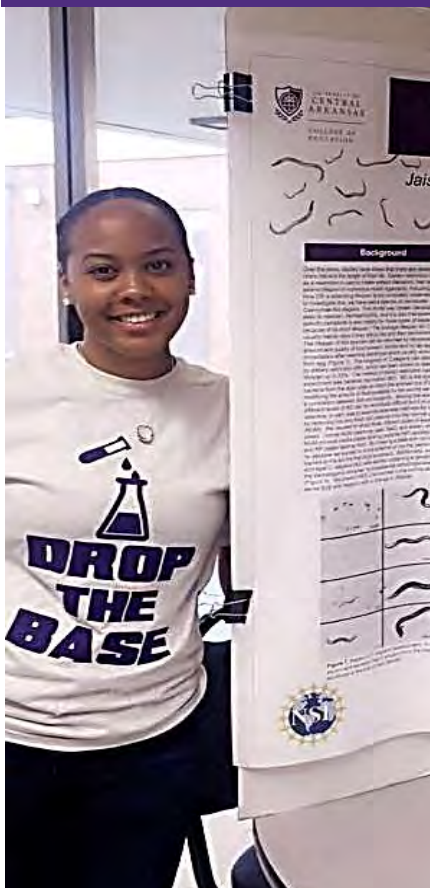


# Great Happenings in Academics

September 2016



UNIVERSITY OF  
CENTRAL  
ARKANSAS™

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## *A Word from our Provost*

Dear Colleagues,

This month, we are sharing with you information about activities in the Academic Advising Center and their focus on building relationships with our academic departments to foster student success. Also, be sure to read about the involvement of UCA's OT faculty and students in the opening of new therapeutic park at the Conway Human Development Center. We also feature some interesting news about individual faculty members and the work by Doug Isanhart's daughter to assist with health care and social services in Kenya.

We know that this newsletter contains only a sampling of the impressive accomplishments of our academic community, and we want to continue to spread the word about our activities. Please keep sending noteworthy items to Suzanne Massey at 450-3126 or [SMassey@uca.edu](mailto:SMassey@uca.edu).

Sincerely,



Steven W. Runge  
Executive Vice President and Provost



*Did you know  
UCA students  
come from 42  
states, 72  
foreign countries  
and all 75  
Arkansas  
counties?*



## Advising Goes Above and Beyond

It's 7:55 a.m. on a balmy Monday morning in early June, and the first floor of Harrin Hall is already buzzing with nervous energy. A large group of eager SOS student volunteers is dancing outside the Advising Center, greeting incoming freshmen with cheers and high fives as they enter the building. It's a summer registration day, and a crowd of recent high school graduates is lined up and getting checked-in for advising appointments. Today, like most days during the summer, nearly 90 students will go through a summer orientation session, followed by a one-on-one meeting with an academic advisor, where students will discuss their major and register for fall classes.

"This summer, over 2,500 incoming freshmen, transfer, and readmitted students have come through our Advising Center," according to Leigh Ann DenHartog, Director of Advising. "It's an exciting time for these kids, but it can also be a little intimidating for them. Our staff is always willing to go above and beyond to answer their questions and help make their transition to UCA as seamless as possible."

But summer orientation and registration is just one-piece of the much larger puzzle that the AAC is tasked to manage. Staffed by 20 full-time advisors, the AAC assigns each advisor to partner with specific colleges and departments to build rapport and ensure that program updates are communicated as efficiently as possible. Along with advising an average of 220 freshman and sophomores each semester, advisors are also responsible for developing programming and presentations for Welcome Week and Bear Facts

Days, organizing an annual Majors Fair, marshaling at each Commencement, and manually updating over 5,000 major and minor changes in Banner each academic year.

Beginning last fall, the AAC has also taken on a significant role in processing graduation applications. Students apply for graduation once they are juniors, and advisors complete a graduation audit using DegreeWorks and the Undergraduate Bulletin. The goal is to streamline the graduation application process and, ultimately, to allow the faculty advisors more time for focusing on major requirements and to ensure students graduate on time. To date, the AAC has processed more than 2,200 graduation audits.

Along with an active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, the Advising Center also makes an intentional effort to creatively engage with students as they enter Harrin Hall. Each year, the AAC adopts a theme, and this year's theme is "Who Will You Become?" This theme is proclaimed on a massive chalkboard wall spanning the main hallway of Harrin Hall, and students are encouraged to reflect and then "leave their mark" on the chalkboard wall by writing down who they hope to become throughout their college experience. Across from the chalkboard wall hangs a gallery of student portraits juxtaposed with inspirational quotes that encourage students to consider the roles that integrity, leadership, perseverance, and intellectual curiosity play in shaping the men and women they will become.

At UCA's Academic Advising Center, the focus is always on building relationships in order to foster student success. "We strive to work alongside every department on campus. It's always a team effort. At the end of the day, it's all about serving the students."

## OT Department Gets Serious About Playing

Many from the community attended a new therapeutic park dedication at the Conway Human Development Center on Saturday, July 30th.

The addition was a product of combined efforts from CHDC's Physical Therapy Department and the University of Central Arkansas' Occupational Therapy department, including Dr. Tina Mankey and her students, who produced recommendations regarding proper pieces of play equipment for the park to be a fun place that serves therapeutic purposes as well.

The park was paid for by assistance from CHDC's Volunteer Council, the state of Arkansas, and the Department of Developmental Disabilities Services.

"We have created an integrated inclusive therapeutic park that our residents and the community as a whole can benefit from and enjoy for years to come," CHDC Superintendent Sarah Murphy said in an email.

Murphy said the park is not just a cooperative project but will also be ongoing to keep the recommendations fresh as the standards in the field change for occupational and physical therapy.

"We are so excited about this therapeutic park," she said. "We are very proud and hope this shows our ongoing investment into our future."

Murphy said the new park is a renovation of the original that was built in 1965 and members of the community can reserve it at no cost.

"We are blessed to share this park with our community," she said.

Jennifer Moore, the chair of the department of occupational therapy at UCA, said they were excited to collaborate with CHDC to provide students with disabilities an opportunity to play.

In addition to the play equipment recommendations, Moore said the OT students also created signs to post near the new playground items to help others understand how to use properly, just as you would find in a gym near exercise equipment, hopefully helping them feel more secure.



"The bottom line is all kids with any ability should have the opportunity to play," Moore said. "That's the primary purpose, and this playground allows that."

Moore said the playground exposes children to new opportunities they might not have had before including learning balance and social skills and developing motor skills.

She said that while the students and children might see the park as fun, teachers can see it as therapy.

"We are so appreciative of this collaboration," Moore said.



*Article by Hilary Andrews, Log Cabin Democrat Staff Writer*



## Isanhart Helps Kenya's Forgotten Children

Doug Isanhart, Executive in Residence and Lecturer of Management in the College of Business, recently shared an extraordinary story about his daughter Leia's effort to establish health care and social services in the poorest parts of Nairobi, Kenya. As senior technical advisor of health for Catholic Relief Services, Leia Isanhart, in collaboration with Special Olympics and Adventist Center for Care and Support, was instrumental in developing a pilot program to care for children with intellectual and physical disabilities and provide positive parenting training to families. These forgotten children, previously locked away, receive the physical therapy and social interaction necessary to achieve their full human potential. Since 2013, six early childhood development centers have been established and 270 children with special needs have been cared for in the slums of Nairobi. That number is continuing to grow, reports Isanhart.



Leia is a 2000 UCA Honors College graduate with a BBA in Economics. After graduation, she joined the Peace Corps and served three years in West Africa. After returning to the states she entered grad school at Emory and earned a Master of Public Health (MPH). She has lived in 5 African nations and now lives in Baltimore where she is a single parent of two children, ages 7 and 3.

## Announcements

Dr. Steve Tucker, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science, along with three former graduate students (Melissa Allen, Ashley Patterson, and Alex Fotioo) were authors on a research presentation at the National Athletic Trainers' Association Clinical Symposia & AT Expo in Baltimore, MD, June 22-25, 2016. The title of the study is "The Effects of Wearing a Portable Media Armband on Muscle Activation of the Biceps Brachii."

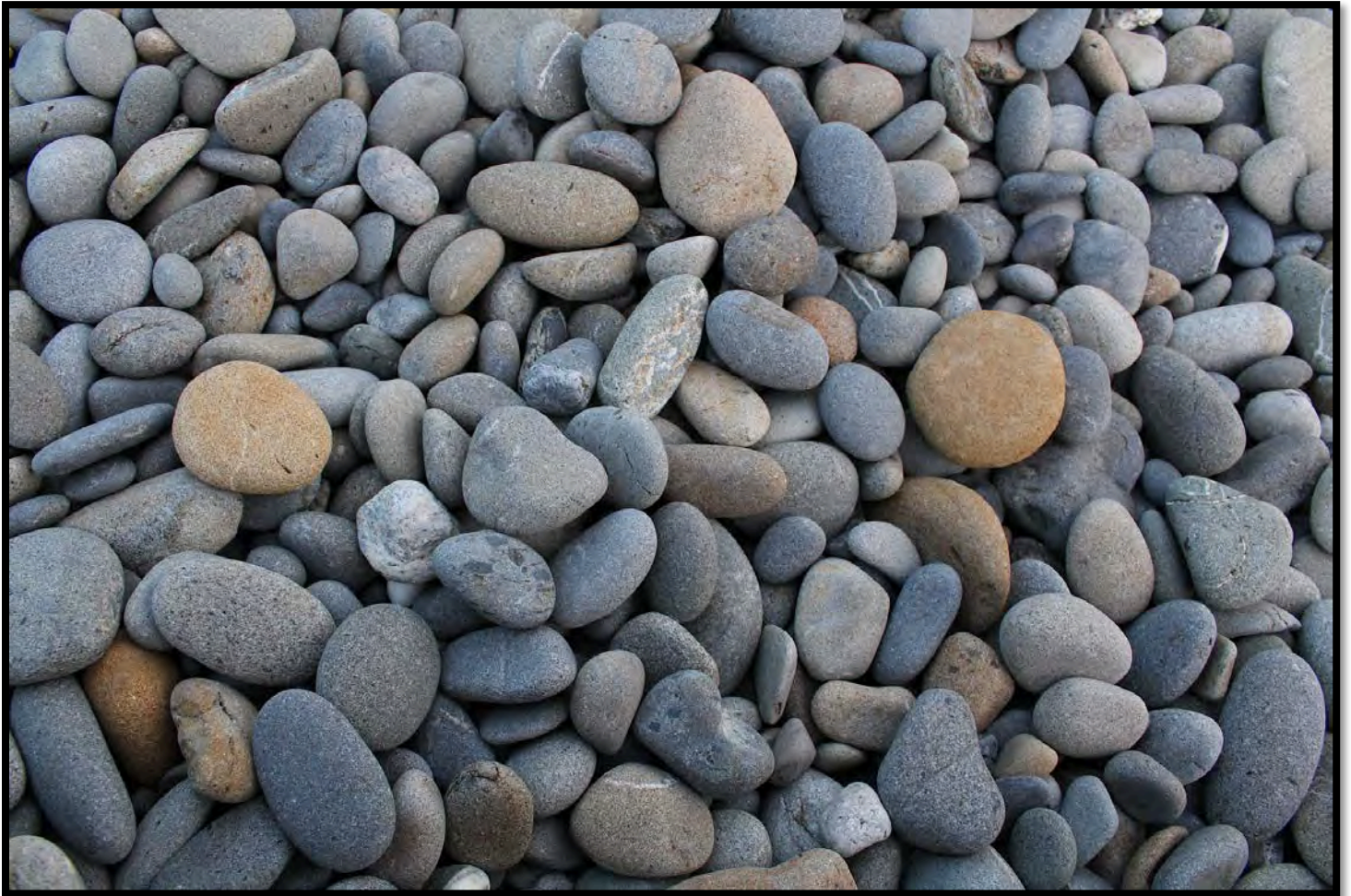
\* \* \*

Emily Hahn, Psychology student, has been awarded a Psi Chi Undergraduate Scholarship. Emily is one of four undergraduates nationwide to receive this award (the other winners were from Florida State University, New York University, and the University of Colorado). Emily is currently doing a research internship at UAMS.

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Dr. Towino Paramby, Assistant Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders, recently received notification of acceptance of a poster presentation entitled, "Effects of Airflow Exercises on Voice Handicap & Acoustic Measures: Preliminary Findings From Ongoing Clinical Trial." This poster received special recognition as a Meritorious Poster Submission. Additionally, Dr. Paramby is presenting with Dr. Balaji Rangarathnam, a graduate from the CSD PhD Consortium; Zachary Davis and Emily Baird, both current CSD MS students; and others. The Meritorious Poster Submission recognition is for proposals judged by the Convention Program Committee to show extraordinary, exceptional, and innovative work. Each Topic Committee has the option of recommending one or two top-rated posters for this special distinction. ASHA received 1901 poster submissions in 2016, and only 48 were selected for meritorious recognition.

*Photography by Steve Runge*



*Skippin' Stones (2016)*