



Jeff Bonacci, left, program coordinator, works with students on evaluation procedures during class. Below, right, Lesley Vandermark, clinical assistant professor, works with students on different scenarios.

## New Space Expands Learning, Teaching Opportunities for Athletic Training Program

Students and faculty in the graduate athletic training program are enjoying a new space for learning and teaching in the HPER Building on the University of Arkansas campus.

The 3,000-square-foot space became available beginning last summer through repurposing of a gymnasium formerly used mostly for recreational activities.

"This much needed teaching space has allowed us to provide an ideal learning environment for our students," said Jeff Bonacci, coordinator of the program. "In addition, it really showcases how our university is providing the support we need as we move forward in our future recruiting."

Along with the new space, the program purchased 12 electric hi-lo treatment tables that are fully adjustable. They can be raised and lowered and have casters to move easily around the room. Each table has two rolling stools, and the tables and stools are embossed with a Razorback logo.

"The ability to electrically lower and raise the therapy table to the desired height allows the athletic trainer to be in the optimal body position to evaluate an injured patient," Bonacci said.

The room also has storage and counter space for educational



equipment and medical supplies. A large projector at the front of the room displays content that can also be viewed on televisions on each side of the back of the room. Anatomical models of spines and other bones are used for demonstrations and student engagement with human anatomy. They can be used as a way of visualizing the locations and movement of structures under the skin.

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## Program Director's Corner By Jeff Bonacci, D.A., A.T.C., L.A.T.



Bonacci

**H**ello Razorback Alumni, prospective students, and friends of the athletic training education program.

We have had another busy year. During the spring semester, the university granted me a sabbatical to develop two new courses in pathophysiology in combination with pharmacology. The thought here is to educate future graduates on the typical general medical ailments that an athletic trainer will face and the pharmacological treatment for the medical condition.

In addition, I am conducting a new marketing initiative for the athletic training program for recruiting purposes with guidance from the university's Sam M. Walton College of Business. The rationale for this initiative, which includes our new website, is a result of the athletic training program being a master's degree only, as mandated by CAATE. These efforts will decrease the possible challenges in recruiting outstanding students to our program.

The clinical anatomy course is underway starting in the summer of 2017. Dr. Vandermark will teach this course.

Going to Houston for the NATA 2017? The alumni party will be Tuesday at Tejas Sports Grill from 8 to 10 p.m. Hope to see you there!!!

## Student Research is High Quality By Brendon McDermott, Ph.D., A.T.C.



McDermott

**T**he year has begun with a lot of research for our athletic training students.

Over the summer, second-year student Ryan Dawson was awarded a Southwest Athletic Trainers' Association Foundation research grant to continue studying the effect of hydration status on baseline concussion testing. He is about to complete data collection on this study and he will present results this summer

in San Marcos, Texas.

On the publication front, Katherine Luhring's ('16) thesis was accepted and is now in print in the *Journal of Athletic Training*. Her study demonstrated that using tarp-assisted cooling with oscillations (TACO) for whole-body cooling of hyperthermic individuals provides adequate cooling for heat stroke victims. This was an important study and the first of its kind demonstrating effectiveness with this method. Now, athletic trainers who do not have access to cooling tubs for heat stroke patients have a cheap alternative that is effective and could save lives.

Many of our students were also involved as participants and researchers on a couple of other projects recently that are now in print. We demonstrated that phase change cooling inserts were effective in mitigating heat strain for industrial workers in the heat and our study appears in the journal

*Applied Ergonomics* as of early 2017. Further, many students helped collect data on a study demonstrating the effect of hydration on measures of arterial stiffness published in a functional imaging journal.

Lastly, a soon-to-come issue in *Military Medicine* will feature research by our students showing that ice sheeting is ineffective for cooling hyperthermic individuals in the field. This is vital as some military training locations should be changing their emergency action plans based on our results.

This year, I have presented research from San Antonio to Boston. Much of these research presentations include work completed by our athletic training students. I will present on heat illness prevention and management for youth and adolescent patients as well as supervising a laboratory on heat illness recognition and management this year at the National Athletic Trainers' Association Annual Meeting in Houston. Dr. Bonacci will be there too, presenting results from our students' study looking at the effectiveness of various methods of extracting a potentially injured patient from a gymnastics foam pit. This study involved certified athletic trainers and emergency medical technicians as research participants.

There is never a dull moment in the research arena here at the University of Arkansas, and this is an integral part of our athletic training program. Our research would not be as successful as it is if we did not have high quality students coordinating our research.

## Students Receive NATA Foundation Scholarships

**F**our University of Arkansas graduate students recently received \$2,300 scholarships from the National Athletic Trainers' Association Foundation. Taylor Lippert, Kristen Peterson, Eric Schwartz and Mariellen Veach are all in the second year of the athletic training education program.

Lippert received the Eddie Wojecki Memorial Scholarship sponsored by the Southwest Athletic Trainers' Association. She is from Sand Springs, Oklahoma, and she has a bachelor's degree in health and exercise science from the University of Oklahoma.

Peterson received the Ben Hogan Sports Medicine Scholarship. She is from Bowling Green, Kentucky, and she has a bachelor's degree in education with an emphasis in exercise science from the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

Schwartz received the Dean Kleinschmidt Scholarship sponsored by the Professional Football Athletic Trainers' Society. He is from St. Peters, Missouri, and he has a bachelor's degree in exercise science from Southern Illinois University.

Veach won the Southeastern Conference Football Officials Association Award. She is from O'Fallon, Illinois, and she has a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from the University of Illinois.

## Class of 2019 Coming From Across the Nation

TAYLOR BOWKER SMU, Dallas, Texas

ANGELIQUE CARMOUCHE Texas A&M University – Commerce

RYAN COLLINS University of Louisville

BRIA COURSEY University of Florida

CODY DEARDORFF Texas Tech University – Lubbock

ELISSA DINKMEYER Texas A&M University –

College Station

BRITTANY FORTENBERRY Texas A&M University – Commerce

PRESTON GIBBS Oklahoma Christian University

COLIN GLENNY University of Oregon

WILLIAM HANNA Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia

JOSSELYN HERNANDEZ Texas Southern University, Houston

SHELBY HIERS University of Arkansas

IKUO KATO Waseda University/Toyko Gakugei University

TAYLOR LITTEKEN University of Arkansas

MATTHEW MCCARTHEY

BRYANNA MOLTZ University of Ozarks, Arkansas

JEORGIA SANDERS Texas Southern University, Houston

KIERA SCHEDEEN University of North Texas

MITCHELL SKINNER California State Polytechnic

University, Pomona

ELIZABETH STUDDARD University of Montevallo, Alabama

HEATHER TROXLER Arkansas State University

ILLIANA VELAZQUEZ Azusa Pacific University, California

TOREY WALTER Cal State Monterey Bay



## PRECEPTOR HIGHLIGHT



### U of A Grad Maintains Connection Through Preceptor Role

Austin Kerkhover was in the shoes of the University of Arkansas students he mentors less than 10 years ago.

A 2009 graduate of the Master of Athletic Training program, Kerkhover began serving as a clinical preceptor for the program shortly after taking a position as an athletic trainer with Bentonville Public Schools in 2011. Before that, the Illinois native spent two years working as an athletic trainer at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. Last year, when Bentonville High School split, he became head athletic trainer at Bentonville West High School.

Preceptors supervise clinical practice of graduate athletic training education students during their rotations in college athletics, high school athletics and medical clinics.

"I used to be in these U of A students' shoes and so I do want to make it fun and an enjoyable experience for them," Kerkhover said. "We want them to learn and grow and use the skills they are learning in program."

He was a top student in the U of A program, winning one of the Bill Ferrell Athletic Training Scholarships in 2008.

Bentonville West High School offers more than a dozen sports year-round from football and basketball to bowling, wrestling, cheer and dance. The athletic trainer's job, like anywhere else, is to provide medical coverage for athletes during games and practice. They are responsible for prevention and care of injuries, but one thing U of A students will learn is that the environment is different from collegiate athletics, he said.

"My goal is to provide them that reality of the high school experience," Kerkhover said. "Every sport presents its own challenges and injuries are possible in them all. This is what it is. It's not a 9-to-5 position; most nights, we have events going on so 4:30 is when things start picking up. We want to provide a quality experience for them whether they decide to go into this or realize they prefer another route."

Kerkhover was a track and field athlete as well as playing football in high school and as an undergraduate at the University of Missouri. He had been in and out of the athletic training room while playing but until the athletic trainer at Missouri suggested athletic training as a career, he had not really considered it.



"I knew I enjoyed athletics and helping people," he said.

He also found that he has the patience to be a teacher. And, it's not a one-way street. He gets satisfaction from hearing about students' success.

"It may be that they have achieved a position they have really been wanting, or they reach out and say, 'I had something happen and I thought about you guys.' It's the most rewarding when they do that."

Likewise, Kerkhover credits both the U of A program and his mentor and preceptor, Jeff McGee, formerly head athletic trainer in Bentonville. They met when McGee was an athletic trainer for the U of A men's cross-country and track and field teams. McGee has since moved to an assistant athletic director's position with the Bentonville School District.

"There are a lot of contributing things that go into where I've gotten to, people who have impacted me," Kerkhover said. "A lot of the philosophy I use today I adapted from my preceptor, Jeff. Being an athletic trainer is a group effort."