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Joint Connections

Fall 2026

Highlights from UNMC's Physical Therapy Program



Class of 2029 pictured on August 21 at the College of Allied Health Professions Professionalism ceremony at Baxter Arena in Omaha.

Class of 2029 enters the UNMC Physical Therapy Program

On Friday, August 21, family members and friends gathered at Baxter Arena to celebrate the entering Doctor of Physical Therapy Class of 2029 during the College of Allied Health Professions Professionalism Ceremony. As part of this longstanding tradition, students received their white coats, symbolizing the beginning of their professional journeys in physical therapy.

The Class of 2029 is the 57th entering class in the UNMC Physical Therapy Program and includes 66

students, with 50 based in Omaha and 16 based in Kearney. Sixty-four students are from Nebraska, while two represent other states.

Acting program director Sara Bills, PT, DPT said, "The Professionalism Ceremony is a meaningful tradition that welcomes students into the physical therapy profession. It was inspiring to see the Class of 2029 embrace the responsibility and privilege of serving others through compassionate care, lifelong learning, and professional excellence."

Message from the Acting Program Director

From the desk of Sara E. Bills, PT, DPT



Sara E. Bills, PT, DPT

In July 2026, Sara E. Bills, PT, DPT, was appointed acting program director of the UNMC Physical Therapy Program following the departure of Betsy J. Becker, PT, DPT, PhD. Dr. Becker was appointed dean of the School of Health Sciences at the University of South Dakota.

A 2004 graduate of the UNMC Physical Therapy Program, Dr. Bills joined the faculty as an

assistant professor in 2014 and was appointed associate director of the Physical Therapy Program in 2020. She was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2025.

Dr. Bills stated, "I am honored and happy to serve as Acting Program Director during this transition period while the search for a permanent program director moves forward. My priority is to provide continuity, support our outstanding faculty, staff, and students, and help position the program for future success.

One of the greatest privileges of this role is the opportunity to highlight the incredible work being done throughout our program. This newsletter showcases just a small sample of the accomplishments, innovation, and dedication demonstrated by our faculty, staff, and students every day. We have much to celebrate and many strengths on which to build. I am excited to support our team as we continue to advance our mission and use these successes as a springboard for an even brighter future."

Alumni Notes

Allyson Benzel, PT (2011) of Sidney, Neb., was inducted into the Chadron State College Athletic Hall of Fame in September 2025, becoming the first female golfer to earn this honor.

Chance Unger, PT (2015) of Lincoln, Neb., recently published a book called *Stride for Stride: A Physical Therapist's Playbook for Runners*. Akin to having a "PT in your pocket," the book addresses every component needed to apply concrete skills and knowledge that empower any runner at any skill level.

Andreas Remis, PT (2022) was awarded the 2026 APTA Outstanding Fellow Award.

Well done, Alumni!

The [UNMC Alumni & Friends Reception](#) will be held Monday, October 19, in Kearney, Nebraska from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Join UNMC Chancellor H. Dele Davies, MD, for the latest campus news, preceptor appreciation, and tours of the newly opened Health Science Education Complex II. The UNMC Alumni Engagement team will host heavy appetizers and beverages.

Alumni - Do you have news to share, contact information to update or advice for current or incoming students? [Submit your information to us.](#)



The University of Nebraska Medical Center Physical Therapy Class of 2026

Convocation 2026

The Class of 2026 was celebrated at the College of Allied Health Professions Convocation Ceremony on Friday, May 8, at Liberty First Credit Union Arena and at the UNMC Commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 9, at Baxter Arena.

The program's associate director and director of clinical education Nikki Sleddens, PT, PhD stated,

"The DPT Class of 2026 distinguished themselves through their positivity, enthusiasm, and unwavering support for one another. Their perseverance and hard work have prepared them well for the profession, and I am confident they will carry forward the tradition of excellence that defines UNMC."

Congratulations, Class of 2026!

Congratulations, Class of 2026!

Ximena Alvarez Magaña
Josie Arduser
Zachary Bennetts
Ashton Boyer
Koby Brandenburg
Hadley Chvatal
Elle Dahlgren
Andrew Davis
Nathan DeLine
Sophia Duggan
Maxwell Fedde
Owen Frideres
Ashtyn Fritz
Porfirio Garcia-Hernandez
Mackenzie George
Kyle Goodban
Jessica Grace
Camaryn Gydesen
Jae Hanks
Emma Hansen
Greta Heffron

Jordyn Heins
Tatum Hemmingsen
Jayson Henrickson
Hannah Hessler
John Himmelberg
Kamille Hocking
Bryan Jeary
Alexis Johnson
Nadia Khayat
Braden Kizer
Nicole Kleffman
Antonia Kolbo
Jackson Larsen
Tristan Larson
Trent Lubberstedt
Aspen Luebbe
Katherine McDonald
Lindsay McMeen
Logan Moravec
Haley Morris
Carrie Oaklund

Maisie Ohlrich
Brooke Peterson
Jenae Pope
Jacob Ray
Sydney Renning
Isaac Robertson
Kara Roos
Tanner Ruda
Antonio Sarmiento
Amelia Sayer
Alexis Shade
Sierra St. Clair
Alexandra Stageman
Peyton Stoppel
Kylee Swanson
Madison Swartwood
Anallely Vega
Spencer Wagner
Hope Whitney
Carlyn Willis



UNMC participants at Joint Effort 2026 (l-r): Aiden Rupprecht, Hank Engelbert, Haley Fleischman, Katie Kilzer, Alexa Richter, Gabrielle Oborny, Jessica Maladecki, and Cole Hoppe

Joint Effort 2026

The 31st annual Joint Effort volleyball tournament was held on Friday, March 27, at Premier Nebraska Volleyball in the Union Bank and Trust Sports Complex in Elkhorn, Nebraska.

Each year, physical therapy students from Creighton University and UNMC work together to organize and host the all-night event, raising funds for the American Arthritis Foundation.

This year, 67 teams comprising 438 participants took part in the tournament, helping raise \$10,160 through sponsorships, raffles, and player fees to support the Arthritis Foundation.



The Joint Effort planning committee pictured at the event on March 27. Front row (l-r): UNMC PT1 Sydney Cobler; UNMC PT1 Jessica Maladecki; Creighton PT2 Ellen White; Back row (l-r): UNMC PT2 Katelyn Malick; UNMC PT2 Peyton Hatcher and Creighton PT2 Anna Deets

UNMC Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency Program welcomes new cohort



Tristan Larson, PT, DPT

The UNMC Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency Program is pleased to welcome two new residents, Tanner Ruda, PT, DPT, and Tristan Larson, PT, DPT, both members of UNMC's DPT Class of 2026.

Accredited by the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education, the UNMC Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency is a one-year post-professional training program designed to accelerate the development of advanced orthopedic clinicians through clinical practice, individualized mentoring, didactic education, interprofessional collaboration, teaching opportunities, and scholarly activity.

Based on the UNMC and Nebraska Medicine campuses in Omaha, the residency provides residents with weekly one-on-one mentorship from expert clinicians, observation opportunities



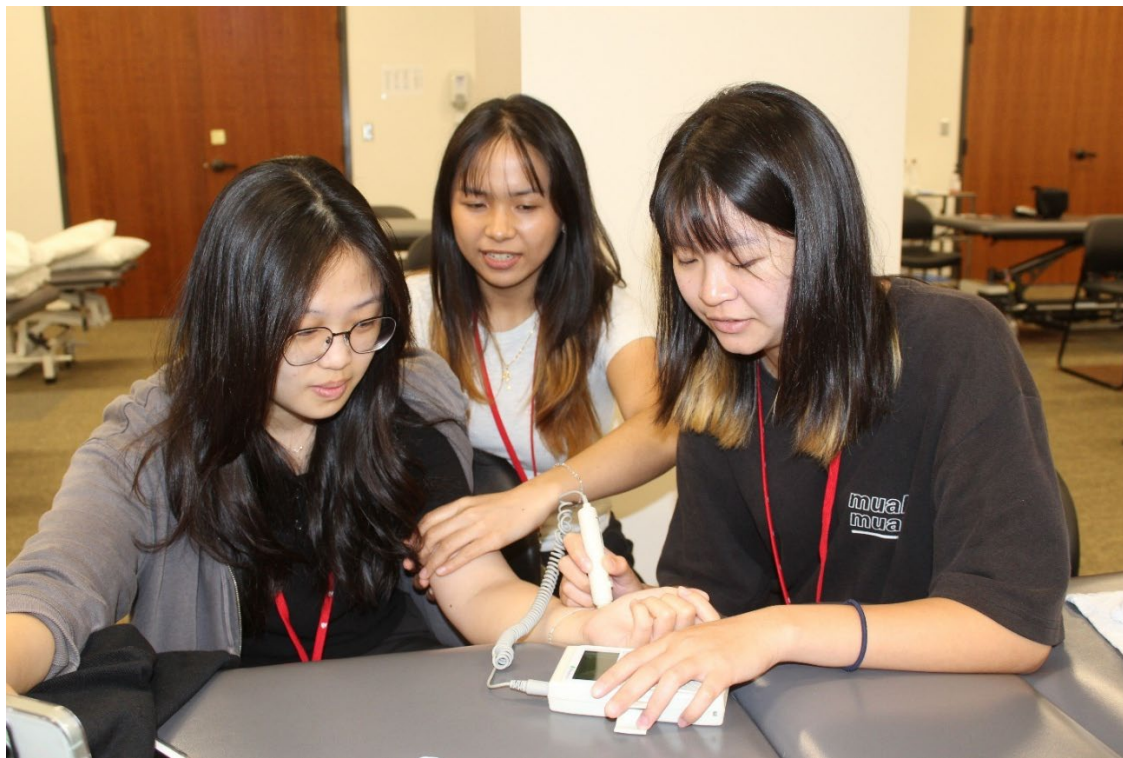
Tanner Ruda, PT, DPT

with orthopedic surgeons, and immersive experiences that foster advanced clinical reasoning and evidence-based, patient-centered care.

"We are thrilled to welcome Tristan and Tanner to the residency program and look forward to supporting their professional development over the coming year," said Megan Frazee, PT, DPT, Associate Professor and Director of the Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency Program. "The residency experience provides an exceptional opportunity for clinicians to refine their skills, deepen their clinical reasoning, and grow into leaders within the profession."

Please join us in welcoming Tanner and Tristan to the UNMC Physical Therapy community.

For more information on the Orthopedic Residency visit: go.unmc.edu/residency.



Three 2026 SEEDS program participants pictured l-r: Alison Chao; Ginberry Tan; and Christina Tseng

Largest cohort participates in physical therapy summer program

Eighteen students from three Asian universities participated in the UNMC Summer Experiential Education (SEED) program in physical therapy this past summer.

Created for international physical therapy and rehabilitation students, the Summer Experiential Education program is a three-week, in-person experience at UNMC. Administered by the Office of Global Engagement and delivered by the UNMC Physical Therapy Program, the initiative offers a comprehensive approach to learning. Participants gain hands-on experience through research lab practice, deepen their clinical knowledge through faculty lectures, interact with UNMC DPT students and observe real-world care during clinical shadowing.

Through these experiences, students developed a deeper appreciation for professionalism, empathy, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

One student shadowed an in-patient physical therapist at Nebraska Medicine, gaining firsthand insight into care across multiple specialty units. "Because many patients required assistance from nurses or occupation(al) therapists, scheduling treatment often depended on coordinating with the entire healthcare team," said Shu-Ching Chao, SEED participant. "This experience helped me understand how important interdisciplinary collaboration is in acute care."

For Qiaoxue Wang, the experience reinforced the importance of seeing rehabilitation through the patient's perspective. "I realized that rehabilitation is not only about restoring physical function but also about understanding patients' perspectives and helping them regain confidence and independence. I believe that only by understanding patients' difficulties from their perspectives can we develop more appropriate and individualized rehabilitation interventions. This experience reminded me that empathy is just as important as clinical knowledge."

"The SEED program provides well-rounded and experiential learning opportunities for our international physical therapy students," said Joseph Siu, PhD, director of the SEED program. "All students graduated from this program are part of UNMC family and are welcome back for more advanced learning options such as graduate or DPT programs."

"This is the largest in-person cohort in the nine-year history of the program," said Jane Meza, PhD, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs. "We are thrilled to share our physical therapy expertise so these students can apply what they've learned when they return to their home universities."

Dr. Wells receives state-wide award



Tessa Wells, PT, DPT

On April 10, 2026, assistant professor and assistant director of clinical education Tessa Wells, PT, DPT received the Achievement in Education Award from the American Physical Therapy Association – Nebraska Chapter.

A 2006 graduate of the UNMC Physical Therapy program, Wells joined the UNMC faculty in 2015. In her role as assistant director of clinical education, she helps prepare future physical therapists through clinical education leadership, development and mentorship of students and clinical instructors. Her scholarly contributions

focus on clinical education, interprofessional education and student wellness, including efforts to integrate Lifestyle Medicine throughout the UNMC Doctor of Physical Therapy curriculum.

Wells has presented nationally on educational innovations and student wellness and serves as an APTA Credentialed Clinical Instructor Trainer, supporting excellence in physical therapist education both within UNMC and beyond.

Of this honor, Dr. Wells states, “I am truly honored to even be considered for the APTA Nebraska Achievement in Education award, and so appreciative of and humbled by the selection. Since beginning my physical therapy education at UNMC, APTA Nebraska has been an important part of my professional growth, and this recognition is especially meaningful given the incredible educators and mentors who have received it before me. Several of those individuals helped shape my own journey, making this especially meaningful.

“Education is a calling that extends beyond the classroom. Every physical therapy professional educates every day, whether that is in the clinic, the classroom, with colleagues or the community. The opportunity to influence others in this way is powerful, rewarding and one I am extremely grateful for. I look forward to continuing to support, mentor and learn alongside others for decades to come.”

Dr. Christensen receives award



Stacie Christensen, PT, DPT being presented the College of Allied Health Professions Excellence in Teaching award by Mariah Jackson, PhD on May 8, 2026.

Stacie Christensen, PT, DPT, is the 2026 College of Allied Health Professions Excellence in Teaching Award recipient. Recipients of this award demonstrate outstanding skills in directing learning, advising students and facilitating meaningful interactions between faculty and students.

An assistant professor in the UNMC Physical Therapy program, Dr. Christensen earned her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from UNMC in 2008 and joined the faculty in 2019. She serves as coordinator for several courses within the curriculum, including neuromuscular physical therapy, neuroscience, and orthotics and prosthetics, and contributes extensively to professional formation and clinical skills development across the program.

Dr. Christensen is recognized for her innovative and student-centered approach to teaching. She has developed multiple educational modules and learning resources, presented nationally on educational best practices and e-learning design, and helped advance the use of emerging instructional technologies within the curriculum. Her commitment to teaching excellence, mentorship and student success has had a lasting impact on physical therapist education at UNMC.

Continued on page 9.

Frazee and Wellsandt complete UNMC's iLEAD program



Megan Frazee, PT, DPT, OCS, MTC, FAAOMPT

In 2026, Megan Frazee, PT, DPT and Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD completed UNMC's Interprofessional Leadership for Excellence and Academic Development (iLEAD) program.

Offered through the UNMC Office of Faculty Development, iLEAD is a year-long leadership certificate program designed to help faculty and staff develop the skills, perspectives and relationships needed to lead effectively across the organization.

Dr. Frazee joined the UNMC Physical Therapy faculty in 2016 and has served as director of the UNMC Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency since 2020. In 2025, she was promoted to associate professor. Reflecting on the experience, she said, "One of the biggest benefits of iLEAD is that it gives you dedicated time to step back and reflect. We may all have really good intentions to grow as leaders, but it's hard to prioritize that in a busy schedule. The iLEAD program creates that space and builds

over time, so you're not just having one-off experiences—you're really going deeper and making connections across different topics. That sustained reflection is what made it so valuable."

Dr. Wellsandt joined the faculty in 2016 and serves as director of the Physical Therapy Program's Clinical Movement Analysis space within the Ryan Wellness Innovation Lab. Promoted to professor in 2026, she noted that iLEAD provided both a practical leadership framework and meaningful professional connections across UNMC. "One of iLEAD's greatest strengths is the foundational leadership framework it provides that I can return to as new challenges and opportunities arise. Equally impactful has been the expansion of my UNMC network into a community of trusted colleagues and friends. It is difficult for me to quantify the full impact of iLEAD. A deep sense of gratitude for the mentorship, relationships, and personal growth stands out most clearly."



Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD, OCS

Dr. Christensen receives award continued

Dr. Christensen writes, "I'm honored to receive the CAHP Excellence in Teaching Award. Working with physical therapy students is one of the best parts of my job, and I'm fortunate to be

part of a program with outstanding students and colleagues. This award reflects the collaborative environment we've built together and our shared commitment to preparing future clinicians."

Program welcomes new clinical education coordinator



Manasi Kate, MA

Manasi Kate, MA, recently joined our physical therapy program as clinical education coordinator. Ms. Kate earned her BS and MA degrees in Communication from the University

of Nebraska at Omaha in 2023 and 2025, respectively. Originally from Pune, India, Ms. Kate states that she has a “passion for education, student success, and building meaningful relationships across academic and healthcare settings. Throughout my career, I have enjoyed supporting learners, coordinating educational programs, and helping create positive learning experiences.

“I am excited to join UNMC and the College of Allied Health Professions as the Clinical Education Coordinator. I look forward to collaborating with faculty, students, and clinical partners to support clinical education initiatives and contribute to the college’s mission of improving health through education, research, and service.

“When I’m not working, I enjoy spending time with family and friends, exploring new places, reading, and learning about different cultures. Having moved from India to Nebraska, I value opportunities to connect with diverse communities and bring different perspectives to my work.”

Welcome Manasi!

Celebrating Our Team: Connecting, Learning and Growing Together

The Physical Therapy Education team came together on August 5 for a wonderful staff development day filled with connection, laughter, learning, and a little adventure! From the morning “Show and Tell” and leadership activities to the “Walk in My Workday” experience, there were opportunities to learn more about each other, appreciate the unique contributions each person brings to the team, and strengthen their sense of belonging.

They also stepped away from their offices to serve and connect with the community during a visit to the Ronald McDonald House, and reflected on the University of Nebraska System Assessment. The day concluded with a tour of the beautiful Chihuly Sanctuary at the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center.

Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences operations manager Marcela Mower notes, “It was a day to celebrate our people, our purpose, and the power of working together. We are grateful for the time to connect, share, support one another, and continue growing as a team!”



Pictured at the Ronald McDonald House (l-r): Nick McCormick; Manasi Kate, MA; Mary Wood, AS; and Marcela Mower, BS

Scholarly Activity

Physical Therapy Program faculty are actively disseminating research and scholarly work on a variety of topics. Below is a list of publications, presentations and grants since the last Joint Connections newsletter in Spring 2026. Names in bold are faculty members in the Physical Therapy Program.

Publications

Allison A, Harrington J, Weaver B, Manzer M, Sajja BR, Tao MA, **Wellsandt E**. Association of Early Knee Extension Range of Motion Deficits With Cartilage T2 Relaxation Following Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction. *Am J Sports Med*. 2026 Jul 12;3635465261462587. doi: 10.1177/03635465261462587. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 42438201.

Becker BJ, Wells T, Volkman K, Sleddens N, Sayles H, **Gossman K, Johnson G, Cochran T**. Integrating lifestyle medicine into a doctor of physical therapy curriculum: a four-year longitudinal study of wellness, psychological capital, and social networks. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*. Online first. 2026

Chinweze RO, Weldon NC, Tao MA, Manzer MN, **Wellsandt EA**. Reliability of Semi-Automated Volumetric Quantification of Knee Effusion Using MRI After ACL Injury. *Iowa Orthop J*. 2026;46(1):213-221.

Deligiannis T, Kelty-Stephen DG, Kiyono K, **Siu KC**, Mangalam M. Aging Amplifies Context-Dependent Variability in Postural Long-Latency reflexes without Enhancing Reflex Selectivity. *npj Exercise Medicine and Health* 2026, 1: 5 (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44437-026-00006-1>

Hao J, Yao Y, **Siu KC**. Extended Reality in Rehabilitation Medicine: A Systematic Review. *Health Science Report* 2026; 9(5): e72477. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.72477>.

Hessler, H, Kleffman N, Larson T, Oaklund C, **Venema D, Rosenthal M**. "Which Test Passes the Test? Using Validity Indices in Clinical Decision Making." E-learning module published online April 14, 2026.

Honeycutt, K., **Becker, B.**, Kennel, V. et al. To Pursue or Not to Pursue an Academic Doctoral Degree: Perceived Motivators and Barriers of Women Working in Allied Health Educational Programs. *Med.Sci.Educ.* (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40670-026-02709-4>.

Hsiao SF, Liu TL, Lin YC, Yen CW, **Siu KC**, Lin JH. Immediate Effects of Binaural Beat Stimulation on Prefrontal Cortical Activation after Cycling Exercise in Healthy Adults: An Electroencephalography-based Study. *Experimental Brain Research* 2026, 244: 190. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00221-026-07387-7>.

Jensen LE, **Volkman KG**, Kennel V, McKelvey M, Klein A, **Cochran TM**. Empowering stroke survivors: interprofessional student tele-teams promote community participation goals. *J Interprof Care*. 2026 May 4. doi:10.1080/13561820.2026.266290

Qin Z, Rajaram SS, Padilla C, **Siu KC**. The Role of Psychosocial Support in Balance Improvements Following a Community-Based Tai Chi Program Among Latino Older Adults. *Behavioral Sciences*. 2026; 16(4):573. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs16040573>

Romero-Padron MA, Kallman T, Amirtharaj M, Weldon N, Manzer M, Sajja BR, Tao MA, **Wellsandt E**. Persistent Magnetic Resonance Imaging-Derived Static Anterior Tibial Translation After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction Is Associated With Elevated Cartilage T2 Relaxation Times But Not Serum Biomarkers. *Knee Surg Sports Traumatol Arthrosc*. 2026 May 20. doi: 10.1002/ksa.70453. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 42159224.

Romero-Padron MA, Weaver B, Sacco G, Werner DM, Post A, Tao MA, **Wellsandt E**. Predictors of Physical Activity Early After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction. *J Athl Train*. 2026 Jun 3;61(6):374-383. doi: 10.4085/1062-6050-0467.25. PMID: 42245136; PMCID: PMC13233076.

Thelagathoti RK, **Siu, KC**, Ali HH, Fernando, RM. Integrated Analysis of Circadian and Sleep Signature in Depression and Schizophrenia Using Multi-Day Actigraphy. *Bioengineering* 2026, 13(4): 383. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bioengineering13040383>

Weaver B, Gavia A, **Wellsandt M**, Werner DM, Bauer S, Romero-Padron MA, Tao M, **Wellsandt E**. Factors Impacting Time To Reach Return-To-Sport Benchmarks Following ACL Reconstruction. *Knee*. 2026 May 22;62:104494. doi: 10.1016/j.knee.2026.104494. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 42173076.

Presentations

AboElnour TM, Behboodi A, **Siu KC**, Malcolm P, Zuniga J. OpenCap vs. Thei3D: A Comparison for Upper Limb Functional Assessment. The 7th Annual Great Plains Biomechanics Conference, Omaha, Nebraska, May 2026.

Presentations continued

Allison A, Harrington J, Weaver B, Manzer M, Sajja B, Tao MA, **Wellsandt E**. Early Extension Matters: Knee Extension Deficits 2 Months After ACLR are Associated with Elevated Cartilage T2 Relaxation Times at 6 Months - Poster Presentation. American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine Annual Meeting; Seattle, WA. 2026 Jul.

Allison AW, Wichman C, Tao M, **Wellsandt E**. Kinesiophobia Associated with Less Daily Physical Activity After Recovery From Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction - Poster Presentation, Osteoarthritis Research Society International Annual World Congress, West Palm Beach, FL, 2026 Apr. Published in: Osteoarthritis Cartilage. 2026;34(Suppl):S201-202. doi: 10.1016/j.joca.2026.01.652.

Chinweze R, Johnson C, Tao M, **Wellsandt E**. Measuring Grit in ACL Recovery: A New Lens for Understanding Psychological and Physical Readiness for Return-to-Sport - Poster Presentation. American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine Annual Meeting; Seattle, WA. 2026 Jul.

Christensen SML, Dexter B, Hollins M, Barrett E. Implementing Holographic Instruction in Multi-Campus DPT Education. Interprofessional Academy of Educators Spotlight on Scholarship 2026. Omaha, NE. March 31, 2026.

Dexter B, Lindemeier A. Building Community-Engaged Capacity to Advance Telerehabilitation Services for Patients with Chronic Disease and/or Disability. Poster, APTA Nebraska State Conference, Omaha, NE. April 2026.

Fraze M, Sattlefield O, Lyden E, **Becker BJ**. Voices of Learning: Exploring the Impact of Human and Artificial Intelligence Voice in Health Professions Education – Poster Presentation Interprofessional Academy of Educators Spotlight on Scholarship 2026. Omaha, NE, March 31, 2026.

Hoffman R, **Dexter B**, Goetsch T. Empowering Health Through Lifestyle Medicine: Practical Tools for Physical Therapy. APTA Nebraska State Conference, Omaha, NE. April 2026. 2 hours.

Leung A, Grooms D, **Wellsandt E**, Malloy P, Zarzycki R, Effect of Menstrual Cycle Phase on Cortical Drive After ACLR: A Case Series - Oral Presentation, Annual Isokinetic Conference - Football Medicine: Return to Performance, Athens, Greece, 2026 Apr.

Leung A, **Wellsandt E**, Malloy P, Grooms D, Zarzycki R, Exploring the Effect of Ovarian Hormones on Cortical Drive In Female Athletes - Oral Presentation, Annual Isokinetic Conference - Football Medicine: Return to Performance, Athens, Greece, 2026 Apr.

Li X, Mei Li M, Lartey R, Zbyn S, Tosun S, Yeh PY, Jian J, Zhang Z, Owens AV, Nessaiver M, Fung M, Giri S, Jacobs CA, Jones MH, Myer G, Otero M, Rodeo S, Koff M, Schmitt L, Hart JM, Pietrosimone B, Stone A, Samaan M, **Wellsandt E**, Golightly YM, Brown J, Anderson DD, Thedens D, Smith SE, Spindler K, Hanano A, Felson D, Kim J, McLeod MM, Winalski C. Implementation and Quality Assurance Monitoring of Imaging for the Multicenter PIKASO Trial to Prevent of Post-traumatic Osteoarthritis after ACL Reconstruction: Protocols and Experience from the First 100+ Patients - Poster Presentation, Osteoarthritis Research Society International Annual World Congress, West Palm Beach, FL, 2026 Apr. Published in: Osteoarthritis Cartilage. 2026;34(Suppl):S279. 10.1016/j.joca.2026.01.384.

Losina E, James K, Katz JN, Aronson S, Smith KC, Segal N, **Wellsandt E**, Safran-Norton C, Pavlesen S, Streicher A, Lange J, Bedair H, Selzer F, Kim J, Collins J. Frequent and Injurious Falls in the First Year Post Total Knee Arthroplasty: Cumulative Incidence and Balance-Related Risk Factors - Poster Presentation, Osteoarthritis Research Society International Annual World Congress, West Palm Beach, FL, 2026 Apr. Published in: Osteoarthritis Cartilage. 2026;34(Suppl):S220-221. doi:10.1016/j.joca.2026.01.638.

Milcsik M, Omran K, Tao M, **Wellsandt E**, Dibbern KN. ACL Reconstruction is Associated with Significant Differences in Contralateral Tibial Morphology Compared to Controls - Poster Presentation. 16th Annual Rocky Mountain American Society of Biomechanics Meeting; Estes Park, CO. 2026 Apr.

Nicole J, host; Ma CB, guest expert; **Wellsandt E**, guest expert. Osteoarthritis Explained. Live Yes! With Arthritis Podcast – Arthritis Foundation. Published May 12, 2026.

Odiseri RR, Johnston A, Hausman H, Brenden G, Douglas J, Wilson L, Runge H, **Siu KC**. From Expert to Avatar: Validating a Motion Capture Pipeline for Translating Expert Intubation Performance into Virtual Reality Training. Midwest Student Biomedical Research Forum, Omaha, NE, March 2026.

Paradis J, Chinweze R, Romero-Padron M, Gutta J, Wimmer G, Tao MA, **Wellsandt E**. Effusion Persists at 6 Months After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction Without Impacting Gait Biomechanics or Quad Strength - Oral Presentation. Great Plains Biomechanics Annual Conference; Omaha, NE. 2026 May.

Siu KC, Hao J, Yao Z. Artificial Intelligence in Physical Therapy Education: Evaluating Clinical Reasoning Performance in Musculoskeletal Care. AI In Health Conference, Omaha, Nebraska, April 2026.

Presentations continued

Vatter L, Minchow, Chinweze R, Romero-Padron M, Manzer M, Sajja B, Tao M, **Wellsandt E**. Knee Effusion Volume and Its Relationship to Serum Biomarkers and Cartilage T2 Relaxation Time Before and 6 Months After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction - Invited Flash Talk and Poster Presentation, Osteoarthritis Research Society International Annual World Congress, West Palm Beach, FL, 2026 Apr. Published in: Osteoarthritis Cartilage. 2026;34(Suppl):S96. doi:10.1016/j.joca.2026.01.106.

Wellsandt E, Advances and Updates in ACL Recovery - Oral Presentation, Husker Athletics Performance and Wellness Monthly Seminar Series, Lincoln, NE, 2026 Apr 13

Woodruff Jameson A, Malick, K. Physical Therapy Assessment of Work Capacity Gaps in Transition-Aged. Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Poster Presentation, APTA Nebraska State Conference, Omaha, NE. April 2026.

Woodruff Jameson, A., Malick, K., Roberts, D., Smith, M., Haitz, R., Ray, R.; "Vocational Fitness for Transition-Aged Adults with I/DD: Is there a mismatch between current work capacity and desired careers?" Poster Presentation. 6th T21RS International Conference; Denver, CO. 2026 June.

Grants

Dawn Venema, PT, PhD

Grant Title: CAPTURE Falls: Collaboration and Proactive Teamwork Used to Reduce Falls
Funding Agency: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program
Start and End Dates: September 2026-August 2027
Role: Co-Principal Investigator

Grant Title: CAPTURE Falls: Collaboration and Proactive Teamwork Used to Reduce Falls
Funding Agency: Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program
Start and End Dates: September 2026-August 2027
Role: Co-Principal Investigator

Liz Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD

Grant Title: Impower Health Pilot 2026
Funding Agency: Impower, Inc.
Start and End Dates: April 2026-July 2027
Role: Principal Investigator

Grant Title: Activity, Cartilage, and Adiposity Early After ACL Reconstruction: The ACTIVE ACL Pilot Study.
Funding Agency: Rheumatology Research Foundation, R Bridge Career Development Bridge Funding Award
Start and End Dates: July 2026-June 2028
Role: Principal Investigator

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