

PT PRIDE

SEMESTER IN REVIEW

SPRING 2025



**2025 RANKED #10
IN THE UNITED STATES**



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
**DEPARTMENT of
PHYSICAL THERAPY**

**BEST
GRAD SCHOOLS
U.S. NEWS
& WORLD REPORT
RANKINGS**

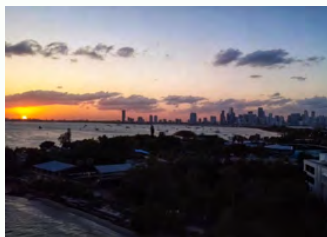


Table of Contents

Meet the UM Media Team	.....	Page 3
Graduating Class of 2025	.....	Page 4
DPT 3's Award Ceremony	.....	Page 5-6
Student Life	.....	Page 7
Dr. Bloyer Book Highlight	.....	Page 8
Marquette Gala	.....	Page 9
Special Olympics	.....	Page 10
Faculty Highlight	.....	Page 11
Feedback	.....	Page 12

MEET THE UM MEDIA TEAM

Behind every newsletter, weekly update, and Instagram post is our hardworking **UM Media team**! This group ***keeps our community informed, organized, and engaged***—whether it's creating eye-catching content, sharing important announcements, or helping prospective students discover everything our program has to offer.

Let's take a moment to recognize the creative minds making it all happen!

Media Chairs



Caroline Macri



Ali Rafieian



Charley Paul

Research Team



Omar Abadie



Rachael Senyk



Diego Perdomo



Hadi Majed

Student Life

Volunteering

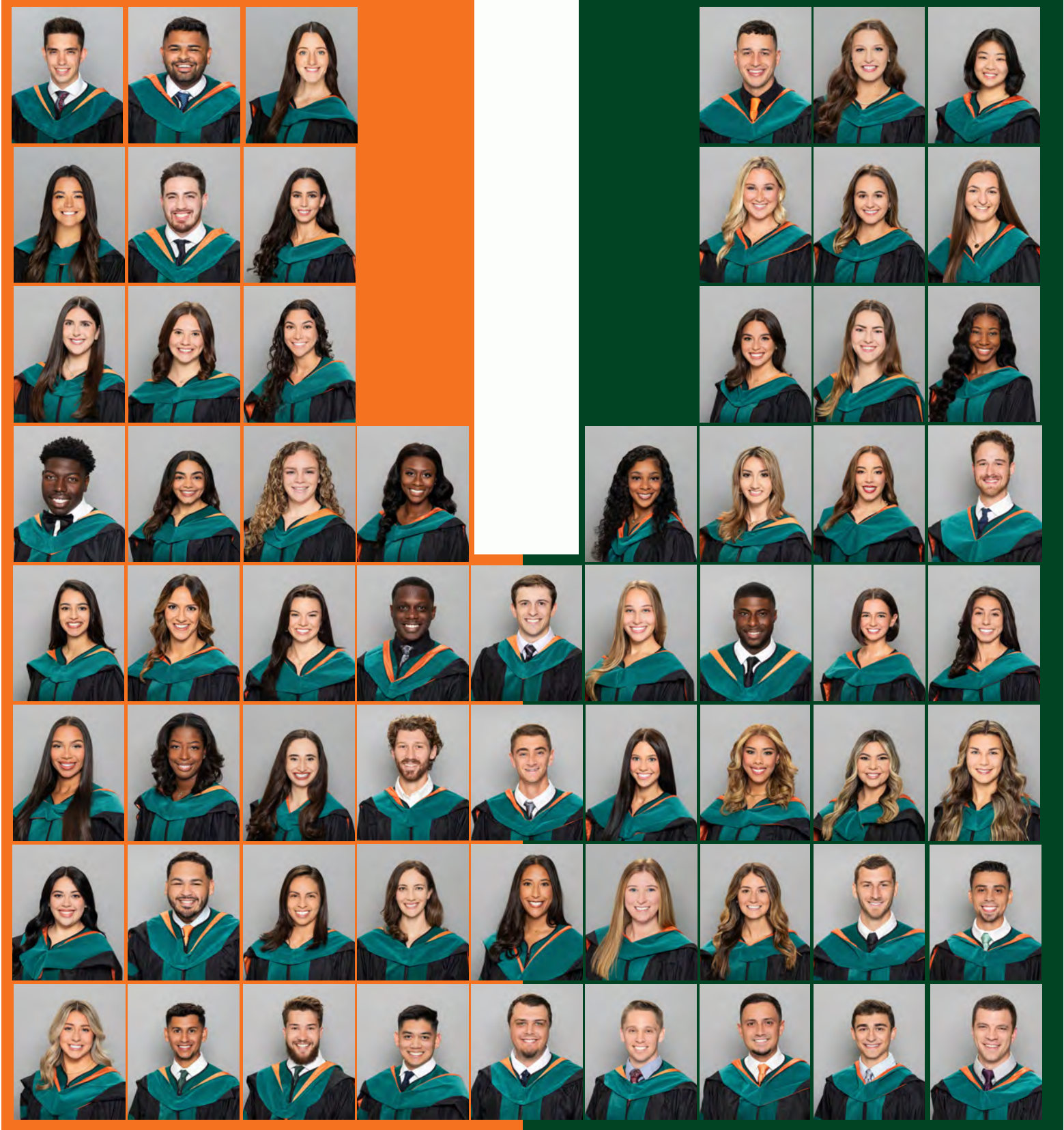


Chidimma Uwoamah



Parker Sims

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2025



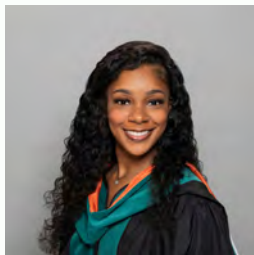
Celebrating Achievements: DPT III Awards

UMPT Chair's Award



Taylor Wright

Sherri Hayes Student Award



Kye Richardson



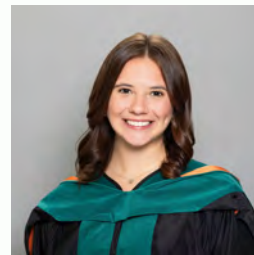
Caitlin Von Vreckin

UMPT Clinical Excellence Award



Skylar Simon

UMPT Student Service Award



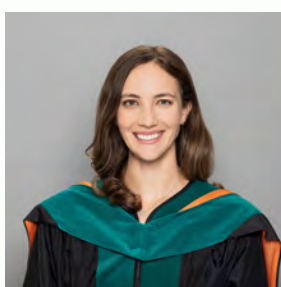
Keegan Phillips

Excellence in Therapeutic Presence Award



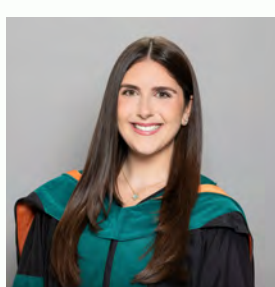
Cayla Pla

Linda Crane Memorial Award



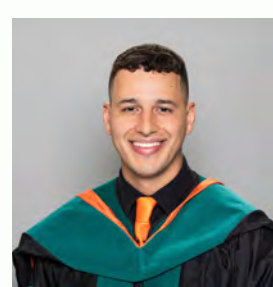
Gabriela Inojosa Tenorio

Steven J. Rose Memorial Scholarship



Paige Lewis

UMPT Student Leadership Award



Tamir Shitrit

Steven J. Rose Student Research Award



Hannah Ackleson



Jessica He



Sydnee Crawford



Sonia Punjabi

Academic Excellence Awards



Catherine Beckwith



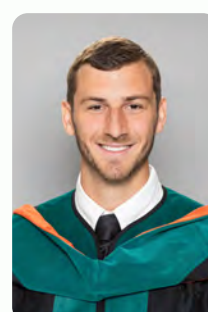
Natalie Costigan



Bianca Galassini



Jenna Kologie



David Payne



Skylar Simon

Next Steps: Residency-Bound Graduates

As they take the next step in their professional journey, we proudly recognize ***six of our graduating DPTs who have matched into prestigious residency programs.*** Their dedication to continued learning and clinical excellence is an inspiration, and we can't wait to see the impact they'll make in the field of physical therapy.



Gabriela Inojosa Tenorio, DPT

UM-JRH Cardiovascular & Pulmonary
PT Residency



Jadyn Chandler, DPT

University of Miami: Jackson
Rehabilitation Hospital
Neurological PT Residency



Cameron Schmidt, DPT

Durham, NC Veterans Affairs
Orthopedic Residency



Bianca Galassin, DPT

University of Miami:
Sports Residency



David Payne, DPT

University of Miami:
Sports Residency



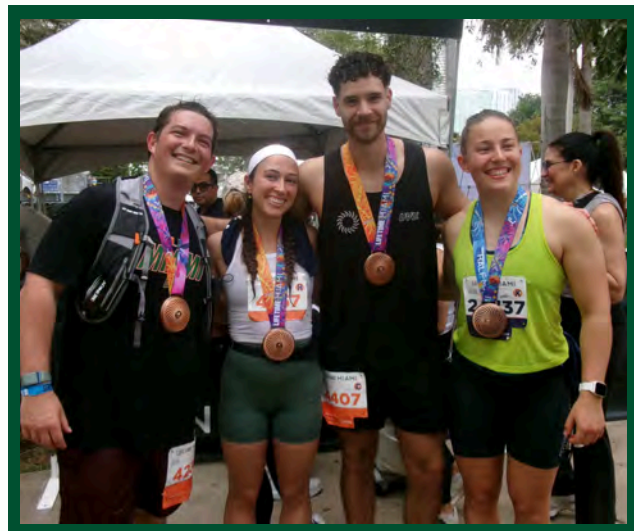
Thomas Pinedo, DPT

University of Miami:
Orthopedic Residency

STUDENT LIFE

This spring, student life at UMPT has been all about movement, growth, and hands-on learning.

Several **DPT I** students took on the **Miami Marathon**, representing UMPT with serious determination. Whether it was the full or half marathon, they managed to train through the demands of school and still having a strong showing. It was a great reminder that we don't just study movement—we live it.



Students in the **Advanced Clinical Practice: Supplemental Skills Elective** gained hands-on experience with **orthotic fabrication, ankle and foot interventions, and taping**. The elective emphasized clinical applications, allowing students to **practice techniques, build confidence, and expand their skills** in a supportive, collaborative setting.



Together, both the marathon and the elective reflect what makes the UMPT experience unique. Whether we are pushing our physical limits outside the classroom or building clinical skills inside it, we're constantly challenging ourselves to grow, support one another, and show up fully—in every setting. That's what being a DPT Cane is all about!



Pioneering Pediatric Physical Therapy

Our Very Own: Dr. Bloyer

With more than 30 years of clinical and academic expertise, **Dr. Bloyer** has **consistently championed the field of pediatric physical therapy**. Her journey—from beginning as a PTA in orthopedics to becoming a leader in pediatric care and education—reflects a deep commitment to improving outcomes for infants, children, and adolescents. That commitment now takes a significant step forward with her latest scholarly achievement: **co-authoring a new textbook aimed at transforming pediatric physical therapy education**.



Dr. Martha H. Bloyer PT, DPT, Board Certified Specialist in Pediatric PT



Eric Shamus PT, PhD

Cindy Miles PT, PhD

Tricia Catalino PT, DSc

What Sets this Book Apart?

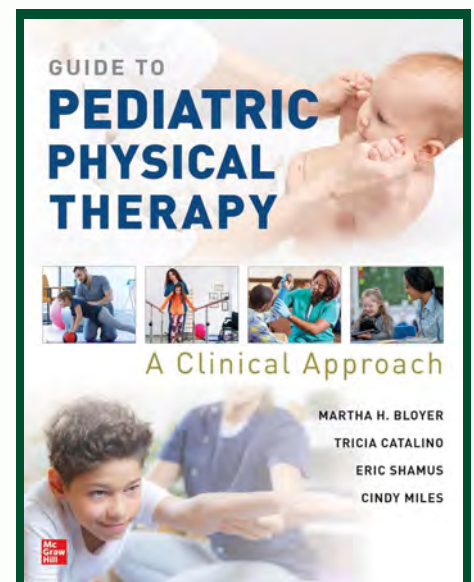
Designed for both students and clinicians, the textbook includes **25 chapters and 86 real-world cases, all grounded in the ICF framework**. Readers will find instructional videos, NPTE-style questions, a glossary, and an appendix of clinical resources. Topics spanning wide, as **Dr. Bloyer states**: “Pediatric PTs must be flexible. Understanding all aspects of development and collaborating with families is key to achieving meaningful outcomes.”

The Future of Pediatric PT

Her goal for the book is that it will not only prepare students for clinical practice and licensing exams, but also **inspire more PTs to work with the pediatric population**. As Dr. Bloyer says; “You never know when pediatric PT will become part of your journey.”

A Vision Seven Years in the Making

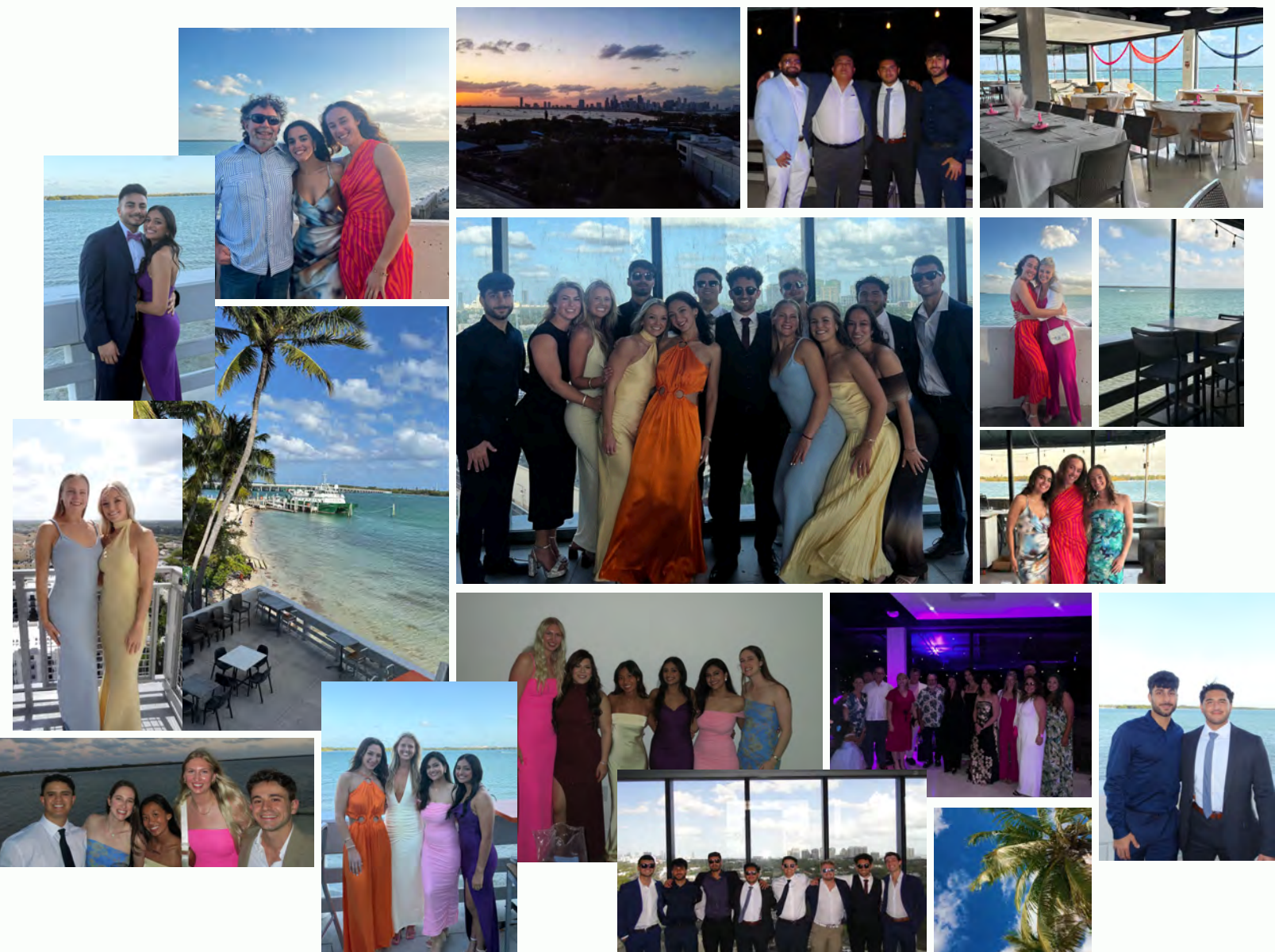
In 2017, Dr. Bloyer and Dr. Eric Shamus identified a gap in pediatric PT resources. They set out, joined by Dr. Cindy Miles and Dr. Tricia Catalino, to create a **clinically focused, case-based textbook**. The team completed their vision, to publish in January 2025 the clinically focused, case-based textbook; *Guide to Pediatric Physical Therapy: A Clinical Approach*.”



DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY: UMPT MARQUETTE GALA

This year's Marquette Gala brought students, alumni, faculty, and friends together for an **evening of celebration, connection, and purpose**. More than just a night of dinner and dancing, the Gala serves as a **meaningful fundraiser dedicated to advancing physical therapy research and innovation**.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, **proceeds from the Gala directly support groundbreaking student and faculty-led research initiatives that are shaping the future of patient care**. Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, and helped make this event possible. We can't wait to see you at next year's Gala!



Champions in Motion: Every Athlete. Every Ability. Every Victory!

At **Florida Special Olympics**, we are dedicated to empowering health, inclusion, and athletic opportunity for children of all abilities across our South Florida community. **Through volunteerism, encouragement, and hands-on support at sporting events, we can celebrate athletes of all abilities while promoting inclusion, movement, confidence, and quality of life.**

Powered by Passion. Driven to Move



Jillian Eckrich, DPT I, guides athletes with enthusiasm and care while recording each jump with precision. Her support helped ensure **every athlete had their moment to shine!**



Logan Burrows and Kamryn Bacchus-Larode, DPT IIs, are transferring their classroom skills to the field, assisting with accurate measurements. Their roles reflected the same precision and patient-centered mindset emphasized in our PT coursework.



As physical therapy students, we volunteered with the Florida Special Olympics because **we believe every child deserves the chance to be an athlete.** **Chidimma Uwaomah DPT II**, believes in using knowledge, compassion, and service to give back to the community. She shares "Volunteering not only strengthens our future as clinicians, but also reminds us why we chose this profession. **"We aim to uplift others through movement, care, and human connection."** We were proud to play a small part in creating big moments of confidence and community for all individuals. Experiences like these remind us how the foundational skills we learn in class extend far beyond the clinic, helping us make a meaningful impact through movement, inclusion, and community service.



Faculty Highlight

Meet Our Newest Faculty Member Dr. Melissa Tovin, PT, PhD



DR. MELISSA TOVIN, PT, PHD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, BOARD
CERTIFIED PEDIATRIC CLINICAL
SPECIALIST

Since joining **the University of Miami in June 2024**, **Dr. Tovin** has brought her passion for pediatric physical therapy and dedication to healthcare equity into the classroom and beyond. A **Board-Certified Pediatric Clinical Specialist**, Dr. Tovin teaches **Clinical Research I** and **Health Systems Science 2** in the DPT program and also contributes to qualitative research education in the **residency** and **PhD programs**.

Research Focus:

One of Dr. Tovin's key areas of research explores health disparities and service access for **adolescents and adults with autism spectrum disorders**. Her second line of research centers on **education outcomes and faculty development**, aiming to shape more effective teaching strategies and curriculum planning for future PTs.

"Understanding the unique health needs and effective therapeutic interventions for individuals with autism can improve their quality of life and highlight the vital role of physical therapy across the lifespan."

Teaching Philosophy:

Dr. Tovin is known for her **engaging** and **compassionate** teaching style.

"I love sharing real-world experiences with patients and families. It helps students recognize their potential to make a meaningful difference—and the importance of being caring PTs."

Why UM?

"The PT Department is big—with **DPT, PhD, Residencies, labs, and clinics**—but it feels like a supportive family. Everyone collaborates, and that really drives our success."

Outside the Classroom:

When she's not teaching or researching, Dr. Tovin is:

- **Scuba certified** and enjoys diving along the South Florida coast
- A proud dog mom to **two chocolate labs** and a **French bulldog**
- Passionate about **pediatric physical therapy**, which has always been at the heart of her clinical career



FEEDBACK



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

Use this link to fill out our google form:
<https://forms.gle/UoMiivABuofk6JDX9>

Follow us on Social Media



[@umiamipt](https://www.instagram.com/umiamipt)

RAFFLE!



FILL OUT THE GOOGLE FORM FOR A CHANCE TO WIN **FREE** UM BACKPACK!