Dear alumni and friends of the program,

People, places and things continue to define our ever growing School. Allow me to give you your annual glimpse of our dynamic and flourishing program.

To begin, let me report on the “thing” that kept us most busy recently: accreditation. The good news is that the formal decision was made by the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) at the fall meetings. Our self-study report (500+ pages!) and subsequent onsite visit by CAPTE reviewers extended nothing but positive feedback. As many of you know, CAPTE is responsible for determining that the needs of the students and the public are being met and that our mission and outcomes are consistent with the institution and region in which we are located. Thus, our self-study looks at all aspects of our School (education, scholarship and service) within the University milieu, with input from multiple stakeholders (students, graduates, faculty, clinical partners, employers and UM administration).

Although this process is extremely time consuming, I can truly say that the value is in the laborious self-assessment. Accreditation is required and thus offers the PT program an opportunity to stop, look and listen to various stakeholders in a comprehensive detailed fashion about all aspects of UMPT. I am proud to say that this team wide effort has resulted in more streamlined processes and fortified documentation as aspects of UMPT. I am proud to say that this team wide effort has resulted in more streamlined processes and fortified documentation as aspects of UMPT.  I am proud to say that this team wide effort has resulted in more streamlined processes and fortified documentation as aspects of UMPT.

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The move to Clinical Education by Sue Ostertag has opened up the need for a new Clinic Director. Sue’s leadership, in conjunction with our clinical and administrative staff, has left the UMPT Clinic well poised for continued success. Thus, we are very pleased to welcome Steve Ferdig (page 5), a transplant from LA and Chapman University to the role of Clinic Director. As a longtime clinic owner/director and adjunct professor, Steve comes well equipped to continue the tradition of excellence that the clinic has embodied. Please welcome Steve and his wife, Desi, to our UMPT family.

Who will fill their shoes you ask? Although a mighty task, we are very confident in our selections for the Clinical Education team—see page 4 and 7 to learn about the team of Jenn Bell and Sue Ostertag. Additionally, we have recently hired two new Administrative Associates as we also bid farewell and well wishes to Jen von Sehlen upon her move to Bozeman (UM’s loss is MSU’s gain), and we are all very excited about the addition of Debra Regan-Wagner and Alyssa Waters (page 3). Caitlin Malinak, our dedicated administrative associate, continues to be a multitaledent and multitasking wizard for which we are eternally grateful. We look forward to embracing a new academic year with a complete administrative team.

Finally, people, places and things would not be complete without information about our most precious resource: our people. To recognize their retirements, in May of 2018 we recently celebrated the life and work of two long term members of our UMPT family: Dave Levison (page 4) and Kathy Frantzreb (page 3) who have a combined 47 years of dedicated UMPT service. It is truly heartwarming to reflect on all that each of these two special individuals have done for those who have come through our doors. We are grateful for their contributions and will miss them daily as they transition into this new stage of their lives. Echoes of “take me with you” are heard through our halls as we live vicariously through them during this exciting time.

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And of course, our students provide both our reason for being and the roots of our future. As we congratulate our graduating Classes of 2018 and 2019, we welcome our incoming Classes of 2021 and 2022 and continue the cycle of life as we have come to know it at UMPT. I am honored to be part of this group. I invite you to learn more about our multifaceted initiatives, as well as our team members, inside this newsletter. As you enjoy these articles, please consider sharing some of your personal experiences or the experiences of other UMPT Alumni for future issues.

As I end my fourth year as Chair, I look forward to another exciting venture at UMPT in this wonderful place that I now call home. I would like to thank each of you for the support you give to a School that will continue to live up to the reputation that you help build.
FROM THE DEAN

I’m grateful to have the opportunity to reflect on both the School and the College. Now in my fifth year as dean, the College has continued to undergo substantial change. We’ve added faculty to the Family Medicine Residency and after three graduating classes, over 70% are practicing in rural Montana. We have overhauled our School of Community & Public Health Sciences, from three faculty to six, and as of May 2019 have added another three as the community health faculty from the Department of Health & Human Performance merge with our group. This expansion is part of the campus effort to academically align faculty in areas of common expertise, and part of that is the move of the Department of Health & Human Performance to the College. In addition to the three community health faculty, we’ll be bringing the exercise and integrative physiology group on board, as well as the athletic training program. The latter faculty will retain their presence in McGill Hall (for some of you, fond memories of your PT education there), but will be working collaboratively with our faculty in PT to advance our mission in interprofessional education. This move, from Phyllis J Washington School of Education & Human Sciences, will open exciting new opportunities in instruction, research and service, and all programs and students will benefit. I couldn’t be more excited about this opportunity.

Meanwhile, I’m continually impressed by the work of the School of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science. The addition of new faculty and clinicians have helped move the dial, and with recent reaccreditation by CAPTE is to be highlighted, we should all send congratulations to the faculty, staff, students of the program — accreditation is a team sport, and we have a great team. And for many of you reading this, we are indebted to you, whether it is through philanthropy, or just plain advocacy.

So to conclude, I’m grateful to be in this position, at this time, and grateful for your continued support and advocacy. Thanks, and have a great winter!

Reed Humphrey, PhD
Dean & Professor
Head, UM Health & Medicine

Dear UMPT Alumni & Friends,

This past January, I moved to Missoula to take on the role of Director of Development for the College of Health Professions & Biomedical Sciences. In my short time here, I have already been overwhelmed by the great work that is being done by UMPT students, faculty, and staff. After seeing our students directly impact the community through their work in the PT Clinic and the New Directions Wellness Center, and witnessing the cutting-edge research being done by our outstanding faculty, I am proud to be able to spread the word about this great group of people.

Much of my role is focused on traveling throughout Montana and the western United States meeting with people like you: alumni & friends who are passionate about the work being done in the Skaggs Building, across campus, and throughout our community. I have already been fortunate to meet a number of you and thank you for your generous support, which is absolutely essential to the success of our PT program. If you received a scholarship during your time here at UM, or received mentorship & training that shaped your professional endeavors, I urge you to consider supporting the students & faculty that make UMPT such an outstanding program. If you are interested in donating to UMPT, you can do so by visiting SupportUM.org/health and indicating in the comments that you would like your gift designated to the School of Physical Therapy. If you would like to assist our students in other ways, such as internships or clinical opportunities, feel free to contact me directly at (406) 243-4301.

If you have questions about how to support our efforts, don’t hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the months and years to come. We truly appreciate your support.

Tim Sorensen
Director of Development,
College of Health Professions & Biomedical Sciences
UM Foundation

UMPT program re-accredited for ten years!

Great news! The Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education completed its review of the UMPT program and re-accredited our program for 10 years! The UMPT team worked tirelessly over the last 10 years and especially the last couple years. Cheers to having such a great program and team!
Andy Kittelson, PT, PhD will be joining the UMPT Program faculty as an assistant professor in the Spring of 2020. His research interests are in the areas of informatics, data science and clinical decision making. He also has a passion for teaching and will be leading the Applied Clinical Anatomy course. Andy, his wife Kate, and daughters, Edna (2 years) and June (2 months) are excited to make Missoula their new home and we will welcome them with open arms!

Dr. Brian James Loyd DPT, PhD is a post-doctoral trained researcher who will be joining the UMPT faculty as an assistant professor in the Spring of 2020. His current research is in the area of vestibular rehabilitation and community-based monitoring of movement in mobility limited populations. He also has a great love for teaching and will be leading the content areas of Neuroscience and vestibular rehabilitation. Joining in his move will be his wife, Janelle, and their two dogs. UMPT and Missoula are a perfect fit for Brian and Janelle who both love the outdoors and live music. We couldn’t be more excited to welcome Brian and his family to our UMPT family.

Alyssa Waters has joined UMPT as the new Administrative Associate for the School of Physical Therapy replacing the retired Kathy Frantzreb. Alyssa earned her BA in English through the University of Montana Western and has 10 years’ experience working in higher education in her previous roles as an Academic Advisor and Graduation Auditor at the University of Montana Western. She enjoys supporting students through their academic journey and success. Alyssa is also a proponent of human rights, and is certified as a Civil Rights Investigator. Her outside interests include learning about other cultures, reading, concerts, and traveling. She has lived in Montana for over 15 years, but has also spent time in California, Washington, Virginia, and Mississippi with her Navy parents. Alyssa will be part of the Clinical Education Team, and will also be working on recruiting, pre-PT advising, and admissions. She is excited to be here, and we are delighted to have her.

Debra Regan-Wagner, MPA, joined the UMPT family in the fall of 2018 as the new Accounting Associate for the School of Physical Therapy. She brings a wealth of experience and expertise including being an Executive Director of the MT Army National Guard Family Readiness Program (1994-2007). Additionally, Deb moved to Washington and worked for Peter Pan Seafood’s at King Cove, as the Alaska Office Manager, WSDOT – Ferries security division, and Puget Sound Energy before returning to Montana to complete her education. She brings 18 years of Federal and State governmental experience in budgetary process, federal and state grant applications and project management, operations, financial, accounting and auditing experience. Debra earned both her BS of Business Administration (2016) and her Master’s in Public Administration (2017) here at the University of Montana. As part of her international business degree, she traveled to Sibiu, Romania and completed an internship at Carpatica Bank. Her outside interests include traveling abroad, camping, fishing, volunteering and teaching computer skills to seniors, and quilting. We are delighted that Deb has chosen to join our UMPT administrative team.

KATHY FRANTZREB SAYS HER GOOD-BYES

Long time Administrative Associate Kathy Frantzreb retired May, 2018 after a long career at UM. She will be missed by all, not only because there was chocolate to be had anytime you visited her office but we will also miss her ability to win radio trivia and share in the subsequent Harvest Bakery winner’s spoils. But all kidding aside, she will mostly be missed for her dedication to students and her ability to find a way to a smile and a hearty laugh (if it wasn’t too early in the morning). We wish her all the best in her retirement.

Here is Kathy’s good-bye message: “Every time I was asked how long I worked at the School of Physical Therapy, I immediately called Dave Levison to ask how old his youngest daughter, Rachel, was that particular year. Rachel was 3 weeks old when I interviewed for the job. She will be 20 in October. I have to say I have been spoiled working with the folks I have come to know through my position with UMPT. Staff are exceptional: devoted, hard-working and fun. Faculty are dedicated and invested in the success of students. And then there are the students. Year after year, the caliber of students has just been incredible. They are smart, motivated, appreciative, and also fun. I found I loved working with students, but most particularly, PT students. They graciously put up with my idea of fun, and even dished some back. They truly ruined me for working with any other student population. I couldn’t even think of working anywhere else after having worked with them all these years. So I retired. I will miss you all each and every day…when I finally wake up.”
A CHANGING OF THE GUARD
FOR UMPT’S CLIN ED PROGRAM.

With the retirement of longtime faculty member and DCE, Dave Levison, the UMPT faculty unanimously supported Jenn Bell as the new Director of Clinical Education. The UMPT community looks forward to a smooth and exciting transition as we support Jenn in her new role. Below please find Jenn’s first message in this leadership position, followed by a short synopsis of Dave’s impactful career.

As we continue to offer outstanding clinical experiences to our students, I look forward to connecting with our UMPT alums, current clinical faculty and future CIs/CCCEs to grow and develop our student programs. Working closely with colleagues across the region and country to help move clinical education initiatives that increase student achievement while also respecting the demands on CIs and CCCEs was a high point. I welcome input and engagement from everyone in physical therapy and healthcare as we work together to grow the future of our profession.

The faculty, staff and students of UMPT want to thank Clinical Associate Professor Dave Levison, PT, MHS, for his dedication to our program and the profession of Physical Therapy.

Dave has worked tirelessly over the last 28 years to make UMPT clinical education an innovative and responsive program that helps develop students into great PTs. Dave’s work extends beyond UMPT through his work with MAPTA, the Northwest Intermountain Consortium of Clinical Education, and the APTA. During the last five years, Dave has served as my colleague and mentor and we have prepared well for this transition in leadership. He will be missed, but I wish him well in the next (fishing) phase of life. I am humbled by the huge shoes I have to fill.

Since joining UMPT in 1990, Dave has been instrumental in so many initiatives that have positively impacted UMPT and our profession. Here are just a few:

• When Dave was initially hired, his main role was as Director of the UMPT Clinic. While still in the basement of McGill Hall, he successfully increased referrals and expanded student engagement and put into motion a vision of the UMPT clinic as a model for patient care and clinical education that it is now.

• Dave was involved in transitioning the PT program from a bachelors to masters to doctor of PT curriculum.

• He brought in the concepts of Motivational Interviewing and expanded the behavior change models to the DPT curriculum and greatly expanded the clinical reasoning curriculum. Dave built the practice and administration content over time as well.

• The DPT/MBA dual degree was spearheaded by Dave, only the 2nd of its kind in the US at the time.

• The clinical education program grew under Dave’s watch, going from under 100 clinical partner’s to over 400, and giving students the opportunity to work with some of the best PTs at sites throughout the US.

• Dave was a co-founder of the Northwest Intermountain Consortium (NIC) of Academic Clinical Education programs and its first Chair which serves a broad geographical area and continues to be a collaborative and productive force in improving clinical education in our region.

• Dave is one of the creators of Acadaware, which is a first of its kind software developed to manage PT clinical education, making the process more efficient and effective. Acadaware products are now being used by over 40 other universities.

• Dave also led a team in developing the Performance Assessment System (PAS) as a response to feedback that a student assessment tool was needed that was less time consuming for CIs and students.

• As one of the first of a handful of PT program faculty that joined and participated in APTA’s Private Practice Section (PPS), Dave spearheaded student/PPS engagement as the initial Chair of the University Initiative Task Force. He was also invited and served on the PPS Strategic Planning task force, and was an invitee to the initial and subsequent Graham Sessions, a think tank to clarify challenges and consider solutions facing physical therapy private practice.

• Dave has been a contributing member of MAPTA since he was a student, including being the student liaison, Program Chair, Payment Policy representative to APTA and long-term Newsletter Editor, to name a few of his contributions.

A PARTING MESSAGE FROM DAVE LEVISON
“THANK YOU ALL FOR A GREAT CAREER.”

After 28 years, I have decided it is time to retire from the University of Montana, or as I like to characterize it, phase 3 in life begins August 18, 2018. It has been a great privilege to have been employed at UMPT for all these years. Over that time I have worked with dozens of faculty colleagues and staff, over 800 students, around 2500 clinical instructors and a whole lot of patients that came through our clinic when it was housed in McGill Hall and I was clinic manager. I consider myself very fortunate to have made this incredible breadth of personal and professional connections.

Thanks to all for putting up with my sense of humor and letting me learn, grow, contribute and have a wonderful, rewarding career at UMPT. I owe a lot to the University of Montana and will continue to be a strong supporter of the program and University.

I get a lot of questions about what I will do with my time. Phase 3 activities are still developing, but I envision lots more hiking, fishing and exploring the great landscapes of the western US and beyond. Gardening will get more attention and I will still make a habit of coming to campus with extra veggies to share with students. I will also put some of my energies into community service, finding people and activities that could use an extra hand. Hope to see you around. All the best and Go Griz!
THE ORTHOPEDIC RESIDENCY RECEIVES ACCREDITATION!

In May, 2018 the UM Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency received formal accreditation status by the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education. It was quite a process, and we are very excited to be recognized by the American Physical Therapy Association as an accredited residency program! Many thanks to the Director of the Orthopedic Residency Program, Jake Mischke PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT, for shepherding us through the accreditation process. For more information on the Orthopedic Residency at UMPT, visit - http://health.umt.edu/physicaltherapy/Residency%20Program/default.php

Steve Ferdig PT, DPT, OCS, joined the UMPT family in the summer of 2018 as Director of University of Montana PT Clinic services and has completed a very successful year. Steve succeeds Sue Ostertag, who is moving into the Associate Director of Clinical Education position. Steve brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this new role, including 25 years of orthopedic clinical practice; 18 years as an orthopedic clinical specialist; 14 years as a private practice owner (Specialized Physical Therapy); and 20 years as an adjunct clinical faculty at Chapman University. Steve received his MPT degree from University of Southern California in 1993 and his t-DPT from Chapman University in 2011. We very much appreciate Steve’s interest in building on the success that Sue and her team has cultivated. Welcome Steve!

WELCOME OUR NEW CLINIC DIRECTOR – STEVE FERDIG

UMPT’S FIRST ORTHOPEDIC RESIDENT REFLECTS ON HIS EXPERIENCE

The UMPT is pleased to announce that our first orthopedic resident, Phil Hageman, has successfully completed his Orthopedic Residency. The faculty, staff and students appreciate the job well done by Phil and wish him well in what promises to be an outstanding career. Here’s what Phil has to say about his yearlong experience: “The UM Orthopedic PT Residency has been a challenging, yet tremendous period of personal and professional growth that I value enormously. The curriculum, clinical mentoring, and working alongside a diverse team of knowledgeable and experienced clinicians, faculty and research scientists, has truly enhanced my knowledge of orthopedic physical therapy and clinical reasoning, along with my ability to deliver quality patient care. The clinical mentoring sessions have been the most impactful, as they required me to step out of my comfort zone and become open to receiving valuable feedback. The residency has also enabled me to pursue my interest in clinical education and teaching and gain significant experience serving as a lab instructor, guest lecturer, and clinical preceptor for students in the DPT program. My experience in the residency program has given me a solid foundation and instilled in me a desire for life-long learning, commitment to professional and community service, and the continual pursuit of professional and clinical excellence.” Congratulations to Phil on passing his Orthopedic Certified examination in 2019. Our first time pass rate is officially 100 percent!

TJ CRIPPEN, 2018-19 ORTHOPEDIC RESIDENT

We are pleased to announce T.J. Crippen as our 2nd Orthopedic Resident at UMPT. T.J. was born in Billings, MT, raised in Colstrip, MT. and attended Carroll College in Helena, MT, where he played football for the Fighting Saints, while earning a BA in Health Sciences. T.J. then graduated from UM, receiving his Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Besides his past orthopedic clinical rotations and experience as a collegiate student-athlete, T.J completed a 15-week clinical rotation in outpatient orthopedics at Kootenai Health in Coeur d’Alene, ID. He is a member of the Orthopedic Section of the American Physical Therapy Association. His clinical interests include manual therapy, sports rehabilitation, post-surgical care, lower extremity injuries, and injury prevention. He is tremendously excited to further build upon his UM education to improve his clinical skills as well as become a better educator for both his patients and his future students as a clinical instructor. T.J.’s interests include hiking, hunting, fishing, camping, sports, reading, cooking, and playing outdoors.

Welcome Josh Krantz, PT, DPT 2019-2020 Orthopedic Resident

We are pleased to announce Josh Krantz as our 3rd Orthopedic Resident at UMPT. Josh is originally from Ronan, MT and attended the University of Montana where he earned a BS in Health and Human Performance. He continued his education at UM receiving his Doctorate in Physical Therapy in 2019. He is excited about the opportunity to continue his education at UM. Josh is a recent UMPT graduate who looks forward to spending the next year as our 3rd UMPT orthopedic resident. Born and raised in Ronan, MT, he moved to Missoula in 2008 to attend the University of Montana where he graduated with a B.S. in Health and Human Performance in 2012. He went on to attend PT School at UM and graduate in 2019. Josh is interested in orthopedic rehabilitation while promoting patient self-efficacy and evidence-based care. Personally, Josh enjoys engaging in his local church community and all the great outdoor activities Montana has to offer. UMPT is excited to welcome Josh, his wife, Trista, and their newborn son, Noah to the UMPT family.
Each year, graduating students have the opportunity to nominate a clinical instructor they believe is worthy of recognition for their commitment to clinical instruction. All of our clinical instructors are praise worthy for volunteering their time and expertise in helping to train the next generation of PTs. But we only give one award each year.

The 2018 winner was Weston Vik. Weston was nominated by Emily Smith. Weston is an UMPT alum, class of 2014, and practices at Kootenai Medical Center in Coeur d’Alene, ID. After graduating from UMPT, he continued his professional education, finishing an orthopedic residency at John Hopkins Hospital and earning his Orthopedic Certification Specialization. He is appreciated for his dedication to his patients, students and profession.

The 2019 Outstanding Clinical Instructor is John-Henry Anderson, who was nominated by Jen Miller (Class of 2019). John-Henry graduated from UMPT in 2008 and practices outpatient orthopedics at APRS Bozeman. After graduating from UMPT, John-Henry became a Board-Certified Sports Clinical Specialist with a focus on running injuries. John-Henry has been a CI for UMPT since 2006 and consistently offers high-quality, challenging experiences for our students.

Thank you Weston and John-Henry.

We are proud to announce that Partnership Health Center (PHC), a multi-disciplinary community health center, is the home of the University of Montana Physical Therapy’s first satellite clinic. Envisioned by Sue Ostertag more than 10 years ago, seeing patients at PHC has been many years in the making. This spring, four 2nd year students in conjunction with Audrey Elias, PT, PhD took on all the perils and pitfalls involved in creating a PT practice. UMPT and PHC are indebted to these pioneers for their dedication and vision, and congratulate them on their successful opening in March of 2019. Following our celebratory opening, other students also volunteered as supervised clinicians in these initial months and found the opportunity of working with this population both challenging and gratifying. This Fall we will initiate our first formal UMPT learning experience at PHC as 4 students will engage in their Integrated Clinical Experience (ICE) under the tutelage of Sue Ostertag in this venue.

The clinic is designed to be an integral part of the multidisciplinary care available at PHC. Physical therapy students participate in patient care as well as collaborate with other professionals. The Family Medicine Residency of Western Montana, behavioral health, dental, and pharmacy are all housed within this location, thus broadening our students’ opportunities to engage in interprofessional practice.

After almost 6 months, we are confident that our presence at PHC is an all-around win as providers are practicing across disciplines in ways that result in collaborative care that enriches both the patient and the caregiver experience. We are fortunate to add this satellite clinic to the excellence that is the hallmark of both the UMPT Clinic and the UMPT School.
“There is nothing permanent, except change.” — Heraclitus.

This quote is so true! After graduating from UM in 1993 and setting sail for my first position at St. Luke’s Rehab Institute in Spokane as a new PT, I was faced with the prospect of reapplying for my own job within a year of employment due to reorganization efforts within my company. I didn’t realize, at the time, that this was just a symptom of the challenges I would continue to face working in health care. CHANGE IS INEVITABLE. So, instead of fighting the change that was coming that year or any year since, I chose to embrace it. It seems since pre-PT school I have been seeking out new and different opportunities….undergrad started at MSU in Bozeman, continued on in California part time at two different academic settings while I was fighting fires and living in 5 different locations in only a few years. Over the past 28 years, my husband, Tom, and I have moved more than a handful of times while I worked in a variety of settings and locations: St. Luke’s, Deaconess, and Home Health in Spokane; skilled nursing and sub-acute care in Helena; and outpatient and long-term-care in Lewistown, MT.

Why the quote and comments on change? Well, once again opportunity is knocking on my door and I must answer! I am moving out of my long held position as Clinic Director for UMPT, and am excited to report that I will be moving into the newly vacated role of Associate Director of Clinical Education right here at UMPT. This change in my career path is something that I have thought long and hard about, and the timing was right for many reasons: Tom and I will be moving our youngest daughter Amy into the UM dorms fall 2018, and with this new job change we won’t have to relocate! Tom is quite thankful for that!

I look forward to having many new opportunities to interact with students, and clinical instructors and coordinators while continuing to teach and provide service and scholarship to the profession of PT and the University of MT. The UMPT Clinic has developed into something I could not have envisioned in 2005 when I started at UM, and I am excited to see where the next phase of leadership takes it.

Here’s to CHANGE!

UM FACULTY AND STUDENTS BORNEO BOUND

In May 2018 and again in the summer of 2019, an interprofessional group of UM students and faculty traveled to Indonesian Borneo for a 3-week service learning program. Dr. Jennifer Bell, UMPT faculty, led the group that included PT students, pharmacy students, public health students, family medicine residents and pharmacy and family medicine faculty. The group spent time providing clinical services to patients at Klinik ASRI, an Indonesian NGO (non-governmental agency), as well as learning about ASRI’s planetary health projects.

ASRI focuses their work on addressing issues that impact both human and environmental health. One example is a project to eliminate slash-and-burn agriculture which contributes to pollution, poor water quality, and droughts. By teaching organic farming techniques and investing in reforestation projects, the local communities have more stable income, safer and more consistent water supply, and access to native fruits and plants. Klinik ASRI also provides subsidized, high-quality health care to the local community.

During their time in Borneo, the UM team, using their different professional perspectives, collaborated with colleagues to address child and maternal health. The public health students, did extensive research on child stunting and the benefits of breastfeeding. They shared the evidence for breastfeeding, as well as, programmatic ideas to address the local barriers. The UMPT team developed screening tools for developmental delay, as well as exercise recommendations during pregnancy to address low back pain.

The pharmacy team reviewed all medications in the ASRI pharmacy to determine which were safe during pregnancy and breastfeeding. The family medicine group focused their energy on improving prenatal and post-partum care.

In addition, the UMPT group piloted a project to teach people with disabilities how to plant and grow native seedlings, which are sold to the reforestation projects. This program allows people with disabilities to financially contribute to their families and gain confidence in their participation within the community. Overall, the UM group was able to learn about ASRI’s multi-faceted approach taken to address planetary health and expanded their understanding of global health issues.
Ryan Mizner continues to make meaningful contributions to the science of physical therapy practice. Within the past two years, he has had 8 scientific presentations and 5 peer-reviewed papers. Most of his publications have come from his long held collaborations with the University of Utah (U of U) focusing on people with total knee arthroplasty. Consistent with Dr. Mizner’s history, he is not just prolific, but also exemplary as evidenced by this research having received the 2017 Best Poster Award from the Gait and Clinical Movement Analysis Society Annual Conference. The collaboration with the U of U was important as it allowed the use of a split-belt instrumented treadmill to study the kinetics of gait for people with total knee arthroplasty. UMPT is thrilled to announce that we have recently added a similar piece of equipment to the Movement Science Laboratory with the hiring of Dr. Rich Willy to the faculty of UMPT!

Publications from our collaboration with Utah include:


Dr. Mizner also received a new grant in 2018 issued by the Institute of Translational Health Sciences (ITHS). The funding is part of a training grant designed to help Ryan develop his work with people who have had ACL reconstruction. ITHS is housed at the University of Washington and Ryan visited Seattle to share some preliminary findings and to complete a grant-training workshop. He submitted an NIH proposal that utilizes his custom body weight support system to lessen the risk for developing knee osteoarthritis after ACL reconstruction.

UMPT’s Clinical Physical Therapy Instructor, Audrey Elias, and Ryan have also been honored to have had their abstract chosen for the Clinician’s Reception at the 2018 Annual ACSM meeting in Minneapolis, MN this past May. Their abstract was selected as one of the top 11 clinical case/research abstracts submitted to next year’s meeting. Their work is entitled: Jump Training Improves Psychological Impairments and Facilitates Greater Sports Participation in Athletes with ACL Reconstruction. Much of the results of their recent clinical trial has recently been published in the American Journal of Sports Medicine.

UMPT is excited to continue to support the influential work of Dr. Mizner, Dr. Audrey Elias and Dr. Rich Willy within the UMPT Movement Science Laboratory.


Over the past year, UMPT’s newest faculty member, Rich Willy, has been busy setting up new lab equipment in the UMPT Movement Science Laboratory. His new force sensing split belt treadmill will be used to assess running and walking mechanics. In support of this work, Rich was recently awarded an internal research grant to assess knee forces in individuals as they run and walk with heavy backpacks. This work will have specific application to the military, as well as wildland firefighters. Rich was a featured speaker at the Mountain Land Running Summit in Park City, UT Sept. 21-22, 2018. He spoke on the use of wearable devices to monitor training loads in trail runners, particularly in the prevention of stress fractures and knee injuries. Rich is also on the author team for the recently published clinical practice guidelines (CPG) for patellofemoral pain for the Orthopaedic (JOSPT) Section of the APTA. This publication provides specific evidence-based guidance for the evaluation and treatment of patients with patellofemoral pain based on a systematic review of the scientific literature on the topic. Look for the patellofemoral pain CPG in JOSPT. For more information on the work Rich is doing, visit: http://health.umt.edu/physicaltherapy/Contact%20Us/faculty%20and%20staff.php?ID=5316
Professor James Laskin, PT, Ph.D. was abroad for the 2017-18 academic year on a Sabbatical and ASEAN Fulbright Research Fellowship. It has been a remarkable year for James filled with teaching, research, UMPT student & Professional PT study abroad programs, conferences, professional exchanges and, of course, amazing travel and cultural adventures. During his time away he traveled to and worked in: Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Poland, Portugal, Hungary, Denmark, Germany, and Lithuania. He actively engaged in projects involving 5 MS students and 1 PhD student in Thailand, 2 PhD students in Poland as well as a number of collaborations with faculty and organizations in Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Poland and Portugal.

These endeavors were made possible by the support of UMPT, the University of Montana, the Fulbright Commission, the U.S. Mission to the ASEAN Community, Fulbright Thailand, the College of Sport Sciences and Technology and the School of Physical Therapy at Mahidol University, Bangkok, the Department of Physical Therapy at Chiang Mai University in Thailand, the Rural Development Agency in Laos, the School of Physical Therapy at Jozef Pilsudski University in Warsaw, the Faculty of Sport at University of Porto, Portugal and Erasmus Mobility + program.

THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF JAMES’ JOURNEY.

UMPT Study Abroad Program
Ten UMPT 2nd-year students arrived in Bangkok on December 28, 2018 for a 3-week study abroad program. This was the 4th and largest group that James has hosted. The goal of this program was to balance an intensive academic program with opportunities to discover some of the rich culture that the “Land of Smiles” has to offer. The group toured Bangkok, spent New Year’s in a tropical island paradise called Koh Mak, hiked in the jungle of Doi Inthanon and toured the Golden Triangle. On the academic side, students engaged in Thai massage and pool therapy classes; clinical visits to the Srisangwan Chiangmai School for Children with Physical Disabilities, the Rajanagarinda Institute of Child Development, acupuncture at Chiang Mai Central Memorial Hospital, and the Thammapakom Social Welfare Development Center. A highlight of the program was the opportunity for the UMPT students to spend an evening with the 140 CMU 2nd and 3rd-year students, as well as teaching them aspects of orthopedic assessment.

The Health, Quality of Life and Physical Activity of Older Laos: A Pilot
While James was involved in a number of research projects during his sabbatical, he reports none were as impactful, complex and satisfying as his project in Laos. In the past decade the degree of urbanization of the Lao people has been dramatic. Causes of mortality are shifting from infectious diseases to those that are preventable and chronic. These factors along with the social changes in how aging parents were traditionally cared for to exacerbate the challenges of caring for a growing elderly population. However, little is known about this growing population of elderly Lao in terms of quality of life, health outcomes, level of physical activity and the risk for falls. Working with the Rural Development Agency, James developed a survey based strategy to reach a large cross-section of Lao elderly in urban, peri-urban and rural communities. They hope to capture a broad cross section of socioeconomic, educational, vocational and ethnic variation in their population sample. After almost 3 months they have captured 399 surveys. James and colleagues are working with the U.S. Embassy in Laos, the Laos Ministry of Health and the Asian Development with Disabled Persons (a Japanese NGO) to continue this project throughout the country. Stay tuned.

Pilot Professional Exchange Program.
In February 2019, James coordinated a professional and cultural exchange opportunity for UMPT alum, Alyssa Schock, DPT, (2016). This program consisted of a 3-week professional exchange at Mahidol University in Bangkok. The purpose of Alyssa’s visit was to 1) support James with his Laos project; 2) learn about physical therapy practices in Thailand; and 3) explore the status and interest in Women’s Health and Pelvic Floor care. Given the success of Alyssa’s experience, James will continue to explore the potential for developing ongoing professional exchange opportunities in both Thailand and Poland.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. JENNIFER BELL!
The University of Montana recently awarded her one of ten Outstanding Performance Awards given to non-tenure faculty in 2018. Dr. Bell has excelled in engaging students in the classroom and clinic. She also collaborates across campus and around the world to increase access to quality healthcare in low-resource, under-served areas. She is a real asset to the UMPT team.
UMPT at PTMU

In May of 2019, James Laskin spent 3 weeks with four UMPT students in Thailand to practice Physical Therapy as exchange students of Mahidol University (MU). Mahidol University is located in Salaya, a suburb about 35 km west of central Bangkok and is considered the premier University in Thailand. It is the oldest institution offering a degree in PT in Thailand and is famous for having cared for the recently deceased King and his current family. The Royal family’s primary therapist is also the Dean of the Faculty of Physical Therapy. Currently, MU offers Bachelors, Masters, and Doctor of Philosophy in Physical Therapy degrees. The Faculty of Physical Therapy at MU lead Thailand in academics, conducting extensive research in multiple areas of physical therapy.

From James: PTMU welcomed us into their state-of-the-art facilities, asking us to keep their motto in mind: P-public mind, T-talent, M-moral, and U-unity. Under the supervision of established PTMU Faculty, myself and three second year UMPT students were invited to practice in their teaching labs, research labs, and multiple clinical sites. We began by treating patients at the outpatient physical therapy center on the main MU campus. Here, we were introduced to Eastern physical therapy practices. We overcame the language barrier and immersed ourselves in the ways of Thai physical therapy. Patients value PT and therapists are highly regarded in Thai culture. Buddhism, monarchy, and pride in their country are strong cultural values that individualize physical therapy practice in Thailand, yet we quickly learned the foundation of PT is largely the same.

The PTMU center has three clinics where they treat pediatric, neurologic, and orthopedic patient populations. In pediatrics we treated children with CP, MD, and Cri-du-chat Syndrome using techniques such as Vojta Therapy and FES. In outpatient orthopedics we were exposed to Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy for treatment of tendinopathies and other soft tissue injuries. We had the unique opportunity to participate in rural home health and aquatic therapy. Inter-professional collaboration is highly encouraged in Thai practice and a new collaborative care experience for us was working with the Veterinary Science program to provide pediatric hippotherapy services. A pony named “Brownie” was the star of the show!

We also spent several days at Siriraj Hospital in the heart of Bangkok. Siriraj Hospital, also known as “The King’s Hospital”, is the country’s largest medical center with more than 2,800,000 outpatient visits and 80,000 inpatient admissions each year. With 25 different departments, Siriraj has over 200 physical therapists on staff. It also serves as a large teaching hospital for Mahidol University physical therapy and medical students. While at Siriraj, we treated patients in the Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation unit and the Acute CVA unit. Despite the overwhelming atmosphere of this clinical site, practicing at Siriraj remains a highlight of our trip and was ended by touring the incredible Siriraj Medical Museum. The museum, full of medical curiosities and intricate dissections, was an anatomist’s dream. If you ever find yourself in Bangkok, I recommend taking the ferry to the hospital where it sits on the famous Chao Phraya river. The museum will not disappoint and it’s the best hospital food you’ll ever have!

In addition to the main campus clinics, PTMU has a nine-story building dedicated to outpatient physical therapy services and research at their Pinklao site. Here we worked on the outpatient orthopedic floor and the neurological rehabilitation floor. While at Pinklao we enjoyed practicing gait analysis in their ultramodern running analysis lab with physical therapy students from Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand. We also challenged each other to simulate return to work tasks while experimenting with their EvalTech Functional Capacity Evaluation system in the ergonomics lab.

Along with our clinical experiences, we participated in several didactic activities. We enjoyed educating the PTMU Masters students on the cultural differences of Western physical therapy, attending PhD dissertations, assisting Dr. Laskin in lecturing on Sport and Disability, and learning to play wheelchair basketball!

On the weekends and in our spare time we packed in every activity we could think of! We travelled north to Chiang Mai where we spent a weekend playing with elephants, touring historic Wats, hiking the sticky waterfalls, eating northern Thai and Indian cuisine, and walking the night markets. Other trip highlights include ice cream, orchid farms, the King’s Palace, ice cream, canal tours, dining with our clinical instructors, cooking class, morning runs with Dr. Laskin, ice cream (are you seeing a pattern here?), and so much more!

Takeaways from Thailand: PT is universal. Language is not always a barrier. Exercise is truly the best medicine. Don’t wear your shoes in the clinic. It’s okay to eat ice cream three times a day when it’s 117 degrees.
Recently, UMPT established an agreement with Hillside Health Care International (HHC). Based out of Punta Gorda, Belize, Hillside is a non-profit organization that provides free health care to the people of the Toledo district in southern Belize. DPT student, Rachael Kohler became the first student to travel to Punta Gorda to do a clinical rotation there. Rachael was part of an interprofessional team that included a supervising PT and 2 other PT students from the states, a pharmacist and 3 pharmacy students, a physician/medical director along with 3 Physician Assistant students. Hillside also has nursing and public health services and is supported by a fantastic staff of locals that help make it all work. Rachel sent the following communiqué after the fourth of her 8 week clinical rotation there this summer.

We are the only physical therapy providers in the entire Toledo district. Though life in Belize is much different from what I know back in the states, with being part of Hillside I do not feel like a tourist in a new country. The people of Hillside care deeply about the community they serve and they work hard to provide health care to individuals throughout the southern third of the country. I have treated patients post-stroke while they relax in their hammocks, spent a morning teaching body mechanics, positioning and bed-mobility to 37 local caregivers, and I have visited several schools in Mayan villages where I’ve discussed disability awareness with the students. I’ve been challenged to stretch and reshape my previous understanding of the PT profession and how to serve the individuals that I have the opportunity to impact. Hillside operates from a Community Based Rehabilitation approach and through that approach I have been able to treat, teach and influence the health care system beyond traditional one-on-one patient care. I am working closely with physician’s assistants, pharmacists, nurses and other medical professionals, and have had the opportunity to collaborate with them on a daily basis. I have also been afforded the opportunity to take my time with each patient which has allowed me to focus on and justify my clinical reasoning. Due to the limited resources, I have been challenged to implement care plans catered to my patients’ lifestyle demands, and their ability to return for follow up visits. It is not uncommon for a patient to go 4 to 8 weeks between appointments so I’ve had to rely heavily on patient education and activity modification with my care plans. I am learning more every day and am evolving as a professional and as a person and I am only half way done!

Before retirement, UMPT’s Director of Clinical Education, Dave Levison, spent time with Rachael in Belize and also got to experience first-hand the great work that the team of providers and students are doing via HHC. Dave shares that, “UMPT is fortunate to have the opportunity to send students to Hillside Health Care to learn and serve the people of southern Belize. There is great need for PT and other services and the people of Belize are very appreciative. It is obvious that through their interactions with the people of Belize and immersion into their culture, that students and providers gain more than they ever could have imagined.”

As Rachael attests to, there is opportunity to practice in more traditional ways, but also to experience non-traditional roles and be part of an interprofessional team of providers. If you are interested in learning more about Hillside Health Care and possibly volunteering, go to https://www.hillsidebelize.org/

As alumni may remember, PTSA is the student arm of UMPT, and it has become a multifaceted unit with a common goal. Our students would like everyone to know that although PTSA is the main mechanism for student fund raising, it has also become so much more. The mission of PTSA revolves around furthering the understanding of the Physical Therapy profession by the general public and healthcare community, as well as providing opportunities for DPT students, newly licensed clinicians, and the community. PTSA would like to ask our alumni to assist them in this mission. Alumni involvement could range from on-site or telecommunication presentations about interesting topics, to formal or informal mentoring, to distribution of informative handouts, to collaboration during PT Awareness Month (October)…the options are endless. We are proud of our alumni and their invaluable experiences across the spectrum of Physical Therapy Practice and Service. Please consider exploring opportunities to assist the PTSA in their mission. Our faculty advisor: Jaclyn Carson, PT, DPT, would welcome your contact: jaclyn.carson@umontana.edu or 406-243-2517. PTSA thanks you in advance for contributing your time and expertise to the profession & community through the PTSA.
UMPT Hosts Life-changing Program for People with Spinal Cord Injuries

At the University of Montana, from June 9 – 15, 2019, seven recently injured individuals with para- or quadriplegia engaged in an immersive week of rehabilitation, recreational activity and mentorship on navigating life with a spinal cord injury.

Empower Spinal Cord Injury (SCI), Inc., is dedicated to empowering those with spinal cord injuries to live happier, more meaningful and independent lives. The residential program pairs newly injured spinal cord participants with mentors who have learned to thrive with similar injuries. All week long, the participants were surrounded by a specialized volunteer team of occupational and physical therapists, personal care aides and nurses as they engaged in activities like fishing, kayaking, yoga, wheelchair rugby, educational sessions and rehabilitation counselling. Participants also underwent training and mentorship in vocational coaching, disability rights, transportation and counseling on relationships and wellness. But perhaps most importantly, participants spent the week in a community of wheelchair users as they learned to navigate the challenges and nuances of living with a spinal cord injury.

This was the first time the East Coast-based program, Empower SCI, was held outside of its home campus of Stony Brook University in New York. Some of you may recognize that venue as the previous professional home of Anita Santasier, Chair of UMPT, as she has been involved with the Empower SCI program at Stony Brook University since it was created there eight years ago by co-founders Carrie Callahan, (PT) Jessica Goodine, (PT) and Elizabeth Lima (OT). Once at UMPT, Anita knew that UM was a perfect fit for Empower SCI, as the program is nothing short of transformative for everyone involved and mirrors UM’s commitment to inclusivity and access in the health sciences curriculum (https://www.umt.edu/umhm/About.php).

As many of you know, after acute care in the hospital following a spinal cord injury, people often don’t get the depth of training necessary to fully reorient their lives with a life-changing injury. Empower SCI is a truly unique experience where everyone involved learns something from each other. Continually, there is overwhelming feedback from participants that they have learned better ways for life to continue after a spinal cord injury. There’s resilience and an energy that participants create and take with them that continues beyond the program and fosters a lifelong connectedness. Former Empower SCI participants are now business owners, disability advocates, healthcare providers (nurse supervisor, medical student), for example, and many of them return to give back to Empower SCI as peer mentors in subsequent years. At UM, the week included seven participants with spinal cord injuries and 30+ staff who spent the week in Panzer Hall, a fully accessible residence hall on the UM campus. Our Empower SCI staff had a strong representation from UMPT. Joining Anita Santasier was Molly Blair (New Directions), UMPT faculty Sue Ostertag (UMPT 1993), Jaclyn Carson (UMPT 2010) and Troy Adam (UMPT 2016), UMPT Alumni Aleisha Gornick (UMPT 2016) and Molly Smith (UMPT 2019), and UMPT student Brittnee Grimstad (UMPT 2020). Working side by side with the UMPT contingency were Missoula-based nurses from Providence St. Patrick Hospital, UM students (AT, Psychology, Exercise Science, Nursing and Speech) and non-UM students (OT, COTA, PTA, pre-PT). Additionally, UM welcomed staff (PT, OT, Rehabilitation counselling, peer mentors and primary care attendants) who traveled from over 10 states to volunteer for this program.

UM students and others from out of the area spent the week with participants as residential aides, learning the intensity of care required of primary care attendants 24 hours a day, including overnight and emergency care. Having students experience the level of care required for those living with these kind of injuries fits the UM model of experiential learning, learning to view health care on a continuum, and engaging in team treating in a multidisciplinary care model. Participants’ experiences and therapies were driven by a set of self-directed goals which ranged from learning how to independently catheterize, roll over in bed without help, or transfer from floor to wheelchair—just to name a few. This team built entirely from volunteers, along with their Missoula partners Providence St Patrick Hospital, Summit Independent Living, Missoula Parks and Recreation, and UM Dining, Housing, Transportation and Events Services provided rehabilitation care for the participants as well as a variety of week-long recreational activities which combined to create a seamless, yet abundant experience.

Participants in the Empower program apply ~6 months in advance. There is a fee to attend this all-volunteer program, and scholarships and funding are greatly needed. Plans are already in the works for Empower SCI to continue in its newest home at UM in the summer of 2020. We would love to have you join us for this life changing experience. For more information visit www.empowersci.org.

UMPT faculty and staff took time off to volunteer at the Missoula Food Bank one morning in each of the past two winters. A big shout out goes to the people that work at and donate to the Missoula Food Bank to help our fellow Missoulians in need.
The physical therapy program at the University of Montana graduated its first class in 1981, but the program’s historical roots go back much further with the existence of a dynamic pre-physical therapy program. On the strength of the preparation provided by faculty legends, Vince Wilson and Nora Staael Evert, many UM pre-PT students were accepted into existing out of state programs to pursue PT degrees that led to productive careers.

We were fortunate to recently hear from four of those former students, all of whom went to the University of Montana in the late 60’s and were happy to share a bit of their history and current activities.

Bill Kelly was raised in Butte, and has fond memories of his youth there, especially being a drummer in a rock-n-roll band playing at many of the old historic buildings in Butte, like the Columbia Gardens. Bill, at 70 years young, still plays drums on a volunteer basis in the SNF he works at now. It’s not the big band sounds that the residents reminisce to, but the Stones, Doors, and Beatles. Bill notes that he was very well prepared by his mentors Nora and Vince, which helped him get into the PT program at Columbia University in New York. It was quite the change for a small town boy from big sky country.

Bill went to Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas after graduating from Columbia, and worked there for 2 years. He then escaped the sun of Texas to the clouds and rain in Seattle, where he was hired by the University of Washington Hospital. Over his career there Bill worked in in-patient rehab, mostly with patients with spinal cord injuries and also taught a few classes in the UW PT School. In his spare time Bill also worked in home health for the Western Washington Muscular Dystrophy Association and obtained a Master’s in Education from the University of Washington Hospital. Over his career there Bill worked inot the majority of his career. Mike also served as a Clinical Associate Professor for Eastern Washington University’s PT program, and welcomed many PT students into his clinic over the years.

Bill shares that he incorporates music and dance into his treatments. “I think Nora would approve, as she was a beautiful dancer, and I was trained at Columbia with a PT instructor who was a Rockette.” Bill offers these parting sentiments. “The PT profession has been good to me, and the University of Montana made it all happen. Go GRIZ!”

Craig Kopet got into the Mayo program after UM and he attributes that to Nora’s recommendation and the fact that she was a Mayo alumnus. After graduation, Craig spent 2 years in the army at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Denver. He then headed to Seattle where he practiced in home health for 2 years. After that, he and a partner bought a private practice in Burien, Washington, just south of Seattle. Twelve years later Craig partnered with Highline Community Hospital and has been the managing partner for rehab services ever since. Working full-time still, he oversees the in-patient department and 5 outpatient clinics. However he admits that sometimes he is usually receiving therapy more often than he is providing therapy.

John Michael “Mike” Schruth graduated from UM in 1968 in Pre-PT. From there he entered the Army after graduation and was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant from the ROTC Program. After 2 years in the Army, Mike attended PT School at Arkansas, graduating in 1972. He then moved to Spokane, WA and has been there ever since. Mike worked as a staff PT at 2 different Spokane hospitals before returning to school at Eastern Washington University where he earned a MS degree in Psychology in 1977. The next adventure was to open a private practice specializing in orthopedic outpatient PT services. Managing this practice and providing orthopedic PT services has made up the majority of his career. Mike also served as a Clinical Associate Professor for Eastern Washington University’s PT program, and welcomed many PT students into his clinic over the years.

Gene Morris spent one year at U of M and realized he was not ready for college and went into the military. In 1966 during the Vietnam war, he found himself aboard a ship that was assigned to rescue Vietnamese refugees who were under hostile fire in North Vietnam and took them south to safe haven.

After the military Gene returned to U of M to pursue his interest in agriculture and forestry, that is, until he meet Nora Staal Evert. Nora’s inspiration and celebration of life, and her dedication in helping others have a better life was overwhelming. While in Nora’s classes Craig met Bill Kelly, Mike Schruth and Craig Kopet, plus Butch Ortiz, Roseanne Fraiser and other pre-PT students.

After UM Gene also went on to the University of Arkansas’ PT program along with Mike Schruth, Butch Ortiz and Roseanne Frazier and graduated 18 months later. From there, he went on to work for 41 years in Seattle in several different hospitals with a specific interest in caring for patients rehabbing from burn injuries. Gene also practices at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and co-authored a paper on exercise for children with leukemia while they were in protective isolation, lamina airflow systems.

A year before retiring, Gene returned to Vietnam to do a bike tour and realized that this is where he needed to be. So he returned to Vietnam in 2013 where he lives now, working in an orphanage with newborns to 18 year olds. Five days a month Gene also provides wound care and prosthetic services at a leprosy colony in the costal highlands. He also generously offers a scholarship program for young people who are not getting to school because of hardships in the family. Gene loves the country, the culture, food and the humble way of life of the people.

Gene shares that at the recent reunion with Bill Kelly, Mike Schruth and Craig Kopet that they all realized that Nora’s inspiration resulted in the four of them loving being a PT at the end of their careers as much, if not more, than the day they graduated.
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