



# Department of Physical Therapy Samuel Merritt College

Newsletter

Fall 2008

## Physical Therapy Alumni Organization

Early this summer, several Samuel Merritt College PT program alumni met to start planning for the development of the Samuel Merritt College PT Alumni Association. The alumni are formulating the goals and plans for the Association, including how they can provide support to the program and networking opportunities with each other.

This core group of alumni decided that the first step in the process is to update the contact information for each program alumni so they can effectively disseminate information to the group. A Yahoo Group has been formed (SMCDPTAlumni), and all PT alumni are encouraged to join (email [smcdptalumni@yahoo.com](mailto:smcdptalumni@yahoo.com) with your contact information to join). This core group of PT alumni will also be attending the Samuel Merritt College PT program reception at the California PT Association Chapter Annual Conference, and they plan to present the upcoming plans of the group and encourage more alumni to be active in the organization. If you would like more information, please contact Kristen Welsh (PT'07) at [kristen32@hotmail.com](mailto:kristen32@hotmail.com); Amanda Forster (PT'06) at [aforster@hotmail.com](mailto:aforster@hotmail.com); or Sue Grieve (PT'98) at [sgrieve@samuelmerritt.edu](mailto:sgrieve@samuelmerritt.edu)

### Physical Therapy Alumni and CI Appreciation Day

The Department is renewing our Alumni and Clinical Instructor Appreciation Day in November 2008. This year we are sponsoring two workshops to benefit all of the clinical instructors who give so much to our students' education and to thank our alumni for their continued commitment to the program.

**On November 15, Valerie Short, PT, MS,** will present a one-day workshop entitled **Cognition In Rehabilitation**. Ms. Short completed the MSPT program at Samuel Merritt College in 2005 where her thesis was titled, *Physical Therapy and the Assessment and Treatment of Cognition and Language in Individuals with Cerebrovascular Accident*. She currently works at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle. She has taught this program to physical therapists and other rehabilitation professionals and to entry-level students in the Northwest. The Department is underwriting a major portion of the cost of the program so the registration fee is only \$25.00. If you are interested in attending, please contact Veronica Paniagua ([vpaniagua@samuelmerritt.edu](mailto:vpaniagua@samuelmerritt.edu)), the Department's Administrative Assistant.

**On November 15-16,** the College is hosting a **Clinical Instructor Education and Credentialing Program**. The instructors are Dr. Nordstrom, Gaye Raymond (the Department's ACCE), and Kate Salamon from the University of the Pacific. The Department is able to underwrite \$70.00 of the \$140.00 for clinical instructors who are APTA members. This course is full, we will offer several courses in 2009, including January 17 & 18 in Sacramento. If you are interested in participating, please contact Gaye Raymond ([graymond@samuelmerritt.edu](mailto:graymond@samuelmerritt.edu)).

### Meet An Alumna: Amanda Streeton

Amanda Streeton received the Outstanding DPT Student award at the 2008 commencement ceremony recognizing her commitment to service, clinical practice and academic excellence. During her experience at Samuel Merritt College she exemplified the Department's focus on cultivating an approach to providing physical therapy for her patients with sensitivity to each person as a unique being deserving of respect. Amanda just finished her six-month internship with experiences at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center and Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. She plans to find her first professional position in the Los Angeles area.



Amanda received recognition as one of two outstanding case reports for 2008 with her report, *Does Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation Improve the Gait of a Young Male One Year Post Traumatic Brain Injury with Associated Severe Ataxia*. Her paper was accepted for presentation at the APTA Combined Sections Meeting in February 2009.

Amanda received the David M. and Olah B. Evans scholarship award. This award recognized Amanda's commitment to the profession and her community. She was one of the student leaders in the Podiatry-Physical Therapy journal club, coached a soccer team of children with physical disabilities, and attended the California Physical Therapy Association's annual legislative day. She had the opportunity to have lunch with Patti and Olah Evans at the luncheon honoring her receipt of the scholarship.

On a sad note, Olah Evans passed away in 2008. While we lost a good friend, her spirit and that of her husband David will live on through the work of the recipient of their scholarship.



## Clinical Education Alert

Physical Therapy is facing a growing crisis in clinical education, and our program is not immune. Students choose us based on the strength of our clinical education program. With early, integrated experiences, our two full-time eight-week clinicals and the six-month internship, our students have more clinical education than found in most PT programs. This strength of our program means we rely on the support of our clinical community but that strength is under threat.

### What's the problem?

- Payers, primarily Medicare, continue to scrutinize services provided by students in all of the health professions and threaten to further restrict payment for those services.
- Physical therapy continues to be a growing profession with personnel shortages all over the country, including California. This means there are fewer physical therapists available to work as clinical instructors.
- Physical therapy programs around the country are increasing their clinical education hours and their class sizes as applicant pools are increasing.

For the past two years we have had difficulty finding adequate clinical placements for our students. In some cases

we have found placements one week before the clinical experience is scheduled to start.

### What can we do together?

- Clinics can prepare themselves for working with students. Ask for assistance from our ACCE to help start or strengthen your clinical education program. A large part of that role is assisting clinics in this regard via in services, training, and other support.
- If you are already a CI, take the CI Education and Credentialing Program to be more efficient and effective in that role. We can pay partial tuition for our CI's in recognition of their support.
- Consider working with two students in a 2:1 model. Clinical instructors using this model report that it gives them more time to teach and consult with students about patient care while maintaining a productive clinical caseload. Research shows students learn more in this model than in the traditional 1:1 model. Our ACCE can provide training on how to make it work.
- Consider applying for a clinical faculty appointment. These voluntary, faculty appointments include access to library services, including online databases and full-text articles. Contact Gaye Raymond if you are interested. (graymond@samuelmerritt.edu)

## Case Report Day 2008

As part of a Samuel Merritt DPT graduate's culminating experience, students must prepare and present a Case Report on a patient encountered during their six-month internship. Students orally present their cases at Case Report Presentation Day following a format similar to conference platform presentations, and they also submit a written manuscript in a format suitable for publication. The following organizations sponsored this year's Case Report Day

Alta Bates Summit Medical Center  
Eden Medical Center  
John Muir Health  
Kaiser Permanente  
Physiotherapy Associates  
Sutter Health Sacramento Sierra Region  
Sutter VNA & Hospice

Through their generosity, we were able to provide breakfast, lunch and reception. Additionally, their sponsorship supports the Physical Therapy Student Research Fund at Samuel Merritt college. This fund provides financial support to DPT students for disseminating their research at state and national meetings and provides a cash award for the recipient of the "Outstanding Case Report" Award. If you are interested in being a sponsor call 510-869-6241.

## Recent Student Publications

Over the last three years, approximately seven student's case reports have been presented as posters or platforms at state, national, and international conferences. Additionally, three student cases have also been published in peer-reviewed orthopedic and geriatric physical therapy journals in the last two years.

Racouillat M. Use of plyometrics in the rehabilitation of a female la crosse player following patellar dislocation. *Orthopedic Practice*. 2007;19:189-194.

Horning E, Gorman SL. Vestibular rehabilitation decreases fall risk and improves gaze stability for an older individual with unilateral vestibular hypofunction. *J Geriatr Phys Ther*. 2007;30:121-127.

Streeton A., Gorman SL., Does Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation Improve the Gait of a Young Male One Year Post Traumatic Brain Injury with Associated Severe Ataxia. Poster CSM 2009

Garakian J, Gorman SL., Complex Acute Physical Therapy Management of a Patient with Abdominal Compartment Syndrome, platform CSM 2009

Taniguchi N., Gorman SL., Translating Evidence into Practice for Acute Care Interdisciplinary Fall Prevention, educational session CSM 2009

For Previous Year's Case Report Presentation Day Topics Visit the link

[http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/physical\\_therapy/student\\_work](http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/physical_therapy/student_work)



## Using Standardized Patients in the Curriculum

The Musculoskeletal and Neuromuscular Patient/Client Management courses throughout the DPT curriculum are now using Standardized Patients (SPs) for both experiential learning and performance assessment activities. SPs are people who have been trained to accurately and consistently recreate a portrayal of a patient/client. For our DPT students, these patient actors are trained to realistically represent not only the physical manifestations of particular patient/client presentations, but to do so realistically in the context of a range of associated psychosocial factors. Currently, SPs are used during simulated patient encounters during class time and during practical examinations. Both practicing physical therapists and professional SP actors have been integrated into the curriculum, starting in the first year, first semester, and continuing through to the last academic semester of the program.

Practicing physical therapists are an integral part of practical examinations, where they provide skilled feedback from the perspective of the patient on students' handling and communication skills. Professional actors are also used to provide both students and the faculty with digital video/audio recordings of students' performance and clinical reasoning in the context of realistic clinical

situations. These recordings provide students with an opportunity to self-reflect and receive detailed feedback from faculty about both their performance and their ability to self-identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance.

The Health Science Simulation Center (HSSC) at Samuel Merritt College is also being integrated into the DPT curriculum starting in the first semester. The center can be configured to replicate ICU scenarios, hospital rooms, and outpatient treatment rooms. Students will perform practical examinations in the HSSC to take advantage of the state-of-the-art digital recording capabilities, and also use this unique learning environment to cover content in critical care, acute care, and inpatient scenarios. Some learning scenarios involve the use of SimMan®, a mannequin that can be programmed with a variety of physiologic functions and portray an inpatient with multiple lines/tubes, while others use hybrid simulation with the patient/client being portrayed by faculty or SPs.

SP performance assessments both in and out of the HSSC are currently providing data that the faculty can correlate with clinical performance as measured by the CPI. In addition to providing students the opportunity to learn and receive feedback on performance in the context of simulated



Dr. Rolando Lazaro,  
PT, MS, DPT, GCS



Sharon Gorman,  
PT, MS, GCS



Nicole Christensen,  
PT, MAppSc, PhD (cand)



Dr. Ben Boyd,  
PT, DPTSC,

clinical practice situations prior to entering into their clinical education experiences, they may also provide a more realistic mechanism through which to screen students' level of readiness to progress to the clinical education setting.

## Faculty Updates

### Ben Boyd, PT, DPTSc, OCS

Dr. Boyd is a new full time member of the DPT faculty and will be involved in teaching the musculoskeletal patient client management series, beginning research course and case report series. He recently completed his DPTSc degree and is in the process of submitting manuscripts for publication from his doctoral research on peripheral nerve mechanosensitivity to movement and the impacts of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and peripheral neuropathy. He plans to continue this line of research here at Samuel Merritt College including clinical measures of neurogenic responses to movement and ultrasound imaging of peripheral nerve motion.

### Nicole Christensen, PT, MAppSc, PhD (cand)

Nicole Christensen continues her work at SMC, updating the content of the musculoskeletal patient/client management curriculum and infusing opportunities for the development of clinical reasoning skills throughout the curriculum. She is currently completing her PhD dissertation, focused on the development of clinical reasoning capability in student physical therapists from the University of South Australia.

### Linnette Clark, MS, PT, PhD (cand)

Linnette Clark is continuing to work in improving biomechanics in curriculum. She is currently attending Nova Southeastern University in Florida, hoping to finish her dissertation this December on stress urinary incontinence in women.

### Sharon Gorman, PT, MS, DPTSc (cand), GSC

Sharon Gorman anticipates completion of her dissertation, "Development and Pilot Testing of the Function In Sitting Test (FIST) in Adults with Acute Stroke," and graduating with her DPTSc from UCSF/SFSU in June 2009. She is currently in her second year

on the APTA's Annual Conference Planning Committee and is serving as a Subject Matter Expert for the Acute Care Section-APTA by developing and shepherding acute care physical therapy to become a recognized specialty by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties.

### Rolando Lazaro, PT, DPT MS, GSC

Dr. Lazaro is continuing his PhD program at Touro University and is approaching the dissertation phase of his studies. He has traveled the world presenting papers at various conferences, including Sweden, South Korea, and Hong Kong.

### Terry Nordstrom, PT, EdD

Dr. Nordstrom completed his Doctor of Education degree at the University of San Francisco in May 2008. His dissertation, Physical Therapist Students as Moral Agents During Clinical Experiences, was awarded an outstanding doctoral dissertation award by the School of Education at USF. He will present his findings with two posters and a workshop with Nicole Christensen at the APTA CSM meeting in February 2009.

### Gaye Raymond, PT, MS

Gaye Raymond, PT, MS, accepted the ACCE position last December. She is working on her transitional doctorate at Temple University. She completed the training to become a trainer for the CI Credentialing Course with plans to offer more CI Credentialing courses in the Bay Area and throughout Northern California.

### Gail Widener, PT, PhD

Dr. Widener enjoyed a well-earned sabbatical during the 2007-8 academic year. She spent her sabbatical year in New Zealand. On her return she is working on a publication of her research project concerning balance training for people with MS using weighted torso vests.

## Calendar of Events

### November 15, 2008

Cognition in Rehabilitation taught by Valerie Short, PT, MS  
Samuel Merritt College—Health Education Center

For more information visit:  
[http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/physical\\_therapy/events](http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/physical_therapy/events)

### November 15 & 16, 2008

Education and Credentialing Program  
[graymond@samuelmerritt.edu](mailto:graymond@samuelmerritt.edu)

### January 31, 2009

Doctor of Physical Therapy Admissions Interviews

### May 20, 2009

Doctor of Physical Therapy Case Report Day

## Faculty Publications & Presentations 2008 — 2009

Clark L., Gorman S.L., Lazaro R., Self-assessment of clinical performance improved by modified Objective Structured Clinical Examination testing. Combined Sections Meeting APTA 2008 (poster), 13th Ottawa International Conference on Clinical Competence 2008 (platform), 2nd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education (platform).

Gorman S.L., Lazaro R., Clark L. Development and implementation of a modified Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) in neuromuscular physical therapy: a pilot study. 13th Ottawa International Conference on Clinical Competence 2008 (poster), 2nd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education (poster).

Nordstrom, T., and Christensen, N., "Integrating Clinical Reasoning and Ethical Reasoning in Physical Therapist Entry-Level Education" Education Session, CSM, 2009

Widener G.L., Allen D.A., Gibson –Horn C. Balance-based torso-weighting may enhance postural stability and function in persons with multiple sclerosis: preliminary evidence. *Arch Phys Med Rehabil*, (in press)

Gibson-Horn C. Balance-based torso-weighting in a patient with ataxia and multiple sclerosis: a case report. *J Neurol Phys Ther*. 2008; 32: 139-146.

Lazaro R., Breger, Stanton D. Systematic Review of Contrast Baths. *Journal of Hand Therapy*. (in press)

Higgs J., Jones M., Loftus, S., Christensen, N. *Clinical Reasoning in the Health Professions*. Amsterdam: Elsevier; 2008.

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