LSUHSC SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

MARCH NEWSLETTER

2025

LSU Health NEW ORLEANS

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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS:
LSUHSC CLASS OF 1974 GOLDEN REUNION



On October 18, 2024, the LSU Health Sciences Center Physical Therapy Department hosted a 50th reunion for the class of 1974, bringing together alumni who graduated half a century ago.

The event was a heartwarming celebration of enduring friendships, professional achievements, and the continued legacy of the LSUHSC PT program. Alumni reflected on their shared journey with gratitude, reminiscing about how their LSU-PT experience shaped their lives.

Under the leadership of Class President of 2027, Jacob Kieff, students assisted with event preparations, leaving a positive impression on attendees. Alumni praised the students' potential and encouraged them to embrace future challenges while advocating for expanding physical therapists' roles in healthcare.

The LSUHSC PT Department extends heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to this memorable celebration, reinforcing the lasting bonds and shared commitment to advancing physical therapy.

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QUOTES FROM CURRENT STUDENTS



“The Class of ‘74 reunion was a great experience to take part in. I loved hearing the stories of how school was and getting to share how school is now. Mr. Regan shared stories of their time living in the Perdido dorms and what our current campus once was. I have already had classmates raise ideas for our reunion, which is 50+ years away.”
- Jacob Kieff, Class of 2027



“It gave me a lot of perspective on just how far PT has come with research and skills. Despite not having the doctorate level of degree, the PT’s at the reunion all seemed to have been very hungry to learn more at the start of their career. They were many of the people who paved the way for us by just being curious and bold enough to try new things, start a practice, or fight for legislation that would give us the profession we know today. I also greatly appreciated talking to them, as they had great advice, I only wish we had more time to soak up all of their stories and bits of wisdom!
- Michael Buisson, Class of 2027



“I appreciated the opportunity to help with the 50 year reunion! It was great to see those who have contributed so much to the profession and know that I have the opportunity to make as much of an impact. I hope that tradition continues and that in 52 years my own class will be back to celebrate.”- Sophia Boudreaux, Class of 2027

“It was good to meet seasoned professionals. I liked hearing about how much our field has grown, and how much room it has to grow.”
- Kent Bardwell, Class of 2027

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QUOTES FROM ALUMNI

“Great opportunity to hear from students about their perspective and views regarding the PT profession.”

“So good to see how close all of those classmates are 50 years later.”

“Great facilities at LSU including equipment, classrooms, and staff. Everything is accessible to everyone, and to other departments, OT, Speech, and Med.”

“What a wonderful time remembering so many stories, I think we may have transformed some of the students’ views of who we were and who we are now 50 years after graduation.”

Wonderful reunion, so fun, can’t wait another 50 years before doing it again!”

“Felt more like my young self than I’ve felt in a long time, (the reunion) brought our younger spirit back.”

“you guys were [are] amazing; such an accomplished group of men and women, so inspiring; I fell in love with your wonderful class.” - Family member of alumni, Class of 1974

“Everyone [was] so friendly and welcoming!”

“[I was] impressed by how dedicated to [the] profession all alumni and students are as a group.”

“What a wonderful gift we share as classmates, as therapists, and in the memories we carry with us so many thousands of patients lives and families we have touched over the years.”







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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



The Department of Physical Therapy is thrilled to spotlight Mr. David Regan, Class President of the Class of 1974. Raised in a small rural community in southern Louisiana, Mr. Regan was the youngest of nine children-and the only one to pursue higher education. He reflects on how fortunate he was to have the opportunity, desire, and drive to attend college, ultimately continuing on to physical therapy school. Mr. Regan describes his life and career as deeply meaningful, and he is humbly grateful for the journey.

Mr. Regan is the proud father of four daughters, ranging in age from 39 to 50. Each of his daughters has pursued higher education and is flourishing in their respective careers. Notably, one of his daughters holds a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree from Duke University and an MBA from Texas Women's University in Houston.

The Department of Physical Therapy is honored to feature Mr. Regan as our Alumni Spotlight!

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



The Department of Physical Therapy is proud to highlight **Dr. Rachel Wellons, PT, DPT, NCS**, an expert in neurologic and vestibular rehabilitation. Dr. Wellons earned her BS in Health Sciences (2002) and MPT (2003) from the University of Scranton, followed by a tDPT from Thomas Jefferson University (2006). She practiced in acute care, outpatient, and inpatient rehab from 2003-2010 and became a Board-Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist in 2009.

A leader in vestibular rehabilitation, she completed the APTA Vestibular Rehabilitation Competency Course (2008) and Advanced Vestibular Course (2010), later directing the Vestibular Rehab Program at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital (2006-2010). Dr. Wellons joined LSUHSC-NO in 2011 as an Assistant Professor and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2018. She teaches neurorehabilitation, prosthetics & orthotics, and professionalism courses while maintaining an active clinical practice treating vestibular and neurologic disorders.

She has served in the Vestibular SIG of the ANPT for over a decade, currently as Chair (2020-2026). Her research and presentations focus on balance disorders, interprofessional education, and clinical reasoning in PT education. She has presented at local and national conferences, including the ANPT Annual Conference and CSM.

Fun Fact

Dr. Wellons is a volunteer scuba diver at the Audubon Aquarium—catch her in the Maya Tunnel Tank on select Saturdays!

Recent Accomplishments

- ANPT Annual Conference (Sept 2024, Columbus, OH): Vestibular Migraine & Mal de Debarquement Syndrome.
- CSM Presentation (Feb 13, 2025): Managing Persistent Postural Perceptual Dizziness.
- Recent Publication: Investigating health disparities in vestibular rehab. J Vestib Res. 2024;34(4):205-214.

We are honored to have Dr. Wellons as a valued faculty member, mentor, and leader in our department!

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

This month, we are excited to spotlight five exceptional students who contribute their creativity and expertise to our social media content and communications. Their hard work ensures that our department stays connected and engaged with the community. Thank you to Sabrina Nguyen, Emily Sabido, Marlena Majarrez, Abby Busch, and Lucy Harper for your dedication and passion!











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Introducing NEW STAFF



LISA CLANTON

Department Assistant

We are thrilled to welcome Lisa to our team as our new Department Assistant! With a strong background in administrative support, Lisa is passionate about expanding her skills and continuously learning.

When she's not at work, Lisa enjoys bike riding, reading, shopping, and exploring new destinations. Her travels have taken her to exciting places like Disney World, Las Vegas, Cozumel, and Lake Tahoe!

We're excited to have Lisa on board!

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PROGRAM EVENTS



VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT WHITE SANDS 2-1-2025

Student PT service representatives and faculty advisor Rachel Wellons, coordinated a fundraiser to benefit Make Good NOLA



WHITE COAT CEREMONY 1-31-2025

Friends, family, and faculty joined to celebrate Class of 2027 as they received their white coats. We were honored to have Dr. Richard Baudry as our keynote speaker.

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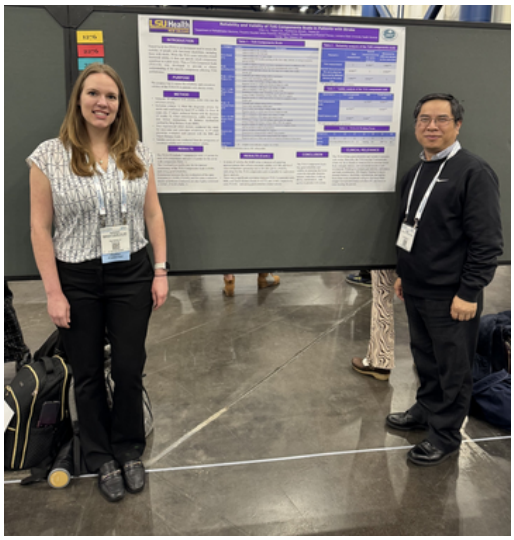
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EVENTS

Faculty and students from the Physical Therapy department recently attended the Combined Sections Meeting (CSM) of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) in Houston, Texas, where they engaged in valuable learning and networking opportunities with professionals in the field.







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PUBLICATIONS

1. Clinical Education Placement Capacity and Process Innovation Taskforce. (2024). Task Force on Clinical Education Capacity and Process Innovation Final Report. American Council of Academic Physical Therapy. 7mini-reports/final-report-summary.pdf?sfvrsn=4b3c96d8_1. (Contributions by **Hoang, T**)
2. Friesen KB, **Giordano KA**, Oliver GD. Kinematic Comparison of Softball Pitchers With and Without Upper Extremity Pain. Sports Health. 2024. doi.org/10.1177/19417381241285894
3. Nebel AR, **Giordano KA**, Schmitt AC, Oliver GD. Temporal Differences in the Kinematic Chain Between College Pitchers' Fastest and Slowest Fastballs. Sports Medicine and Health Sciences, 2024. doi.org/10.1016/j.smhs.2024.10.001.
4. Nebel AR, **Giordano KA**, Bordelon NM, Oliver GD. Predicting the Presence of Pain in Youth Baseball Pitchers Using the Concept of Biomechanical Efficiency. Orthopedic Journal of Sports Medicine 2024; 12(10). doi.org/10.1177/23259671241277596
5. **Giordano KA,** Nebel AR, Fava A, Oliver GD. Tall and Fall vs. Drop and Drive Strategy in Baseball Pitching for Performance and Injury Risk. American Journal of Sports Medicine. 2024;0(0). DOI: 10.1177/03635465241279406
6. **Giordano KA**, Wasserberger KW. On Discretization of Continuous Data in Baseball Biomechanics and Alternative Analytical Methods. Sports Biomechanics. July 2024. DOI: 10.1080/14763141.2024.2377219
7. **Giordano KA**, Wasserberger KW, Oliver GD. Altered Cervical Spine Position Results in Decreased Eccentric Shoulder Rotation Strength. Int J Sports Med. 2024 Apr 2. doi: 10.1055/a-2281-1396. PMID: 38437874.
8. **Giordano KA**, Schmidt AC, Nebel AR, Yaganita YZ, Oliver GD. Normative In-Game Data for Elite Collegiate Baseball Pitchers Using Markerless Tracking Technology. Orthopedic Journal of Sports Medicine. October 2024;12(2). DOI: 10.1177/23259671241274137
9. Pontiff M.E., Batra A., Li L., *__Moreau N.G__.(2024). Muscle power is associated with higher levels of walking capacity and self-reported gait performance and physical activity in individuals with cerebral palsy. Front Physiol. Jan. 6;15:1488905. doi: 10.3389/fphys.2024.1488905. PMCID: PMC11743613. [Impact Factor: 3.2]

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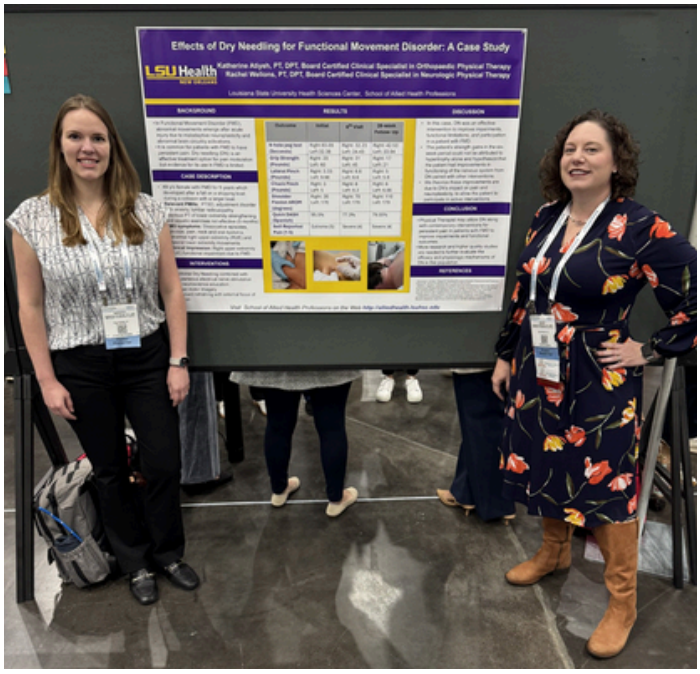
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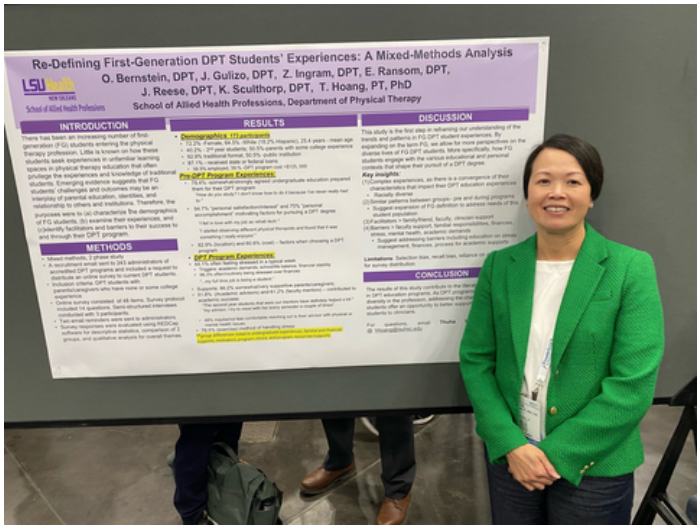
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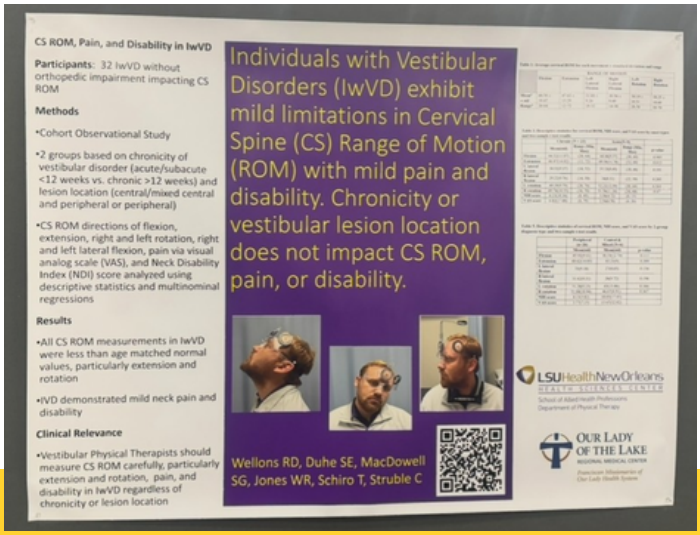
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POSTER PRESENTATIONS

1. **Atiyeh K, Wellons R.** (February, 2025).Effects of Dry Needling for Functional Movement Disorder: A Case Study. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX
2. **Giordano KA**.(February, 2025). Influence of pitch count on throwing arm strength. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX
3. **Guilbeau E,** Sirikul B**,** Hebert E. (February, 2025). Perspectives on Physical Therapy and Pain Among Louisiana Physical Therapy Professionals. Combined Sections Meeting. APTA, Houston, TX
4. **Liu H**, Liu J, Cai X, **Atiyeh K**. (February, 2025).Reliability and Validity of TUG Components Scale in Patients with Stroke. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX
5. **Wellons R**, Duhe S, MacDowell S, **Jones WR, Struble C**, **Schiro T**.(February, 2025). Cervical Spine Range of Motion, Pain, and Disability in Individuals with Vestibular Dysfunction. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX
6. **Hoang T, Bernstein O, Gulizo J, Ingram Z, Ransom E, Reese J, Sculthorp K.** (February, 2025). Re-Defining First-Generation DPT Student Experiences: A Mixed-Methods Analysis. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX
7. **Liu H**, Lu QQ, Zhu PA, Salem Y, Holmes C, Bao X. (February, 2025). Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation over the Supplementary Motor Area in Parkinson's Disease: A Meta-Analysis. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX







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PLATFORM PRESENTATIONS

1. **Giordano KA**. Large Sample Normative Data for Strength and Range of Motion in Baseball Pitchers. Orthopedic Summit and Evolving Techniques 2024 annual meeting. Las Vegas, NV.
   a. Won first prize in senior research presentation competition
2. **Moreau, N. G.**, Bjornson, K. B., Licea, J., Mercante, D. (2025, February). Power Training combined with Interval Treadmill Training to Improve Walking Activity in Cerebral Palsy. Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy, Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX.
3. **Moreau, N. G**., Bjornson, K. B., Pontiff, M., Licea, J., Mercante, D. (2025, February). Effects of a Power-Based Approach for Improving Walking Activity in Cerebral Palsy on Muscle Performance. Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy, Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX.
   a. Award for the best podium abstract submission from the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy at the Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX.
4. Salem Y, **Liu H**, et al. (2025, February). Effectiveness of Aquatic Exercise for Individuals with Fibromyalgia: A Systematic Review. Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Houston, TX.
5. **Wellons, R**., MacDowell, S. (2025, February). Critical Conversations and Practical Management Strategies for Patients with Persistent Postural Perceptual Dizziness (PPPD)

GRANTS REVIEWED

1. **Noelle Moreau** served as a member of the NIH Special Emphasis Panel to review Medical Rehabilitation Research Resource Centers (P50) grant applications (November 4-5, 2024)
2. **Noelle Moreau** reviewed fall 2024 research grants for the Foundation for Physical Therapy as a member of the Scientific Review Committee

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AWARDS

Noelle Moreau received the **2025 John P. Maley Award** from the Academy of Physical Therapy Research of the APTA.

Dr. Noelle G. Moreau, a trailblazer in pediatric rehabilitation research and a leader whose impact reaches far beyond the walls of academia. Her nominators commended her dedication, innovation, and commitment to mentorship that have not only advanced scientific knowledge but have also directly improved the lives of children with cerebral palsy.

Dr. Moreau is a Professor at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and serves as Associate Dean of Research for the School of Allied Health Professions. Her research has transformed the way we understand and treat motor impairments in children with cerebral palsy. By shifting the focus from traditional strength-based interventions to muscle power training, she has introduced new, evidence-based approaches that are redefining rehabilitation practices worldwide.

She has played a key role in global research initiatives, including an international Delphi study aimed at standardizing the measurement of muscle morphology—an essential step in ensuring consistent, high-quality research across the field. She has also contributed to two internationally recognized textbooks on cerebral palsy, helping to guide clinicians and researchers in their work.

Dr. Moreau's leadership in research is reflected not only in the groundbreaking studies she conducts but also in her ability to secure the funding necessary to push the field forward. Since 2014, she has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health, securing over $5.7 million in external grants such as R21 and multiple R01s.

She is equally committed to mentorship and collaboration. Through her leadership roles at LSUHSC, she has helped shape institutional research strategies, developed grant and research programs, and provided mentorship to students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty. Her guidance has empowered several researchers to pursue their own groundbreaking work.

The nominators also describe Dr. Moreau not just as a researcher—but a visionary leader, a mentor, and an advocate for scientific excellence. Her contributions have changed how we approach rehabilitation for children with cerebral palsy, and her influence will continue to shape the field for years to come.



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