



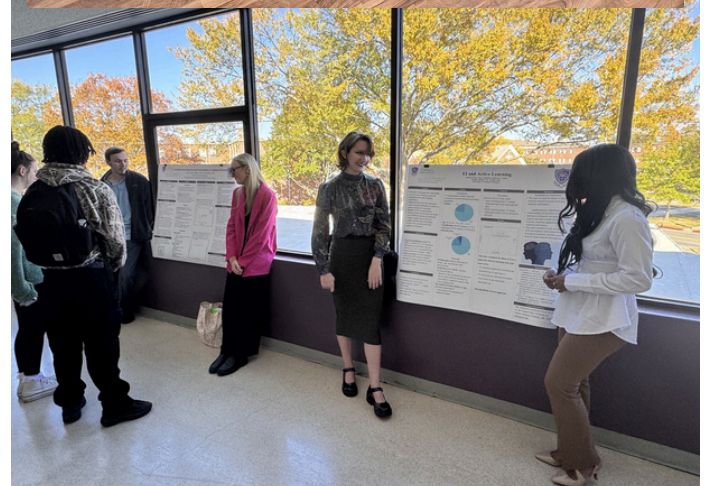
SIGNs

Significant & Important Good News

February 2025

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Significant & Important Good News



*Dean Nancy
Berryman Reese*

UCA College of Health and Behavioral Sciences

In past newsletters, I've written frequently about the impact we in the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences have on our students and their futures. In this column, I want to talk about the impact our students and graduates have on the lives of Arkansans and citizens from around the globe. Here in the UCA College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, we prepare students to improve lives by teaching them to deliver excellent health care, to educate others about healthy eating and food preparation, to become future educators of our children, to connect with and provide care for those experiencing challenges like depression, anxiety, and addiction, and so much more.

Our students spend hundreds of hours providing all these services to people in Arkansas, across the U.S., and abroad during their time at UCA. Not only do they receive a high-quality education, our students are ready to engage in their respective professions upon graduation. Because of the education they have received at UCA, our graduates go on to improve the lives of many of you, your family members, and your friends. If you live in Arkansas, you likely have been, or will, receive care from one of our outstanding graduates. Because of our graduates, your lives, and the lives of your family members, will be healthier and more productive.

Throughout the SIGNs newsletter, you will see many examples of the opportunities we provide our students and the ways they engage in those opportunities. I am grateful every day to be part of an institution of higher education that, every single day, helps students learn and grow, have brighter futures, and contribute so much to society. Thank you for your continued support of UCA, the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, and our wonderful students!





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Morgan Drayton

Director of Development, CHBS

We have a lot of exciting news from the Division of Advancement, starting with the UCA's eleventh annual UCA Day of Giving. Last year, 2,369 donors from 41 states and 73 countries worldwide contributed \$1,466,334 on Day of Giving. We hope to keep the momentum going, so mark your calendar for March 13, 2025.

Funds raised during the Day of Giving support many needs, including scholarships, state-of-the-art equipment, research, and experiential learning opportunities that prepare students to be leaders in regional and global economies.

Help us make a difference for our students! You can give back directly to the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, your department, or the fund of your choice. When giving online at uca.edu/dayofgiving, donors can select and give specific funds among student, campus, and community impact categories.

For more information on how to get involved with the college by giving your time or your financial resources, please feel free to reach out.





CHBS Advisory Board Highlight



April Bennett, President of Baptist Health Medical Center in Conway

I often get asked why I chose healthcare, or more specifically, healthcare leadership. My answer is simple - I chose nursing as a ministry, to be at the bedside caring for those that needed someone to hold their hand, offer a prayer, or provide comfort in some small way. I quickly found that there was a ministry in taking care of the people who are taking care of the patients, which led me to my first experience and so many more in healthcare leadership. Having transitioned from cleaning houses and daycares to being a dietary aide in a nursing home to serving as a patient care technician in a hospital and then as a nurse and charge nurse, I am truly passionate about ensuring we are taking care of both our people and our patients.

When my husband and I relocated to Conway with our two little boys - Aiden and Alex - in the summer of 2020 so I could serve as the Chief Nursing Office for Baptist Health Medical Center-Conway, we weren't sure what to expect: we were experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic and related shut-downs, were unfamiliar with the area and schools, and didn't know anyone. What we found, however, was an incredible community that we are blessed to call home!





CHBS - ITC Introduces AI Simulation to Annual IPE Forum: Pioneering the Future of Collaborative Learning

The College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (CHBS) Interprofessional Teaching Center (ITC) successfully introduced a groundbreaking addition to this year's Interprofessional Education (IPE) Forum: An Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven patient simulation. For the first time, students from multiple health professions worked together to navigate the complexities of a virtual patient—a 37-year-old woman preparing for bariatric surgery, whose medical, nutritional, psychological, and social needs were as dynamic as they were challenging. This innovation marked a significant leap forward in preparing students for real-world, team-based care, providing an authentic and interactive learning experience that mirrored the unpredictability of patient interactions.

Developed by CHBS faculty, the AI simulation showcased the potential of AI in healthcare education and set the stage for future advancements in interprofessional collaboration. Students engaged with the AI client in real-time, refining their ability to communicate, problem-solve, and develop care plans as a team. Insights gained from this pilot will guide enhancements to future IPE events, with the potential to scale the initiative to include additional professions and more intricate case scenarios. By weaving technology into education, CHBS demonstrated its commitment to shaping the future of healthcare. This event was just the beginning of an exciting new chapter!

Text written with the assistance of ChatGPT



Image created by DALL-E



Peer Support: Expanding the Team at the Community Care Clinic

The Community Care Clinic is excited to announce the addition of peer support services, made possible by a grant from the AR Opioid Recovery Partnership led by Dr.

Stephanie Rose. This initiative introduces two dedicated peer recovery specialists, Christine Bailey, BS-Addiction, CIP, and Millie Goins, BS, IBCLC to the clinic team. Their experiences and training equip them to provide compassionate support to individuals navigating recovery from any addictive behaviors including gambling, alcohol use, social media, opioids, nicotine, or food-related challenges.



Christine serves as our community-facing recovery specialist, leading our SMART Recovery groups, providing one on one support for individuals, and connecting individuals and organizations with vital recovery resources.



Millie, our student-facing provider, is available to provide education sessions for classes and student organizations about addiction recovery and offers direct support to students through referrals.

These new services reinforce the clinic's commitment to providing comprehensive, whole-person care and addressing the growing need for accessible addiction recovery resources.





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One Of Our Very Own Saving Lives

One of the Community Care Clinic's amazing Physical Therapists, Chris Rigsby, is not just changing lives but saving lives too.

In February, Chris traveled across the country to donate 1.5 liters of bone marrow to a patient with Leukemia. Way to go!





CHBS IPE Excellence and Innovation Award

Congratulations to the “It’s A Party” Team on receiving the CHBS IPE Excellence & Innovation Award back in August! This group demonstrated excellence in IPE curriculum development creating a new innovative experience that reached across 4 programs. This team included Becky Gray (School of Nursing), Erin Garrett (School of Nursing), Joanna Cupp (Nutrition and Family Sciences), Juliane Crafton (School of Nursing), Kathryn Carroll (Nutrition and Family Sciences), Katy Oswalt (Communication Sciences & Disorders), Lynn Holloway (Occupational Therapy), Rebekah Luong (Nutrition and Family Sciences), and Chad Lairamore (Interprofessional Education). Pictured below is Dean Nancy Reese with the “It’s A Party” team!





Welcome



CHBS's Littlest Recruits!



Paul & Fredrick Reed

We want to send our warmest congratulations to our very own Associate Dean, Dr. Darshon Reed, and her new little additions!





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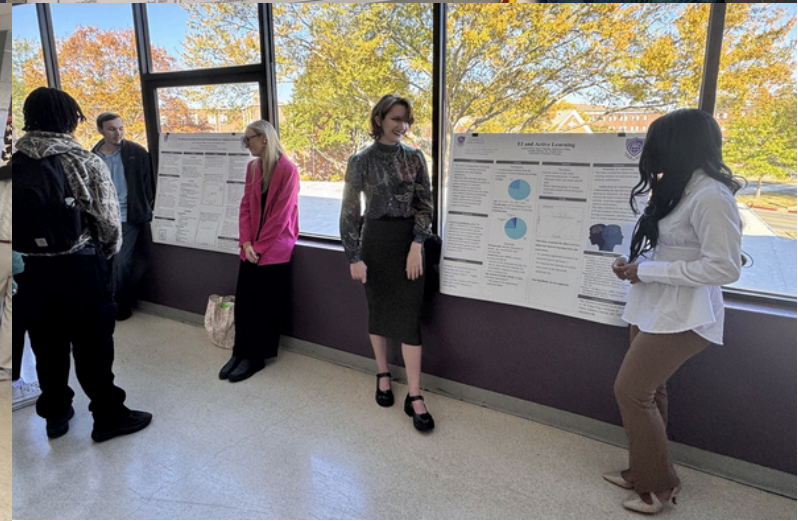
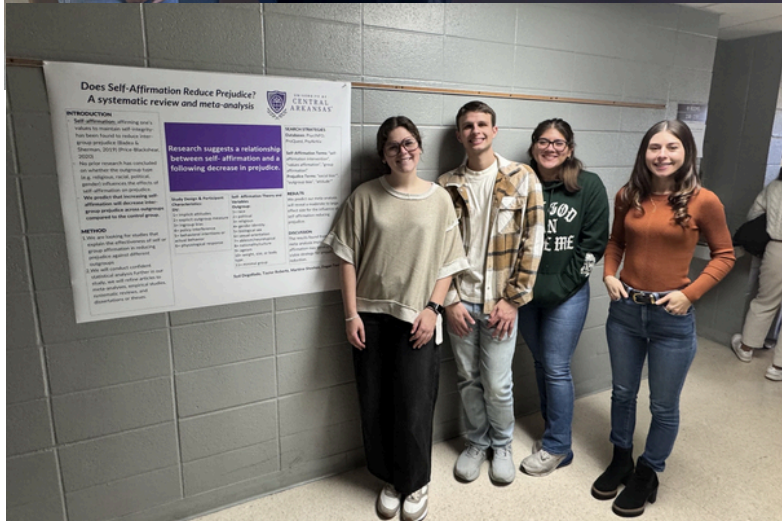
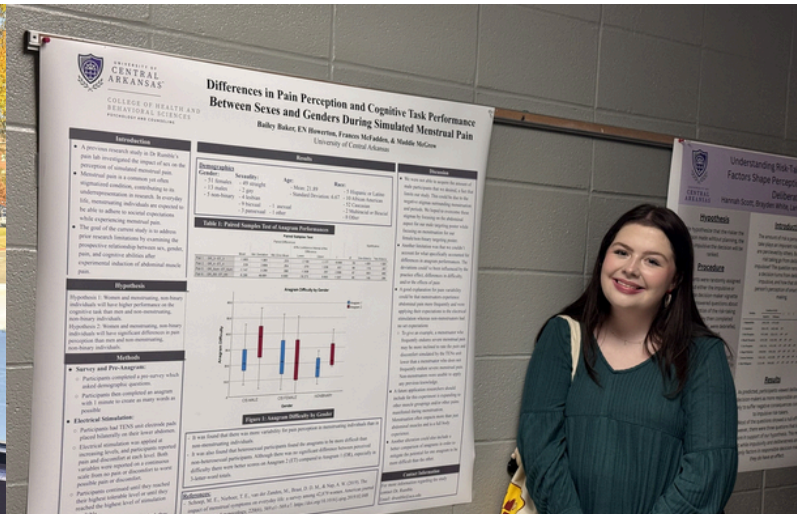
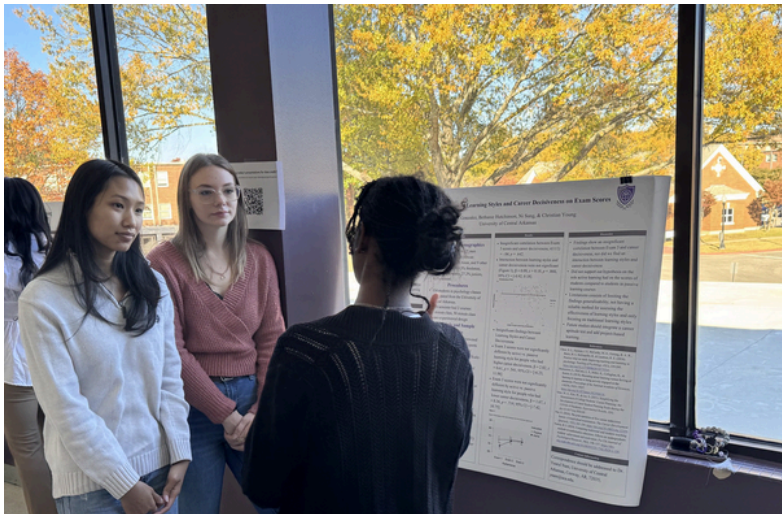
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Arkansas Symposium for Psychology Students Undergraduate Presentations

Congratulations to the undergraduate Psychology students who completed their research projects and presented last fall!





UCA Living Learning Communities

Living Learning Communities

Beginning in fall 2024, all first-time freshmen at UCA were included in UCA's Living Learning Communities, which offer an academic focus and theme for each first-year residence hall, along with the Minton Commuter College for first-year students living off campus. The College of Health and Behavioral Sciences supports the HPAW@Conway and WISH@Arkansas Living Learning Communities. Learn more about all the Living Learning Communities at uca.edu/llc.

About Your Academic Coordinators

Every Living Learning Community's academic programming is organized by an academic coordinator, a faculty member or graduate assistant whose field of expertise aligns with the academic theme of the community. HPAW is led by Ashley Brink, a graduate student in occupational therapy, and WISH is led by Dr. Stephanie Rose, associate professor and program coordinator of the addiction studies program at UCA. Academic coordinators not only host programs and events in the residence halls, but also hold office hours in the residence halls, connect students with campus resources, and meet with students for one-on-one support in navigating their first year academic experience.





UCA Living Learning Communities

About HPAW

Designed to immerse students in an environment that promotes individual and community health and wellness, HPAW@Conway is a place where students focus on overall health and wellbeing during their college experience. HPAW@Conway students are the next generation of healthcare professionals. Through the support and curriculum built into the learning community, students work alongside faculty and student mentors who share their drive and passion for helping others. With study spaces designed for physical and mental wellness, HPAW@Conway centers wellness in and outside of the classroom.

About WISH

Housed in UCA's only residence hall just for women, WISH@Arkansas empowers women to excel in their studies and become leaders and advocates in STEM and healthcare. WISH@Arkansas programming and coursework focuses on equity in STEM-related fields, and is open to all STEM and Healthcare majors, regardless of gender. WISH@Arkansas provides a welcoming community for students with similar goals as they learn and grow together. With specialized faculty and student mentors in the residence hall, this community is designed to help students meet the challenges of their first year on their journey to become tomorrow's leaders in healthcare and STEM. The College of Science and Engineering joins CHBS in supporting WISH@Arkansas.





Achievements

Psychology and Counseling

Congratulations to Franchelsa Francisco on successfully defending her psychology honors project titled "Effects of Adverse Generational Life Experiences in Education on First-Generation College Students of Minority Groups"

Congratulations to William Owens, ASMSA class of 2017, who opened the Alumni Pathways Speaker Series on Thursday September 26th, 2024.

Congratulations to our graduate student Mei Ishimura, who recently received a Global Citizen Scholarship!

Congratulations to Beth Rachlin for successfully defending her dissertation titled "The Relationship of State Hope, Trait Hope, Connectedness, and Positive Religious Coping with Psychological Distress in University Students With and Without Trauma Symptoms" on August 15, 2024!

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Elson Bihm for being awarded Fellow Status by the Arkansas Psychological Association!

Congratulations to Counseling Psychology doctoral student, Will Brock, for being awarded a VA Health Professionals Scholarship

Please join me in congratulating the 2024-2025 Officers of the Psychology Student of Color, President: Kathryn Armstrong, Vice President: Franchelsa Francisco, Treasurer: Kat DeJesus, Public Relations Chair: Tiera Chism

Congratulations to Dr. Anna Park, who was one of three finalists for the university's Teaching Excellence Award.



Communication Sciences and Disorders

Congratulations to Dr. Towino Paramby, associate professor of CSD, on completing his renewal and approval as a Board Certified Specialist in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders. As he notes, there are only three Board Certified Specialists in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders in the state of Arkansas.





SIGNs

Achievements

Congratulations to Dr. Sun Thao, who has been selected to attend the Grant Writing and Mentorship in Education Research (GAMER) program for fall 2024.

Interprofessional Education

Dr. Chad Lairamore has been appointed as a co-chair for the Healthcare Access and Quality sub-committee for the National Academies of Practice Interprofessional Strategic Initiative.

School of Nursing

Nursing students Hannah Davis, Ryan Davis, Kaitlin Lensing, and Hunter Elmore participated in a prostate cancer screening event sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Office of Human Resources.

UCA Nursing seniors Morgan Ponthieux and Jennifer Resendiz were two of ten nursing students who were accepted into the Arkansas Center for Nursing's BSN Young Leaders Program.

The UCA School of Nursing is excited to announce that the dual enrollment program, Bridge2BSN, has been fully approved by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.

Congratulations to Megan Moix DNP, APRN, FNP-C on being selected by The Board of Directors for the Arkansas Center for Nursing, Inc., as the Arkansas Center for Nursing's 40 Nurse Leaders Under 40 for 2024.



Physical Therapy

Congratulations to Dr. Charlotte Yates on her recent appointment to the Arkansas Brain Injury Council (ABIC) Pediatric Subcommittee.

Nutrition and Family Sciences

Dylan Silverman-Barnes was recognized by Congressman French Hill on the House Floor in Washington.

Health Sciences

Congratulations to Dr. Duston Morris on his recent appointment to the National Board for Health and Wellness Coaching (NBHWC) Program Approval Council (PAC)





Achievements

Exercise and Sports Science

Congratulations to Brittany Tucker on completing her Certificate of Training as a Phlebotomy Technician!

Congratulations to Mike Gallagher on completing a course on Artificial Intelligence from Auburn University.

Congratulations to Kim Eskola, who was elected as Vice Chair for the ASUN Conference FARs!



Congratulations to Bryce Daniels, Kim Eskola, Mike Gallagher and Brittany Tucker for attending the CETAL AI Mini-Conference at UCA prior to the fall semester.

Congratulations to Abby Lewis Fulbright (EXSS graduate student) who was awarded the Arkansas INBRE Travel award to present at the Central States American College of Sport Medicine conference.

Occupational Therapy

In 2022, as part of a doctoral program in occupational therapy, Keely Cotter completed her capstone project that created agricultural opportunities for students of all abilities. After completing her doctoral program, Cotter accepted a position as an occupational therapist and plans to incorporate her love of livestock and passion for inclusion into her career.





Awards

School of Nursing

Congratulations to Kelly Van Gundy (nursing) who was named the 2024 Atlantic Sun Conference Women's Soccer Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

Psychology



Please join me in congratulating Dr. Varghese for being a finalist for the university's External Funding Impact Award!

Grants

Exercise and Sports Science

Congratulations to Kendal Carter (Nursing student) for being awarded a SURF grant for her research project on the relationship between carbohydrates and migraines during the late luteal phase in women prone to migraines. Kendal has been awarded three grants under the mentorship of Dr. Brittany Tucker (EXXS).

School of Nursing

Dr. Kerry Jordan, Dr. Melissa Allen and Annette Gartman have been awarded a \$166,762 from the Alzheimer's Association Center for Dementia Respite Innovation (CDRI) to enhance the quality and availability of dementia-specific respite care for people living with dementia and their caregivers in Central Arkansas.



Drs. Susan Gatto, Julie Meaux and Laura Hall were awarded \$476,100 from the Arkansas Office of Skill Development to design, develop, and implement an innovative program to fill the ever-increasing nursing workforce gap through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program. They would like to thank CHI St. Vincent for being their Industry partner and contributing the funds necessary to qualify for the grant.





Grants

Psychology

Dr. Nam has received the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP) Early Career Psychologist Travel Grant (\$1,000) for the accepted talk presentation at the 2025 SPSP Preconference: Teaching of Personality and Social Psychology in Denver, Colorado.

Dr. Lee (Co-Investigator, Department of Psychology & Counseling), Dr. Thao (Principal Investigator, Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders), and Dr. Stephanie White (Co-Investigator, Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders) received a UCA Foundational Grant this year to support their community service project, entitled “Collaborative Advocacy in Action: Empowering Families and Training Future Speech-Language Pathologists through Interprofessional Collaboration”

Dr. Park (co-investigator) and Dr. Harris Bozer (principal investigator at Tarleton State University) were awarded an NIH grant in the amount of \$408,000 to study neural components of pain based on their project entitled “Elucidating the neural oscillations of the sensory-discriminative and affective-motivational dimensions of pain”

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Dr. Sun Kim Thao has received a grant from the UCA Foundation!

Physical Therapy

UCA-I-TAP is one of 21 recipients chosen to receive grant funding from nearly 200 applicants across the country. Funds will be used to support I-TAP programming at UCA and also to expand the programming to other universities in Arkansas.





SIGNs

Presentations

Psychology

Dr. Vincent Medina, graduate students Mackenzie Criner, Mei Ishimura, Ashley Maestas, Jordan Miller, undergraduate students Kayla Evans-Kennard, Anna Temple, and Dr. Cody Mashburn from Kennesaw State University authored poster presentations at the Psychonomic Society's annual meeting and a pre-conference.

Dr. Christina Jeffrey gave a symposium on a focus group study on behalf of the research team at the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (div. 2) annual conference.

UCA Psychology students and faculty presented research at the 2024 American Psychological Association convention in Seattle, Washington.

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Dr. Melissa Allen (PT) and Richelle Weese were accepted to present at Arkansas Speech-Language Hearing Association in February 2025.

Interprofessional Education

Congratulations to Dr. Chad Lairamore and Lynn Jackson from Texas Christian University on the acceptance of their abstract titled "Building Bridges to Care: An Interprofessional Network to Expand Preventative-Care" at the upcoming National Academies of Practice Annual Meeting and Conference.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Sun Thao and her multidisciplinary team of Dr. Lesley Graybeal from Living Learning Communities, and Mr. Reuel Shepherd from UCA Outreach and community engagement, and Bridgette Hearn and Jordan Rogers, students from Communication Sciences and Disorders, for the acceptance of their presentation proposal at American Speech-Language Hearing Association Convention.

Occupational Therapy

Dr. Brittany Saviers was invited to lead a 1.5 hour presentation and panel discussion for the American Occupational Therapy Association's Academic Leadership Councils Fall Meeting on the topic of international fieldwork.





Publications

Psychology & Counseling

Dr. Rumble and colleagues have a new paper accepted for publication, entitled “Pain-related Injustice Appraisals, Sickle Cell Stigma, and Racialized Discrimination in the Youth with Sickle Cell Disease: A Preliminary Investigation. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*”

Congratulations to Dr. Jeffrey, Dr. Ridley, Dr. Quintana, and Dr. Terrebonne on the acceptance of their article on the training of the thematic mapping method into the *Journal of Human Services: Training, Research, and Practice*.

Drs. Lee, Wages, and Nam are thrilled to announce that their collaborative research entitled “Perceptions of student learning effectiveness: Exploring active versus passive learning in the psychology classroom” has been accepted for peer-reviewed publication!

Psychology Alumnus, Aaron King, recently had a publication accepted in an international peer reviewed journal.

School of Nursing

Dr. Pam Ashcraft, Professor, had an article accepted for publication in *Research in Nursing and Health (RINAH)* entitled “Promoting the Mission and Vision of SNRS”.

Interprofessional

The Physical Therapy department and School of Nursing collaborated to publish three physical therapy simulation scenarios with the American Council for Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT). This interprofessional team consisted of Lara Davis (PT), Margaret McGee (PT), Erin Garrett (SON), and Sarah Luyet (SON).

Dr. Seungyeon Lee, Dr. Sunjung Thao, and her former UCA students from the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders have a manuscript published in the *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties*:





Publications

Physical Therapy

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Rachel Scott, PhD in PT graduate, along with her dissertation committee on the recent publication of her dissertation entitled "Comparison of Two Methods for Measuring Chronotropic Response to Exercise: Heart Rate-Work Rate Slope Versus Percent Change in Heart Rate-Work Rate Slope - A Cross-Sectional Study"

Health Sciences

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Dustin Morris on his contribution to the recently accepted publication, "Identifying Disproportionate Impacts in Arkansas: New Considerations for Environmental Justice Mapping and Implications for Leaders." This article was part of Dr. Emily Lane's Dissertation.

We are proud to announce that this year's CHBS Student Research Symposium will be held on April 15th, 2025 in the Farris Center.





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