

FALL 2025



DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT): The mission of the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at CSULB, is to advance physical therapy practice through high quality teaching and research engagement to prepare patient-centered, highly competent clinicians who integrate the best scientific evidence into patient care to enhance the health, function, and quality of life of a diverse community.

OFFICIAL
NEWSLETTER OF FALL
2025



FALL 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

:

Department Chair Message ... Pg. 3

Save The Date ... Pg. 6

Student Spotlight ... Pg. 7

Alumni Spotlights... Pg. 9

Dr. William O'Grady ... Pg. 9

Dr. Nkese Jack ... Pg. 10

Dr. Raquelle Geneviève Hafen... Pg. 11

Dr. Taylor Silkens ... Pg. 12

Dr. Natalie Aston ... Pg. 13

Dr. Samuel Ward ... Pg. 14

Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Residency Spotlight .. Pg. 15

Clinic Spotlight PT @ the Beach ... Pg. 16

Publications ... Pg. 17

Other Faculty Accomplishments and Recognitions this Year .. Pg. 18

Skypark Physical Therapy ... Pg. 19

Thank you ... Pg. 20



DEPARTMENT CHAIR MESSAGE:

***Greetings Friends, Members,
and Supporters of the
department! Welcome to the
2025 Annual Physical Therapy
Newsletter!***

Dear CSULB Physical Therapy Community,

We are well underway with fall semester here at CSULB Physical Therapy and are looking forward to celebrating Physical Therapy Month throughout October. It has been an exciting year, from welcoming 38 new students to our D1 cohort to graduating the class of 2025, and we are thrilled to share some of the highlights with you in this newsletter.

This past spring, we hosted our first-ever DPT White Coat Ceremony, marking a meaningful transition for the Class of 2026 as they moved from the classroom to their full-time clinical rotations. It was a great moment to reflect on their journey and celebrate their accomplishments. We also took this opportunity to recognize several outstanding members of our community:

- Outstanding Alumni Award: William O'Grady, PT, DPT, MA, OCS, MTC, COMT, FAPTA, FAAOMPT, DAAPM (CSULB PT 1972)
- Outstanding Clinical Partner: Cheryl Murakami, PT, DPT (SCCE at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center)
- Educator of the Year: Michael Miller, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT (CSULB PT 1990), selected by the Class of 2026

Please see the alumni spotlight below for some highlights from Dr. O'Grady's outstanding career and contributions. We also had the opportunity to recognize Dr. Murakami who serves as the Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE) for Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. Dr. Murakami and Long Beach Memorial Medical Center have been flexible and accommodating in offering clinical rotations to our students and the learning environment at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center is exceptional. We are grateful for their partnership and support!



Dr. Stefan Gustafson (CSULB PT Director of Clinical Education), Dr. Cheryl Murakami (SCCE Long Beach Memorial), and Dr. Jenny Bawell (CSULB PT Department Chair) presenting Dr. Murakami with the Outstanding Clinical Partner Award

FALL 2025



We also recognized our very own Dr. Michael Miller who was selected by the Class of 2026 as the CSULB PT Educator of the Year. The student leadership presented Dr. Miller with the award and spoke from the heart about his impactful and passionate teaching. They shared that his care for them as individuals and his passion for physical therapy education inspired them. It was a proud and emotional moment. Dr. Miller was also honored by the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) by being selected to serve as the Grand Marshall of the CHHS commencement ceremony in May, making us proud again.



CSULB DPT Class of 2026 Co-President Janelle Siqueiros presents Dr. Michael Miller the Educator of the Year Award (left); Dr. Michael Miller serving as College of Health and Human Services Grand Marshall (right)

FALL 2025



Speaking of things that make us proud, in May we celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2025. We look forward to seeing the incredible impact they will make in the profession!



Caption: CSULB DPT Class of 2025 at Graduation

We are incredibly grateful for our amazing students, faculty, staff, and alumni. We look forward to seeing many alumni at our CSM Alumni Event next February in Anaheim. Please spread the word and do not miss it! If you have news or updates to share in future newsletters, please reach out. We would love to hear from you!

Go Beach!

Jenny Bagwell, PT, PhD, DPT

Associate Professor and Department Chair; Department of Physical
Therapy

California State University Long Beach

FALL 2025

SAVE THE DATE



APTA CSM

WILL BE IN

ANAHEIM

THIS FEBRUARY

**WE WILL BE HOSTING
AN ALUMNI EVENT**

**FRIDAY,
FEBRUARY 13
6:00-9:00 PM**

**MORE
DETAILS
TO COME!**



**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY LONG BEACH
PHYSICAL THERAPY STUDENTS • FACULTY • ALUMNI**

FALL 2025



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

DPT Olympics



Every year our third-year students plan the DPT Olympics. This event occurs in the fall semester when all three cohorts are on campus and involves some friendly cohort competition to determine which class gets the honor of having their name on the DPT Olympics winners plaque. This year our third-years took home the honor!



FALL 2025



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

DPT Olympics Cont.



Alumni Spotlights

**William O'Grady, PT, DPT, MA, OCS, MTC, COMT,
FAPTA, FAAOMPT, DAAPM (CSULB PT 1972)**

Dr. William O'Grady, a distinguished graduate of the CSULB Physical Therapy Department, has made remarkable contributions to the field of physical therapy over the past five decades. His career began with service in the United States Army, where he held multiple roles that advanced the quality of physical therapy care for soldiers and veterans. Dr. O'Grady played a pivotal role in shaping orthopaedic physical therapy in the United States through his leadership as Chair of the Orthopaedic Specialty Council of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). In this position, he helped define national standards for orthopaedic practice and contributed to the development of the Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) certification.

His dedication to the profession has been recognized with numerous honors, including Fellowship status in both the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA's highest honor) and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists, multiple state and national service awards across professional organizations, and ongoing contributions to clinical practice, academic teaching, and post-professional education. Dr. O'Grady's legacy continues to inspire the CSULB community and the broader physical therapy profession.



Dr. Michael Miller presents the Outstanding Alumni Award to one of his mentors, Dr. William O'Grady

Nkese Jack. PT, DPT (CSULB DPT 2024)



Dr. Nkese Jack

Congratulations to Dr. Jack for being awarded the APTA Minority Scholarship! This prestigious award recognizes physical therapy students for their professional character and academic excellence. Dr. Jack is committed to ensuring the future of our healthcare system is bright, especially for underrepresented populations. Last year, Dr. Jack was featured in a spotlight story by the College of Health and Human Services, where she shared her reasons for entering the field of physical therapy and what she hopes to accomplish in the future.

"I am eager to contribute to health equity by removing barriers and increasing the quality of care for underprivileged people of color."

While a student at CSULB, Dr. Jack served as the President of the Physical Therapy Student Association (PTSA) at CSULB, volunteered for the Re-active Physical Therapy Student Neuro Coach Program and was a Black Student Union representative at CSULB. She also worked as a self-employed academic tutor and childcare provider, a membership services representative for the CSULB Student Recreation and Wellness Center, and at The Huntington Club performance center.

We are so proud of Dr. Nkese Jack and celebrate her extraordinary accomplishments!

FALL 2025



Raquelle Geneviève Hafen, PT, DPT (CSULB DPT 2024)



Dr. Raquelle Hafen

Dr. Hafen was awarded the 2025 PT Capitol Hill Day Scholarship and had the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. with Academy leaders to advocate for policies that impact the physical therapy profession. Dr. Hafen's passion for maternal health, access to pelvic health services, and legislative engagement began as a student and continues. As a strong voice for the profession, she actively contributes to the Academy of Pelvic Health as Director of the Early Professional Special Interest Group and as a member of the Digital Media Committee for the Journal of Women's and Pelvic Health Physical Therapy. We are proud of Raquelle and all that she has done to enhance women's and pelvic health physical therapy!

Taylor Silkens, PT, DPT, OCS, CSCS (CSULB DPT 2021)



Dr. Taylor Silkens

Dr. Silkens was honored at APTA CSM in Houston in February for receiving his Board Certification as an Orthopedic Clinical Specialist. He is also a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, serves as Vice Chair of the SoCal Chapter of NABPT, and is a physical therapist at @coreperformance.pt

During his time at CSULB DPT, Dr. Silkens demonstrated his commitment to service and leadership. He was honored with the Nancy Mahan Endowed Student Award for his scholastic and extra-curricular achievements. Furthermore, he co-founded the CSULB Physical Therapy Multicultural Alliance and created the impactful “Why I Choose LB PT” video, inspiring greater diversity within the field.

Dr. Silken’s influence extends beyond the clinic. Since graduating, he has taken on the role of Vice Chair for the National Association of Black Physical Therapists - SoCal Chapter, serves on the CSULB Department Advisory Committee and volunteers his time as a Physical Therapist for The Movement Network. He is also an Assistant Instructor for the Emergency Medical Responder Certification Course for the Sports Clinician and provides field Management and sideline coverage for various sporting events. We are so impressed by everything that Dr. Silkens has accomplished and are proud to count him among our alumni!





Natalie Aston, PT, DPT (CSULB DPT 2025)



Dr. Natalie Aston

Dr. Natalie Aston was awarded several honors in her final semester as a DPT student. Dr. Aston was the recipient of the Intercollegiate Academic Clinical Coordinators Council (IACCC) physical therapy student scholarship. The honor recognized her dedication, hard work, and passion for our profession. Dr. Aston was also recognized with the Robert J. Boughton award for Excellence in Neurologic Physical Therapy and the University Dean's List award. She truly deserved these honors for her commitment to excellence in her studies and her growth as a clinician. Congratulations, Dr. Aston!



Sam Ward, PT, PhD (CSULB DPT 1998)



Dr. Samuel Ward as a CSULB PT student

Congratulations to Dr. Samuel Ward, PT, PhD, professor in the Departments of Orthopaedic Surgery and Radiology at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine and Bioengineering at the Jacobs School of Engineering, for his appointment of Vice Dean for Research in the School of Medicine.



Dr. Samuel Ward now

Dr. Ward has served as a Department of Physical Therapy guest lecturer and advisory board member, and still sponsors a scholarship which funds an annual graduating student award for excellence in biomechanics. This year's recipient went to CSULB physical therapy student Kendall Hart, who is on her way to achieving her own great success in the field.

Congratulations and Go Beach!



Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Residency Spotlight



Dr. Michael Miller

The CSULB Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Residency has been advancing orthopaedic clinical practice since its founding in 2018. In 2023, the program proudly earned a 10-year reaccreditation. The Residency was developed and directed by Dr. Michael Miller.

Recently Christopher Ivey, PT, MPT, OCS, SCS, ATC, EdD, began as Residency Director. Orthopaedic physical therapy residents have the opportunity to obtain clinical practice hours and expert mentoring, complete a didactic program focused on fostering orthopaedic expertise and clinical reasoning, participate as a teaching assistant in the CSULB DPT program, and complete research hours in an area related to orthopaedic physical therapy. The program is proud that all program graduates who have taken the Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) examination have passed. We are proud of this program contributing to excellence in orthopaedic clinical practice!



Dr. Christopher Ivey



Clinic Spotlight: PT @ the Beach

The PT@TheBeach Orthopedic Clinic offers physical therapy services to any member of the CSULB campus community whether a student, staff member or faculty. PT@TheBeach is also available to anyone seeking treatment from the community outside of CSULB. Housed under the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS), PT@TheBeach is located on the CSULB campus in the LifeFit Center.

PT@TheBeach also serves the CSULB Orthopedic Residency Program in providing clinical hours.

Dr. David Nguyen, who graduated from the CSULB Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program in 2024, and completed his residency at PT@TheBeach in August 2025, has stayed on with the clinic as one of PT@TheBeach's main licensed physical therapists.



Dr. David Nguyen in the LifeFit gym, a 6,000 sq foot facility with state of the art equipment utilized by PT @ the Beach



Dr. David Nguyen providing high quality, individualized care at PT @ the Beach

“I think it is something super unique to Long Beach State that we have so many health services on campus that we provide to our CSULB community,” Dr. Nguyen says. “I think we are one of the few campuses out there that actually provide in-house physical therapy services and it’s such a great, convenient resource for staff, faculty and students. Visiting PT@TheBeach can fit into your schedule too. You don’t have to worry about driving, to say, a private clinic off campus in the middle of the day.”





Recent Peer Reviewed Manuscripts, Grants, and Accomplishments of CSULB Faculty

Publications

- **Dawson**, J.K., Nee R., Ramirez C., Reyes S., Sanchez D., Sukhadia T., Bartlett A. Gamification in mHealth Apps for Rehabilitation: Protocol for a Scoping Review. JMIR Res Protoc. 2025 Apr 28;14:e63600. doi: 10.2196/63600.
 - Dr. Jackie Dawson published this manuscript with Class of 2025 graduates Drs. Randall Nee, Christian Ramirez, Sharlene Reyes, David Sanchez, Tulsi Sukhadia.
- Havens KL, Starnes C, **Bagwell JJ**. Unmasking the toll of COVID-19 on Physical and mental health of caregivers of young children in the United States. J Womens Pelv Health Phys Therap. 2025; 49(1):10-18.
- Hayward LM, Markowski AM, Steiner BUK, Maitland ME, Watkins MK, Manske RC, **Beneck GJ**. Point of care ultrasonography in physical therapists' clinical practice: a clinical perspective. J Man Manip Ther. 2025 Aug;33(4):334-342. doi: 10.1080/10669817.2025.2470460.
- Stewart BC, Dai S, Havens KL, Eggleston JD, **Bagwell JJ**, Deering RE, Little EE, Catena RD. Determining fall risk change throughout pregnancy: the accuracy of postpartum survey and relationship to fall efficacy. Ergonomics. 2025 Jan;68(1):85-94. doi: 10.1080/00140139.2023.2296827
- **Teng H-L** & Smith JA. Inter-joint Coordination Variability Decreases during Dual-Task Running. Sports Biomechanics. 2025. (accepted) DOI:10.1080/14763141.2025.2557401.

Other Faculty Accomplishments and Recognitions this year

- **Dr. Vennila Krishnan** was awarded an NIH grant (NIH # 1R15HD110941-01- “AI-based Fall Risk Assessment during Daily Activities in Post-Stroke Survivors using Smartphones” _ with Primary Investigator Rahul Soangra and Co-investigators Alison McKenzie and Joby John
- **Dr. Jackie Dawson** was awarded an 8-month fellowship from the NIH AIM-AHEAD program for training in Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning for health research, which was completed this year
- **Dr. Sharon Teng** will be the keynote speaker at the 2025 Taiwanese Biomechanics Association Annual Conference this November
- **Dr. Jenny Bagwell** completed the American Physical Therapy Association, Academy of Education Fellowship in Higher Education Leadership this year
- **Dr. Jenny Bagwell** was the keynote speaker for the 2025 University of Southern California Biokinesiology White Coat Ceremony



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or

call 559-799-4175 for more info

Thank You for Reading!

Visit our website:

<https://www.csulb.edu/college-of-health-human-services/physical-therapy>

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