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## Physical Therapy Department Newsletter for Fall 2014

URI Physical Therapy Department

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THINK BIG WE DO™



## PHYSICAL THERAPY

University of Rhode Island  
Doctor of Physical Therapy Program

## A Season of Change

Fall is finally upon us! The Class of 2017 has been falling into their new roles as first year students and rapidly adapting to the demanding curriculum. The Class of 2016 is taking a big step into their second academic year, acting as mentors to the incoming class and preparing for their full-time clinical rotations. The Class of 2015 is already off on their first clinical rotations practicing their knowledge and acquired skills in a professional atmosphere.

Since the spring of 2015, the program has been busy working with esteemed clinicians to bring new perspectives to our students on the physical therapy profession. Students have also been working diligently to bring awareness of physical therapy to the community through charitable events and lecture series. The PT department continues to stay actively connected to the community and working toward expanding our knowledge.

In this thrilling time the program is sending it's best wishes to all of the students as they transition into their new academic or clinical roles.

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## Stay Connected

[facebook.com/uridpt](https://facebook.com/uridpt)[@uri\\_dpt](https://twitter.com/uri_dpt)[web.uri.edu/physical-therapy](http://web.uri.edu/physical-therapy)

## “What’s Happening?”



Without one united voice it is hard for any profession to accomplish lasting change. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is that voice for physical therapists (PTs), physical therapist assistants (PTAs), and physical therapy students across the United States. The APTA represents the profession on Capitol Hill which upholds the code of ethics for PTs and PTAs, and unites us as professionals in our field, helping to define the value of physical therapy.

Vision 20/20 was developed in 2000 to provide goals and direction to improving the practice of physical therapy across the nation. Vision 20/20 has now been replaced by a vision adopted just last year. In case you missed it, the key statement of the new vision is written as follows, “Transforming society by optimizing movement to improve the human experience.” The key principles that will define our profession when we reach this vision, as delineated by the APTA, are “Identity, Quality, Collaboration, Value, Innovation, Consumer-centricity, Access/Equity, and Advocacy.” The aim of this vision is to guide us into the future of our profession.

Mostly in response to efforts of the APTA and its members, we have some form of direct access (unrestricted or with provisions) in all 50 states and D.C. In the past, physical therapy has been a referral-based practice and the APTA and its members have fought hard to change that. However, there is still more to be done so that individuals across the United States have full, unrestricted access to physical therapy and the benefits we can offer.

The APTA released a new version of the *Guide to Physical Therapist Practice* that is available only online. With membership to the APTA comes free access to this online resource, as well as the many other benefits they offer. Members can subscribe for a fee to receive access to the Guide. Through the provided examples, we are reminded that the APTA seeks the best interest of PTs and PTAs through sustained efforts to improve, advance, and refine the profession.



### Alumni Spotlight:

Justin Laferrier  
PhD, MSPT, OCS, SCS, ATP, CSCS

Dr. Laferrier is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Connecticut. He is also the owner of KIR Consulting. Justin was a former graduate of URI’s PT program and has been selected for the Alumni Spotlight.

*Continued on page 5*

## Highlighted Student of Fall 2014

The URI physical therapy department is the academic home to this year's Champion of the Newport Marathon. Brendan Boyle (Class of 2017) completed the 26.2-mile marathon in 2 hours 37 minutes and 18 seconds! The Newport Marathon was the first marathon race that he ever participated in. Brendan is from Mansfield, MA being an avid runner for many years and continues to enjoy the sport throughout his time as a graduate student.



Brendan previously ran for Brown University's Varsity Track and Cross Country teams before coming to URI. Currently, Brendan balances his DPT curriculum while training on his own time here in Rhode Island. He is planning to run the Boston Marathon in 2016.

Brendan became interested in becoming a physical therapist through his experience as a patient himself from various running injuries. He aspires to someday work as a physical therapist with highly trained athletes and continue his passion for running.



### Words from the Director: Dr. Jeff Konin

"While I am still recognized around the URI DPT world as the "new chair", believe it or not this November marks my one year anniversary! Wow! I extend my thanks to everyone for helping to ensure a smooth transition for me. This includes the faculty, staff, alumni, administrators, and especially our students. I have now had the privilege of experiencing a commencement, an admissions and interview cycle, finals, more finals, comp exams, wrap-up week, retreats, numerous social and community events, a budget cycle, and much more. In this newsletter, you will see rather quickly how lucky I am to be a part of this program and family. Collectively, we do a lot!"

"URI Physical Therapy is making a difference and thanks to all of you our future remains brighter than ever! I wish you and your families the happiest and healthiest holiday season!"



# Distinguished Donor

**Patricia Wolfe**  
**Director of**  
**Rehabilitation Services**  
**Rhode Island Hospital**

Patricia Wolfe is currently employed by Rhode Island Hospital Rehabilitation Services working as the Director of Rehab Services.



She also serves as the Director for Hasbro Children's Hospital and Lifespan. She has a B.A. in Physical Therapy from the School of Medicine at Indiana University and a M.A. in Physical Therapy from Boston University. Her facilities sponsored the Distinguished Lecture Series event held on September 13, 2014 with Dr. George Davies.

## ***Why did you choose to sponsor the Distinguished Lecture Series?***

"We wanted to collaborate and work with the URI PT Program on their efforts to bring in excellent programming for the PT students and PTs in the state. We chose a well-vetted, experienced, knowledgeable presenter for URI's evidence based program. The George Davies event was local and allowed a number of our PTs to attend, as well as fostered collegial relationships with URI and URI PT students."

## ***Would you encourage anyone else to sponsor in the future/why?***

"Yes, George Davies and the educational event was very well received with positive feedback. Sponsorship for attendance had robust and reasonable pricing. Our PTs loved interacting with the students and other attendees!"

## DPT Student Fundraiser for Transitions Foundation

In March of 2015, students from the University of Rhode Island Physical Therapy Department will travel to Antigua, Guatemala. Two second-year students, Alexandra Replogle and Chelsea Anderson have taken on a leadership project to make

this experience even more meaningful. They are fundraising to support the Transitions Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps to empower disabled Guatemalans through social development



programs, mobility training and independent living opportunities. With your help, they hope to bring an American-educated skilled prosthetist to Guatemala in March, who will lead a continuing education workshop for Transitions Foundation and the surrounding underserved community. The course would help to educate Guatemalan rehabilitation specialists on the most recent and effective advances in prosthetic design and development.

Please help them achieve their goal by donating at:

[www.youcaring.com/transitionsfoundation](http://www.youcaring.com/transitionsfoundation)

OR send a check payable to Transitions Foundation to:

**Chelsea Anderson**  
**URI PT Department, Suite J**  
**25 West Independence Way**  
**Kingston, RI 02881**

"Spotlight" continued from page 1

## Alumni Spotlight

### Justin Laferrier, PhD, MSPT, OCS, SCS, ATP, CSCS

Dr. Laferrier first attended the University of Rhode Island to receive his B.A. in Biology and Psychology, as well as a Master's of Science in Physical Therapy. He went on to earn a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist Certification to serve as a strength and conditioning coach for high school, college and professional athletes. He then enlisted to serve in both the US Marine Corps (running physical training for his unit) and in the US Army as an officer. After he was honorably discharged from the Marine Corp, he decided to pursue his Master's Degree in Physical Therapy at the University of Rhode Island.

*Could you describe your experience of applying and being part of URI's program?*

"I only applied to one program (URI) and I was happy that I did because I received a wonderful education. The professors were profoundly knowledgeable and always willing to assist you in any way they could. I still maintain contact with a majority of the people I graduated with and owe that to the feeling of camaraderie and sense of unity that the URI program fosters. I also enjoyed the small class sizes and focus on hands on application. The program exposed me to so much that I was often asked during my tenure as an army PT "where did you learn that?" by PT's with many more years of experience than myself."

*What was your experience immediately after graduating from URI to become part of the Physical Therapy Field?*

"I became a commissioned officer within the army's Medical Specialist Corps as a physical therapist upon graduation. During my time with the army I helped develop and served as the officer-in-charge of amputee physical therapy for Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C. and at Brooke Army Medical Center which has become the Center for the Intrepid in San Antonio TX as well as officer-in-charge of physical therapy for the 31<sup>st</sup> Combat Support Hospital deployed to Baghdad, Iraq. I was responsible for development of the majority of the high intensity training for amputees currently employed in today's DoD rehabilitation programs as well as being responsible for instituting and coaching many of the adaptive sports programs in place at these facilities."



*What are you're current professional responsibilities?*

I received my PhD at the University of Pittsburgh and I am currently employed as an assistant professor in the physical therapy and kinesiology department at the University of Connecticut and physical therapist at Muldowney physical therapy. I hold clinical specialties in orthopedics and sports medicine and assistive technology, lecture extensively on amputee and poly-trauma rehabilitation as well as biomechanics of adaptive sport. I continue to work with the Paralympic Committee and VA on coaching and training of adaptive sport and recreation and have published book chapters related to adaptive sport. As a researcher at the Human Engineering Research Labs and UCONN I have successfully administered multiple research projects (e.g. staffing, research protections, recruitment, budget, etc.), collaborated with other researchers, and produced several peer-reviewed publications.

# Full Swing

## Giving Back to the Community

Building confidence in children through physical activities! That was the mission of second year DPT students Shannon McConnell, Laura Costa, Kim Vereb, and Laila Almahdali, when they ventured out to make this year's Full Swing event a success. Previous students founded the program last year and the ladies were more than happy to take it on as a growing project! They were able to successfully raise over \$1500 for this year's event that was donated to Button Hole Short Course in Providence, RI to help support their continued efforts to offer free clinics for children with physical disabilities amongst other challenges.

In addition to raising funds for Button Hole, Representative Jim Langevin came out to show his support of the event and of children with physical disabilities.



The goal of the event was to help build confidence and personal growth within the participants by providing an opportunity to learn a sport with the collaboration of golf professionals and physical therapists.



The event was a huge success and proved to be extremely rewarding for all involved! Many thanks to all our sponsors, volunteers, and participants! The physical therapy department looks forward to working with Button Hole in the future to continue providing such opportunities for some well deserving kids!!

If you would like more information on the mission and efforts of Full Swing please follow their Facebook page or contact Shannon McConnell at [mcconnell\\_shannon@yahoo.com](mailto:mcconnell_shannon@yahoo.com)

# Visiting Scholar:

## Dr. Donald A. Neumann

The Department of Physical Therapy was visited in mid-September by Marquette University professor, Dr. Donald A. Neumann. The visit was an exciting one for students who recognize Dr. Neumann's name as author of the frequently referenced textbook, *Kinesiology of the Musculoskeletal System*. During his visit, Dr. Neumann shared his current research and contributed to the instruction of our program's biomechanics course taught by textbook collaborator, Dr. Pete Blanpied.



Dr. Neumann wears many hats in his role at Marquette University as writer, researcher, and professor of kinesiology. He has received accolades in all aspects of his career including Wisconsin's College Professor of the Year, *Catherine Worthingham Fellow* of the APTA, and numerous other recognitions for contributions to clinical research. Additionally, Dr. Neumann serves as an associate editor of the *Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy*.

While he was here, Dr. Neumann donned his research hat to share with the DPT students his current data surrounding a novel function of the psoas minor revealed through cadaveric dissection. Many students found the topic interesting and applicable to their recent experience with cadaver dissection. They welcomed the opportunity to make connections between their learning and current literature.

Most importantly students responded well to Dr. Neumann's candidness. "He was very open about the fact that he was hypothesizing and welcomed our ideas and suggestions," first year DPT student

Marissa Smyrski commented. Several of her classmates strongly agreed that both in his research and his teaching, Dr. Neumann appeared to be learning as much as he was educating.

The visit was also more broadly collaborative. Dr. Neumann contributed interactive lab activities from his experience in the kinesiology classroom and took away some ideas about departmental operations. "Dr. Neumann was very interested in the way URI operates its Doctorate of Physical Therapy Program because it differs so greatly from his experience at Marquette," says second year student Laura Costa. He was most impressed with our program's facilities and the teaching opportunities available to students both in the community and with fellow classes.

We are very grateful for Dr. Neumann's visit and we hope to continue to develop collaborative relationships like these that foster the sharing of knowledge and experience.

**Pictured Top:** Dr. Neumann of the Department of Physical Therapy and Exercise Science at Marquette University.

# URI's First Annual Distinguished Lecture Series

On September 13, 2014, Dr. George Davies presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Distinguished Lecture Series here at URI. This event was organized by 4 second-year students with the help of program director Dr. Jeff Konin, and served as a unique fundraising opportunity for the program. The course focused on recent advances in the examination and treatment of shoulder conditions

*“Terrific presentation, dynamic speaker”*

and provided 7 continuing education hours for local PTs and PTAs. In addition to his lecture, he also took the time to demonstrate numerous special tests for the shoulder, focusing on correct positioning and efficiency in the clinical setting.

Dr. Davies came to us all the way from Savannah, Georgia where he works as a professor at Armstrong Atlantic State University in the graduate physical therapy program. He has been involved in the field of sports physical therapy for over 49 years as a clinician, researcher, author and educator. Not only is Dr. Davies an internationally recognized speaker, but he is also a former US Marine, holds a black belt in karate and he is a cancer survivor! We were beyond honored to host Dr. Davies here at URI and are proud to call our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Distinguished Series a great success!

*“Truly blessed to have had the chance to learn from such an influential and amazing individual”*



Pictured: (from left) Dr. George Davies, Chelsea Anderson, Dr. Jeff Konin, Laura Thompson, Jarred Smith, Lisa Portis

# National Student Conclave

When: October 30 – November 1, 2014

Where: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The National Student Conclave (NSC) is a fantastic opportunity for physical therapy students across the nation to form an interprofessional network and utilize resources that will help them to thrive as they transition from the classroom to the clinic. The NSC offers a wide range of exciting programs over the course of its three days. Physical therapy students will be able to create their own learning curriculum as they select from a variety of special interest seminars. Topics at this year's conference included acute care, wound management, geriatrics, pediatrics, neurology, women's health, and sports.

This year we had four students representing the University of Rhode Island's Physical Therapy Department at the NSC: Chelsea Anderson, Lisa Portis, Jarred Smith, and Laura Thompson.



**Above:** Students from Class of 2016 with Scott Chesney, closing Keynote Speaker.

We spoke with these students to get the inside scoop on what their three days at NSC entailed. Their first day began with a networking activity followed by a Miami-Marquette student social. The second day included a tour through the exhibit hall where students mingled with prospective employers and viewed the newest products and services offered in the field. Students then participated in an activity that allowed them to explore a variety of career pathways within the field of physical therapy. Their second day wrapped up with an open discussion with the APTA's current president. Their final day at the NSC opened with a relaxing Tai-Chi group exercise. This was a great way to start the day on valuable leadership development training and take a peek into the vast opportunities for post-graduate experiences. The final evening included the swearing in of new officers for the Student Assembly Board.

All four students enjoyed their experiences and plan to return and attend the NSC in the upcoming year!



# Focus on Sections

## APTA- Health Policy and Administration

This semester, we celebrate the 100th birthday of Dr. Jonas Salk, the virologist who not only discovered an effective vaccine for polio, but who surrendered all of his financial claims and proprietary information so that it could be produced en masse, to best serve the public. Many associate the birth of Physical Therapy as coinciding with caring for those afflicted by the polio epidemic. Dr. Salk's altruism saved countless lives, and polio is nearly eradicated today. Along with that, Physical Therapy evolved.

Although discovering the vaccine was an amazing accomplishment, there are many vaccines that have been developed for a myriad of diseases. But we do not remember the names of those who developed them. We are reminded, as health professionals, that it is not entirely what we do, but how we choose to manage what we do, that can make a lasting impact on humankind.

This is an election year, and the Section on Health Policy and Administration, now known as HPA The Catalyst, is also electing new section officials and slating new issues to be placed before the volunteering body to continue the APTA's commitment to our core values. It is easy to get lost in the election hype. It is easy to be on the winning, or even the losing, team. The challenge is to keep the naive enthusiasm of trying to save the world that many of us once had, in the forefront of our minds as we make decisions that govern our own daily practice. We cannot save the world. Most of us will not be remembered a hundred years from our birth for single-handedly wiping-out a devastating disease. But maybe we can still save one life. Maybe ten, or maybe a hundred.

What would it take for you to become an activist? What would you have to know about the lives you could change in order to make your own professional policy and administration decisions based on the core values, rather than on personal gain?

Consider this a call to action. Complete that research project you've had nagging the back of your mind for so long. Reach out to the community by volunteering your time and your reputation. Publicly recognize a colleague who does good works, so that we can all be inspired. The content of your efforts need not be so great as that of Dr. Salk's work. It is the ordinary, everyday things that often make the most difference. Anybody can prescribe therapeutic exercise. Not everyone can inspire a patient to heal from the inside, out. It is not what we do, but how we do it, that makes the difference, and that is the backbone of HPA The Catalyst.

For more information on how to apply for research grants, volunteer in your community, and nominate a colleague for recognition, please visit the Section's website: <http://www.aptahpa.org/>

# News by Classes

## Class of 2015

URI's third year students are currently enjoying their first clinical rotations. They are scattered across the nation in states including Louisiana, California, and Florida.



**Above:** Miranda Marsh with co-workers at her first clinical rotation.

## Class of 2016

URI's second year students recently participated in community events including Senior Day and an Interprofessional Communication Conference at Brown Medical School.



## Class of 2017

URI's first year students went to South Bay Manor in Kingston, RI for their first patient experiences. It was a great opportunity for them and the residents loved having their company!

### Candle Fundraiser

We are excited to announce that URI's DPT Program is launching a unique fundraiser that will support the program's Broadening initiatives. Smith Wicks is a small company that specializes in hand-made scented soy pillar candles. Smith Wicks Candles has provided our group with two fundraising codes. Both codes will provide the buyer with 10% off of their order. **30% of the purchase price will be donated to the University of Rhode Island Physical Therapy Department.** The first code **URIPT** will have all of the pillar candles ordered wrapped in a URI Physical Therapy label. The image of what candles will look like wrapped is attached to this email. The second code, **URIPTNORMAL** will have the candles to be wrapped in their standard Smith Wicks wraps.

Please consider supporting our program!

[www.Smith-Wicks.com](http://www.Smith-Wicks.com)



Newsletter written and edited by Fall 2014 Graduate Assistants: Jenna Fitzsimmons, Abbey Lamb, Chelsea Anderson, Francesca Mainiero, Shannon McConnell, Cammie Marler, and Kate Hoffman.

## Upcoming Events

November 23rd

Mews Tavern Annual Gear N' Beer  
6.9-kilometer road race

January 4-5th

Interview Days for Class of 2018

January 6-17th

Winter J-term: Sports Medicine Behind  
the Scenes in Tampa, Florida

February to April

Belgian Exchange Students Visit from  
University of Ghent

March 6-21st

Spring Break Broadening Experiences  
New Zealand    Italy    Romania  
Guatemala    Nepal    Ireland

May

Class of 2015 Graduation

- Location: Thomas M. Ryan Center, Kingston Campus
- Date: May 2015

Visit <http://www.uri.edu/commencement/>  
for updated commencement information.



## Mission



**URI  
PHYSICAL  
THERAPY**

The Physical Therapy faculty is dedicated to graduating doctors of physical therapy competent in providing physical therapy to a variety of patient/client populations in Rhode Island and nationwide; who value the need for and use of evidence in practice; who are committed to professional development through life-long learning; and are active contributors to their professional and social communities. The faculty aspires to advance the theory and practice of physical therapy and provide service to the University, State, and Nation, through works that promote the profession, interacting communities and related disciplines.

The program is highly selective and seeks candidates who exhibit a combination of success in the sciences, a broad understanding of physical therapy practice, dedication to their community, and potential for success in the Program. The curriculum is designed to challenge students toward excellence in clinical practice, professional behavior, and service.