

Letter from the Chief of the Division of Physical Therapy

Burke Gurney, PT, PhD, OCS



The University of New Mexico (UNM) Physical Therapy Program celebrated the anniversary of our 40th graduating class this summer. The faculty and staff joined with more than 150 alumni at the Rio Grande Zoo to celebrate with food, drink, and much nostalgia.

All 30 students from the Class of 2016 passed the

National Physical Therapy Exam on their first attempt. As a point of reference, the national average for first-time failure is almost 10%. That brings our 5-year accumulative passage rate to 99%. Our program continues to exceed national averages in both initial and overall pass rates.

Yuri Yoshida, PT, PhD, an expert in biomechanics, has taken over the duties as director for the Fred Rutan Motion Analysis Laboratory. She has already started collaborations with the Department of Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation as well as in the Exercise Science and Athletic Training Programs. Recently, the UNM Clinical & Translational Science Center awarded Dr. Yoshida with a \$25,000 grant to support her study, “Cross Cultural Adaptation of the Stand-Up Test in American Adults.”

Ronald Andrews, PT, PhD, and Marybeth Barkocy, PT, DPT, PCS, recently earned their board certifications in orthopaedics and pediatrics, respectively. Board certification in physical therapy is optional, and successful completion is an important professional accomplishment. Furthermore, Dr. Andrews recently returned from Saudi Arabia, where he was asked to review the Jazan University Physical Therapy Program. Dr. Barkocy traveled last spring to Russia to join John Phillips, MD, in helping establish a strong presence of pediatric rehabilitation (Russia recently recognized physical therapists as healthcare providers).

The Service Learning Student Physical Therapy Clinic just completed its first year of services. In the clinic, two first-year students join a second-year student and faculty member to provide pro bono physical therapy for our many patients. Since its conception, the service has expanded from twice a month to weekly clinics; additionally, the provided care has progressed from

treating exclusively orthopaedic-based injuries to adult neurologic and pediatric problems. The clinic is currently open on Thursday evenings at the UNM Casa de Salud Family Medical Office in the South Valley.

Finally, at the new Domenici Fitness Center (opened in April 2016), we are conducting fitness screening examinations. First- and second-year students will pair with faculty members to perform basic strength and flexibility screens on faculty, staff and students, helping them develop optimal fitness programs using the Health Sciences Center facilities.

The Future

Later this year, we will move our classrooms into the newly constructed Domenici III building. The increased size of the classrooms will allow us to increase enrollment from 30 students to 36. We are currently investigating the potential use of the classrooms to house The Service Learning Student Physical Therapy Clinic.

I am excited to announce that I will be traveling to Ethiopia soon to develop another study-abroad opportunity for students, which will be similar to the one initiated in Guatemala in 2010. If successful, students will accompany me next year and participate in physical therapy co-treatment with Ethiopian physical therapists at Black Lion Hospital in Addis Ababa, as well as volunteer for humanitarian work at the Sr. Adelaide Missionaries of Charity.

The UNM Division of Physical Therapy is proud of the many accomplishments of our students, faculty members, and collaborators. Every year, we improve the ways in which we serve our institution, students, profession, and state—with the shared goal of providing high-quality care to the patients of New Mexico and beyond.

Sincerely,

Burke Gurney, PT, PhD, OCS

Burke Gurney, PT, PhD, OCS
Professor and Chief