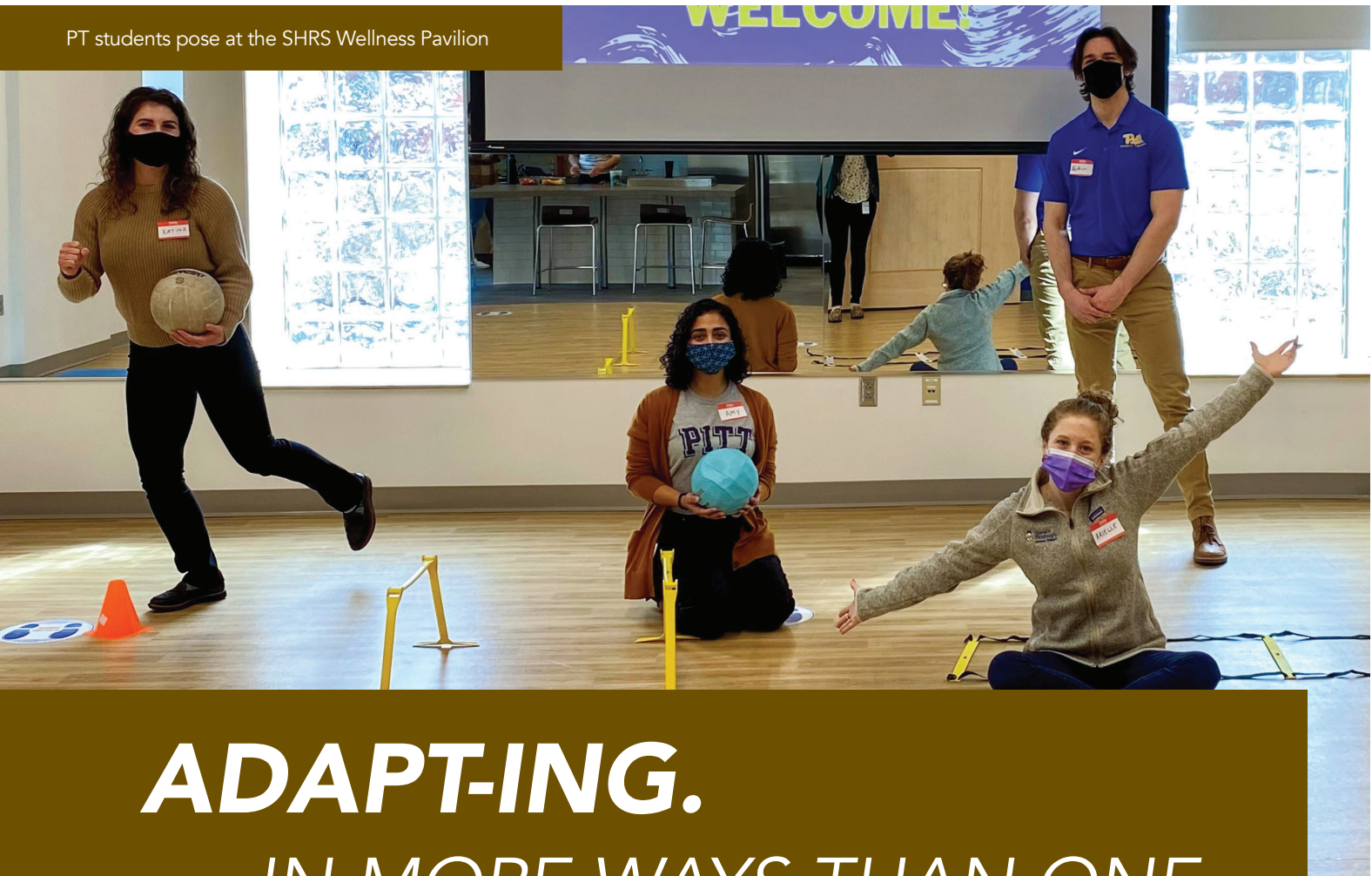
"My commitment to diversity and the expansion of interprofessional collaborations is in keeping with SHRS' vision to create a world free of barriers," notes Gauvin.

"We're very pleased to have Gauvin join our team," adds Rousseau. "She has a tremendous understanding of her field and ignites passion in everyone around her." ■





PT students pose at the SHRS Wellness Pavilion



ADAPT-ING. IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

In the Department of Physical Therapy (PT), new initiatives are in place to ensure its number-one ranked program is also at the forefront of increasing enrollment of underrepresented and disadvantaged students.

The department has initiated an educational pathway to recruit a more diverse student body, adopted a more holistic admissions process and added a hybrid option for students in the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program.

Assistant Professor Tara Ridge-Hankin says ADaPT@Pitt began in August to recruit minority and underserved undergraduates who may be interested in health care careers, particularly physical therapy. “We want to create a source of highly qualified, diverse individuals who will be ready and able to tackle the demands of the DPT program.”

Ridge-Hankin explains that the program started with a social media campaign to engage with Black and Hispanic students as well as students who may have socio-economic barriers

that prevent them from attending graduate school, or other concerns that limit their ability to enroll.

“Our goal is to get to know these students, offer seminars and panel discussions throughout the year to inform them and eventually connect them with mentors in the field,” says Ridge-Hankin.

Next summer, students will have the opportunity to attend a week-long intensive experience on campus that will include networking opportunities, peer mentorship, academic counseling, clinical observation and application support services including meetings with financial aid officers.

“We know there are qualified students from underserved and underrepresented communities who, for one reason or another,

never apply to our program,” observes Ridge-Hankin. “Through ADaPT@Pitt, we hope to identify them and help them along their educational journey to PT.”

David Wert, vice chair of DPT Education and associate professor, says a more holistic approach to the admissions review process that accounts for an individual’s life experiences also impacts the number of diverse candidates accepted into the program.

“In the past, we relied on traditional metrics such as the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), a high number of observation or volunteer hours, and the applicants’ Grade Point Average (GPA),” notes Wert. “However, there are biases in these metrics that sometimes caused us to overlook the potential of some applicants.”

Wert says that since the department eliminated the need for GRE results during the 2021-2022 application cycle, the applicant pool increased by 100.

“We are also now reviewing the observation or ‘shadowing’ hours within the context of the individual applicant, considering their unique circumstances and situations accordingly,” he adds. “Although we still use GPA as a predictor of success, we encourage our reviewers to look at each applicant’s full undergraduate experience in an effort to better understand the academic journey and potential of the applicant, and to recognize the challenges students faced and the efforts put forth amidst such challenges.”

Through the new DPT-Hybrid option, students from diverse circumstances and locations can earn this sought-after degree.

Professor Kim Nixon-Cave serves as director of the DPT-Hybrid offering. She’s one of eight new faculty members from across the country who were hired to implement the new model.

“Pitt has been developing the hybrid concept for several years and we’re very excited to have our first cohort in place,” says Nixon-Cave. Right now, 22 students are enrolled with the goal of the hybrid option enrolling 90 students for fall 2022.

“This is not ‘pandemic teaching,’” she points out. “Our hybrid option follows a very thought-out, well-designed curriculum that is supported by instructional designers, videographers and all the necessary

resources to develop the curriculum. It is top-notch, as you would expect from the Pitt DPT program.”



Tara Ridge-Hankin,
assistant professor
and vice chair



David Wert, associate
professor and vice
chair, DPT Education



Kim Nixon-Cave,
professor and director,
DPT-Hybrid Option



James Irrgang,
professor and chair,
PT Department

The option includes both synchronous and asynchronous learning as well as two, six- to 10-day immersion sessions on campus each semester for hands-on instruction and to facilitate the course material presented online. Hybrid students will have the opportunity to complete their clinical rotations in their hometowns if they choose.

Nixon-Cave says one of the most favorable aspects of the hybrid option is that the students pay in-state tuition. “Physical therapy education is quite expensive and this model helps eliminate some of the financial burden.”

But there’s another benefit. Nixon-Cave hopes some of the hybrid students will remain in their

hometowns to practice after they receive their degree, providing services to people who may currently lack access to health care, specifically physical therapy.

According to PT Department Chair and Professor James Irrgang, “Ultimately, all of these changes will enhance the diversity and inclusion of the PT profession and improve the quality and outcomes of care provided to individuals seeking physical therapy.” ■

Learn more about ADaPT@Pitt at www.shrs.pitt.edu/adapt.





Channing Moreland, director, SHRS Wellness Pavilion, and sr. director of Strategic Programs and Services, SHRS OEI&CE (left) and Quiana Golphin, assistant professor, Counseling (right)

THE JOURNEY TOWARD CULTURAL HUMILITY.

Quiana Golphin, assistant professor, Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling, is on a mission. She wants to ensure that the Counseling program genuinely welcomes all students—and prepares them to work with all clients.

To that end, she has assumed the chair of the newly formed Counselors for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (CODEI) committee, a group of SHRS faculty dedicated to informing best practices in counselor education.

According to Golphin, an important part of their work will focus on developing cultural humility and multicultural awareness in an effort to achieve cultural competence in all aspects of their program.

Eric Meyer, professor and Counseling program director, says the process of gaining cultural competence begins with cultural humility followed by greater cultural awareness.

CULTURAL HUMILITY IS THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE
CULTURE IN WHICH PEOPLE BELONG. FOR EACH ONE OF US,
IT MEANS WE GO INTO ANY SPACE WILLING TO LEARN AND
NOT TRYING TO IMPOSE OUR OWN VIEWS ON ANYONE ELSE. //

— Quiana Golphin

“The Counseling program fosters this developmental trajectory across the curriculum,” explains Meyer. “Our Cultural Considerations in Counseling course provides a foundation of cultural awareness, knowledge and skills for working with clients from diverse backgrounds. This course goes beyond didactic teaching to include a series of experiential learning exercises aimed at promoting humility as well as self- and other-awareness skills.”

Golphin notes that even prior to that course, during summer orientation, faculty prepare the incoming class for the self-reflective and experiential work surrounding cultural humility and multicultural competence.

“Students will be primed for the expectation that throughout the program they will participate in activities, assignments and discussions aimed at increasing their self-awareness, knowledge and skills to work with diverse populations,” Golphin continues.

She says the new CODEI committee provides a framework for how faculty and students achieve cultural humility. She is passionate about the committee’s mission “to celebrate the uniqueness of students, faculty and staff by promoting practices that support an environment in which everyone can achieve success without barriers.”

“The CODEI committee is ensuring that the latest thinking, research findings and best practices are being continually integrated into all that we do in the Counseling program,” adds Meyer. “While our faculty are always attentive to these issues, CODEI puts them at the forefront of our awareness.”

“Our students are affected by what is happening in the world, as we all are,” admits Golphin. “The CODEI committee is working to establish protocols to address highly publicized situations of racial injustice that are very present in our society.”

“We want to provide our students with a safe place where they can find full support and resources to help them process what they are experiencing,” she continues. “When they become culturally aware, they are more confident and better prepared for their clinical placements and more likely to incorporate cultural competence into their future practices.”

Associate Professor Laura Dietz serves as a member of the CODEI committee and Counseling’s faculty coordinator for the SHRS Wellness Pavilion at Pitt’s Community Engagement Center in Homewood. She says the work of the committee informs how Counseling students interact with the community at that facility.

“In their coursework, we teach students to use a multicultural perspective when working with clients and to explore how cultural contexts and experiences shape orientation to mental health. The Wellness Pavilion allows them to translate these perspectives into community-focused and student-led programming,” says Dietz.

To date, students have led a variety of programs ranging from Mental Health 101—a primer for the types of mental health services available and how to access them—to Simple Mindfulness/Relaxation groups and a New Moms Support group.

Dietz says supervisors are critical in helping students practice cultural humility. They utilize role-play to demonstrate how to ask clients about cultural issues and explore aspects of identity with clients to enhance the therapeutic relationship and treatment outcomes.

“As supervisors, we need to encourage our students to use best practices to meet clients where they are and collaborate on treatment goals that are meaningful and congruent with their values and experiences,” adds Dietz. “In that way, we need to demonstrate what cultural humility looks like in practice and model having conversations with clients.”

Golphin says the CODEI committee is looking for growth opportunities. They hope to include students as committee members and are currently conducting an audit to analyze the Counseling curriculum, inviting input from students regarding diversity, equity and inclusion in the program and encouraging faculty feedback. ■





IT'S NOT ALL TALK.

No one likes starting that tough conversation.
Yet everyone feels better once it happens. Eyes are opened.
Feelings are laid out on the table and change can begin.



PASPDI student leaders meet

Students in the Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program are raising their voices to create awareness about inequalities that exist in health care due to a lack of understanding about different perspectives and cultures. But that's not all. They are working to correct these disparities.

"I believe in the power of action," affirms Hoan Bich Nguyen, co-president of the Physician Assistant Students Promoting Diversity and Inclusion (PASPDI) organization. "I am passionate about promoting diversity and inclusion, and I'm ready to be accountable and take initiatives to make that happen."

As an immigrant from Vietnam, Nguyen saw firsthand the challenges her community faced to obtain health care. Since she and fellow Co-President Judy Ballich took over the leadership of PASPDI in March 2021, the organization has hosted three major events to address diversity in health care. One focused on the impact of systemic racism and health care disparities among Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, another on LGBTQ health and a third on mental health.

In addition, they have published monthly journals to discuss adversities in health care, and how it disproportionately affects minoritized groups and people.

"I believe representation matters," says Ballich, a first-generation Syrian American. "It is extremely important for the patient to connect and trust their health care provider. Often, a person's culture and beliefs have an impact on their health."

"It is vital that future providers learn to respect and work together with our patients to ensure optimal health," she emphasizes.

Associate Dean and PAS Department Chair David C. Beck commends his students for their dedication and commitment. "There are so many good things happening through our student organizations," he says. "They are action-driven and positive, and I can see the ripple effects on the rest of our student body and into my colleagues who are practicing PAs."

"Change starts in many places, and our department is definitely one of them."

Immediate Past President of PASPDI, Cherish Star Hannah, wants to see more inclusion in the PA curriculum. "Medical education is currently centered around the White body as the standard, and this directly impacts anyone who is not White."

She cites the example of how Lyme disease is diagnosed.

According to Hannah, "Research has shown the diagnosis of Lyme disease in Black and Brown patients is often delayed because providers do not recognize what the characteristic

target lesion looks like on dark skin. As a result, these patients present with more advanced symptoms, such as neurological disorders and arthritis, than White patients."

Ferdy Huang and Diana Tran serve as Diversity co-chairs for the Physician Assistant Student Society (PASS). Together they publish a monthly newsletter that highlights inequalities that exist in health care due to lack of understanding.

"When we learn stories of people from different backgrounds than our own, we not only learn more about that culture, we develop empathy and in turn, improve the way we will treat and provide care to future patients," notes Tran.

"It is impossible to effectively establish rapport, communicate with and develop appropriate treatment plans for our patients without the understanding of who they are and how they perceive the current health care system," agrees Huang.



Hoan Nguyen, co-president of PASPDI

Huang says PASS is working with faculty to develop a grand rounds-style program on how to assist different patient populations who are at a disadvantage.

Beck says it's a sign of progress that PA students are more empowered than ever to join in the work of promoting diversity and inclusion. "Our students are doing unique things. They have recognized a need and they are pushing forward to accomplish their goals. I'm extremely proud of them and their work." ■



ACCESS+ABILITY



Mary Goldberg (right), associate professor and program director, MRT, with group of former students and staff

IN SEARCH OF SOLUTIONS AND SYSTEM CHANGES.

INTERNAL COMMITTEE AND NEW
SCHOLARSHIPS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING.

In the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology (RST), work is underway to improve equity, justice and inclusion. It's a process that is both internal and external, and filters both from the top down and the bottom up.

RST Online Continuing Education Coordinator Karl Kemmerer is part of a group of faculty, staff and students who are taking a hard look at internal practices surrounding diversity. Since its inception in the fall of 2020, the Equity Justice and Inclusion (EJI) Committee led by Anand Mhatre, assistant professor, has conducted surveys to assess workplace biases, established a tip line and examined ways to improve the curriculum to include coursework on health equity.

"We're putting our heads together, looking at problems and finding solutions," notes Kemmerer.

Department Chair and Associate Professor Jonathan Pearlman says internal accountability is an important first step toward a more diverse and inclusive environment.

"Through the work of the EJI Committee, we see that there are things we thought we were doing better and other things that we could easily change, such as adding gender-inclusive language in our case studies," explains Pearlman.

"The most important thing we've learned is there is really no conclusion," Kemmerer adds. "There's always work to be done."

ANNOUNCING THE NEW ACCELERATE SCHOLARSHIP

Mary Goldberg, associate professor and program director, Master of Rehabilitation Technology (MRT), says one way to create a more inclusive environment is to recruit students who are themselves from diverse backgrounds or who have a passion for serving individuals from underserved or underrepresented communities.

The new AccelerATe scholarship does just that.

Sponsored by the Kaufman family, this award provides \$5,000 each to nine incoming master's-level students who are committed to careers in assistive technology.

In the first cohort, eight of the students are enrolled in the MRT program, and one in the Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) program. They come from different countries, cultures and backgrounds, but they share a common purpose. They are passionate about pursuing careers that will make a difference in the lives of others. And they are all driven by personal experiences.

"My younger brother is legally blind and has Autism Spectrum Disorder," says MRT student Meghan Mulloy. "I've seen firsthand how assistive technology has allowed him to be more independent. His magnifier allows him to read by himself and he always has so much fun on his adapted bike. I would love to help other people with disabilities access the assistive technology they need."

MRT student Courtney Sargent says she was inspired to get into the field of rehabilitation after doing service work with individuals with intellectual disabilities. "I learned that everyone, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, should have the opportunity to live life as they want and be contributing members of society. I hope that as an Assistive Technology Professional (ATP), I will help countless people live more authentic and fulfilling lives."

"As a Black woman growing up in predominately White spaces, I rarely saw providers that looked like myself," adds P&O student Marissa Ceaser. "By increasing diversity in the field of assistive technology, representation within Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities can drive forward innovation that ultimately improves patient-centered care."

"Diversity definitely drives innovation," agrees MRT student Denise Truong. "Members of my family have used assistive technology for more than 15 years, and each one has different perspectives, skills and experiences. Through the AccelerATe scholarship, I hope to pursue my dream of creating products that will benefit people with quadriplegia, like my mother, and help them live more fulfilling lives."

"With diversity in the field of assistive technology, there is diversity in ways patients can connect with their assistive device technologist," says AccelerATe scholar Areeba Khan. "They will discover new ways to increase individual independence."

Goldberg notes that the initial class of AccelerATe scholars are all women, although the overall ATP population is currently dominated by males, especially in leadership positions. "This further demonstrates our commitment to diversity and inclusion and proves that it's a very exciting time for the field of rehabilitation technology." ■





LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP LEADS TO IMPROVED COMMUNITY HEALTH



The Department of Health Information Management (HIM) and the Neighborhood Resilience Project are old friends.

Associate Professor Valerie Watzlaf began volunteering with the organization more than a decade ago. But in 2014, she enlisted the help of Associate Professor Leming Zhou and some graduate students to create an electronic health record (EHR) for the free health clinic Neighborhood Resilience Project operated for the predominantly Black community in Pittsburgh's Hill District. By 2016, the HIM team had also implemented imHealthy, a tool that is still being used to track the well-being of community members.

Today, HIM students continue to work on behalf of the Neighborhood Resilience Project to improve the health of its underserved population.

Kristina N. Abernathy, chief development officer of the organization,

says Pitt's HIM students have contributed greatly to a variety of projects, providing database management, organization and much-needed research to help the clinic better serve its patients.

Gregory R. Littlejohn II, a student in the Master of Science in Health Informatics program, recently worked as an intern at the Neighborhood Resilience Project, conducting research on underinsured residents of the Hill District who use its services. He examined what other similar organizations use for underinsured guidelines and how out-of-pocket medical costs relate to income of the uninsured.



He says his work will allow the residents of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, to discover what resources are currently available to them, and what Neighborhood Resilience Project must do to advance the organization moving forward.

"I selected Neighborhood Resilience Project for my internship because I had heard of the breadth of issues this organization faces," says Littlejohn. "I knew I would be able to collect and use data to support impactful recommendations for organizational strategies related to the exchange of health information. At the

same time, I would be able to assess the effectiveness of various patient engagement activities.”

Watzlaf says that over the years, students have taken on huge responsibilities helping with important projects such as data governance, data improvement, even helping to build policies.

They’ve also collaborated with faculty and the Neighborhood Resilience Project to create a well-being scale, a social network analysis and various technologies.

“The students provide help and support on projects that are critical to the operations of our organization but cannot be completed by the staff because of the time and expectations that come with running and managing our many programs,” notes Abernathy.

HIM Adjunct Professor Steve Moeini worked with the Neighborhood Resilience Project while completing his doctoral dissertation, building a well-being assessment mobile app and scoring algorithm.

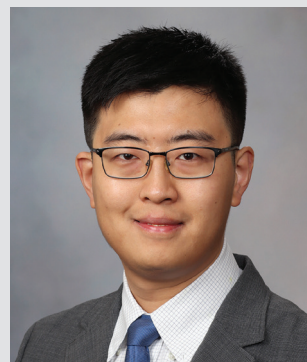
“I felt fortunate to be involved,” reflects Moeini. “And I believe the ongoing work of students is vital. It not only helps the Neighborhood Resilience Project achieve its short-term goals, but it also expands the perspectives of students, giving them first-hand experiences with community-based organizations and paving the way for future collaborations.”

Zhou says community engagement is a priority for the HIM Department. He says they soon will be helping to manage data for the SHRS Wellness Pavilion at Pitt’s Community Engagement Center (CEC) in Homewood. ■

According to Neighborhood Resilience Project’s chief executive officer, the Rev. Paul T. Abernathy, the mission of the organization is to support the transformation of neighborhoods from trauma-affected communities to resilient healing and healthy communities through trauma-informed community development.

Formerly known as FOCUS Pittsburgh, the Neighborhood Resilience Project provides basic community support, including food and clothing pantries, transportation assistance, a free health clinic, trauma response team and other services.

For more information, visit neighborhoodresilience.org.



NEW RESEARCH INTO SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

In a recently published study,* Yanshan Wang, newly appointed vice chair of research and assistant professor, HIM,

writes, “The associations between social and behavioral determinants of health (SBDH) and health outcomes are complicated and diverse, but rarely investigated as an intervention to improve patient outcomes.”

In a systematic study of six databases, Wang found it may be possible to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology to extract SBDH information and other essential information from clinical data embedded in electronic health records (EHR).

He says this type of knowledge will improve the chances of influencing health policy change for patient wellness and ultimately promote health and health equity.

Formerly an assistant professor in the Department of Artificial Intelligence and Informatics at Mayo Clinic, Wang now shares his expertise with SHRS students in the Master of Science in Health Informatics program as well as with HIM undergraduate students.

“At Pitt SHRS, I will continue to study how novel AI and NLP techniques can be leveraged to identify SBDH information from EHRs and other data sources (e.g., social media). We’ll look at how the SBDH information can be utilized to enhance current clinical and translational research to create a more equitable health system, to deliver better health care and eventually to improve population health.”

“Wang is an outstanding addition to the HIM faculty,” notes Bambang Parmanto, professor and chair. “He brings very extensive research experience in the applications of natural language processing in electronic health records which will be very important for research in health services as well as other biomedical research areas. This will open a lot of potential collaborations with researchers from SHRS and other schools at Pitt.”

* Anusha Bompelli,[†] Yanshan Wang,[†] Ruyuan Wan, Esha Singh, Yuqi Zhou, Lin Xu, David Oniani, Bhavani Singh Agnikula Kshatriya, Joyce E. Balls-Berry and Rui Zhang,[‡] “Social and behavioral determinants of health in the era of artificial intelligence,” *Health Data Science*, 2021. [[†]co-first authors; [‡]corresponding author]



OUR WELLNESS PAVILION. OUR COMMUNITY.

No single facility defines the work of SHRS in the community more than the SHRS Wellness Pavilion. This student-run entity inside the University of Pittsburgh Community Engagement Center (CEC) in Homewood provides free health and wellness programming and services to community members across the lifespan.



(Left) Learn & Earn student and Pitt OT student (standing).
(Right) Learn & Earn group with Pitt Nutrition students receiving a food demo lesson.

More about Learn & Earn: www.partner4work.org/learnandearn

“A focus of my classes is to help students appreciate the importance of practicing with cultural humility. There are many foods that provide the nutrients we need to stay healthy. It takes a culturally competent dietitian to both build a relationship with their clients to understand which foods hold value and meaning to them and then use that knowledge to make recommendations the client will actually want to follow. The demonstration kitchen in the Wellness Pavilion provides an informal setting for us to build a relationship with the community members who join our programs and learn the foods they value.”

— Caroline Passerello
Instructor, Dietitian Nutritionist Program

VITAL PARTNERSHIPS

Through our community and university partnerships, we’ve deepened our relationships and shared SHRS’ expertise, resources and connections to help enhance the existing work that is currently being done in the community by local organizations such as Homewood Children’s Village (HCV), Landforce, Sojourner House, Homewood YWCA, A Second Chance, Inc., Allegheny Center Alliance Church, Pittsburgh Millionaires University Prep 6-12, Alma Illery and Trying Together. Through this community-based learning, SHRS advances its teaching practices and positively impacts the student experience.



(Left) Peyton and Kaitlyn, Pitt Counseling students, at the Homewood Farmers Market making a stress ball with guest.

(Right) OT students facilitating enrichment activities at The Shop, with children enrolled in Homewood Children’s Village’s Summer Learning Hub.



Peyton and Kaitlyn making stress balls with young children at the PittEnrich Family Fun Day.

“My practicum experience at the Wellness Pavilion was enriching, insightful and preparative. I learned the importance of approaching each one of my relationships, professional or personal, with humility; everyone has a unique life experience that we can learn from if we are willing to be taught.”

— Peyton Kondis, Class of 2022
Student, Clinical Rehabilitation
Mental Health Counseling

“While providing basic mental health education to those who came to the Wellness Pavilion, I also learned the importance of cultural competence and humility from them. I feel better prepared to become a competent clinician by understanding the importance of continuous learning and growth.”

— Kaitlyn Herron, Class of 2022
Student, Clinical Rehabilitation
and Mental Health Counseling



Peyton and Kaitlyn facilitating a Learn & Earn session on mental health and wellness.

“The Wellness Pavilion prepares SHRS students to treat and support people inclusively regardless of their cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds. It creates community-based learning opportunities in nontraditional settings, preparing our students to address health disparities and create equitable health care environments for all.”

— Channing Moreland
Director, Wellness Pavilion, and
Senior Director, Strategic Programs and Services, SHRS

BY THE NUMBERS

208 SHRS students engaged in the work to date

250 community members participated in synchronous or in-person programming

5892 website page views
(85.4% new visitors)

412
Facebook
page “likes”

980
YouTube
views

385
quarterly
newsletters
distributed



OT (left) and PT (middle and right) students offering interactive workshops at one of the Saturday PittEnrich sessions.



Change Service Requested

PROGRAMMING

Student-led programming with supervision from SHRS faculty and staff has focused on hypertension and heart disease, obesity and diabetes, educational enrichment, mental health and the management of chronic pain. Virtual programming is available 24/7 on YouTube. The Wellness Pavilion has also participated in local food distribution events, offered K-12 tutoring support and hosted several trauma-informed care workshops.

For a full list of programming, visit www.wellnesspavilion.pitt.edu.



This mural circa 1993 of the Homewood Arts Festival greets guests as they enter the WP.



Pitt Nutrition offering food education and demonstrations to Saturday PittEnrich attendees.



Pitt Nutrition packaged 60 non-perishable food bags to give to Homewood families at the Community Empowerment Association Food Drive.



Pitt EM and Counseling students hosting our first American Red Cross Babysitting class.