



UNIVERSITY of
ST AUGUSTINE for
HEALTH SCIENCES
ALUMNI

Introducing the Alumni Association Advisory Board

The **University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (USAHS) Alumni Association Advisory Board** was formed in September 2021 and provides valuable insight into how the University can support and engage with its alumni. The volunteer board members help share alumni engagement initiatives to strengthen the University in pursuit of its mission to develop professional healthcare practitioners.

Representing most degree programs, campuses and the broad range of graduation years of our alumni, the founding USAHS Alumni Association Advisory Board members are:

President: Steve Weyandt, PT, DPT, SCS, MTC (MPT '00, tDPT '04)—Regional Director/Partner, BenchMark Physical Therapy



Dr. Weyandt has been at BenchMark Physical Therapy since 2003 and served as a partner and in multi-site leadership roles with the company since 2014. He received his Manual Therapy Certification (MTC) in 2004 through USAHS, Board Certified Sports Specialist (SCS) in 2010, and he was recently certified through the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) for golf rehab and performance in 2020.

Dr. Weyandt continues to do personal study in leadership development and enjoys time as a guest lecturer for leadership topics to USAHS students. Outside of work, he enjoys playing golf, traveling, participating in fitness activities and spending time with family. He is also an avid Pittsburgh Steelers fan!

https://www.linkedin.com/in/steve-weyandt-b48561145?trk=people-guest_people_search-card

Vice President and Chair, Governance Committee: Stephen Elam, PT, DPT, EdD (MPT '96, tDPT '11)—Board Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist; Board Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist; Assistant Professor, University of Lynchburg



Dr. Elam is a graduate of the inaugural MPT Blue Cohort in 1996. Since then, he has practiced in a variety of settings including acute care, outpatient, worker's compensation, home health and skilled nursing, and he has been owner/co-owner of the Vehab Rehab Company. He actively practiced from 1996 through 2011. After earning his transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, he began teaching in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the University of Lynchburg. In 2016 he completed a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership at the University of Lynchburg.

At the University of Lynchburg, Dr. Elam founded the Community Health Clinic, which provides student-led pro bono care for un- and under-insured community members. He currently works with [Wheels on the James](#), providing adaptive Amtrykes to children and adults who cannot ride traditional bicycles.

Dr. Elam is married to Dr. Penny Elam, PT, DPT, and they have three children. He loves to work with non-profit organizations on a local and national level. Dr. Elam is also active in the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), including serving as membership chair, a five-term state delegate and with the Health Policies & Administration Section.

<https://www.lynchburg.edu/academics/faculty/stephen-w-elam/>

Vice President and Chair, Alumni Engagement Committee: Jane Min, OTD, OTR/L (OTD '21)—Occupational Therapist, High Five Hand Therapy and Rehabilitation, Los Angeles, CA



Dr. Min graduated from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, Miami campus in 2021 and is an occupational therapist currently working in an outpatient hand therapy clinic in Los Angeles. During her time at USAHS, she was the class representative of the inaugural OTD cohort at the Miami campus, an active member of the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) and the recipient of the Occupational Therapy Academic Achievement Award, as the class valedictorian.

Dr. Min is passionate about advocating and providing client-centered, evidence-based services to her patient population and is currently working toward improving her visual schedule iOS application created during her capstone experience for the pediatric population.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jane-min>

Vice President and Chair, Advocacy Committee: Rebekah Jarrar, MA, MOT, OTR/L (MOT '17)— Instructor, OT programs at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences



Rebekah Jarrar is a core faculty instructor at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences and is passionate about the field of occupational therapy. She completed her Master of Arts in Communication from Marquette University Graduate School and is currently pursuing a Post-Professional Doctorate of Occupational Therapy with a focus on teaching in higher education.

Jarrar's interests in children and mental health led her to start a pediatric clinical practice focused on empowering children and adolescents in the community, including creating an adolescent girl's group focused on teaching coping skills for dealing with stress.

When not teaching or studying, she enjoys time with her husband and two children, swimming, cooking and playing with their dogs.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rebekahjarrar>

To reach a member of the Board Executive Committee, please contact USAalumassoc@usa.edu.

Additional USAHS Alumni Association Advisory Board members include:

• **Morgan Beard** (MS-SLP '21)—Speech Language Pathologist, North Mississippi Medical Center



Morgan Beard sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.

Beard is completing her clinical fellowship at North Mississippi Medical Center across a variety of settings as a speech-language pathologist. She works in acute care rehabilitation, as well as intensive inpatient rehab and outpatient rehab from pediatrics to geriatrics.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/morgan-beard-268707b4>

- **Kevin Brueilly, PT, PhD (MPT '96)**—Professor; Associate Program Director at Charleston Southern University



Dr. Kevin Brueilly sits on the Governance Committee.

Dr. Brueilly is a faculty member and administrator in the DPT program at Charleston Southern University in Charleston, SC. He is also self-employed with an education consulting business and specializes in accreditation and curriculum.

- **Gregory Dean (MOT '04, DPT '06)**—President/Owner, Achieve Physical Therapy Solutions LLC



Dr. Gregory Dean sits on the Advocacy Committee.

Dr. Dean earned both his Master of Occupational Therapy and Doctor of Physical Therapy at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science and Wellness from Jacksonville State University. Dr. Dean is a State of Georgia Licensed Physical and Occupational Therapist with more than 10 years of service providing therapy solutions in inpatient and outpatient settings. He communicates with and educates all therapy patients regarding treatment, setting expectations for return-to-work timeframes and emphasizing education and motivation. He is married to Kristi Dean.

- **Paige Funderburk, ASDCS (MOT '05, OTD '06)**—Director of Developmental Therapy Services; Occupational Therapist at Cortica Pediatric Neurology

Dr. Paige Funderburk sits on the Advocacy Committee.



In June 2021, Dr. Funderburk transitioned from her management role in outpatient senior living to Director of Developmental Therapy Services with Cortica—San Diego, CA region. Cortica is a physician-owned company offering comprehensive care programming for children (now expanding into adults) with neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders. Her current role encompasses multiple outpatient clinics, telehealth services, in-home and community multidisciplinary services, including occupational, physical, speech and music therapy. Additionally, she coordinates services with neurologists, physician specialists, medical staff, nutritionists, family counselors, psychologists, board-certified behavioral analysts and behavioral interventionists.

Since graduation in 2006 from the OTD program at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences St. Augustine, FL campus, Dr. Funderburk has obtained post-doctoral certifications as

a Neurodevelopmental Therapist, Certified Lymphedema Therapist, Certified Fall Prevention Specialist and most recently as a Certified Autism Spectrum Disorder Clinical Specialist. She has been accepted as a candidate for Certified Hand Therapist certification and plans to sit for the credentialing exam in 2022.

- **Gabrielle George** (OTD '20)—Pediatric Occupational Therapist, Houston Pediatric Therapy, Remarkable Kids Therapy



Dr. Gabrielle George sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.

Dr. George is a specialist for children and young adults ages 0-21 who may think, act or look differently from a typical child. She helps children reach their greatest functional abilities despite the differences they may have.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gabrielle-george-otd-otr-l-149473132>

- **Cristine Juul Johnson, PT, DPT, MTC, certified DN** (DPT '09)—Supervisor Outpatient Rehab Services, Ochsner Therapy and Wellness



Dr. Cristine Johnson sits on the Governance Committee.

Dr. Johnson is an outpatient orthopedic physical therapist, specializing in headaches and the rehabilitation of the back and spine, and serves as the supervisor of rehab services for Ochsner Therapy and Wellness in her hometown of Covington, LA. She is active in the APTA-LA chapter as a district representative on the Government Affairs Committee. When away from the clinic, Dr. Johnson enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and two children.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cristine-johnson-pt-dpt-mtc-cert-dn-b26296114>

• **Wendy D. Larkin, DNP, MSN, ARNP** (DNP '20)—Assistant Chief, Quality Management Service, James A. Haley VA Hospital

Dr. Wendy Larkin sits on the Governance Committee.

Dr. Larkin has been in healthcare for more than 20 years and is the Assistant Chief, Quality Management Service at James A. Haley VA Hospital and Clinics (JAHVH) in Tampa, FL. JAHVH is a complexity Level 1-A facility and ranks among the largest medical centers in the Department of Veterans Affairs, with more than 4,000 employees and several outpatient clinics dispersed over a large geographical region.



Her areas of expertise are Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), The Joint Commission (TJC) and regulatory compliance, quality improvement, medical staff and organizational improvement. Dr. Larkin has a 20-year history as Chairwoman, Administrative Investigation Boards (AIB) and is Lean Six Sigma in Health Care, Green Belt. She has served as a direct care provider, educator and consultant, and she is a sought-after speaker and has presented workshops and presentations on quality improvement.

In addition, Dr. Larkin has 15+ years' experience in Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service as an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP), Accreditation Manager, Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service, Chief of Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV), administrator and educator.

Dr. Larkin received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from California State University, Sacramento; Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP) from the University of California, San Francisco; and her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences. Her professional affiliations include Sigma Theta Tau International (honor society of Nursing) and Florida Association Healthcare Quality (FAHQ).

• **Christopher A. Long, PT, DPT, OCS, AIB-VRC** (DPT '16)—Clinic Director/Partner – Orthopedic Physical Therapist, BenchMark Physical Therapy

Dr. Christopher Long sits on the Advocacy Committee.



Dr. Long is a board-certified orthopedic physical therapist whose passion lies in the manual therapy, concussion and vestibular world. He treats all patient populations in his clinic in the Charlotte, NC area and is adjunct faculty with the American Institute of Balance for their vestibular rehab and concussion management certification course.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrislongdpt90>

- **Tomika Lowe-Lopez, PT, DPT, OTR/L** (Flex DPT '15)—Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist and Lead Therapist (weekends) at Piedmont Healthcare

Dr. Tomika Lowe-Lopez sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.



Dr. Lowe-Lopez lives in Georgia with her husband and daughter. She received a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from the Medical College of Georgia in 2003 and her Physical Therapy doctorate from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences in 2015. She currently works for Piedmont Healthcare in acute care and in an inpatient rehab hospital setting.

- **Deveshma Maharaj** (OTD '21)



Deveshma Maharaj sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.

As a new mother and wife, Maharaj completed her undergraduate career in psychology at California State University-Sacramento. It was on this journey that she discovered the realm of occupational therapy through testimonials and fell in love with the impact it had on clients. As a recent entry-level OTD graduate from the San Marcos, CA campus at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, Dr. Maharaj aims to transition into the workforce with goals focusing on continuously expanding her knowledge of skills and advocating for the well-being of clients.

- **Craig McGhee, MHA, FACHE** (MPT '96)—Chief Ambulatory Officer, Akron Children's Hospital



Craig McGhee sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.

McGhee is responsible for the organizational integrity of non-hospital-based ambulatory services at Akron Children's Hospital, which includes strategic/business planning and positive financial performance and compliance oversight for all ambulatory areas. He serves as senior corporate liaison between private practice surgeons and the hospital, and he has responsibility for regional sites for Akron Children's in Norwalk, Mansfield, North Canton, Medina and Hudson in Ohio.

McGhee obtained his Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology from Kansas State University, his Masters in Physical Therapy from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences and his Masters in Health Administration from the University of South Florida. He is board-certified in Healthcare Management and a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives since 2007. McGhee currently serves as the President of American College of Healthcare Executives Northern Ohio chapter.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/craig-mcghee-a3580745>

• **Chelsea Montes** (MOT '21)



Chelsea Montes sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.

Montes is a recent graduate of the 2021 Fall MOT class at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences and is currently living in the East Bay Area of Northern California. Outside her passion for occupational therapy, she enjoys being outdoors, hiking, exploring the beauty of nature and traveling. She has been to 19 states so far!

• **Molly Patel-Desai, DPT, MHS-CL, CMTPT** (DPT '02)—Owner, Reform Physical Therapy



Dr. Molly Patel-Desai sits on the Alumni Engagement Committee.

Dr. Patel-Desai is a physical therapist who treats patients with chronic pain caused by degenerative processes, autoimmune diseases, temporomandibular dysfunction and sports injuries. She believes that by keeping people involved in their active lifestyle, they are able to maintain a healthier emotional state. This, in turn, gives way to work together to improve their physical state.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/molly-patel-desai-403353105>

• **Sara Story, EdD, OTD, OTR/L, BCG, CAPS** (PPOTD '11)—Chair, Associate Professor, Auerbach School of Occupational Therapy at Spalding University



Dr. Sara Story sits on the Governance Committee.

Dr. Story is the Chair and an Associate Professor in the Auerbach School of Occupational Therapy at Spalding University in Louisville, KY. Her clinical experiences and scholarship interests, surrounding productive aging and mental health populations, are influential in the courses she teaches.

• **Ryan Wooley, MTC, ART, certified DN** (DPT '09)—Owner, Clinician, Sentry Safety and Physical Therapy Specialists, LLC

Dr. Ryan Wooley sits on the Advocacy Committee.



After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Health and Ex Science from Colorado State University and a doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, Dr. Wooley had a home health position in Virginia. He then moved back to St. Augustine, FL and worked in an outpatient capacity at STARS Rehab until 2015. He has since moved to New Mexico, where he owns two outpatient clinics. Here he has three DPTs, two PTAs and a massage therapist who work for him. When he is not carrying a full case load between the two clinics, he enjoys spending time with his spouse and three sons and loves outdoor activities.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ryan-wooley-990b8125>