



**College of Health
Professions and Sciences**

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

**Transforming Healthcare.
Improving Lives.**

healthprofessions.ucf.edu

A Message From the Dean

One of the greatest traits of UCF is that it resonates opportunity — an opportunity to get a quality education, an opportunity to do something different, an opportunity to make a difference. As one of the newest colleges at UCF, the [College of Health Professions and Sciences](#) seized many opportunities to establish the college as a leader in health education, research, clinical practice and service. During this seminal year, we have launched a [strategic plan](#) for the college that communicates our goals and serves as a roadmap for our success.

Because of coronavirus, 2019-20 was a year that tested everyone’s ability to be flexible. In CHPS, we not only achieved our goals, but also innovated along the way and utilized the pandemic as an opportunity to rethink our curriculum and clinical experiences to best prepare our students for this “new normal.” We grew our fundraising efforts, created synergies with our partners in the [Academic Health Sciences Center](#), and expanded our clinical offerings.

In this first edition of our Annual Report, you will hear some of the ways that our faculty, staff and students are embracing the opportunity to build something great at UCF, in our communities and across the globe. I’m proud of all our achievements and know that we are just getting started.

Charge On!



Christopher D. Ingersoll
Founding Dean, College of Health Professions and Sciences



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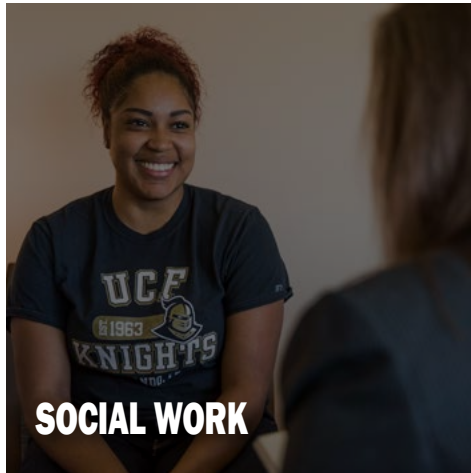
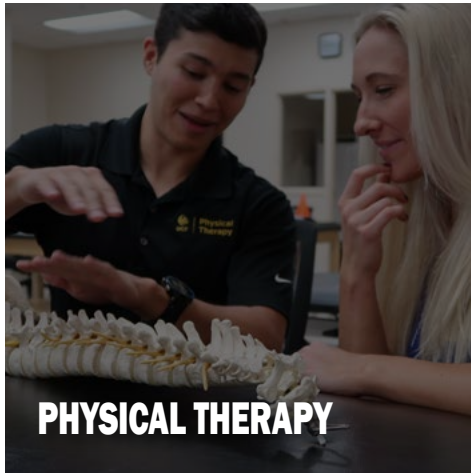
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OUR TOP 5 GOALS

- 1 Conduct high-impact research addressing health and wellness issues facing individuals and communities
- 2 Elevate education within health professions and sciences
- 3 Deliver pioneering clinical education and practice to improve individual and community health and wellness
- 4 Advance a diverse and inclusive community of excellence that embraces faculty, staff, and student success
- 5 Enhance relationships with alumni, donors, businesses, industry and communities



VISION

CHPS will be a dynamic and innovative national leader in health education, research, clinical practice and service.

MISSION

CHPS will improve health through integrative and inclusive education, research, clinical practice and service.

VALUES

Integrity | Diversity | Equity | Inclusion | Excellence | Success | Innovation | Partnership | Professionalism | Well-being



Faculty in the College of Health Professions and Sciences work diligently to ensure students receive the best educational experience in the classroom, while supplying “real-life” skills that aid them in their future careers.

This is most visible in courses with the “high impact” designation. These courses focus on practical experiences that prepare students for scenarios and experiences they will face post-graduation. The designation is awarded by UCF and signifies that the course meets the required criteria for enhancing learning.

There are three categories of high-impact courses at UCF: [Integrative Learning Experience](#), [Research Intensive](#), and [Service Learning](#). To earn the high impact designation, faculty must submit documentation of how their class meets the requirements of the designation and be approved by a committee.

Currently, there are nine high-impact courses in the College of Health Professions and Sciences; two integrative-learning courses, three research-intensive courses and four service-learning courses.

Students enrolled in high-impact courses reap a variety of benefits from these courses, says [Suha Saleh](#), assistant dean for undergraduate affairs. These benefits include learning how to do research, more “hands on” learning, and a deeper understanding of their major.

“These courses help students see the connection between what they are learning to application in the real world, as opposed to isolated learning of different topics and subjects,” Saleh said.

Instructor [Martha Garcia-Stout](#)’s HSC 4008 Professional Development in Health Professions is designated as an Integrated Learning Experience High-Impact Course and is a great example of teaching “real-life” skills. Her class is focused on helping Health Sciences majors prepare to submit applications to grad school or apply for their first job in their career.

Garcia-Stout says students appreciate the class and feel they have an advantage over their peers.

“They are more self-aware and more mature coming out of the class and prepared to take that next step in terms of their career,” she said.



Kinesiology Programs Gain STEM Designation

Programs in the [Division of Kinesiology](#) are now designated STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), thanks to recent approval by the State of Florida.

The change in the Classification of Instructional Programs, codes designed to report outcomes in higher education by specific disciplines and professions, gives CHPS its first STEM programs, said [David Fukuda](#), Associate Professor and Chair, Division of Kinesiology.

Additionally, Fukuda said, “This process took several years, and we increased the number of STEM-based courses required for graduation in order to be evaluated for the new CIP.”

Programs with the new CIP code focus on the anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, and biophysics of human movement, and applications to exercise and therapeutic rehabilitation. They also include instruction in biomechanics, motor behavior, motor development and coordination, motor neurophysiology, performance research, rehabilitative therapies, the development of diagnostic and rehabilitative methods and equipment, and related analytical methods and procedures in applied exercise and therapeutic rehabilitation.

“This change better reflects the teaching and practice of kinesiology and exercise science,” Fukuda said. “Our students need to have a solid understanding of the science behind what we do – and they should also have more career options as a result of this new designation.”



KEEP CALM

AND

CHARGE ON

Learning and Serving During COVID-19

UCF Develops Course to Enhance the **Care of Patients** Recovering From COVID-19

A new course in the graduate clinical speech-language pathology program prepares clinical professionals to meet the complex needs of patients hospitalized from COVID-19 and other related conditions. The special topics course is titled “Post COVID-19 Clinical Practice in Medical Speech-Language Pathology” and was launched in the Summer term of 2020.

Patients who are hospitalized due to COVID-19 are often put on ventilators to assist their breathing. Prolonged ventilator use puts a strain on the vocal cords and reduces respiratory muscle strength, which can impact breathing, speech and swallowing. Speech language pathologists are specialists in upper airway, aerodigestive and laryngeal function disorders and are a key part of patient recovery teams.

Due to the pandemic, the course delivery were fully online. Students were mailed simulation materials and medical supplies which are utilized throughout the course. Students engaged in hands-on training in how to accomplish a range of procedures, such as tracheostomy care, speaking valve care, and infection prevention.

“While COVID-19 will eventually be downgraded from a pandemic, what is here to stay is how we train our healthcare providers to respond to these types of situations,” says Hoffman. “This pandemic has forever changed how we deliver care. The course will meet both the short-term needs of the healthcare industry and strengthen the curriculum of future healthcare professionals at UCF.” says Bari Hoffman, associate dean of clinical affairs for the College of Health Professions and Sciences.



“This course provides up-to-the-minute information that fills a need in the education of both practicing clinicians, and students about to enter the field.”

— **Bari Hoffman**, associate dean of clinical affairs for the College of Health Professions and Sciences

Virtually Seamless: Transitioning Patient Experiences Online

When COVID-19 shut down in-person care at the UCF [Communication Disorders Clinic](#), faculty had to act fast to provide our graduate clinicians with the patient care hours they needed to fulfill graduation criteria.

Faculty and staff worked quickly and collaboratively to bring a comprehensive telehealth modality to the clinic, where students could see real patients through video conferencing under the supervision of clinical faculty.

The pilot program launched in May and allowed the entire cohort of 32 students an on-time graduation in the summer.

It was a win-win all around — patients continued their therapy, our students gained new skills to add to their portfolios and, best of all, will be speech language pathologists ready to work in the current environment and beyond.



UCF Students Form Organization to Work Together Against COVID-19

When COVID-19 slowed down the aid that many depend on, Daniela Vulpe, a junior [health sciences student](#), helped form Orlando Against Coronavirus, an organization that provides supplemental support to organizations and facilities impacted by social distancing guidelines. This includes senior-living facilities, schools, nonprofit organizations and others that serve the elderly, children and the homeless.

“It’s a very delicate situation right now with everything going on,” Vulpe says. “So we decided to be the ones to actually reach out and offer to help out.”

With a team of a dozen volunteers, Vulpe and other UCF students implemented several projects to help the community, such as creating and distributing masks, personalized cards, food packages for the homeless, book drives and online tutoring.

“We are happy to support them during this quarantine time, it means so much to them—and to us too,” she says.



BY THE NUMBERS

The College of Health Professions and Sciences makes a big impact!

- 36 awarded scholarships totaling \$156,000
- 5,853 undergraduate students
- 1,650 undergraduate degrees awarded
- 631 graduate students
- 343 graduate degrees awarded
- 1,606 students enrolled in High-Impact courses (2018-19).
- 116,499 credit hours produced
- 4,718 combined volunteer hours at the Apopka Farmerworkers Clinic

2019-2020 FACULTY AND STAFF

Professors	14
Associate Professors	13
Assistant Professors	28
Post Doctoral Scholar	1
Lecturers	9
Associate Lecturers	5
Instructors	20
Associate Instructors	10
Faculty Administrators	14
Administrative & Professional Staff	59
Support Staff	14

No. of Degree Programs

7

Bachelor

4

Master

3

Doctoral

U.S. News and World Report Rankings

#55

Graduate Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders

#57

Graduate Program in Physical Therapy

#70

Graduate Program in Social Work

NOT ALL HEROES WEAR CAPES SOMETIMES THEY WEAR HARNESES



CLINICAL IMPACT

When Larry Lentz Jr. wears his harness in the [Knights on the Go Café](#), he glides from cash register to refrigerator, serving customers sandwiches, pastries and cold drinks, garnished with a big smile.

It's more than purposeful work for Lentz Jr. — it's physical therapy. The café harness, suspended from crisscrossed poles, offsets his bodyweight allowing him to wait on customers, but more importantly, helps strengthen his muscles, finetune his coordination, and increase his endurance.

Lentz Jr. was in his late thirties when he received his commercial pilot's license and soon after had a stroke. He lost not only his ability to fly, but also his ability to walk and talk.

He has spent the past decade focused on regaining his speech and mobility with the help of programs offered by UCF, including the café and the [UCF Communication Disorders Clinic](#).

It's a win-win for everybody: students receive supervised clinical hours as part of their curriculum and gain experience treating patients who have conditions that they might not be exposed to in other clinical settings. And the patients benefit from therapy that is innovative and cutting-edge.

“Our graduate students are so thrilled to work with Larry,” says [Jennifer Tucker](#), clinical assistant professor in the physical therapy program. “They have seen him make enormous strides in his mobility, and he is such an inspiration to be around.”



WATCH IT ON
YouTube

EMBARCKING ON A NEW JOURNEY

Dog Therapy Improves Veterans' Mental Health

Veterans have a multitude of mental health needs—from depression and anxiety, to PTSD, traumatic brain injury, or sexual trauma. Often, challenges in access to care, or perceived stigma of asking for help, can interfere with veterans getting the mental health care they need.

James Whitworth, associate professor in the School of Social Work, has devoted his career to helping veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Before coming to UCF, Whitworth served as a clinical social worker and mental health officer in the US Air Force for 21 years. He is intimately aware of the challenges veterans face.

So when Whitworth heard about a program that was pairing veterans with service dogs in-training to help with the symptoms of PTSD and depression, he thought it was a novel idea and formulated a research study to examine the efficacy of the program.



Photo Credit: K9 Partners for Patriots

He was awarded a research grant by the Department of Defense Wounded Warrior Service Dog Program to investigate “dog therapy” programs for veterans through his work with K9 Partners for Patriots, a service dog training center in Florida for veterans with PTSD.

“We are building the research that assesses the health outcomes of participants in this program, which will hopefully lead to more financial support so the programs can help more veterans,” Whitworth said.

Through another “dog therapy” project, Whitworth investigated a service dog training program- where dogs are paired with veterans and trained by the veterans through a series of classes over a 19-week period. The study showed “statistically significant improvement” in all 12 symptoms examined, which included things like hypervigilance (always on alert for potential threats), depression, stress, anxiety and anger.

While any dog-lover can testify to the positive impact that having a canine companion brings, Whitworth links the success of the program to the responsibilities that come with training a service dog.

“Having a service dog forces the veteran to focus on something else and be more present in the moment,” he said.

And though the service dog training program may be just the “distraction” veterans need, Whitworth is staying focused on his research because he knows the key to growing these types of programs is scientific evidence.



UCF Athletic Training Students Prepare To Be First Responders

When trauma happens at athletic events, an athletic trainer is usually the first medical professional at an athlete's side. An athletic trainer's ability to think clearly and act fast can be life-determining skills. In order to best prepare [athletic training students](#) with these skills, UCF faculty integrate active learning simulations into the curriculum.

"These are skills where practice doesn't make perfect, but perfect practice makes perfect," said [Carlos Gual](#), associate instructor in athletic training. "So we run it over and over, until students kick into auto-pilot mode."

These are skills that are not only beneficial to injured athletes, but can be applied in any emergency situation; such as an active shooter event, or where many are injured.

Athletic trainers are assessed on emergency care as part of their national certification exam—an area where UCF students consistently score high, thanks to the training they get. In addition to learning skills like how to apply a tourniquet, or how to spine board a patient, students run drills in different environments and are presented with simulations where they have to think critically and apply the skills they've learned.

"The students are learning to save a life, and that's a skill that surpasses the importance of any exam."

Carlos Gual
Associate Instructor



UCF Physical Therapy Treats Student Athletes Thanks to a New Partnership

The [UCF Division of Physical Therapy](#) has teamed up with UCF Athletics to treat student athletes in a unique environment that brings together experts in physical therapy and innovations in clinical practice. Within the training facility on the UCF main campus, faculty in physical therapy will provide care to the athletes while training physical therapy doctoral students in the process. Other experts within the [School of Kinesiology](#) and Physical Therapy will also be involved to enhance the skillsets and contemporary expertise of UCF Athletics' personnel in sports medicine and sports performance.

UCF Physical Therapy has grown its partnership with UCF Athletics over the years: first starting out as

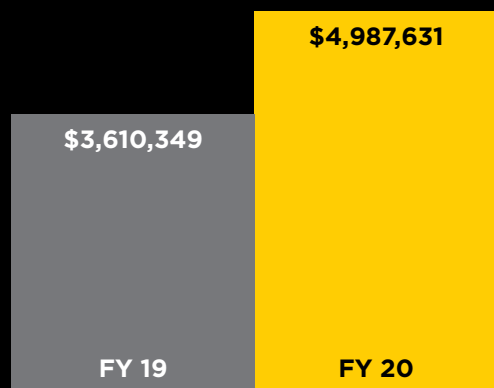
research opportunities and evolving into this new model of care, which will have a central focus on optimal care for student athletes and involve teaching and research activities.

"Our services within UCF Athletics will provide student athletes with access to highly-skilled physical therapy clinicians who are board-certified clinical specialists," said [Patrick Pabian](#), director of the UCF Division of Physical Therapy. "It creates an ideal academic partnership and demonstrates our commitment to interdisciplinary care. This model embodies best practice for student-athlete well-being."

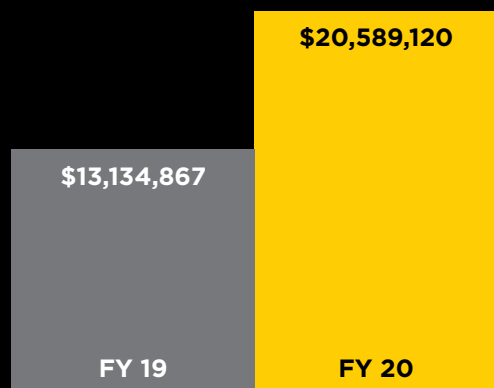
RESEARCH IMPACT

146

Peer-reviewed
publications in 2019-2020















TOTAL FUNDED RESEARCH



PROPOSED RESEARCH FUNDING

OUR RESEARCH FACILITIES

-  Aphasia & Related Conditions Lab
-  Center for Behavioral Health Research & Training
-  Communication Disorders Clinic
-  FFAST Center
-  Athletic Training Lab
-  Body Composition Lab
-  Exercise Biochemistry Lab
-  Human Performance Lab
-  IMOVE Lab
-  Musculoskeletal Research Lab
-  Neuromuscular Plasticity Lab
-  Strength and Conditioning Lab



Through our various lab crawl events, we invite other researchers into our lab spaces to learn about ongoing research and foster greater interdisciplinary collaboration.



Researchers Partner with Child Welfare Groups to Improve Outcomes for Foster Children

Associate Professors [Julie Steen](#) and [Chris Stewart](#) in [UCF's School of Social Work](#) are leading an evaluation of an effort by Embrace Families to strengthen the child welfare system and improve outcomes for children in foster care. The \$1 million evaluation subcontract issued by Embrace Families is part of the Strong Foundations project, a five-year endeavor funded through an \$8.6 million cooperative agreement with the Children's Bureau, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to advance child permanency.

Three strategies are being implemented to achieve this goal: creating a supervisor certification

process, producing a tool to assess case complexity, and developing a "conditions for return" process that clearly spells out what is needed before a child can return home.

Florida's Strong Foundations project is one of five awarded nationally in 2018 to "develop, implement and evaluate strategies that focus on better adoption outcomes." The other sites that received the award are the Department of Children Youth and Families in Washington; Judiciary Court of the State of New Mexico; the University of Kansas Center for Research, Inc.; and the University of Texas – Austin.



FURTHERING PATIENT-CENTERED RESEARCH ON APHASIA

Researchers in [UCF Aphasia House](#) have partnered with the nation's largest public research funder – the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) - as its first beneficiary to use patient-centered research methodologies to advance aphasia treatment and improve the lives of the nearly 180,000 individuals who acquire the disorder each year.

It is a “boots on the ground” approach that not only brings together researchers, clinicians and other healthcare professionals in a collaborative setting, but also welcomes people with aphasia and their families and caregivers to UCF to work toward identifying what supports and interventions work best for patients in the real world.

UCF Assistant Professor [Lauren Bislick](#) and UCF Instructor [Amy Engelhoven](#) are teaming up with Associate Professor Jackie Hinckley from Nova Southeastern University for this funded project. “We are thrilled to once again partner with Dr. Hinckley,” Engelhoven said. “She has been

instrumental in many advances in aphasia therapy and research, and we value her insight into patient-centered outcomes research.”

The project, dubbed “[BRIDGE 2.0](#),” is approaching clinical research radically different than past research in the field. Engelhoven says she sees advantages to this new way of collecting data.

“In the past, researchers have come up with their own research questions and then look to the literature to support it,” Engelhoven said. “But as we have found, the research lab is not the real world and does not necessarily account for the human factor. Patient-centered research not only takes hard science into account, but it also relies on data from the human experience.”

“We want people who are living with aphasia to join us in tackling important questions in aphasia research,” Bislick said. “They know better than us what they need to help improve their quality of life.”

Sport and Exercise Science Track Gains National Accreditation

The [School of Kinesiology](#) received Level 3 Comprehensive Accreditation for its Sport and Athletic Coaching Track from the National Committee for Accreditation of Coaching Education. This national recognition is a reflection of the program's ability to train coaches effectively to meet the unique developmental needs of every athlete at all levels of sport. UCF joins an elite list of only a few universities that hold this achievement.

To be accredited, programs must successfully document comprehensive program content in alignment with the National Standards for Sport Coaches (NASPE, 2006) and the NCACE Guidelines for program supervision, personnel and operations. “Our coaching program has always aligned with top professional and industry standards,” said [David Fukuda](#), director of the Kinesiology program. “We take great pride in preparing coaches that lead in their field, and this accreditation is affirmation that our program is leading the way in coaching education.”



Undergrads Shine At Annual Research Symposium



As part of the Applied Health Research Methodology course, [health sciences](#) students develop a research proposal to ensure students have the necessary skills to be good consumers of information and critical thinkers. Over 300 students presented their research proposals at this year's Research Symposium. Students with the top proposals then presented to a panel of judges to compete for gold, silver and bronze recognition. Pictured are the gold recipients with their poster “Effect of Short-Term Vitamin D Supplementation on Blood Pressure In Vitamin D-Deficient Hypertensive African-American Adults.”



COMMUNITY IMPACT

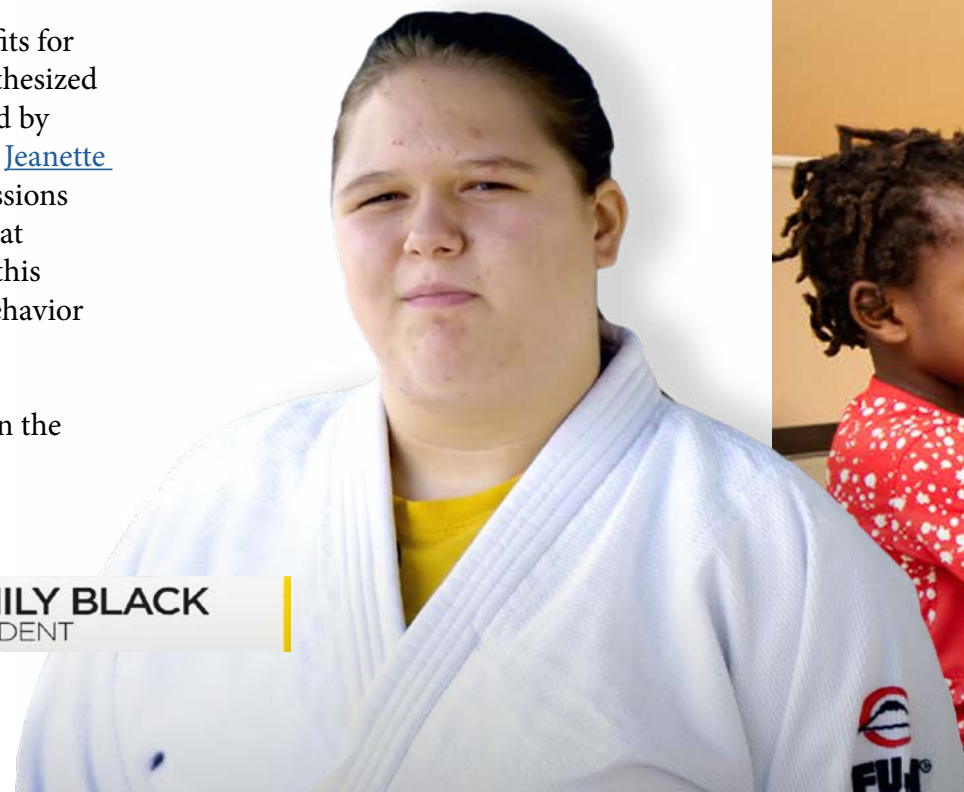
Judo Program Helps Children With Autism Pin Down Success

Judo may be just the right sport to increase the physical activity level among children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and holds promise for reducing sedentary behavior, which is linked to obesity and diabetes, according to a new study from researchers in the [Department of Health Sciences](#).

“While karate, a form of martial arts, has documented benefits for the autism population related to social interaction, we hypothesized that the emphasis on mindfulness and self-defense promoted by judo would provide additional benefits for ASD youth,” says [Jeanette Garcia](#), an assistant professor in the College of Health Professions and Sciences who led the study. “Indeed, our study shows that judo not only promotes social skills, but is well accepted by this population and is a great program for reducing sedentary behavior and increasing confidence.”

The study’s findings were published in late December 2019 in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders.

“*UCF, what they are doing is INCREDIBLE!*”



EMILY BLACK
STUDENT



WATCH IT ON
YouTube

New Program Helps Students Work With CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A new graduate certificate program is designed to prepare future special education teachers and speech-language pathologists through interdisciplinary learning to improve language and literacy services and outcomes for children with disabilities with high-intensity needs. The program is a partnership between the [College of Health Professions and Sciences](#) and [UCF's College of Community Innovation and Education](#).

The program is called Project SPEECH, and stands for Speech-Language Pathologists and Exceptional Educators Collaboration for Children with High-Intensity Needs. Students in the program can receive tuition assistance thanks to federal funding from the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education, which covers a majority of students' tuition and fees. In return, students are required to fulfill a service obligation. For each year of funding received, scholars are required to work with students with disabilities for

at least 51 percent of their time or 51 percent of their caseload in a school setting.

Children with high-intensity needs require specialized intervention in language and literacy. Through collaborative and specialized instruction across two programs, scholars who participate in this project will gain the competencies needed to work with students with a variety of disabilities who need sustained interventions to address their language and literacy needs.

“This program is aimed at addressing the shortage of fully qualified special educators and speech-language pathologists in our Central Florida school districts,” said [Linda I. Rosa-Lugo](#), a co-principal investigator on the project and speech-language pathologist. “By bringing these two groups of students together, they learn critical knowledge and skills from each other that support them in their role.”



Working to Improve Healthcare Delivery in Rural America

About 60 million people, or more than one in five Americans, live in rural areas, according to the U.S. Census. In Florida, half the counties are rural. Getting affordable quality care to those communities is a real concern.

That's where [UCF's Rural Health Research Group](#) comes in.

The interdisciplinary group of researchers focuses on health disparities in rural populations, costs and the operations of rural primary-care organizations. The group also studies the role of Accountable Care Organizations in rural communities. ACOs were created to encourage medical professionals to coordinate care of residents with Medicare insurance (coverage for older Americans and persons with disabilities). The ACO translates into a network of doctors and hospitals that share financial and medical responsibility for providing coordinated care to patients in hopes of limiting unnecessary spending.

“There is a lot of need,” says Judy Ortiz, director of the research group. “It’s not a small population and it’s quite diverse. You’ll find older adults, veterans and other groups like Latinos disproportionately represented. With America’s demographics shifting and Latinos becoming the biggest minority, this is not something we can ignore.”

Ortiz and others in the group conduct interviews with rural residents in Florida and other states to help explain what they are seeing—or not seeing—in the data.

The work done by the Rural Health Research Group will impact public health policy, and like all policy change it will take time. But team members say they don’t let that deter them, because in the end it will be worth it.

Every Patient, Every Time: Suicide Screening Initiative Addresses Crisis

In 2019, [UCF's School of Social Work](#) partnered with AdventHealth on a three-year, \$1.45 million pilot program to study the effects of suicide intervention screening on all emergency-room patients.

Since then, healthcare professionals have been screening every adult patient who comes into the ER for signs of hopelessness or despair and providing follow-up care for those at high risk for suicide.

[Kim Gryglewicz](#), the project’s director and an assistant professor in the School of Social Work, said the program was modeled on Zero Suicide Initiative, a movement urging healthcare providers to focus on prevention. The program is being funded by a grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Services Administration.

In addition to providing social worker support, the program trains ER staff and other healthcare providers to recognize and help patients who are dealing with suicidal thoughts or feelings.

“Suicide is a topic we don’t talk about, but we need to,”

Kimberley Gryglewicz
Project Director

Gryglewicz lost two cousins to suicide and has spent the past 17 years researching its causes and ways to prevent its incidence.

Gryglewicz and her team are focused on two main areas of impact: Improving safety measures and practices; and measuring outcomes to track the effectiveness of the intervention.

As the research continues, the same procedures will be implemented at other Central Florida sites, and then throughout the country at other AdventHealth sites to best prevent suicides and attempts from happening.

Learning Health Promotion By Teaching Others

Children with autism spectrum disorder are 41% more likely to be overweight or obese than their typically-developing peers. To help children with ASD lead a healthier life, Assistant Professor Jeanette Garcia from Health Sciences along with a team of undergraduate researchers are implementing a healthy eating program for high-school aged students at The Paragon School, a private school in College Park for students with high-functioning ASD.

In addition to leading the classes, UCF students also helped develop the content. Garcia knew that keeping the attention of students with ASD can be a challenge, so she asked students to gamify the content – a learning technique she knew would make it fun for the participants.

“The students are way more creative than I am, and they came up with really cool ways for getting the kids engaged in the content and competing against each other- something that they really like,” said Garcia.

When the program ends, Garcia hopes to crunch the data to see what positive changes the program achieved and tweak the program for the next cohort to make it even better. In the end, she hopes to have a structured guideline for providing this type of education for youth with ASD.



Fueling Community, One Meal At A Time

Celine Rodriguez, a [social work graduate student](#), didn't understand food insecurity issues until she was interning at the Academic Center for Excellence in Parramore.

This led Rodriguez to develop a food pantry at the school by partnering with Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida to provide food and supplies.

Since starting the project in early 2020, more than 1,000 pounds of food have gone to families in the Parramore community, with about 40 families visiting the pantry each week.

Field education internships, such as Rodriguez's internship at ACE, are an important component of the social work program, said [Jacqueline Withers](#), former director of field education for the School of Social Work.

“Internships provide the opportunity for our social work students to apply theories learned in the classroom to the practice of social work while completing internships at community agencies,” Withers said.

For Rodriguez, working on the pantry at ACE has been a labor of love and her way to ensure future success in the next generation.

“It feels good to know that there is one less stress that the kids don't have to worry about,” she said.

Guiding Light: Helping Refugee Children in Turkey

Kenan Sualp, '15 MSW and a current public affairs doctoral student within the social work track, is helping refugee children in his home country of Turkey thanks to a grant from the International Association for Social Work with Groups.

Sualp's project titled, The Skills and Motivation: Group Therapy Training for Social Workers Working with Unaccompanied Refugee Children in Turkey, will provide local social workers in Turkey with clinical training and resources to better assist unaccompanied refugee children who exhibit symptoms of trauma. The research is further supported by co-PI Olga Molina, associate professor in the [UCF School of Social Work](#).

Sualp utilizes his background and collaborative partnerships with consulting agencies and organizations in Europe to fill the gap in knowledge about clinical group work that currently exists in Turkey.

"The important thing is that the manual will be there for the social workers even after our study. Our hope is to serve as a catalyst and enable them with a framework that they can rely on to ensure the best outcomes for these children," says Molina.

Teaming Up To Enhance Children's Language Skills

Language experts know that it is critical for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) and their families to have access to listening and spoken language services at an early age from knowledgeable, skilled, credentialed providers.

To better address those needs, a new partnership between the [UCF Listening Center](#) and Orange County Public Schools began in September 2019 for pre-kindergarten children who are D/HH.

The program partners a teacher with a graduate clinician in speech language pathology in the classroom to enhance children's listening and spoken language skills. This pilot program was initiated at Lake Como Elementary and is the beginning of what program developers hope will be similar programs throughout the district.

The children in the class do not primarily utilize American Sign Language (ASL). Many have hearing aids or cochlear implants and are seen

by a cadre of professionals that work collaboratively to enhance their listening and spoken language skills and support their academic development.

UCF graduate clinicians benefit from providing speech language pathology services in the specialized, real-world classes, under the supervision of [Whitney Haas](#), a speech language pathologist who is a certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialist (LSLS).

A LSLS is a qualified provider for children with hearing loss who are pursuing listening and spoken language. There are approximately 35 LSLS in Florida because the certification is extremely hard to get. Students will benefit by working with and learning from such specialist. It's a win-win for all the students involved.

EVERYONE DESERVES A CHANCE TO DANCE

Thanks to a new community partnership with [UCF Physical Therapy's Go Baby Go!](#) and Chance 2 Dance studio in Casselberry, tiny ballerinas with limited mobility had the chance to bring their sugar plum fairy dreams to life. The holiday performance of "The Nutcracker Reimagined" brought together dancers of all abilities and allowed Go Baby Go! the opportunity to integrate its mobile harness play system into the community in a meaningful way. The harness offsets the weight of the child, helping them to glide with ease. The experience was the first time the harness dancers were able to participate in a dance recital. "This is what every parent wants for their kid," said Jenny Osterhaus, a parent of one of the dancers. "Experiences like these are like rites of passage, and I'm glad we were able to provide her that experience."

 **In The News**
Read More

Athletic Training Program Helps Train **Judo Therapy** Students From Japan

Alumni from [UCF's athletic training program](#) have traveled with organizations throughout the world, thanks to their talent, drive and skills.

Sometimes, the world comes to UCF. The program's reputation of preparing career-ready athletic trainers reached Japan, where leaders at a judo therapy school saw how UCF was preparing future athletic trainers and how it could benefit its students.

In Japan, athletic trainers are a growing profession, and as such, the Keishin Group, a judo therapy school from Japan, wanted to expand its students' knowledge of athletic training related skills as it is in direct alignment with best preparing its students for future careers.

While athletic trainers play an important role of healthcare delivery to athletes, athletic trainers can also work in non-sports related fields where their expertise in triaging, diagnosing and life-saving skills are needed.

Because of the growing popularity of American football in Japan, the Japanese students also wanted to learn spine therapy evaluation, spine motion restriction, and hands on techniques like how to remove protective equipment from patient with a spine injury to provide the correct standard of care.

Students in the UCF AT program contributed to the workshops by demonstrating those skills, said [Carlos Gual](#), instructor for the Athletic Training Program. "They also gained important experience in how to communicate effectively through cultural and language barriers, while understanding the importance of inter-professional healthcare."

"In the ever evolving world of healthcare, certified athletic trainers play an important role, not only in athletic competitions and organized sports, but also in any business where there is a chance of an injury occurring on the job," Gual said. "We look forward to our continued partnership with Keishin and helping those providers in Japan be best equipped to help patients."



GET SOCIAL

Join the conversation and follow CHPS on your favorite social media platform!



Student & Alumni Awards

Order of Pegasus

Safia Centner, Health Sciences
Breon Clark, Health Sciences
Taylor Duffy, Health Sciences

30 Under 30 Awards

Frankie Catalfumo '13
B.S. Health Sciences

Sarah Goldman '14
Bachelor of Social Work

Marsha Mena '15 '16MSW
Bachelor of Social Work
Master of Social Work

Founders' Day Award

Danielle Scognamiglio, Athletic Training

CHPS Outstanding Dissertation Award

Alyssa Varanoske, Exercise Physiology

Faculty & Staff Awards

Luminary Award

[Martine Vanryckeghem \(CSD\)](#)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

[Jacqueline Towson \(CSD\)](#)

Teaching Incentive Program

[Jacqueline Towson \(CSD\)](#)

[Suha Saleh \(HS\)](#)

[Nicole Dawson \(PT\)](#)

Research Incentive Awards

[William Hanney \(PT\)](#)

[Tracy Wharton \(SW\)](#)

[Kimberley Gryglewicz \(SW\)](#)

College Award for Excellence in Research

[Michael Rovito \(HS\)](#)

University Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching

[Carey Rothschild \(PT\)](#)

College Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

[Adam Wells \(KIN\)](#)

[Suha Saleh \(HS\)](#)

CHPS Employee of the Year

[Alexandra Barraza-Oliphant \(USPS\)](#)

[Samantha Mundell \(A&P\)](#)

Women's History Month Awardees

[Jennifer Tucker \(PT\)](#)

[Jane Hostetler \(CSD\)](#)

Tenure & Promotion

Congratulations to our faculty who made tenure and promotion this year!

Communication Sciences and Disorders



Joe DiNapoli
Senior Instructor



Todd Fix
Associate Instructor



Julie Matura
Associate Instructor



Michael Rovito
Associate Professor

Social Work



Reshawna Chapple
Associate Professor



Kim Gryglewicz
Associate Professor



Robin Kohn
Senior Instructor



Tracy Wharton
Associate Professor

Health Sciences

Welcome New Faculty



“Ali” Amirkhosravi
Lecturer
HS



Bethany Backes
Assistant Professor
SW



Susanny Beltran
Assistant Professor
SW



Melissa Bermudez
Instructor
SW



Keith Brazendale
Assistant Professor
HS



Punam Desormes
Instructor
CSD



Katia Ferdowsi
Lecturer
HS



Julie Feuerstein
Assistant Professor
CSD



Martha Garcia-Stout
Lecturer
HS



Ethan Hill
Assistant Professor
KIN



Christopher D. Ingersoll
Professor
KPT



Gail Kauwell
Professor
HS



Sheila Klausner
Assistant Professor
PT



Lakshmi Kollara Sunil
Assistant Professor
CSD



Vicki Lewis
Instructor
CSD



Carrie Loughran
Instructor
CSD



Julia O'Connor
Assistant Professor
SW



Cassie Odahowski
Assistant Professor
HS



Alison Redd
Lecturer
KIN



Josett vonBirgelen
Instructor
SW



Asli Cennet Yalim
Assistant Professor
SW

PHILANTHROPIC IMPACT

NEWLY ESTABLISHED SCHOLARSHIPS



After experiencing first-hand the tremendous power of speech language therapy, UCF alumna and brain-cancer survivor Angel-Marie Carson established **Angel's Gift Scholarship** for graduate students in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders to honor her profession and elevate its students.



The **Dr. Kenyatta Rivers Memorial Scholarship** was created by his UCF colleagues to honor his years of devotion to his profession and his far-reaching mentorship impact. This scholarship is awarded to a graduate or undergraduate student in Communication Sciences and Disorders with an interest in mentoring underrepresented populations in the future.



Established by long-time friends and colleagues from the Society for Technical Communications, the **Mike Murray Make a Difference Scholarship** honors a remarkable leader who has battled Parkinson's Diseases since 2008. This scholarship supports graduate students in the School of Communication Sciences & Disorders who strive for positive change in patient care.



The **Jeffrey D. Law Memorial Scholarship** was established by his family and UCF Professor Matt Stock to honor the legacy of Jeffrey Law, a strength and conditioning coach and Dr. Stock's first graduate student advisee. This scholarship supports M.S. in Kinesiology students interested in pursuing careers in strength and conditioning.



One of our distinguished professors, preferring anonymity, has established an endowed scholarship that will support graduate excellence.

The generosity of alumni, friends and partners provides the college with vital resources to support the best and brightest students, recruit top faculty scholars, and support innovative teaching and research. To learn more about philanthropic opportunities within the college, please visit <https://www.ucffoundation.org/givetochnps>.

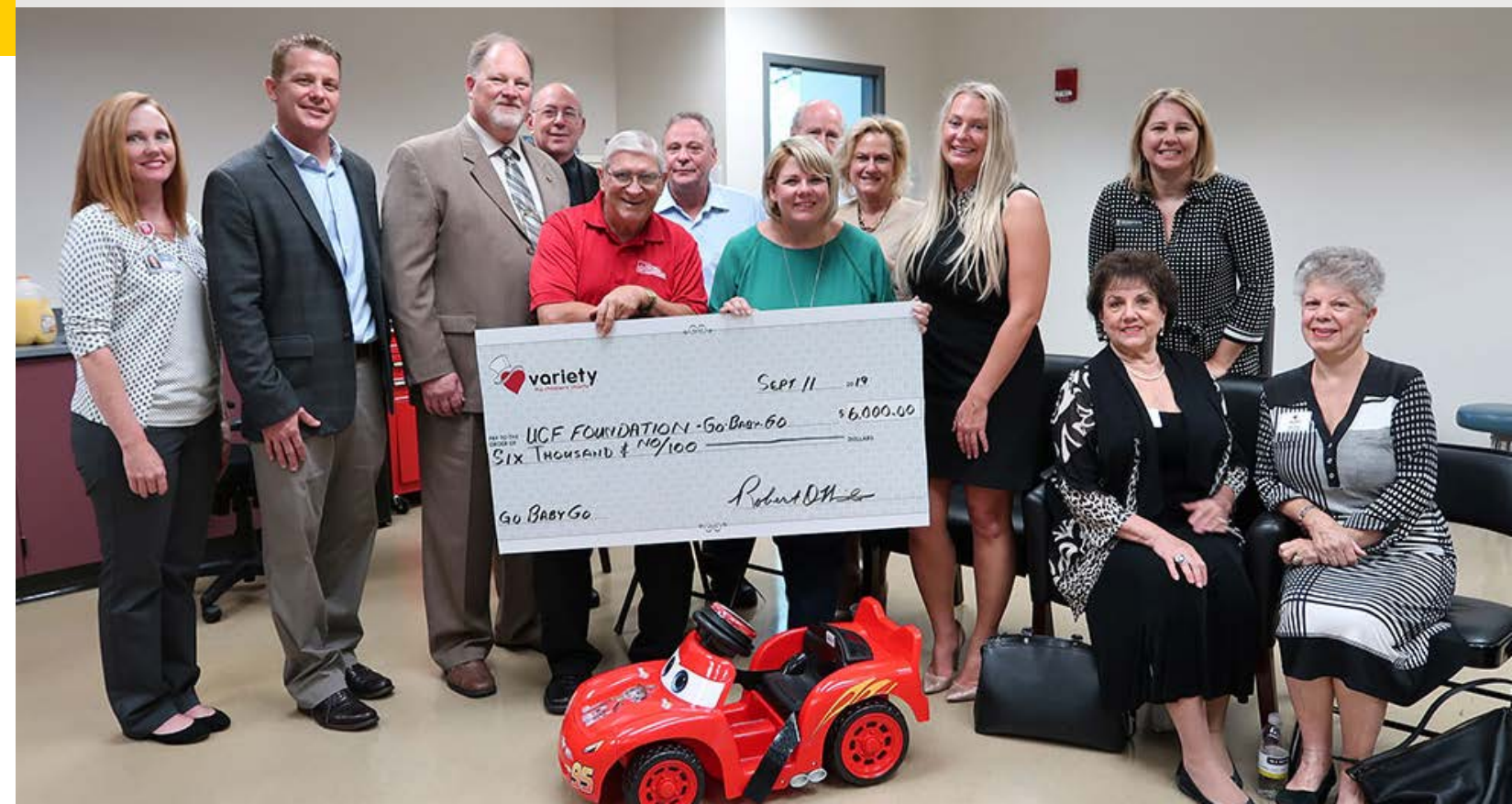
36

college scholarships for \$156,000
in student support

257

unique donors who made
a gift to the college

A gift from **Variety - The Children's Charity of Florida** will support modified ride-on cars and portable harness systems to improve the lives of children with mobility issues.



UCF CARD Receives \$150,000 Gift to Help Those with Autism and Their Families

The [UCF Center for Autism and Related Disabilities](#) is able to expand its reach thanks to a \$150,000 gift from Providing Autism Links & Supports(PALS).

UCF CARD is one of seven regional resource centers established by the State of Florida to support those with autism spectrum disorder and their families. UCF CARD serves more than 15,000 individuals and families of all ages across Orange, Lake, Osceola, Sumter, Brevard, Volusia and Seminole counties.

"UCF CARD does so much with their limited resources, and we wanted to help them do more," said Brian Moore, a PALS board member.



NEW CHPS SCHOLARSHIP

Honors Strength, Promise and Invincibility

A new scholarship in the [College of Health Professions and Sciences](#) honors not only a student's promise, but also their past.

The Invincible Knights Award was created to honor students who demonstrate stoic determination, tenacity of purpose, grit, bravery, resilience and hardiness to triumph over difficult circumstances and Charge On! toward a better future.

Dean [Christopher Ingersoll](#) was inspired to create the award after hearing the story of Amiyah Murphy-Allison, a social work student who has overcome tragedies in her life on the road to becoming a Knight, including witnessing her mother's murder at the hands of her stepfather.

"My mother died when she tried to leave my stepfather for a better life," Murphy-Allison said. "How could I let her death stop me from achieving her dream?"

The Invincible Knights Award is a \$2,000 scholarship made possible by charitable donations from both faculty and staff in the college, as well as community partners.

"We want to support our students who show an unwavering commitment to success," said Ingersoll. "We are pleased to name Amiyah as the first recipient, and we know that she will continue to rise above any challenge that dares get in her path."



Remembering Kenyatta Rivers

If everyone mentored someone, then we would all move forward

The late Kenyatta Rivers, a retired faculty member in the [School of Communication Sciences and Disorders](#), had a passion for teaching and mentoring his students, and inspired them through his life of service and education.

Rivers was especially involved with guiding students to the profession he loved so much. He helped many students achieve their educational goals and career dreams and worked at a national level to advance the practice of speech-language pathology.

"We worked on research, traveled together and presented together, but most of all, we understood the power of raising up the next generation of leaders," said [Linda I. Rosa-Lugo](#), a longtime colleague and friend of Rivers.

Rivers' commitment to increasing diversity within the field of speech-language pathologists inspired the ongoing work of many of his mentees and colleagues, both at UCF and across the country. A [new scholarship](#) developed in his name continues to support the next generation of SLPs.

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**College of Health
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