An Interview with Dr. Hooper

Second-year master’s of occupational therapy student Benjamin Triplett sat down with Dr. Hooper to ask him about his vision for the future of research in the Allied Health Sciences at UNC-CH.

What makes the Allied Health Sciences unique in the medical community?
We do command a major share of the healthcare workforce, and because of that, there are increasing needs for those types of professionals to assist in the care of a variety of patients from birth to geriatrics. We are fortunate to be housed within the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, and one of the things that has occurred recently is that we have moved from being historically a basic science program, to now, in this past year, we have become an official clinical sciences program within the School of Medicine. So we’re very excited about that, and are hoping that it opens up other avenues for collaboration with our partners in the School of Medicine.

What do you see as the greatest assets of the Department of Allied Health Sciences at UNC?
Unquestionably, it’s the faculty, the staff, and the students. Those groups make up the lifeblood of this department. Our primary mission here is to make up the next generation of leaders in the healthcare workforce, and every one of those groups provides significant contributions to that. The faculty are key in that, because they are the intellectual drive to make it work, and that has worked beautifully over the past several years, in that our programs are ranked as the top in the country with many of those ranked in the top ten. So we’re very proud of that, and I think that it’s a testament to the dedication of the faculty and staff. The students are also critical in that. We get some of the best students in the country. The students are a very select group, and it contributes to that ongoing drive to be the best program in the country.

How do you envision future Allied Health employment opportunities for graduates from our various clinical and research programs?
I will say despite the fluctuations in our economy, we do command a major share of the healthcare workforce, and because of that, there are increasing needs for those types of professionals to assist in the care of a variety of patients from birth to geriatrics. We are fortunate to be housed within the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, and one of the things that has occurred recently is that we have moved from being historically a basic science program, to now, in this past year, we have become an official clinical sciences program within the School of Medicine. So we’re very excited about that, and are hoping that it opens up other avenues for collaboration with our partners in the School of Medicine.

Students’ Learning Enriched on Rehabilitative Farm

Students from UNC’s Clinical Rehabilitation Mental Health Counseling program were able to see work-as-therapy first hand when they visited The Farm at Penny Lane in Pittsboro. On The Farm, individuals with severe, persistent mental illness practice skills in a community-based setting. Thava Mahadevan, MS, Director of the Farm and alum of the program, conducted the tour.

As part of their service project, students also learned about The Farm's PAWS program, and spent time socializing puppies as they learned of the importance of pet therapy and ownership in the lives of individuals with developmental and psychiatric disabilities.
**GRANTS AWARDED (January 2015 - June 2015)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>TEAM</th>
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<td>Behavioral Inflexibility in IDD Outcome Measurement</td>
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<td>Measuring Dynamic Balance in Adults with Cerebral Palsy: Feasibility and Estimates of Reliability</td>
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<td>American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)</td>
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<td>Training Dual-Task Walking after Stroke: Effects on Attentional and Locomotor Control</td>
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<td>American Heart Association</td>
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<td>A Multi-Center Study of a New Method of Sweat Testing: The CF Quantum Sweat Test</td>
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<td>The Legacy of Angels Foundation (University of Wisconsin at Madison)</td>
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**UNC NDSS Program Receives CAAHEP Accreditation**

The UNC Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science program recently earned programmatic accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) through the Committee on Accreditation of Polysomnography Education (CoA-P SG). The UNC NDSS program is the first bachelor’s-level sleep program in the world to achieve this standard. This accreditation validates that the NDSS program meets the highest level of standards associated with the field of sleep technology.

**Research Highlight: Dr. Adam Jacks**

Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences Associate Professor Adam Jacks, PhD, recently received a subcontract through a Small Business Grant (R44) to Soterix Medical Inc. from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). The focus of the study, titled “Targeted transcranial electrotherapy to accelerate stroke rehabilitation: Exploratory trial on aphasia,” is to determine the effects of targeted brain stimulation paired with behavioral treatment for naming impairment in adults with aphasia. Jacks will lead the UNC arm of the clinical trial, enrolling 30 adults with aphasia over a three-year period. In addition to Soterix, other partners in the study include researchers at Georgetown University, The City College of New York (CCNY), and MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, DC. The award will provide $330,000 to fund the UNC arm of the study.

The potential benefits of conventional transcranial Direct Current Stimulation (tDCS) using sponge-pad electrodes have been demonstrated in small pilot studies for motor rehabilitation after stroke and for the treatment of aphasia after stroke. However, conventional sponge-electrode montages lead to diffuse stimulation throughout the cortex with less-than-optimal intensities at the desired target brain regions. In previous work, collaborators at CCNY and Soterix developed a more targeted implementation of tDCS – high-definition tDCS (HD-tDCS) – tested it for feasibility, and piloted the technology in the clinical treatment of anoma in aphasic stroke survivors. The goal of this study is to determine if a Phase III efficacy clinical trial on aphasia treatment with HD-tDCS is warranted and to prepare the technology and regulatory process for such an event. In brief, the aims of the study are 1) to perform a double-blind, randomized, multicenter, sham-controlled clinical efficacy study to assess the short-term benefits of adjuvant HD-tDCS in the treatment of aphasia, and 2) to prepare the device hardware, targeting tools, and regulatory approvals for a pivotal clinical trial.
From Dr. Grace Baranek, Associate Chair for Research

With summer winding down, we welcome the start of the 2015-2016 academic year and all the creative energies that come with new students, new courses, and new ideas in Allied Health Sciences (AHS). We’re excited to launch the long-anticipated AHS modular research methods courses this fall semester, bringing together faculty and students from our three prestigious PhD programs – Human Movement Science, Occupational Science, and Speech and Hearing Sciences. The Pro40+ course, a new AHS initiative sponsored by the Center for Faculty Excellence, is in development for the entry-level professional programs in the spring semester, with new instructional units designed by our research methodologists, Drs. Richard Faldowski and Wanqing Zhang. The Methodology Lunch & Learn and the Research Forum series are both back by popular demand, so stay tuned for the full schedule of events!

Some personnel news – Patty Kinneer joined us on July 20th as the new Research Coordinator/Grant Editor in the AHS Office of Research. Patty has an MA in Journalism and Mass Communication from UNC and many years of research project management experience, so we are lucky to have her join our team! Susan Schulz, who has been in this role for over 2 years, retired at the end of July, but fortunately for us she will continue to help out with grant editing during anticipated high-volume periods.

I hope you enjoy this issue. Many thanks to Aaron Dallman, Ben Triplett, Susan Schulz, and Gabrielle Scronce for their hard work on this newsletter – in particular for their interviews with our chair, Dr. Stephen Hooper, and their spotlighting of other students and staff. Inside, you’ll find coverage of extensive global service activities across divisions and programs, ranging from projects in Africa to South America to China. During 2014-2015, faculty and students collectively generated more than 70 publications in high impact journals, showcasing impressive scholarship across an array of topics including health, rehabilitation, education, technology, and services. Faculty were busy writing research and training grants, submitting 49 grants this past year, and total awards topped $4,310,000. Jennifer Daniel and Susan Schulz did an amazing job helping faculty and students prepare the highest quality applications and getting them out the door in a timely manner. Way to go!

Our departmental retreat in June, led by Dr. Hooper, generated a vision for the future of AHS – with top-ranked educational programs, cutting-edge research, and technological innovations on the horizon, we are poised to offer new ideas and solutions for tomorrow’s health care needs, both locally and globally.

Total Awards Received Fiscal Years 2005-2015

Total Funding Received Fiscal Year 2014-2015
Clinical Laboratory Science: The CLS program is targeting student communication skills, fostering leadership skills, and expanding students’ abilities to think critically with regard to diagnostic methods. Further, the program is looking to expand its molecular testing component.

Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling: The program has been CORE accredited for many years, and the division is under review for a second accreditation through CACREP. In June, the division changed its name from Rehabilitation Counseling & Psychology to the Division of Clinical Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling. The name more accurately reflects the division’s work and was one of the changes recommended by CACREP. Rehabilitation counseling and mental health counseling is growing – US job growth is 11%; job growth for rehabilitation counselors is 20%; job growth for Mental Health counselors is 29% and for substance abuse counselors is 31%. The division received $1.75 million in two five-year RSA training grants in 2014.

Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science: The program is developing and improving its scope of practice, including plans to move to a master’s degree program and pursue funding for the launch of a sleep science innovation laboratory. Employment data are now available from graduates of the NDSS BS program, showing their move into roles as educators, administrators, and sleep technology developers. The program is on the forefront with a national educational needs assessment for sleep technologists.

Occupational Science/Occupational Therapy: The OS/OT is beginning its second year of a new entry-level Master of Science curriculum in occupational therapy that emphasizes clinical skill development, enhanced interprofessional education, and fieldwork timing that allows for more exposure to practice settings frequently chosen for post-graduation work sites. Further, the program is planning for evolution of the curriculum to the entry-level clinical doctoral degree.

Kibera, Africa
Linn Wakeford, Associate Professor, led a trip to Kibera, Africa with occupational therapy students Lauren Proctor Deisenroth, Jamie Stiller, Stephanie Conner, and Caryn Biglow. The team partnered with Carolina for Kibera to identify individuals who have disabilities as well as to provide resources for local supports.

Hong Kong
In June, Erin Mooneyham, Jessie Poteat, and Aaron Dallman, occupational therapy students, participated in the Summer Overseas Exchange Subsidy Scheme hosted by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Students learned about international practices in rehabilitation sciences and networked with international occupational therapists.

Guatemala
The UNC PT Outreach: Guatemala service learning project had another successful year with 5 students, 2 faculty, and 3 adjunct faculty/leadership team members traveling to Guatemala in April. They provided direct patient care, educational programs for local professionals, and health fairs in two rural communities.

Ethiopia
NDSS student Bereket Habte traveled to Ethiopia for his practicum. In Ethiopia, he trained nine new technologists and established three EEG labs in northern Ethiopia.

Bolivia
Linda Watson, Betsy Crais, Jessica Kinard, Pamela DiLavore, and Grace Baranek traveled to Bolivia in June 2014 to train local therapists and parents about Autism Spectrum Disorder. As part of an effort to improve autism awareness and services in Bolivia, UNC-CH autism specialists were first recruited more than 5 years ago through Partners of the Americas, a non-government organization promoting cultural exchanges and collaborations between US states and states or regions in South and Central America and the Caribbean.
For the 2015 Mitchell Symposium, the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy welcomed Dorothy Holland, Ph.D., Boshamer Distinguished Professor of Anthropology Emeritus at UNC-CH. Dr. Holland is a sociocultural anthropologist who has conducted extensive research in identity, social movements, and activism. Recently, she has concentrated on participatory research methods that can generate meaningful responses to the challenges faced by communities.

The Mitchell Symposium consists of a formal public lecture, a scholarly seminar with doctoral students and faculty, a lunch with the MSOT students, and individual meetings with students and faculty.

Dr. Holland’s public lecture, Cultural Know-How, Community Capacity and Transformative Agency: A New Frontier for Occupations Science and Therapy, highlighted the potential role occupational therapists can play in community activism and social movements. According to Dr. Holland, community activism is more important than ever to compensate for the noticeable devolution of supportive and protective responsibilities to individuals, families, and communities caused by neoliberal policies. In Dr. Holland’s opinion, occupational therapists are well positioned to assist individuals whose capacity for engaging in meaningful activities has been disrupted or inadequately recognized as a result of current economic downturns, social dislocations, and issues of social justice. Promoting community capacity involves assessing the strengths/assets of communities, including their ‘cultural know-how’ (i.e. repertoire of practices that create/mobilize a collective identity/spaces for the community).

Dr. Holland’s seminar focused on participatory action research methods. Emphasis was placed on the need to build relationships and connect with community leaders to co-create community research projects. The discussion also covered issues related to negotiating power differentials between collaborators, recognizing the researcher’s role in the process, and ensuring that the needs of the community are prioritized.

Dr. Holland’s lecture generated numerous discussions among participants regarding the potential role of occupational therapy and occupational science in developing community capacity. You can learn more about the Mitchell Symposium and view Dr. Holland’s public lecture (as well as those of past symposium speakers) at https://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/oscs/about-us/mitchell-symposium.

The 2016 Mitchell Symposium speaker will be Staffan Josephsson, Ph.D., OT, Professor of Occupational Therapy at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden. Dr. Josephsson’s research focuses on activity in relation to creativity, involvement and participation for people with chronic disabilities. His expertise in the narrative tradition of research emphasizes the everyday lived experiences of people and is globally recognized.

**New Faculty**

Raheleh Tschoepe, MS, OTR/L, joined the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy faculty as an assistant professor in June 2014. Tschoepe received her BS in Biology and her MS in Occupational Therapy from UNC. She has had a diverse career working at the continuing care retirement community Galloway Ridge in Pittsboro, NC, as well as serving as an occupational therapist at the UNC Health Care inpatient rehabilitation center. Tschoepe will teach OCCT 757 and OCCT 767 in the fall.

Dana McCarty, PT, DPT, PCS, C/NDT, joined the Division of Physical Therapy as the new Director of Clinical Education for the division.

Edmund Fernandez, MA, joined the UNC Middle School Writing project team, which is an interdisciplinary project in the Allied Health Sciences led by Drs. Steve Hooper and Lara Costa.

Todd Williams, MMS, PA-C, joined the Department of Allied Health Sciences in the Physician Assistant Program.

Eight AHS PhD students were hooded at the graduation ceremonies in May. Congratulations to Dr. Anne Kirby (PhD in OS), as well as Drs. Joy Diamond, Hilary Harper, Jessica Kinard, Sarah Mamo, and Jennifer Zoski (PhD in SPHS), and Drs. Shih Gato and Derek Pamukoff (PhD in HMSC). (Note: Graduates Gato and Pamukoff are not pictured).

Faculty are Karen Erickson, Linda Watson, Grace Baranek
Refereed Publications


and youth adults with chronic kidney disease. BMC Nephrology, 16, 66-.


Book Chapters and Non-Refereed Publications


2015 Human Movement Science Symposium

The 12th annual Human Movement Science Symposium was April 17, 2015, at UNC. The symposium featured 65 presentations with topics such as: joint stiffness in young adult runners, static and dynamic single leg postural control, attention and balance, among other topics. The keynote speaker was Dr. Jimmy Onate from the Ohio State University. Dr. Onate's research focuses on reducing lower extremity injuries, particularly anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury. Sponsors for the event included Tekscan Incorporated, The American Society of Biomechanics, DJO Incorporated, and UNC-Chapel Hill.
An Interview with Dr. Hooper

Continued from Page 1

omy, that the future for our graduates is extraordinarily bright. Having been through two rounds of graduations here, and looking at the history of what happens to our graduates, I'm very confident in telling you that we have nearly 100% rate of students going on to get jobs or moving on into higher education. So our rates of success, if you will, are extraordinarily high, and part of that is a testament to the students, part of that is a testament to the faculty and the product that is being produced from this program, and it also speaks to the need in the healthcare workforce. As you recall, we make up about 60% of that healthcare workforce...well, that market isn't changing. It's going to continue to be large. In fact, we can't keep up, across all of those different programs, with the need in this state and across the country. So there are jobs out there in teaching, and particularly in the clinical realm. The other piece that I will share with you is I think that with the changing healthcare climate, with the Affordable Health Care Act, and a big push for integrated care, that big push is going to involve a lot of Allied Health Care professionals across many of the divisions — if not all of the divisions — that we have. And while we may be looking at a new health care climate, I think that our Allied Health Care professionals are going to play a major role in what that looks like in the future for individuals with health care.

Do you think that focus will shift to certain populations or settings in healthcare?

I think that, from the perspective of this department, I've been very pleased to see the amount of global activity that our faculty and students are involved in. I'm very proud of that, and quite frankly think that we are at the very leading edge of that in the university environment. The other part of that, is that in this department, because of its public university stature, we have a commitment to do outreach to underserved populations. North Carolina as a state is largely rural, and we have a commitment to work with constituents in all 100 counties and regions of the state and we are devoted to that. At the national level, we are an aging population. I do believe that from a population perspective, while we already have significant strengths and assets in our work in the early childhood area, particularly around the area of autism, I also think we have expertise in the aging population in terms of addressing that larger population need. The baby-boomers are going to be around for a while, and health care needs interestingly are going to in part be driven by physicians, but largely by Allied Health professionals.

What are some future priorities for research in the Allied Health Sciences?

We are making a commitment to our younger junior faculty to give them success on their pathways to being scientists. I think that we want to give our senior faculty the tools to be successful as independent scientists in their areas of expertise. I am also encouraged by the outreach that many of our senior faculty are making to other divisions and departments in this university, as well as other universities in this state and around the country, so that the goal of larger, multi-site research initiatives are underway. We will have success in that area downstream. Last but not least, I think that we clearly want to continue to examine the development of our overall research infrastructure here within the department, because while the teaching is our lifeblood, research is the intellectual driving force in terms of new science and innovative ideas that is a major mission of a major public university.

What can we do to build capacity for research in the Allied Health Sciences?

Probably the biggest tool for building capacity in this department or any department are the relationships that our faculty have. And I think that as our faculty go out, and remember, I think that is one of our best resources, and they begin to link with other divisions and departments and universities, that begins to build capacity, and I think that success begets success, because then we can build on those relationships, not just for idea generation, but also for resources, personnel, and equipment down the road. That interdisciplinary component to research is becoming vital to how we build capacity in this department.

What do you see as our department’s greatest challenges, as well as our greatest opportunities going forward?

I think our greatest challenges lie in our resources. We’ve taken some pretty significant fiscal hits, as have other departments and divisions have in this university, and in the university system in the state. I will say that despite those hits, our department has continued to thrive. And I am hoping that we can turn the corner on the budget, only because I believe that we want to keep our faculty fresh, and we want the ideas to be cutting-edge and innovative. And I think that there is a point that we have to be careful with losing those edges to make ends meet. And again, I don’t think that’s a challenge unique to this department. I think it’s a perspective taken that’s probably university-wide. I think in terms of our assets going forward, I think that our future is extraordinarily bright. I think that we have the best faculty, best program...the fact of the matter is that what I would like to do down the road is to grow that strength that we have and look forward to exploring those possibilities down the road, in terms of the possibilities of strategic growth in our student population. We are small...that is an asset. But we are one of the smallest programs in the country, and it would be nice to grow. And we know that we have the interest, and we know that we have the workforce data behind us, and we know that we have the capabilities to do that given the right resources. So we are poised very nicely to grow our academic unit. From the research ventures, as I mentioned earlier, I think that we have a nice stable of junior faculty that are learning to become independent scientists, and that is very nice to see. And we have a number of senior investigators that are very active in their grant submissions and pursuit of extramural funding for the resources to do their research. We also have begun to embark upon looking at large-scale studies involving multiple sites and multiple parts of the university. I think those are all very strong components to the research growth that I’m looking forward to. The last thing that I want to mention is that we also are exploring our clinical growth. We are an Allied Health program, so looking at clinical services is becoming a focus for us. How can or where do we want to grow? How do we partner with our strong university hospital system to facilitate that growth? The other part of that is, how do we use those settings not only for our training, but also for our research. So we can really facilitate our researchers who are interested in clinical activities to partner with clinical sites to gather populations and again, investigate their scientific areas of interest.
For the past four years, Stephanie Reszka, PhD, has been a Research Associate and Project Coordinator for the Advancing Social-communication and Play (ASAP) Project. Under the direction of Principal Investigator Brian Boyd, PhD, the project evaluates the effectiveness of an intervention designed to help promote social-communication and play skills for preschool-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Dr. Reszka’s role in this multi-site project is to coordinate project activities across sites and day-to-day activities at UNC Chapel Hill. She works closely with classroom teams, data collectors, coders, and statisticians to ensure that all assessments and measures are completed and that the intervention goes well in the classroom.

Dr. Reszka’s interest in working with children with ASD began when she was an undergraduate student in Psychology and Sociology. During a summer internship in a child development center, she met a three-year-old with recently diagnosed autism.

The growth demonstrated by this child during a few months of intensive therapy inspired her to continue and expand her work with young children with autism.

Reszka completed her graduate studies in Educational Psychology, Measurement, and Evaluation while working as a research assistant at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. There, her work with Richard Clifford, PhD, in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales helped focus her interests on the dramatic, lasting effects of high quality early childhood environments for children with ASD. To increase her impact through research on the lives of children with ASD, she then completed her PhD in Early Childhood Education from UNC-CH.

As a researcher, Dr. Reszka enjoys fitting together the pieces of participant recruitment, directing interventions, assessing outcomes, analyzing data, and learning new things to build a clearer picture. In her current position with ASAP, Dr. Reszka especially values ongoing collaborations and continuous learning. She appreciates the conversations among investigators involved in ASAP, crediting her previous and current mentors and colleagues with combining diverse experiences to create a productive way of solving problems and improving the project.

Outside of work, Dr. Reszka enjoys running. She has completed half marathons and is currently training for her first triathlon, scheduled for this fall.

Inside AHS

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which has been sanctioned by the American Occupational Therapy Association. The division has also developed two new clinical endeavors and is strengthening community ties with entities serving both young and older adults with autism.

Physical Therapy: The division has achieved candidacy status for a new Pediatrics Physical Therapy Residency, and the first resident will begin training in late August. Faculty are initiating self-study activities as part of the process of reaffirmation of accreditation by the Commission on Physical Therapy Education with an onsite visit scheduled for Fall 2017.

Speech and Hearing Sciences: The division will begin self-study activities in conjunction with review for re-accreditation by the Council of Academic Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, with a site visit anticipated in early 2017. They are also exploring new collaborative opportunities with UNC Hospitals, the Department of Otalaryngology, and NC-LEND, for program development in the areas of research and clinical education.

Radiologic Science: In the future, radiologic science education must address the need for a system that keeps technology expansion and educational relevance more in sync. Faculty will need to continually evolve into new areas of expertise and develop innovative methods for knowledge sharing and skills acquisition.

Training Grants

Help Support Student Learning

Drs. Burker, Rak, Chan and Schmidt were awarded two Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) five-year training grants this year. The grants will provide $10,000 per year for four semesters for 28 students and enable the program to hire RSA scholar/graduate assistants. RSA scholars will participate in a variety of special activities including mentoring opportunities at state conferences and visits to vocational rehabilitation agencies in rural North Carolina. This summer, seven students traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in an RSA training and three RSA scholars – Dee Drake, Margaret Garehan, and Rae Jodrey – are presenting a workshop at the NC Division of Services for the Blind with Drs. Schmidt and Burker.
Anne V. Kirby, PhD, OTR/L, is heading west, where she will be an assistant professor in the Division of Occupational Therapy at the University of Utah. Dr. Kirby’s path to this position began when she was a Master’s student at the University of New Hampshire and afterward, when she was a practicing occupational therapist in Washington, DC. There, she decided to pursue research to answer her many questions about the long-term efficacy of interventions and the needs of people who receive occupational therapy services.

Kirby found that she was a great fit as a graduate student in the UNC Chapel Hill Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. One aspect of research she discovered that she particularly enjoys is its combination of creative problem solving and systematic detailed thinking. Her research at UNC was varied and prolific, but her primary involvement was with the Sensory Experiences Project with principal investigator Grace Baranek, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA. She was able to participate in all aspects of this project – from conceptualization and grant writing to publication, including data collection, video coding, statistical analysis, mentoring junior students, and more. Between research responsibilities, she somehow found the time to train for and complete a half ironman triathlon!

In Utah, Dr. Kirby’s tenure-track, research-intensive position will allow her to continue her research focused on individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families. In particular, she plans to investigate the transition to adulthood for individuals with ASD, including how sensory processing issues impact daily functioning for this population. In addition to conducting intervention research to support adolescents and young adults with ASD and their families, Dr. Kirby will teach a master’s-level course on foundations of occupational therapy in pediatric settings. Dr. Kirby, we wish you the best in your next position and beyond!

As a licensed Speech and Language Pathologist, Joy Diamond had worked in private practice for several years, specializing in working with struggling readers. In her work, she had questions that were not being answered by the professional journals she consulted. This led to her discovery that she wanted to be involved in the development of interventions to help both students who struggle with reading and the teachers who teach them.

Diamond and her husband moved back to Chapel Hill in 2010 to raise their children and so that she could pursue her PhD. She found multiple opportunities to engage in diverse projects across disciplines. One of her major projects at UNC was the Big Words Science project with Karen Erickson, Lori Geist, Jennie Zoski, and Nancy Quick. She helped with content development for this computer-based literacy program for adolescent struggling readers. The program uses consistent letter patterns to help struggling readers decode science words. After helping to develop the content, she assisted with data collection for the intervention, which led to her dissertation, Examining the Language and Literacy Profiles of Adolescent Struggling Readers.

In May 2015, Diamond received her PhD – her second degree from UNC Chapel Hill. (Her first degree as a Tar Heel was a B.A. in Industrial Relations, followed by a Master’s in Speech and Hearing Sciences from Vanderbilt University.) Dr. Diamond will continue to develop and evaluate interventions for struggling readers and professionals who work with them. Outside of work, she remains family-focused, spending time with her children, husband, and their dog.
NDSS Graduates and Students Present at the NC Academy of Sleep Medicine (NCASM) Meeting

NDSS student Beth Payne presents on PSG education

Beth Payne, RRT, RPSGT, and current NDSS student, led an educators’ forum during the NCASM annual meeting. She facilitated a discussion among PSG educators on current events affecting PSG programs in NC and on ways to increase collaboration between educators. Beth serves as program director of the Polysomnography Technology program at Lenoir Community College in Kinston, NC.

NDSS graduates Tanisha Burke ’13 (left) and Sonya McNeil ’13 (right)

Tanisha Burke, BS, RPSGT, and Sonya McNeil, BS, RPSGT, presented classifications of narcolepsy. Their presentation included diagnostic criteria, clinical features, and treatment of narcolepsy as well as a description of techniques to improve quality for patients with narcolepsy disorders. Tanisha is employed by Carolinas Sleep Services in Charlotte, NC, and Sonya is employed by Southeastern Sleep Center in Lumberton.

NDSS Graduate Brittany Tolar ’14

Brittany Tolar, BS, RPSGT, introduced new ideas surrounding sleep apnea treatment continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP). She discussed her novel CPAP mask-fitting questionnaire and described strategies for integrating the questionnaire into practice to promote compliance with therapy and to aid in proper mask selection. Brittany works at Feeling Great Sleep Medical Center in Jacksonville.

PT Students Support Multiple Sclerosis Research through Walk

Lexie Williams, a UNC PT student assisted in organizing a Walk for Multiple Sclerosis. The walk supports cutting-edge research, programs, and services for people impacted by multiple sclerosis. UNC students raised more than $750 to support the cause.