LSUHSC SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

JULY NEWSLETTER

2025

LSU Health NEW ORLEANS

School of Allied Health Professions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03 Class of 2025 Graduation

06 New Faculty & Staff

07 Spotlights

10 Events

12 Awards

14 Scholarship

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GRADUATION AWARDS



- Dean's award: Easton Guilbeau, DPT
- George Hampton Award for Clinical Excellence: Michaela McInnis, DPT
- John F. Burke Award: Kezia Robinson, DPT
- Academic Excellence Awards: Elizabeth Schouest, DPT
- Dave Pariser Memorial Scholarship: Easton Guilbeau, DPT

ALPHA ETA SOCIETY NOMINEES

Elizabeth Schouest, DPT, Gabrielle Deshotels, Michaela McInnis, DPT, Conor Murphy, DPT, Amanda Gerrets, DPT, Lauren Amiss, DPT

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC PHYSICAL THERAPY NATIONAL STUDENT HONOR SOCIETY

Elizabeth Schouest, DPT, Easton Guilbeau, DPT, Lauren Amiss, DPT, Conor Murphy, DPT, Micheala McInnis, DPT

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Introducing

NEW FACULTY & STAFF

CHRISSY MACMASTER, PT, DPT, PCS

Assistant Clinical Professor

LESLIE FIELS

Department Assistant



We are thrilled to welcome Leslie to our team as our new Department Assistant! She is from Destrehan, LA and comes with a strong background in medical analytics and intake coordinating for home health. Leslie is passionate about science and looking forward to the opportunity to work with students and patients.

When she's not at work, Leslie enjoys Italian food and travelling with her family. Her top two destinations are Tennessee and the Delaware coast!

We're excited to have Leslie on board!

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

CHRISSY MACMASTER, PT, DPT, PCS



The Department of Physical Therapy is proud to highlight **Dr. Chrissy MacMaster, PT, DPT, PCS,** an expert in pediatric rehabilitation. Dr. MacMaster earned her Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (2012) from The Ohio State University and her Doctor of Physical Therapy (2015) from the University of South Alabama. In 2019, she became a Board-Certified Pediatric Clinical Specialist, reflecting her dedication and advanced expertise in pediatric care.

Dr. MacMaster has practiced in a variety of settings—including school-based, home health, and outpatient clinics—holding both clinical and leadership roles. Her diverse background brings a wealth of experience to her teaching and clinical work.

In June 2025, Dr. MacMaster joined LSU Health Sciences Center–New Orleans as an Assistant Professor. She will be teaching the pediatric components of Human Development Across the Lifespan, as well as Health Policy, while maintaining an active clinical practice treating pediatric patients. Passionate about education, Dr. MacMaster is excited to help shape and inspire the next generation of physical therapists.

When she's not in the clinic or classroom, Dr. MacMaster enjoys traveling, reading, adding to her plant collection, and wrangling her two very active toddlers.



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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

KAITLYN ODELL, SPT



Kaitlyn Odell, now a second-year DPT student, brings a unique blend of science, movement, and compassion to her journey in physical therapy. Kaitlyn earned her dual degree in Biological Engineering and Kinesiology with a minor in Dance at LSU-Baton Rouge-a reflection of both her academic drive and lifelong passion for movement.

Dance has been central to Kaitlyn's life since the age of 3. From recreational classes to intensive training, performing, and teaching throughout high school, she knew movement would always be a part of her story.

Kaitlyn's passion now extends to using dance as a therapeutic tool. Inspired by her work with mentor Susan Perlis and the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, Kaitlyn began teaching movement classes for individuals with Parkinson's disease and has since developed a dance curriculum for children and young adults with special needs.

Kaitlyn's ultimate goal is to integrate dance and physical therapy to serve patients with special needs. Her work is a testament to the healing power of movement, and her passion continues to inspire both her peers and the communities she serves.

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

MICHELLE GAUBERT, PT, DPT

Dr. Michelle Gaubert, PT, DPT is the founder and CEO of FunXional Physical Therapy, a thriving cash-pay clinic offering holistic, client-centered care both in-person and virtually. After earning her Doctorate in Physical Therapy from LSU in 2018, Michelle felt confined working within the constraints of the traditional outpatient physical therapy model. Michelle opened her own practice after losing her job due to the pandemic in 2021 with the goal of breaking away from the constraints of insurance-based care. Her mission is to deliver deeper, more transformative results by combining movement, nervous system regulation, and lifestyle coaching. Today, she leads a growing team of like-minded clinicians who are passionate about helping clients not just get out of pain—but create lasting change. Michelle is also a mentor, professional speaker, and entrepreneur dedicated to redefining the future of physical therapy.



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PROGRAM EVENTS

TAI CHI IN THE PARK







“I've had the pleasure of working with Dr. Liu over the past year with his community grant for tai chi as an intervention for people with Parkinson's and their caregivers! This celebration in Audubon park was the pinnacle of the members’ participation and our way of showing thanks for all their hard work. We had snacks, music, and got to get to know one another better in person! Not only did members get to see familiar faces during the celebration, but some PT and OT students and faculty were in attendance as well. The weather was great and everyone felt relief, relaxed and refreshed after getting together and practicing some tai chi together. Thank you again for all who came and celebrated with us! I’m personally looking forward to continuing to help Dr. Liu with his line of research and working to find effective and fun rehabilitation practices for this patient population!”

Em Fluellen, 2nd year DPT Student

Parkinson's Foundation

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The School of Allied Health Professions recently held its annual Research Day, showcasing the scholarly work of students through capstone and case report presentations. Students delivered both platform and poster presentations, sharing evidence-based findings and clinical insights with faculty, peers, and health professionals.

Congratulations to this year's winning platform presentation:
"The Efficacy of Core Training on Pain and Function in Females with Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome: A Systematic Review." Authors: Gabrielle Deshotels, DPT; Hallie Henssler, DPT; Michaela McInnis, DPT; Nathan Velez, DPT

Also, a big shout out to this year's best PT case report defense:
"Physical therapy management in the acute care hospital following coronary artery bypass graft procedure: a case report" Author: Cassie Conners, DPT

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School of Allied Health Professions

AWARDS

Dr. Howe Liu Awarded the 2025 SAHP Outstanding Scholarship and Innovation Award

Congratulations to **Dr. Howe Liu**, recipient of the 2025 School of Allied Health Professions Outstanding Scholarship and Innovation Award. Dr. Liu has demonstrated exceptional achievement in research and scholarship throughout the year, with four published manuscripts, multiple invited presentations, and a funded community-based project through the Parkinson Foundation. His work in rehabilitation science, particularly on conditions such as Parkinson's disease, stroke, and obstructive sleep apnea, reflects a strong commitment to advancing translational research and improving public health. Dr. Liu's leadership in scholarly publishing, mentorship, and dedication to underserved communities exemplify the mission and values of LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans.



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School of Allied Health Professions

AWARDS

Dr. Kezia Robinson awarded the 2025 American Physical Therapy Association Minority Scholarship Award



Please join us in congratulating **Dr. Kezia Robinson** ,**DPT,** a graduate from class of 2025 in being recognized for this prestigious honor. The receipients of this award must be in their final year of an accredited program and demonstrate outstanding professional character and academic excellence.

Dr. Robinson is an emerging leader in physical therapy. Known for her academic excellence, compassionate care, and unwavering commitment to health equity. She stands out as a role model in the field. Her dedication to serving underrepresented communities and advancing inclusive healthcare practices exemplifies the spirit of this award.

Dr. Kezia Robinson will soon start her career as a pediatric physical therapist at Manning Family Children's Hospital.

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SCHOLARSHIP

Publications

- Pontiff ME, Moreau NG. Age-related trajectories of muscle strength and power in individuals with cerebral palsy and the relationship to walking capacity. Gait Posture. 2025 Jul;120:66-71. doi: 10.1016/j.gaitpost.2025.03.028. Epub 2025 Apr 3. PMID: 40188701.
- Giordano, K., Nebel, A. R., Lerch, B., & Oliver, G. D. (2025). Description and Consistency of In-Game Pitching Kinetics' Relationship With Ball Velocity. International Journal of Sports Medicine. DOI 10.1055/a-2640-8863

Symposia

- Giordano KA. Common Analytical Mistakes in Strength and Conditioning Research – How to Spot Them, How to Interpret Them, and How to Correct Them. 2025 National Strength and Conditioning Association Annual Meeting. Kansas City, MO.

Grants

- Giordano KA, Akotaobi N. Rehabilitation Exercise Muscle Activation Across Resistance Modalities Through a Full Arc of Motion. LSUHSC SAHP Intramural Research Grant.
- Liu H, Lord K, Booth B, Atiyeh K, Franc I. Effects of Deep-Breathing Emphasized Progressive Tai Chi Exercise on Multimorbidity in a Senior Living Community- An Exploratory Crossed Randomized Controlled Trial. LSUHSC SAHP Intramural Research Grant.

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