

LSUHSC SCHOOL OF ALLIED
HEALTH PROFESSIONS

DEPARTMENT OF
PHYSICAL THERAPY

SPRING NEWSLETTER

2026



LSU Health
NEW ORLEANS

School of Allied Health Professions

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**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS:
LSUHSC CLASS OF 1975 GOLDEN REUNION**



WE RECENTLY HAD THE HONOR OF HOSTING THE CLASS OF 1975 FOR THEIR 50-YEAR REUNION—AN EVENT MARKED BY PRIDE, CONNECTION, AND JOYFUL CELEBRATION ACROSS GENERATIONS. THE GATHERING BROUGHT ALUMNI TOGETHER TO REFLECT ON THEIR JOURNEYS IN PHYSICAL THERAPY AND TO SHARE STORIES THAT HIGHLIGHTED THE ENDURING IMPACT OF LSU’S PROGRAM ON THE PROFESSION THROUGHOUT LOUISIANA AND BEYOND. THE AFTERNOON WAS FILLED WITH LAUGHTER, MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS, AND A DEEP APPRECIATION FOR THE PIONEERING LEGACY OF THE CLASS OF 1975.

A HIGHLIGHT OF THE EVENT WAS THE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN ALUMNI AND CURRENT STUDENTS FROM THE CLASS OF 2028. OVER TWENTY STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE 4-STAGE AND 4-SQUARE BALANCE TESTS, WHICH QUICKLY EVOLVED INTO SPIRITED AND LIGHTEARTED COMPETITIONS. ALUMNI WERE ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED BY THE STUDENTS’ PROFESSIONALISM, KNOWLEDGE, AND COMPASSION—MANY NOTING THEY WOULD “HIRE ANY OF THEM WITHOUT HESITATION.”

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THE EVENT ALSO PROVIDED ALUMNI THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECONNECT WITH LSU HEALTH'S EVOLVING CAMPUS WHILE CELEBRATING THE TRADITIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT CONTINUE TO DEFINE THE PROGRAM. FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS WORKED COLLABORATIVELY TO CREATE A WELCOMING AND MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE—ONE THAT ATTENDEES DESCRIBED AS “OUTSTANDING” AND “UNFORGETTABLE.”

THIS MILESTONE REUNION NOT ONLY HONORED THE LEGACY OF THE CLASS OF 1975 BUT ALSO SHOWCASED THE STRENGTH OF LSU HEALTH'S PT COMMUNITY—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

KATHRYN WATSON, PT, DPT



Kathryn Watson, PT, DPT, is a pelvic floor physical therapist who graduated from LSUHSC in 2021. She is certified in obstetric health physical therapy and specializes in pregnancy, postpartum, and birth preparation care. Kathryn works at a cash-based, wellness clinic in Fort Worth, Texas. In 2024, she founded Dr. Watson Pelvic & Obstetric Wellness, an online company dedicated to empowering women through evidence-based movement and education. Kathryn also volunteers with the APTA as a Certificate of Advanced Practice in Physical Therapy in Obstetric Health (CAPP-OB) case study reviewer. She loves spending time with her husband, daughter, and two dogs, and will welcome her second baby this May.

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

EMILY MEYER, SPT

“Emily is such a great friend that inspires me every day with her positive attitude and willingness to go above and beyond for her friends. Not only is she an amazing friend and student, but she has showcased so much strength this semester as she has worked to recover from a shoulder injury. Emily has stepped up to leadership opportunities within our class serving as Social Chair, and she is always working hard to plan events for us. I am so grateful for the positive light that Emily brings to all of our lives!” -Nominated by classmate



ZACHARY BERNARD, SPT

I “think Zach is a great candidate for this spotlight because he is always there to help others and make everyone feel positive! Zach tries to interact with his peers as often as possible! I think Zach is a great role model for what a great student and Physical therapists should be!” - Nominated by Classmate

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

SUSAN KURTZ, PT, DPT, CWS, SCCE

We are thrilled to spotlight Dr. Susan Kurtz as an adjunct faculty member in the department of Physical Therapy, where she inspires clinicians through her teaching in Diagnosis and Management of Integumentary Dysfunction. Dr. Kurtz earned her Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science (1993) and Master's in Physical Therapy (1997) from Northern Arizona University and became a Certified Wound Specialist through the American Board of Wound Management in 2001.



She began her career in the ICU/CCU at Southern Regional Medical Center before moving to Kindred Hospital New Orleans, where she helped expand the wound care program and later served as Wound Care Coordinator and Director of Rehabilitation. Following Hurricane Katrina, she supported staff relocation and the rapid reopening of the hospital.

Her clinical experience spans the lifespan, including seven years of burn and wound care at Children's Hospital New Orleans and an expanded pediatric practice through Crane Rehab Center and Louisiana's Early Intervention Program.

Since 2015, Susan has served the veteran community, helping establish a new outpatient clinic in Slidell. She maintains advanced certifications including LSVT, Kinesiotaping, and dry needling. She is an adjunct faculty member at LSU Health's DPT program and has been a PT Clinical Specialist-Clinical Educator since 2016. In this role, she has supervised students, expanded university partnerships, and strengthened interdisciplinary training through Tulane's Neurology Clerkship.

Susan also serves as Director of the Orthopedic and Neurologic Physical Therapy Residency Programs, guiding advanced clinical training for future specialists. She currently works with veterans with progressive neurological disorders.

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PROGRAM EVENTS

VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT WHITE SANDS 3-15-26

Student PT service representatives Meagan Giovingo, Karla Cheshire, Matthew Armbruster, and faculty advisor Rachel Wellons, coordinated a fundraiser to benefit Make Good NOLA and LSUHSC Student Physical Therapy Association



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RESEARCH

The past 6 months have been filled with remarkable accomplishments. Our faculty have contributed 2 new publications and delivered 17 presentations at regional and national conferences.

Explore the full list recent scholarly activity on the following pages.



PUBLICATIONS

- **Moreau, N. G.**, Bjornson, K. B., Hurvitz, P., Mercante, D. (Jan. 2026). Power Training Combined with Interval Treadmill Training in Cerebral Palsy: an RCT. *Pediatrics* (accepted Jan., 2026).
- **Pontiff M.E.**, Oral, E., Li L., **Moreau N.G.** Muscle predicts lower extremity power generation during a power leg press test in individuals with cerebral palsy. *Clinical Biomechanics* (in press).



SYMPOSIA/ EDUCATION SESSIONS

- **Moreau, N. G.**, Bjornson, K. B., Hurvitz, P., Mercante, D. (2026, February). Effects of Power Training combined with Interval Treadmill Training on Walking Capacity versus Performance in Cerebral Palsy. Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy, Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Anaheim, CA.
- **Moreau, N. G.**, Bjornson, K. B., Greve, K. (2026, February). "I've Got the Power": A Power-Based Approach for Improving Walking Activity in Cerebral Palsy. Presented as an Educational Session at the Combined Sections Meeting, Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy of the APTA, Anaheim, CA.
- **Moreau, N. G.**, Gainey, C., Lyman, J., Maitre, N., Moran, T., Carey, P., Kwok, C., Colquitt, G. (2025, October). Fostering Inclusive Participation in Adapted Sports and Exercise Programs for Individuals with Cerebral Palsy: Bridging the Gaps. Presented as a Pre-Conference Course at the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine 79th Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- **Moreau, N. G., Licea, J.**, Bjornson, K. B., Mercante, D. (2025, October). Specificity of Training Effects of a Power-Based Training Program on Rectus Femoris Muscle Architecture in Youth with Cerebral palsy – Comparison to Traditional Approaches. American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, New Orleans, LA. **Top Ten Free Paper Finalist and Gayle G. Arnold Nominee for Best Scientific Paper.**

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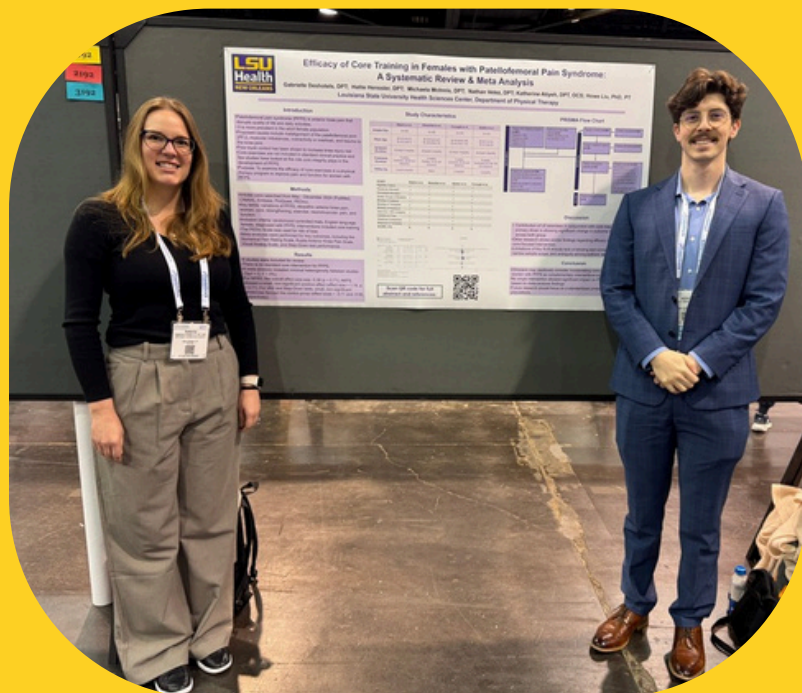
SYMPOSIA/ EDUCATION SESSIONS

- **Giordano KA**, Wasserberger KW, Palasiewicz J. Fastball Velocity, Injury Risk, and Performance: A Major League Perspective on the Tommy John Epidemic. APTA Combined Sections Meeting, 2026. Anaheim, CA.
- **Moreau, N. G.**, Bjornson, K. B., Hurvitz, P., Mercante, D. (2025, October). Effects of Power Training combined with Interval Treadmill Training on Walking Capacity versus Performance in Real World Setting in Youth with Cerebral Palsy. American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, New Orleans, LA. **Gayle G. Arnold Award for Best Scientific Paper.**
- **Liu H.** Applying Yin-Yang Theory in Tai Chi for Older Adults' Health and Well-Being. (In: Kauffman T, Wang DM, Liu H, Kang N, Wang BL, Wayne P. East Meets West: Tai Chi and Health Promotion - a 2-hour symposium), at 2025 annual conference of Gerontological Society of America in Boston, MA; Nov 12-15, 2025.
- Lee V, **Hoang H.** Using health humanities to integrate structural thinking in challenging and uncertain times. Presented at: APTA Educational Leadership Conference; October 18, 2025; Kansas City, MO.
- Jun H., Kulo V., Burbage A., McBrien S., **Hoang T.** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training for Practicing Health Professional: A Scoping Review. American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting; April, 2026; Los Angeles, CA.
- **Wellons RD.** Precision Vestibular Rehab: Hypothesis Driven Thought to Target Dysfunction. 3rd Midwest Vestibular Symposium. April 24, 2026. Regional: Chicago, IL.



PLATFORM/ POSTER PRESENTATIONS

- **Guilbeau E, Robinson K, Galloway J, Henry C, Zeigler L, Akotaobi N, Hoang H.** Examining DPT programs' use of technology for recruitment of underrepresented minority students. Platform presentation at: APTA-Louisiana Fall Meeting; August 22, 2025; Baton Rouge, LA.
- **Wellons R, Dugas C, Goff L, Hauth E, Gerrets A, Schouest E.** Effectiveness of vestibular therapists in instructing the vestibulo ocular reflex X1 exercise. Poster presented at: Academy of Neurologic Physical Therapy (ANPT) Annual Conference. October 16-18th 2025.
- **Velez N, Deshotels G, Henssler H, McInnis M, Liu H, Atiyeh K.** Efficacy of Core Training in Females with Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. APTA Combined Sections Meeting, February 2026. Anaheim, CA.
- Li H., Salem Y., Miller K., **Liu H.** Systematic Review: The Impact of Tai Chi on Health in Type 2 Diabetes and Related Conditions. APTA Combined Sections Meeting, February 2026. Anaheim, CA.
- Luo XT, Tu JK, **Liu H**, Xing JY, Yang JW, Zhang J, Salem Y, Miller K. Association Between Nonspecific Low Back Pain and Bone Metabolism Abnormalities in Adults Aged 18–40 Years. APTA Combined Sections Meeting, February 2026. Anaheim, CA.
- Salem Y., **Liu H.** Aquatic Exercises for Individuals with Parkinson's Disease: A Systematic Review of Literature. APTA Combined Sections Meeting, February 2026. Anaheim, CA.
- Salem Y., **Liu H.** Aquatic Exercise for Children with Cerebral Palsy: A Systematic Review of Literature. APTA Combined Sections Meeting, February 2026. Anaheim, CA.



GRANTS

PI: Guidry M, Majoue M. Co-investigator: Lopez L, Walker B, **Hoang T**, Yu Q.
Critical Thinking: A Program Review of Allied Health Students. Funding
source: LSUHSC-NO School of Allied

Moreau/Simon Peter (PI). WIRP Grant. LSU Health Sciences Center. Molecular
regulation of skeletal muscle function in children with cerebral palsy:
implication for therapeutic targets. 10/04/24 – 10/03/26. \$99,892. Role: PI.

AWARDS

Dr. Kevin Giordano

Giordano, K.A. Outstanding Scholarship and Innovation Award, LSUHSC
School of Allied Health Professions. New Orleans, LA. March 2026.

Dr. Noelle Moreau

Moreau, N. G. Best Platform Abstract Award, Academy of Pediatric Physical
Therapy, Combined Sections Meeting, APTA, Anaheim, CA. February 2026.

Moreau N.G. Gayle G. Arnold Award for Best Scientific Paper. American
Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, New Orleans,
October 2025.

Dr. Rachel Wellons

Wellons, R. Outstanding Alumni Award, University of
Scranton. Scranton, PA. February 2026.

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Future Events

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR

Spring ALUMNI EVENT

LSUHSC - NOLA
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FRIDAY
MAY 8, 2026
4:00 - 6:00 PM

WRONG IRON ON THE GREENWAY

3532 Toulouse St.
New Orleans

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