



In Touch

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM
ALUMNI NEWSLETTER • FALL 2025

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A Message from the Program Director

Dr. Susan Wenker

Hello everyone,

I hope your summer was filled with laughter, good health, and some well-deserved rest and relaxation. Another year has flown by, and I'm proud to share that the DPT Program continues to thrive, even in times of change. One constant remains: the incredible faculty and staff who make this program so special. Because you already know them well, this update will focus more on the outstanding work of our students and, when relevant, the faculty's involvement in those efforts. I'm deeply grateful for the dedication and passion our team brings to the program every day.

Additionally, in this InTouch, you will learn about the Program's clinical education process from a historical, current, and future lens. Interviews with past Academic Coordinators of Clinical Education (ACCE)/ Directors of Clinical Education (DCE) inform this update, student scholarship and service, along with scholarship awardees. Next year we will be sharing information about the dual Master of Public Health / Doctor of Physical Therapy degree.

Find-a-duck

Onsite, in the DPT Program, we continue to find ducks. Similar to last year we would like to spread the fun to all of you again in this year's InTouch, so a duck has been "hidden" in this newsletter for you to find. Once you find the duck, you are encouraged to put your name in a drawing to receive UW Madison DPT swag. To submit your information, click on this [link](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6XaoygSEf1rq2fy) (https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6XaoygSEf1rq2fy). Submit your information by October 15, 2025 and three names will be drawn by October 31, 2025. Winners' first name and last initial will be announced in the next InTouch newsletter. We wish you luck in your duck hunt!

Our 2024 Duck winners were Allison M., Jennifer S. and Jennifer W. Congrats!!

100 Year Anniversary

We continue to meet and discuss plans for the 100-year celebration of the UW Madison Physical Therapy Program! I encourage each of you to click on the [link](https://go.wisc.edu/ptnews) https://go.wisc.edu/ptnews to share what you have been up to these past few years along with any memories you have during your tenure in the program.

The planning committee is seeking a key contact from each class to assist us in gathering updates, pictures, and any other artifacts from their class. Please use the link above to share your interest in being your class's key contact!

Faculty/Staff Updates

We wish **Dr. Dan Uhrlich** a happy retirement. Dr. Uhrlich (in the picture with the Class of 2027) taught the DPT neuroanatomy course and has surpassed all expectations! We thank Dr. Uhrlich for his years of teaching dedication and for connecting the Program with another set of wonderful instructors from the department of neuroscience: **Dr. Jared Gregg** (assistant professor), **Dr. Elena Kandror** (Scientist), and **Dr Abbas Rizvi** (assistant professor). We are looking forward to an ongoing partnership with the Neuroscience department.

A shout-out to our summer faculty and lab assistants for all their work they do to educate students:

Dr. Nicole Waner, Dr. Nicole Van Heuklon, Dr. Katie Lampry, Dr. Jessica Johnson, Dr. Anna Grimh, and Dr. Mike Egan.

Congratulations to **Dr. Jeanne Duncan** for being recognized by the UW Health Simulation Center for her support and dedication to using simulation in the context of educating DPT students.

Upcoming Retirement!

It is with mixed emotions that I share the news of **Lisa Levy's** upcoming retirement October 3. Since joining the Program in 2005, Lisa has been a dedicated and passionate ambassador, leaving a lasting impact on our community.

From the very beginning, Lisa played a vital role in admissions—supporting applicants, leading tours, and contributing to recruitment events. Over the years, her responsibilities evolved to include managing our social media presence and providing invaluable behind-the-scenes support for initiatives like Go Baby Go, guest lectures, and the overall PT program environment.

Lisa's infectious smile, unwavering positivity, and deep commitment to our students and faculty have made her a cherished colleague and friend. While we will deeply miss her presence, we are excited for her as she embarks on this next chapter.

Please join me in celebrating Lisa's remarkable contributions and wishing her all the best in retirement!

Exciting Update – PT Program Awarded Simulation Lab Remodeling Funds

I'm pleased to share that the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program has been awarded remodeling funds to create a dedicated simulation space for students to practice skills commonly used in acute care settings.

This new space will be equipped with durable medical equipment that will remain in the room for use by all PT students and integrated into relevant coursework.

We are grateful to the School of Medicine and Public Health for supporting this initiative, which will enhance hands-on learning and better prepare our students for in-patient clinical environments.

Clinical Education Update

Change is a constant in clinical education. Past and current ACCEs/DCEs have worked diligently to ensure students are well-prepared as generalists for entry-level practice. For almost 30 years, four individuals have led the clinical education program:

- **Dr. Lisa Steinkamp** (1997–1998)
- **Dr. Jill Thein-Nissenbaum** (1998–2005)
- **Dr. Sue Wenker** (2005–2015)
- **Dr. Jeanne Duncan** (2014–present)

Cover / Student News

Internship Structure

The program has developed a scaffolded internship model that integrates prior learning and supports the application of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Students complete:

- A 2-week internship after their first two semesters
- A 4-week internship after their first year
- Four 9-week internships following completion of didactic coursework, allowing a short break before board exams.

Site Selection Process

Behind every placement is extensive coordination. Students are given choices in their internship locations, supported by strong relationships and collaborative practices. However, site availability changes annually due to factors such as staff turnover, parental leave, timing, and facility policies. Student preferences, backgrounds, and geographic considerations also play a role. Site selection has evolved over the years—including an increase in the use of technology. **Drs. Steinkamp** and **Thein-Nissenbaum** relied on postal mail and physical magnets to coordinate placements. Under **Dr. Wenker**, the program began using email and databases to track site requirements. Currently, **Dr. Duncan** now uses the EXXAT database to manage site data, student feedback, and placement logistics. She collaborates with **Deonna Suiter** and the UW SMPH Compliance Office to ensure students meet all health and legal requirements. Contracts are jointly managed by this team.

Student Placement Options

Annually, our clinical partners provide the program with placement offerings for the upcoming year for all 6 of the clinical rotations. It is an exciting process matching 120 students with general, rehab and specialty rotations, while taking into consideration family situations, travel and financial constraints, and site availability. An increasing number of partners are allowing for specific student requests; therefore, students work with the DCE to submit those requests for consideration. Students are granted access to “First Come, First Served” slots as soon as the information is received from the facility. As such, students who are interested in these slots are able to commit to them immediately. The DCE provides specific information to students regarding the various processes for Application based clinical placements. The “Reserved” slots are then selected through an automated lottery placement process where students compile a wish list of up to 10 placements that were offered. The automated process places the student with an effort to get students their highest ranked placement. Students may work with the DCE in developing 1 new affiliation agreement with a clinical site not already affiliated with the UW-Madison PT Program.

Ongoing Challenges

Securing placements in acute and neurological settings remains difficult, reflecting broader trends in PT practice. This challenge is compounded by individual student needs, financial considerations, and clinic and program expectations. The program is grateful for all site offerings and for **Dr. Duncan's** tireless efforts to ensure a positive experience for students, clinical instructors, and SCCEs.

Enduring Benefits

All four DCEs have shared that the most rewarding part of their role is getting to know students beyond the classroom, understanding their challenges and triumphs, supporting clinical instructors, and witnessing student growth throughout this critical phase of their careers.

Congratulations to the 2025 Graduates!



Best wishes to the Class of 2026 as they transition to their internships.



Welcome to the Class of 2028!



Class of 2027 becoming DPT-2s (Dr. Uhrich is pictured in the middle)



Student News

Please enjoy the collage of pictures highlighting students from this past year's activities!



SMPH Financial Aid and Financial Wellness Advising provides students bagels and coffee to assist them in answering financial questions.



Preparing for an exam in the collaborative classroom.



Class of 2026 Debate in the ethics course.



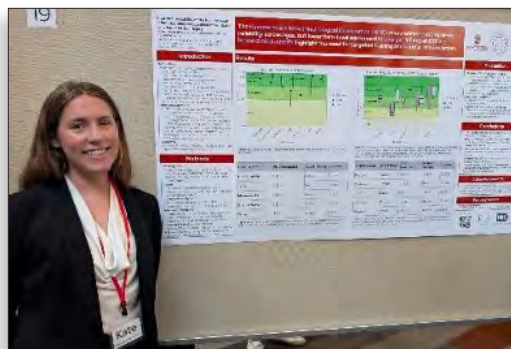
Go Baby Go 2025



Bucky's Race 2025



A DPT-2 student educating students from Madison School District.

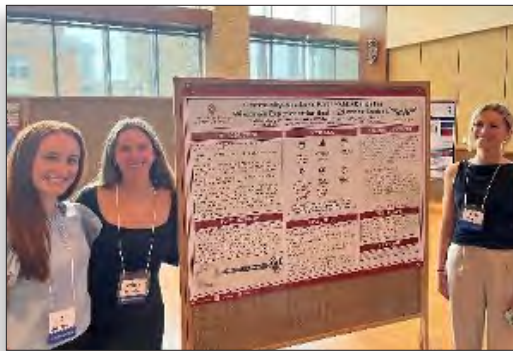


DPT-1 student presenting at the 2025 Pediatrics Week Conference.

Student News



DPT-3 student presenting at Medical Education Day 2025.



Students' Poster Presentation at the UW Teaching and Learning Symposium.



Class of 2025 Graduation Open House.



Students participating in a Falls-Prevention Community Event.



CSM 2025 platform presentation by DPT-3 student.



Participants at the 2025 DPTSO Golf Outing.

Congratulations to the following 2025 Scholarship Recipients!

- **Moncher/Katz Scholarship:** **Taylor W. and Alyssa A.**
- **Ridley Family Physical Therapy Scholarship:** **Brady E.** and **Thomas C.**
- **Barbara J. Morgan PhD Physical Therapy Scholarship Fund:** **Ide. E**
- **Barbara Ellen Gerlich-Hoefeyzer Scholarship :** **Delaney W.** and **Zach C.**
- **PT Student Scholarship:** **Amanda S.**
- **Mildred Harper Scholarship:** **Taylor S.**
- **Caroline Harper Scholarship:** **Melody W.**
- **CM & CL Harper Scholarship:** **Nick S.** and **Taylor A.**
- **Amelia Doyon Scholarship:** **Rose D.**
- **Margaret Kohli Scholarship:** **Dalton S.**
- **Jean L. Roland Scholarship:** **Kailey H., Jilian W., David F.** and **Alex M.**
- **Ramaker/Budlong Scholarship:** **Ide I.** and **Camille B.**
- **UW-Madison PT Alumni Coalition Scholarship:** **Eve A.**
- **Stephanie Joy (Graham) Lunning Scholarship:** **Samara B.** and **Izi K.**
- **Jean L. Roland Scholarship:** **Maegyn N.** and **Megan K.**
- **Lemke Scholarship:** With support from the Lemke Scholarship **Jacques S., Dalton S., Ethan T.** and **Gavin H.**, presented their research at APTA Combined Sections Meeting 2025.

Appreciation of Financial Support:

The program and students share with donors their appreciation of the gifts they receive. In addition to these thank you notes, a student will be featured in future "InTouch" publications. I start this new tradition with an excerpt from a thank you letter that Elisha wrote to their donor.

Elisha I., Class of 2026, writes "As I embark on my second year of PT school, I am filled with excitement about the future. I continually remind myself to stay curious and open to learning... Thank you once again for your belief in my potential and your generous support. It has made a significant impact on my journey..."

Congratulations to the following students in the Class of 2025 who were accepted into residencies!

- Alicia T.** - Sports Physical Therapy, WI
- Jacque S.** - Sports Physical Therapy, FL
- Gavin H.** - Sports Physical Therapy, WI
- Nathan N.** - Orthopedic Physical Therapy, WI
- Ethan T.** - Sports Physical Therapy, MN
- Dalton S.** - Orthopedic Physical Therapy, WI

Micah Wong Spirit Award

This award is peer driven through nominations and votes by DPT-1 and DPT-2 students. Nominees and awardees are individuals who embody Micah's spirit. He was a fun, loving, and warm individual who drew people in.

DPT-1: **Brady E.**

DPT-2: **Alex M.**

2025 Visiting Lecturer

Dr. Cathy Ciolek will be visiting campus on Friday, September 26, 2025 to offer a student and community focused presentation on brain health as it relates to clinical practice. During her stay, Dr. Ciolek will visit campus partners who focus on brain health, including staff at UW Center for Interprofessional Practice and of the VA-Geriatric Education and Clinical Center. The community presentation will be hybrid. Information has been sent to all alumni with details and you can also join at this [link](#) from 11:30am-12:30pmCST.

2025 DPTSO Golf Outing - Saturday September 27

Come out for a great day of golf while supporting the Doctor of Physical Therapy Student Organization.



Dual Degree (Master's Degree in Public Health and Doctor of Physical Therapy Program)

The UW Madison is one of only five programs in the United States providing students an efficient and cost-effective way to blend the outcomes of both programs. We are in the fourth cycle of the Dual Degree MPH/DPT match. **Elisha I., DPT-3 student** (Class of 2026) will complete the MPH requirements during internships in 2025-26 while **Zach R., DPT-1 student** (Class of 2028), will complete during internships in 2027-28. We are also looking forward to having **Kaisa S.** and **Brandon L.** (Class of 2029) join us next year, upon completion of the first year of the MPH/DPT dual degree.

Alumni News

Alumni Updates

Margaret Kohli Award

Dr. Kathy Zalewski was our 2024 recipient. Congratulations Dr. Zalewski! Please nominate an alumni by completing the nomination form found at: <https://www.med.wisc.edu/education/physical-therapy-program/alumni/margaret-kohli-award-nomination-form/>. Eligible recipients should demonstrate significant contributions to the physical therapy profession through clinical practice, education, research, or service.

Kristi Hallisy, Class of 1984

Life can't get any better than teaching every day (for the past 27 years) at the place that first launched my PT career 40 years ago. Once a Badger, always a Badger. On Wisconsin!

Jennifer Sewall, Class of 2006

I currently reside in Grand Junction, Colorado and am the head physical therapist for Colorado Mesa University varsity athletics. I work alongside athletic trainers, strength and conditioning staff, bio mechanists, and faculty and students from the MSAT and DPT programs. We have been performing pre-season screening on the baseball team for 4 years now and implementing corrective exercises to prevent in-season injuries. Our goal is to do the same for other high-risk teams in the coming year. Last year, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Prague, Berlin, and Paris with our men's basketball team and am looking forward to traveling to Italy, Croatia, and Slovenia next summer with our women's volleyball team. Go Mavs (and Badgers!)

Dr. Ben Williams, Class of 2015

was featured by UW Health and on Channel 3000 for recognizing a rare condition. (https://www.uwhealth.org/news/team-ben-helps-save-colleague-following-routine-physical-therapy-appointment?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZWQCMTEAR3054s66hML2hlfatx6xXID8ndZ4Tuhu0IXhgrwCGqxbB6ypYeja07d8M_aem_5AiqQA12Mjz4zm6Fs5rSw).

Suzann Campell DeLapp, Class of 1965 (BS), Class of 1968 (MS)

I live in Chicago but also visit Lakewood, WI regularly, where I have a cottage. I retired from teaching at the University of Illinois - Chicago some time ago but I stay active in my specialty of neonatal physical therapy by teaching workshops on the Test of Infant Motor Performance, both online and in person. Most recently, I presented a workshop for 30 PTs, OTs and pediatricians in Osaka, Japan. I also enjoy my hobby of ikebana flower arranging and had the opportunity to study with masters while I was in Japan.



Dr. Suzann Campell – DeLapp, and attendees at a workshop she offered in Japan.



Dr. Kurtis Rayfield, Class of 2022, proudly holding the 2025 WNBA championship trophy.



Dr. Carryn Herrick, Class of 2017, completed the Ironman.



Dr. Hannah Mark, Class of 2024, shares her "clinic" on the set of STOMP.



Dr. Matt Kuik, Class of 2022, receives the APTA - WI Rookie of the Year Award.

Small Business Resources for Alumni

The School of Business (SBDC) offers courses for people interested in starting their own business. Please see the information below for additional information.

- **SBDC 'First Steps':** very simple; introduces ideas including not having health ins, being independent with everything, entrepreneurial mindset screening, etc. Free; takes 60-90 mins and can be taken anytime. SBDC First Steps – UW–Madison
- **SBDC Biz Smart Sprint:** virtual, live, course with 6 sessions (4-6pm in June/July) of various business content. No deliverable to finish. Cost=\$239.
- **SBDC ETP:** virtual, live, course with 6 sessions (5:30-8pm on Thurs in Feb/March) of various business content. Deliverable required; focus is to complete comprehensive draft of business plan in the form of a written workbook. Cost=\$250.

Alumni Gifts

Ongoing financial support from our generous donors plays a vital role in easing financial burdens for our students. Your contributions help sustain the high quality of our program and ensure that future physical therapists are well-prepared to serve their communities. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have supported the UW–Madison DPT Program—your past and continued generosity makes a lasting impact.

Would you like to have a legacy impact on the UW-Madison DPT Program? Bequests, or gifts from estates, Life Income gifts (the donor makes a gift and receives an income for life), and gifts of real estate can have a tremendous impact on the UW Physical Therapy Program. Planned Gifts may be given to support students (scholarships and unique learning opportunities), faculty, research, and programs. For more information on naming the PT program as a beneficiary of your will, to find out which assets make the most tax-efficient bequest to charity, and to be inspired by the stories of your fellow alumni who have created planned gifts please contact Jill Watson at jill.watson@supportuw.org or 608-262-4632.

Please see <https://www.med.wisc.edu/education/physical-therapy-program/make-a-gift/> for descriptions on ways to donate on-line.

The PT program created a Rural Scholarship recently to defray student costs when completing internships in rural areas. The Program's goal is to provide clinical experiences in rural areas to increase the number of students choosing jobs in rural communities after graduation.

We are pleased to announce the creation of the Dewane Neurorehabilitative Pro Bono Clinic Fund, that was initiated by a Pro Bono patient. This fund will support this valuable program across PT, OT and Speech.

To contribute to any of the scholarship funds visit the "[Give a Gift](#)" tab on our webpage.

Let's keep
In Touch!

We love hearing from our alumni!

Drop us an email to let us know of any news you'd like to share with us at: <https://go.wisc.edu/ptnews>

Also, you can keep up-to-date with the program on our Facebook page: <https://bit.ly/2Z6ReTe>

Contact the UW–Madison Physical Therapy Program

Donor Gifts

DPT Honor Roll

July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

\$500+

Kay s. Bizjak
Sandra L. and Jeffrey A. Busse
Suzann K. Campbell and Jim B. Delapp
Pamela F. and James R. Carlson
Collette L. Engerson
John D. Garbrecht
Shirley M. and Berdean D. Jergenson
Mitchell L. and Cheryl Jordan
Amy M. and Howard M. Katz
Elizabeth A. and Tony L. Kille
Karen K. and Robert J. Klostermann
Vicki K. and James Lundeen
Bruce Lunning
Judith G. Neigoff
Janet M. Nordstrom
Elizabeth M. Petty and Karen K. Milner
Barbara C. and Jay A. Ramaker
Karen K. St John
Elizabeth A. Stoffel
Jane K. and Glenn H. Watts

\$250 - \$499

Mary E. and Raymond J. Jast
Geoffrey J. Kaplan
Ann Schmidt
Mark G. and Marjorie R. Schmitz
Mary K. Stone

\$100 - \$249

William G. and Jill S. Boissonnault
Georgia A. Corner
Mary A. Daley
Kristine C. and Daniel J. DeKarske
Monica F. and Thomas J. Diamond
Michelle L. Drucker
Sally C. Edelsberg
Courtney R. Froemming
Irene Fung
Sandra W. and Richard J. Groebner
Susan Helm
Kristine T. Jackson
Ruth M. Jaeger
Jean A. Kristy Blankenship
Laura J. and Daniel T. Kult
Bonnie L. Lindahl
Kathryn M. and Lyman L. Lyons
Raymond R. and Kathleen A. Maffet
Richard D. Osterberg
Joan K. Ostermeier

Janice A. Pauc
Robert W. Sandstrom
Kathleen A. Shields
Thomas J. Thomas
Leslie and Steven Van Volkinburg

\$1 - \$99

Jerry S. Aul and Melissa M. Ernest Aul
Dale E. and James Coon
Erin C. Decker and Marcos Martinez
Ellen M. and Scott Ferris
Kenneth L. and Suzanne J. Haima
Jane A. and Thomas D. Newman
Tori A. and Richard A. Owens
Audrey J. Schmidt
Todd M. and Susan Stuebe
Nancy L. Thompson
Helen Wahlstrom Stratton
Christina A. Wipperman

thank
you

Please visit the following website for descriptions of these funds and ways to donate on-line:

<https://www.med.wisc.edu/education/physical-therapy-program/>

- **Physical Therapy General Fund**
- **Physical Therapy Student Scholarship Fund**
- **Janet Lemke Fund** (for research)
- **Physical Therapy Visiting Lecture Fund**

