



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

DEPARTMENT of
PHYSICAL THERAPY

PT PRIDE



SEMESTER IN REVIEW
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Meet the Class of 2028

We're thrilled to welcome the bright and passionate Class of 2028 to our PT program! This diverse and dynamic group is already making a strong impression with their unique backgrounds, inspiring journeys, and shared commitment to patient care. In this issue, we're excited to introduce a few of these incredible students and share what motivated them to pursue a graduate degree in physical therapy



Chloe Leverington

Home: Forks, Washington

Fun Fact: I studied exercise science at Saint Martin's University where I pitched for the softball team.

Why PT?: Growing up in a rural area with limited access to healthcare inspired me to pursue PT.

Why UM?: I chose UM for its holistic approach, strong specializations and the sunshine!

Home: London, England

Fun Fact: I tore my ACL while wakeboarding here in Florida that led to a surgery and extensive rehab.

Why PT?: I have always been passionate about helping others through movement and my ACL injury inspired me to pursue PT.

Why UM?: I chose UM because they truly saw me as a person, not just a student, and it's given me an incredible education and community.



Conor Floyd



Gal Zmora

Home: Israel

Fun Fact: I earned my Bachelor's in Athletic training and works with sports teams, clinics, and PT.

Why PT?: Helping athletes recover sparked my passion for physical therapy.

Why UM?: I chose UM for its strong reputation, diverse clinical opportunities, and innovative approach to care.

CLASS OF 2027: WHITE COAT CEREMONY

With white coats on and bright futures ahead, our **Class of 2027** officially stepped into the next chapter of their journey toward becoming compassionate and skilled physical therapists. **The White Coat Ceremony** is more than a rite of passage—it marks our students' passage from the classroom to clinical care, carrying with them the values of compassion, integrity, and excellence.

Surrounded by their peers, mentors, and loved ones, the **Class of 2027** proudly donned their white coats, **signifying their commitment to the profession and to the patients they will one day serve.** We couldn't be prouder to support them on this meaningful journey.



LIZ AND ASH ROTHLEIN SIMULATION SUITE: ELEVATING PT EDUCATION

The University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine proudly announces the dedication of the Liz and Ash Rothlein Simulation (LARS) Suite in the Plumer Building—a cutting-edge space designed to elevate student learning and honor a legacy of service.



Left to Right: Rothlein Estate Trustee, **Nicole Zarins-Tenenbaum, BHS, RN, UMPT** Chair, **Neva Kik-Sanchez, PhD, PT** and Executive Dean for Education and Policy, **Latha Chandran, MD** dedicate the LARS Suite.

Honoring Liz Rothlein

Liz Rothlein, Ph.D., served UM's School of Education and Human Development for **25 years, including 13 years as associate dean.**

Her commitment to education and compassion continues to inspire the transformative learning experience offered in the new suite.



Purpose & Impact

The Liz and Ash Rothlein Simulation Suite offers a state-of-the-art environment for hands-on training in physical therapy. Equipped with **high-fidelity simulators**, the suite enhances clinical expertise and prepares students for real-world patient care.



LARS: ELEVATING PT EDUCATION

Honoring Ash Rothlein

Ash Rothlein, B.S.C.E. '53, was a respected **World War II veteran** honored with France's National Order of the Legion of Honor. He returned to UM for his engineering degree and later led a successful career in construction. His values of integrity and service are embodied in this simulation space.



A Living Legacy

Their generosity extends beyond the suite—supporting **UM's ROTC Global Scholars Fund** and now enabling immersive clinical training for Miller School students. This new facility will empower PT students to develop precision, empathy, and excellence in care



Left to Right: Nicole Zarins-Tenenbaum, BHS, RN, and Ari Tenenbaum celebrate the opening of the LARS Suite with UMPT faculty and students.

UMPT GRAND ROUNDS

Overview

The Department of Physical Therapy has launched a new monthly Grand Rounds Lecture Series, bringing together leading ideas and expertise from across medicine and rehabilitation.

What It Is

Each session features a focused **presentation** on an important topic in **clinical practice, research, or innovation** within the rehabilitation sciences. Speakers include department faculty, doctoral students, and guest experts from a variety of disciplines.



Professional Value

Sessions are designed to be immediately relevant to practice, highlighting **current trends, new treatment approaches**, and collaborative **problem-solving** in rehabilitation. Participants can also earn continuing education credits.



What Makes It Unique

UMPT Grand Rounds creates a space where **current evidence, emerging research, and real-world clinical experience** intersect. Its hybrid format offers flexibility for participation, and the rotating speaker roster ensures fresh, diverse perspectives each month.



UMPT Grand Rounds is offered the first Thursday of the month, 12:00-1:00 ET in-person and virtually. Please request more information by contacting Vanessa Gonzalez-Pena at vxg357@med.miami.edu

Faculty Highlight: Guiding Students Through the Continuum of Learning

Meet three of our outstanding PT Educators whose dedication ensures consistency, mentorship, and excellence across the DPT program. Each aid in supporting lab components of multiple courses and bridge the gap between the classroom and the clinic. Together they form a backbone of support!

Dr. Monica Burns Robertson

Fun Fact: Raised in Brazil, Monica speaks Portugese as her first language. A competitive triathlete for 15 years, she has completed over 25 long-course races – including Ironman 70.3 Worlds and representing Team USE at the Long Course World Championship.

Dr. Dayadnny Alvarez

Why UM? After years supervising UM students in Acute Care, she was inspired by their professionalism and knowledge. “I took a leap into teaching in 2018 – and I’m so glad I did. Being part of this program and team is truly rewarding.”

Dr. Magda Gonzalez

Why PT? A lifelong love of sports and caring for elders led her to PT. Volunteering in high school, she was struck by the therapist-patient connection. “PT is more than a career – it’s walking with people through their most vulnerable moments with compassion and humility.”



Fueling Ability, Inspiring Community: Youth N Action Adaptive Fitness Day

At Youth N Action Adaptive Fitness Day, Pediatric SIG Chair **Chidimma Uwaomah (DPT III)** partnered with **Charley Paul (DPT III)** and **Jillian Eckrich (DPT II)** to give students hands-on experience in adaptive sports and pediatric care. The event united pediatric and sports-focused DPT students in volunteering, collaboration, and community engagement, showcasing PT's role in fostering inclusion, empowerment, and fun.

Pediatric Power in Motion



Liza Khapsalis (DPT II), Makenna Boose, Georgia McKay, Kamryn Bacchus-Larode, and Logan Burrows (all DPT III) brought energy, compassion, and skill to Youth N Action Adaptive Fitness Day—running stations, cheering athletes, and providing hands-on support. Joined by **UMPT alumna Dr. Cillien**, they embodied leadership, clinical excellence, and a shared commitment to inclusion, showcasing the passion and purpose that define movement specialists.



Student Fun Facts

Ever wonder what makes our students unique beyond the clinic and classroom? From hidden talents to surprising favorites, we're shining a spotlight on the fun, quirky, and unexpected facts that make our PT community one-of-a-kind!



Maddie (DPT 3)

When I was 15, I traveled across Austria with my cello basically living my own classical music dream.



Rachel (DPT 2)

I am a certified Pilates instructor.



Devon (DPT 1)

I'm right handed in every sport except ping pong.



Rebecca (DPT 3)

I have 3 pet capybaras.



Jake (DPT 1)

During COVID, I taught myself how to play lacrosse and ended up playing for my high school.



Vicky (DPT 3)

I have a fraternal twin sister—we look nothing alike and took totally different paths: I'm in healthcare, she's a graphic designer.

FEEDBACK



If there is content or stories you would like to see in the future newsletters,
Please let us know!

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YOU ARE & WHAT YOU
THINK!