NCPTA Fall Conference  
Amanda Friedline Weber (DPT3)

UNC Division of Physical Therapy students and faculty attended the North Carolina Physical Therapy Association Fall Conference held in Greensboro, NC from October 13–15, 2016. Attendees heard presentations on a variety of topics, including vestibular rehab, functional movement taping, sports concussions, the Otago program and falls prevention, chronic pain and the opioid epidemic, COMPASS stroke research, and MANY more!

Our very own Dr.’s Debby Givens, Mike McMorris, Carla Hill, Jennifer Cooke, and Laurie Ray represented our program with class as they presented at the Conference. Debby Givens presented the evidence for interventions that impact neuromuscular control and pain in knee injuries and osteoarthritis. Mike McMorris presented on lumbar spinal stenosis and hip OA, and how manual interventions for the hip may improve patient outcomes. Carla Hill presented twice, first discussing how to increase exercise adherence and behavior change in individuals with knee OA and, secondly, about residency and fellowship education and opportunities. Jennifer Cooke focused on manual therapy and orthotic intervention for knee osteoarthritis. Finally, Laurie Ray presented recent evidence on assessments for school-aged children. Conference attendees caught a quick glimpse of the knowledge (and humor!) of the faculty that we, as students, are privileged to learn from in our program.

We were also able to network with PT students from other schools, practicing clinicians, and employers during the Pub Night, exhibitor showcase, and poster presentations. Overall, it was a successful conference where we learned new concepts, made new friends, spent time with recent UNC physical therapy alumni, and shared in the passion that we all have for this profession!

Announcements and Recent Awards

After raising over $50,000 for the Foundation for Physical Therapy, UNC DPT has gained distinction as a new member in the Foundation’s Philanthropy Circle!

Vicki Mercer, PT, PhD, graduated from UNC’s Thorp Faculty Engaged Scholars Program.

Deborah Thorpe, PT, PhD, received a Center on Health Services Training and Research (CoHSTAR) grant for continued research of cerebral palsy in adults.

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The purpose of the UNC SPTA is to promote the profession of physical therapy and encourage the professional development of students enrolled in UNC’s Division of Physical Therapy in the Department of Allied Health Sciences through leadership and service opportunities.
PT Day of Service at TABLE
Jennell McIntosh (DPT2)

Serving the community is a cornerstone of the profession of physical therapy and on October 14, 2016 our program decided to go out and do just that. In 2015, a group of dedicated physical therapists came up with the idea for the Physical Therapy Day of Service (PTDOS), which turned into a week-long event that gathered together physical therapists and PT students around the world to volunteer in their respective communities. This global campaign caught the attention of Jaime Hankins (DPT2) and myself, and we decided to become Ambassadors for UNC’s participation in the 2nd annual PTDOS this year.

In addition to volunteering at the local Ronald McDonald House [see page 4], we also helped out at a local non-profit organization called TABLE. TABLE’s mission is to “provide healthy, emergency food aid every week to hungry children living in Chapel Hill and Carrboro, NC.” In the weeks before PTDOS, we put a food donation box outside LL100 and within a week the box was full to the brim. The morning of October 14th, eight 2nd-years headed to TABLE’s headquarters in Carrboro to help organize their next set of drop-offs at local schools and community centers.

TABLE organizers expressed to us how important their work is in providing for kids in the community. They explained how many children rely on school meals for nutrition and that the only fresh produce these children eat often comes from TABLE. Through monetary and food donations, as well as the help of volunteers, TABLE is able to provide food for students to take home for breaks and holidays from school. TABLE’s volunteers also teach children healthy recipes at camps and after-school programs. PTDOS was a great opportunity to see the community that we will be serving as future physical therapists in a different light. I cannot wait to see what we can accomplish at the 3rd annual PTDOS in 2017.

SHAC PT Updates
Deborah Guthmann (DPT1)

I am honored to have been involved this past year with UNC’s Student Health Action Coalition (SHAC) in providing care for underserved populations in the surrounding communities. Over the past 50 years, SHAC has grown from just a few medical students to a large multidisciplinary facility involving all Allied Health disciplines. The Department of Physical Therapy currently provides free physical therapy services every Wednesday from 7-9 pm.

I was surprised during my first experience at the SHAC PT clinic to see that it was completely led by volunteer DPT students with the help of faculty advisors. After spending so many hours in the classroom, volunteering at SHAC was an opportunity each week to renew and strengthen my desire to learn and become the best health practitioner that I can be. Volunteering at SHAC has also been a very humbling experience. Though we are a student-run facility, patients come to us for help with their injuries. They put their trust in us to help them.

Olivia DeSena (DPT1) and I are excited to take on SHAC PT leadership positions in March. I would like to extend a big thank you to 2nd years Kate Finegan and Guneet Chawla, who worked tirelessly this past year as the student leaders of SHAC PT. Because of their hard work and dedication, we were able to help a lot of patients this past year. I can’t wait to see what we can achieve together in 2017!
On September 30, 2016 the UNC Division of Physical Therapy hosted the 11th Annual Golf Tournament at Chapel Ridge. Third years Hannah Leshin, Kristen Ignaszewski, and I all worked as co-chairs overseeing this year’s tournament. We strove to make this event a success and thank everyone who participated. I would also like to extend special thanks to Mike McMorris, our phenomenal tournament faculty advisor, for his dedication and help with the event.

Despite the rain, guests and golfers still enjoyed socializing over food donated from Chapel Hill restaurants and the opportunity to win raffle prizes donated from local businesses. Proceeds from this annual event were donated to the national Foundation for Physical Therapy as part of their Marquette Challenge, a competition-style fundraiser that PT schools from across the nation participate in to raise funds for physical therapy research.

I am thrilled to report that this year we raised over $10,000. Because of this record donation, we are proud to have gained distinction as new members of the Foundation for Physical Therapy’s Philanthropy Circle, which recognizes programs that have donated at least $50,000 in the past 10 years. We hope to also receive recognition for our efforts at the PT NEXT conference in June of 2017.
Ronald McDonald House Cleaning  Anna VerMeulen (DPT1)

This year for the 2nd annual PT Day of Service, UNC DPT 1st year students teamed up with the Ronald McDonald House of Chapel Hill with a Cleaning Supply Drive and House Cleaning. After collecting donations for cleaning supplies, a group of us spent the afternoon of October 15th organizing and cleaning the House’s common areas. Located on Old Mason Farm Road in Chapel Hill, the Ronald McDonald house is a beautiful facility consisting of a main house with a common room and kitchen, as well as short and long-term apartments for families surrounding a central garden and play house for children. The Chapel Hill location is the only House in the area that also offers hospice rooms for patients to stay with their families.

We were all very impressed by the detailed beauty of the facility. Each common area is decorated by local artists that have donated their time and craft and the garden design and plantings were donated and installed by local landscapers. It was explained that the House relies on its volunteers to provide much-needed services such as cleaning and cooking as well as planning activities and events such as arts and crafts and game nights to help entertain children and families staying at the House. This was an incredibly rewarding experience for all of us to give back to such an inspiring organization that helps patients and their families be together during such hard times.

From the SPTA President  Ali Serrani (DPT2)

As my time serving on the Executive Board quickly draws to a close, I cannot say enough positive things about SPTA this year thanks to my fellow board members, committee chairs, and passionate members of the organization. We increased SPTA hosted events in each of our committees, including many new networking and personal branding opportunities with the addition of Networking Chair Jessica Anderson. We gave back to the great community of Chapel Hill thanks to our Philanthropy Chair Jaime Hankins, as well as Sunshine Member Jennell McIntosh. “Lunch and Learns” were an outstanding addition and an area where Sage Stout excelled as Continuing Education Chair. Fundraisers were fun and prosperous due to the hardworking pair of Lindsay Saunders and Stacy Harris. Carly Bernadotte worked with the Sunshine Committee to help us through the good and the not-so-good times and Natalie Stein and Bria Dunn organized some amazing events for us to blow off steam and get to know one another better. Lastly, Ned Bixby kept us from going stir-crazy by promoting and organizing Intramurals.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to SPTA in any way, shape, or form, and a special thanks to Ellie Rubin for her diligence with this Newsletter. I am excited for the Class of 2019 to now take the reins and I look forward to seeing how they continue to advance and promote UNC SPTA in 2017!