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Athletic Training Education Program

Spring 2011

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University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Athletic Training Education Program

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Citation

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Athletic Training Education Program. (2011). Athletic Training Education Program Newsletter, Spring 2011. *Athletic Training Education Newsletter*. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/atepnews/2>

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Alumna Prepares for Medical School After Success at Renowned Orthopaedic Clinic

Lauren Poindexter had an epiphany one day while observing an ACL reconstruction surgery that led her to medical school this fall.

“While at the Steadman Clinic, I was constantly in and out of the operating room, assisting the surgeons in the clinic, communicating with our radiology team, and working very closely with all the patients,” Poindexter said. “It was during a routine ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) reconstruction by Dr. William Sterett that I found myself observing from the shadows, subtly moving my hands like the surgeon’s, looking at the video feed from the arthroscopic camera to find evidence of the same pathologies I saw on the MRI, and considering which surgical approach for reconstruction would be the most beneficial for this particular patient.”

Poindexter, a 2005 graduate of the University of Arkansas with a Master of Science degree in kinesiology with a concentration in athletic training, enrolls this August at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine in Roanoke. She expects to enter a surgical residency program following the four-year program and may specialize in orthopaedics since the bulk of her medical experience has been in that area.

Orthopaedic Experience

Her entry into medical school follows two years at the Steadman Clinic in Vail, Colo. Before graduating from the University of Arkansas in 2005, Poindexter traveled to the Steadman Clinic to interview for a yearlong professional athletic training fellowship position. She was offered the position and worked in the following capacities: physician extender, head athletic trainer (high school), and as a Certified Athletic Trainer in the physical therapy office and at community sporting events.

“Due to my special experiences at the clinic and the professional friendships I made, I was overjoyed to stay on for a second year as the post-operative coordinator and athletic trainer for Dr. Marc Philippon, a world-renowned hip surgeon who specializes in hip arthroscopy and joint-saving procedures for both local ‘weekend warriors’ and international professional athletes,” Poindexter said.

She realized during that ACL operation that she was beginning to think like a doctor.

“This, in addition to the long hours I willingly spent at work, my insatiable appetite for learning, and encouraging comments by doctors and patients alike, convinced me that I was ready

for medical school,” she said.

Poindexter completed all of her pre-medical course requirements in two years through the Health Careers Program at



Lauren Poindexter

the Harvard Extension School in Cambridge, Mass., sat for the Medical College Admission Test, and, for the past two years, taught MCAT prep courses for Kaplan Test Prep & Admissions in both Boston and Los Angeles.

“In retrospect, though I am not working as an athletic trainer in my daily activities, I could never have realized this dream of attending medical school without my incredible education, diverse internship opportunities and professional relationships at the University of Arkansas and the personal support Dr. Bonacci has provided over the years,” Poindexter said. “He is truly an incredible leader, educator, organizer and proponent of the individual student, ATEP program, and the athletic training profession as a whole. I

Alumna story continued on page 4

Greetings from the Dean By Tom Smith, Ed.D.



On behalf of the College of Education and Health Professions, I would like to thank you for your interest in the athletic training education program. This issue of the program’s newsletter offers several

highlights from this semester. The program continues to uphold high academic standards as seen by our students’ certification exam results while offering our students a competitive advantage in securing internships. It also

affords them opportunities to conduct research and present their findings among some of the top researchers in the field. As a new class arrives soon, we see the program’s future as brighter than ever.



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



Greetings alumni, prospective students and friends of the athletic training education program at the University of Arkansas. For this spring's edition of the

departmental newsletter, we highlight an alumna who is performing outstanding work in the profession. We will feature a program alumnus each spring.

This year has been an eventful one in the athletic training education program. We were honored to have one of the leading authorities in sports nutrition, Jackie Berning, Ph.D., present nutrition recommendations for pre-, during and post-exercise to the faculty of our program and exercise science. Our second guest speaker during the spring semester was Rebecca

Stearns, M.A., A.T.C., from the Kori Stringer Institute at the University of Connecticut, which focuses on preventing sudden death in sport. Ms. Stearns spoke about preventing exertional heat illness, differential diagnosis and treatment of the condition.

The Board of Certification that governs the licensing examination has allowed students to sit for the national board exam earlier in the year, February instead of April. This allows students to get a quicker jump on the job market. I am proud to announce all of our students who took the exam in February passed, increasing our overall pass rate on the national board exam to 96 percent, compared to the 38.2 percent overall national pass rate.

This also was a banner year for applications to the program; 51 prospective students applied for 15 slots for the incoming cohort. Many students came

with high credentials, making the selection process very difficult, and we were pleased that the top 15 students all accepted an offer to be part of the 2013 class. The students hail from Washington state to Florida.

We also added a new orthopedic rotation to the clinical component. Students now have the opportunity to shadow the Razorback team orthopedic physicians during their office clinic hours and they have observed multiple orthopedic injuries. In addition, we instituted a journal club in which students were presented orthopedic cases and general medical topics from the Razorback team physicians. Students were assigned specific articles to read and quizzed on the topics. The journal club evenings were educational as well as providing good sports medicine fellowship among students, ATCs, and physicians.

Clinical Instructors Vital to Students' Success By Sharon Hunt, Ed.D.

Head of the Department of Health Science, Kinesiology, Recreation and Dance



The success of the nationally accredited athletic training education program at the University of Arkansas and its students' impressive 94 percent

pass rate on the Board of Certification exam can be attributed in great measure to our clinical instructors. These certified athletic trainers share their expertise, overseeing the athletic training students in a variety of clinical rotations scheduled throughout their

two-year course of study.

A number of clinical sites have been established to provide hands-on practical skills needed in the evaluation and rehabilitation of injured athletes. These clinical sites include the University of Arkansas Athletics Department, the Division 7-A high schools in Northwest Arkansas, physical therapy clinics, general medical rotations with physicians practicing family medicine, and a possibility of working with the Northwest Arkansas Naturals baseball team, an AA affiliate of the Kansas City Royals organization.

Several students have secured

prestigious internships with the NFL, NBA, MLS, and MLB. Graduates of the program have been accepted into medical school, physical therapy school, and doctoral programs in kinesiology. Other students have secured employment in high schools, colleges and universities, and professional sports. Dr. Jeff Bonacci, program director, and Dr. Gretchen Oliver, clinical coordinator, have built a top-notch entry-level graduate athletic training education program that is highly competitive and attracts students from around the world who come to fulfill their dreams.

Students Taking Research Findings Around Nation, World

RESEARCH FOCUS BY GRETCHEN OLIVER, PH.D., A.T.C., L.A.T.



Students in the athletic training education program have been very busy with research projects being conducted by the University of Arkansas Sport

Biomechanics Group, and several of those students will travel internationally this summer to present their research at prestigious conferences.

Our research covers such topics as muscle activation of various core exercises and the kinematics of throwing motions.

The Sport Biomechanics Group has helped the athletic training education program provide our students the invaluable research experience of presenting and publishing their findings. It's my pleasure to lead this group, and Dr. Bonacci and I are looking forward to travel in the next few months to present research with students at the Ameri-



Mike Sola collects data from electrodes placed on shoulder muscles of Kelley MacDonald as she performs exercises typical of shoulder rehabilitation. The research helps determine whether the muscles thought to be targeted with a particular exercise actually are being activated. Sola and MacDonald are first-year students in the athletic training education program. *Photo by Russell Cothren*

can College of Sports Medicine in Denver and internationally at the World Congress of the International Society of Biomechanics in Brussels and at the World Federation of Athletic Training and Therapy in Banff, Canada.

The students, athletic training staff and alumni presenting are Masa Abe, Kirk Evanson, Ajay Kurani, Adrian Pettaway, Hillary Plummer, Katie Roling, Alyssa Romasco and Audrey Stone.

The Sport Biomechanics Group has been a research portal for not only athletic training students but also some graduate assistant athletic trainers serving the athletic training education program as approved clinical instructors. Sara Rabe, Austin Kerkhover, Nick Sarantis, Rachael Helmer, Audrey Stone and Hillary

Plummer have published research findings in peer-reviewed publications such as the *Journal of Athletic Training and Sports Health Care*, *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, *Journal of Athletic Training*, *Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine*, *International Journal of Exercise Science*, and *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*.

In addition, I received a summer grant from the University of Arkansas College of Education and Health Professions that will fund several athletic training students as they work on identifying scapular abnormalities and determining the assessment relevance in the clinical and research setting.

To watch a slideshow of muscle activation research, visit <http://coehp.uark.edu/colleague/>. To learn more about our research and view a list of presentations and publications, visit <http://hkrd.uark.edu/biomechanics/index.php>.



Sean Huddleston, left, prepares MacDonald for another round of data collection. Huddleston is also a first-year student in the athletic training education program. *Photo by Russell Cothren*



Workshop Offers FMS, SFMA Level 1 Skills

The athletic training education program and Physicians' Specialty Hospital present a three-day workshop May 20-22 on the University of Arkansas campus that will provide physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, physical therapists, athletic trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, coaches and students with skills that they can begin to use immediately.

Steve Smith, P.T., D.P.T., S.C.S., C.S.C.S.S., of the Andrews Institute in Gulf Breeze, Fla., will present

information at the Razor Fitness Spring Sports Medicine Workshop for certification in Functional Movement Screening and Selective Functional Movement Assessment. The three-day workshop will feature both lectures and hands-on laboratory sessions.

Cost and registration information are available at <http://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=937295>. Registration includes 24 continuing education units for both courses.

The Selective Functional Move-

ment Assessment course is designed to allow the health care professional to evaluate painful movement, determine the source of the pain, and perform manual therapy and neuromuscular exercise techniques to treat the painful condition. The Functional Movement Screen is a course that allows athletic trainers, strength and conditioning specialists, personal trainers and physical therapists to identify current injury trends and stats as they relate to the prevention of non-contact injuries.

ALUMNA STORY Continued...
look forward to maintaining my athletic training credentials throughout my lifetime as a testament to Dr. B, my classmates, and my education at the UA."

Vital Service

In 2006, her hometown newspaper, the *La Canada Flintridge Outlook*, featured Poindexter after she successfully administered CPR to a participant in cardiac arrest during a volleyball tournament. She said people outside the medical field may have a hard time believing it, but administering CPR was just part of her job. That day, Poindexter was the only medical staffer on hand for a tournament that included more than 200 players and 100 spectators.

"Helping our community as Certi-

fied Athletic Trainers (ATCs) is a responsibility that isn't widely appreciated by the public or government and doesn't receive much recognition because we're routinely mislabeled in the press and confused with 'personal trainers' and 'strength coaches,'" Poindexter explained. "Most people know that 'trainers' can tape ankles and make ice bags for athletes and they're right, but they don't realize the extent of our education and training and how this can better the lives of all community members, not just athletes. As more people of all ages participate in sports and lead longer, healthier, active lives, athletic trainers will be in increasing demand."

Expanding Field

Since graduating from the univer-

sity, Poindexter has read about new areas in which athletic trainers find employment.

"I think that's a huge positive for the profession," she said. "I loved my experiences as an athletic training fellow and 'physician extender' working closely with doctors and patients in a physician-owned orthopaedic clinic within a hospital. Other emerging employment opportunities prove that athletic trainers have a diverse skill set that can be applied to virtually any medical field or environment where health care is administered, and these options need to be communicated to the younger generation, so they have a broad view of where this career can take them."

Alumni,

please let us know what you are doing by visiting <http://kins.uark.edu/atep> and filling out the alumni contact form linked from the left-side menu.