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Implementation of an Evidence-Based Program to Reduce Fall Risk of Older Adults in Nevada

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IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM TO REDUCE FALL RISK OF
OLDER ADULTS IN NEVADA

By

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A doctoral project submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Department of Physical Therapy
School of Integrated Health Sciences
The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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Abstract

As Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, we completed a service-learning project to deliver a free evidence-based fall prevention program to senior residents of Nevada. “Stepping On” is a 7-week fall prevention program from the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging that is designed for older adults who are at risk or fearful of falling or for those who want to increase their awareness of fall prevention strategies. The program includes learning balance and strengthening exercises, discussing fall prevention strategies, and collaborating with community partners and healthcare professionals. The first objective of this service-learning project was to offer the program to metropolitan and rural communities as well as through a virtual platform to improve access to this type of program. We also planned to measure the unique strengths and limitations of each platform through qualitative measures. This objective was measured through participant attendance, student critical analysis where we compared our experiences in leading each program, and feedback from participants, guest experts, and community partners. The project’s second objective was to advance our professional growth as DPT students, which was attained through written self-reflection. We each assessed our professional development in the context of the core values established by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA).

There were initially 47 participants between the three platforms. By the end of the seventh week, 77% of the original participants remained. The highest percentage of completion was noted in the Pahrump platform, while the lowest percentage was amongst the Las Vegas platform. Through this project, we acquired leadership skills, improved our communication, adapted our teaching styles towards older adults, and recognized the importance of contributing to the communities’ specific needs. Out of the nine APTA core values, the three that were the

most commonly reflected on were duty, collaboration, and compassion and caring. We additionally identified areas for improvement by analyzing our limitations, acknowledging constructive feedback from participants and guest partners, and recognizing areas for future work to enhance future programs. Overall, this service-learning project achieved its primary aims of improving access to an evidence-based fall prevention program in addition to facilitating our professional growth and development as DPT students.

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Section 1: Background

Upwards of 35.6 million older adults (≥ 65 years old) in the United States have been reported to experience a fall each year.¹ A fall is “an event which results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level”.² Data from 2020 reveals 27.6% older adults have reported a fall within the year, and 38,742 older adults have experienced a fall related death in 2021.³ Falls among this population lead to financial strains in our healthcare budget, resulting in costs of approximately 50 billion dollars annually.⁴ Specifically to Nevada, falls have contributed to \$295 million in annual healthcare costs; therefore, it is important to find intervention strategies aimed at reducing falls.⁵

Many interrelated risk factors can contribute to falls, including weakness, gait disturbances, sensory loss, medication intake, and environmental hazards.⁶ As the number of risk factors increases, the probability of falling increases.⁶ Psychological aspects also contribute to predicting fall risks among older adults.⁷ Those who have fallen in the past tend to have decreased balance confidence in comparison to those who haven't fallen.⁸ Reduced balance confidence is proposed to be related to fear of falling avoidance behaviors which may have negative contributions to social participation, activity levels, quality of life, and fall risk.^{7, 8, 9}

The American Geriatrics Society (AGS) introduced a clinical practice guideline to assess fall risk as well as provide prevention strategies for older adults.¹⁰ In terms of monitoring fall risk, the guideline suggests asking older adults about their fall history and conducting a multifactorial fall assessment as a part of the screening process.¹⁰ These two strategies are intended to help determine whether or not an older adult is at risk for falling. If an older adult is deemed at risk for falling, the AGS guideline encourages using multiple intervention strategies to address the individualized elements related to the person's fall risk. These strategies include

exercise, home safety education, medication modification, and footwear management.¹⁰ These intervention strategies can be provided through community-based programs, which have improved outcomes for older adults by providing socialization, increasing physical activity, and encouraging learning through exchanging views and knowledge.¹¹ These programs also have the potential to be held virtually, which is a viable alternative to in-person programs.¹²

Although evidence-based fall prevention interventions exist, falls remain the number one cause of unintentional injury-related death in individuals 65 and older.¹³ This discrepancy may be due to a need for more awareness of specific evidence-based prevention strategies in the aging adult population.¹⁴ Across the country, older adults face barriers to participation in fall prevention programs due to a shortage of available programs within their community, especially if they live in rural areas.¹⁵ In Nevada, there is a notable community need to implement such programs based on the growing population rate of adults over 65.¹⁶ Recent data from the 2021 Profile of Older Americans showed a 59% population increase of older adults aged 65+ in Nevada between 2010 and 2020, ranking it in the top nine states for population growth of that age group.¹⁶ Among the older adults living in America, 27% live alone.¹⁶ Additionally, Nevada has been ranked 17th for the highest percentage of older adult-reported falls in the United States, further supporting the need for related prevention programs.¹⁷ These trends justify the importance of delivering an evidence-based fall prevention program to the senior residents of Nevada.

The rural areas of Nevada demonstrate a unique need, as these areas tend to have a higher percentage of older adults per unit of the population compared to the urban areas.¹⁸ These areas are also seeing the greatest increase in population growth in individuals 65-74 years old.¹⁸ Falls pose a greater risk to individuals in rural communities due to reduced access to care, financial

constraints, transportation limitations, and environmental differences.^{19,20} Improving accessibility to free community-based programs may alleviate these potential barriers by bringing the services to the rural community and eliminating potential financial conflicts.

The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging governs a 7-week fall prevention program titled “Stepping On”, aimed at older adults who are fearful of falling, at risk of falling, or want to know more about how to reduce their fall risk.²¹ It encompasses a multifactorial approach by addressing various risk factors related to falling in older adults, including balance and strength, footwear, home and community safety, and what to do after a fall. Through this approach, the program has shown a 31% decrease in falls among participants in metropolitan areas in and around Sydney, Australia.²² While this statistic pertains to a metropolitan area, the Stepping On program can be adapted to rural settings and virtual platforms. This versatility may provide many benefits for people in all geographical areas and may improve accessibility through the ability to reach a larger audience. The Stepping On program also provides an opportunity for service learning which is defined as “a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility”²³. Participation in leading service-learning projects has the capability of enhancing professional growth of the students involved.²⁴

Section 2: Purpose and Objectives

This service-learning project focused on two aims. The first aim of this project was to improve access to the evidence-based fall prevention program titled “Stepping On” for Nevada’s older adult population. To maximize outreach and achieve this aim, we planned to offer two in-person programs in urban and rural communities and a virtual program through Zoom. We anticipated that providing the class in three locations would not only improve access but also provide additional insights to us as future healthcare professionals. We aimed to examine each platform’s distinct strengths and limitations through participant attendance, our group analysis, and feedback from participants, guest experts, and community partners.

The second aim of this project was to develop professionally as DPT students and future clinicians. Self-reflections at key milestones during the service-learning project evaluated our professional development. We anticipated that at the culmination of this project, we would have gained experiences and opportunities to practice the APTA core values, thus enhancing our professional development as prospective healthcare professionals.

Section 3: Methods

Planning

We first consulted with Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition, a statewide fall prevention group that is overseen by the National Council on Aging, to discuss the organization of planning our community-based fall prevention program. Through group collaboration, we decided to run three simultaneous Stepping On programs: an in-person program in Las Vegas, an in-person program in Pahrump, and a virtual program open to all Nevada residents. Through networking in the community, we found sites to host our weekly in-person sessions: Desert Vista Community Center in Las Vegas, NV and Great Basin College in Pahrump, NV. Providing a location in Las Vegas allowed for the traditional in-person experience for those who desired face-to-face interactions. The Las Vegas setting also offered convenience by holding the program in a retirement community where many older adults reside. Since Pahrump, NV is considered a rural area with a population of roughly 44,000²⁵, delivering a program there for the first time helped expand our reach to adults living outside of Las Vegas, NV. Providing this program in a rural setting aligned with our mission of making a fall prevention program more accessible to residents of Nevada. We also decided to offer a virtual platform to assist those who live further away from our in-person sites and face transportation barriers, improving access to care.

STEADI Training/Stepping On Certification

In preparation for leading a fall prevention program, we individually completed the CDC's virtual continuing education course *STEADI: Empowering Healthcare Providers to Reduce Fall Risk*.²⁶ The STEADI initiative stands for "Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries," and it provides an algorithm for students and clinicians to screen for fall risk in addition to providing fall prevention resources.²⁶ This tool consists of the Stay Independent

Questionnaire²⁷ and physical performance measures, including the Timed Up and Go Test (TUG)²⁸, the 30-Seconds Chair Stand Test²⁹, and the 4-Stage Balance test³⁰.

To further develop our skills in fall prevention, we participated in a 22-hour virtual training course for the Stepping On program, led by Stepping On Master Trainers. This training certified us as facilitators for the evidence-based program, enabling us to provide in-person and virtual sessions. We were trained in leading participants through a series of exercises, and we learned how to apply adult learning principles to facilitate discussions about falls. The adult learning principles aim to incorporate the experiences of the participants, promote critical thinking, make the material engaging and relatable, and encourage self-reflection.³¹

Participant Recruitment

According to the Stepping On guidelines at the time of our program, eligibility to participate included being a community-dwelling older adult aged 65 years and older who feared falling or had recently fallen. Other eligibility included individuals who were cognitively intact, lived in a house, apartment, or in an independent living community, and were able to communicate in English. Exclusion criteria included individuals who relied on a walker for indoor ambulation or a wheelchair, or those with a known, diagnosed cognitive impairment.²¹ Individuals with neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis were also excluded from the program.

Participants were recruited through multiple outreach strategies. To recruit eligible participants, balance and memory screenings were conducted in Las Vegas and Pahrump. The screenings were performed in collaboration with Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition and occurred during the National Council on Aging's Fall Prevention Awareness Week (FPAW) in September 2022. The national FPAW campaign occurs during the first week of fall and is aimed at bringing

awareness to fall prevention in older adults.³²

The screenings were advertised on social media, at local physical therapy clinics, and at medical facilities. During the screenings, the CDC's STEADI toolkit was utilized to assess fall risk.³³ If deemed at high risk for falls, the participants were encouraged to register for a Stepping On program in Las Vegas, Pahrump, or virtually. In conjunction with the STEADI toolkit, the Mini-Cog³⁴ was used to screen for cognitive impairment and memory deficits. Participants who scored less than three points on the Mini-Cog, indicating possible cognitive impairment, were encouraged to speak with on-site healthcare professionals to discuss their results and gain additional resources. Individuals who scored less than three points were still able to participate in the Stepping On program, as the scores on the Mini-Cog did not influence eligibility.

Aside from the balance and memory screenings, separate efforts were made to recruit participants in rural and northern areas of Nevada through advertising strategies. In Pahrump, Nevada, information booths were set up at multiple community centers to enhance public awareness of the program and promote the importance of fall prevention programs. Flyers were also posted at these locations to encourage enrollment, including information regarding both in-person and online services. The program was also advertised in the local newspaper and on social media. Residents of northern Nevada were encouraged to participate in the Stepping On program virtually. The Stepping On virtual flier was sent out to eligible residents through active collaboration with the Director of Wellness Programs at the Sanford Center for Aging in Reno, NV.

Implementation of the Stepping On Program

The Stepping On program was structured the same way across the three separate platforms. Stepping On classes met once per week for seven weeks, lasted 2 hours, and had

breaks midway through class. Each platform was led by two facilitators. One additional UNLV DPT student assisted with the Las Vegas platform to ensure two facilitators per platform. The additional student was trained alongside our team to be a certified Stepping On facilitator. The in-person platforms were designed to support 8-14 participants, while the virtual platform supported 6-10.³⁵

Regardless of the platform they attended, every participant received a Stepping On binder, which included an exercise manual and an outline of the program with the activities, handouts, and discussion topics each week. Examples of handouts included home safety checklists, diet questionnaires, travel and sleep habit tips, an exercise log, and a medication record card. The in-person participants received their corresponding handouts each week, whereas the virtual participants were mailed a complete binder with all the handouts for the entire program ahead of time to ensure access. Facilitators leading the virtual platform had the ability to record each session, after gaining permission from the participants, should absences arise. If participants had questions from the recording, communication was encouraged, and we designated time during the following session to clarify or demonstrate.

As trained facilitators, we were taught to tailor the sessions toward adult learning styles by generating group discussions through open-ended questions. This style of teaching encourages participation and supports a healthy environment for adult learning. By utilizing the adult learning theory, we were able to guide participants in determining their own risky behaviors and identify barriers for behavior change. We helped them create their own realistic solutions to make them feel more confident and successful. In each session, participants were called upon to share a personal story of a fall, after which a structured group discussion helped identify factors that contributed to the fall and its consequences. Fellow participants could offer

feedback or advice after the initial round of solutions were discussed. This method helped guide the participants in discussing the possible reasons behind their recent falls and strategizing ways to prevent future falls. Each session also included a different topic relating to falls, such as home hazards, medication management, safe footwear, and vision (table 1). Our in-person platforms included an educational table to display relevant safety equipment for each topic. The virtual platform also displayed safety items either via webcam or by digital images. Each platform hosted guest experts, consisting of occupational therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, EMTs, nurses, and firefighters, who were invited to speak about their expertise during select sessions. These guest experts volunteered their time and were invited to help foster a sense of community and encourage learning from an interdisciplinary approach.

In addition to a discussion-based approach, the participants were also taught foundational strength and balance exercises (table 2). The participants were educated on the functional importance of each exercise. Modifications were made individually based on each participant's physical abilities, and participants were each offered adjustable 5lb ankle weights to temporarily use during the in-person platforms to advance the exercises. Participants in the Las Vegas and Pahrump platforms who completed five out of seven sessions were given their own pair of five-pound ankle weights to incentivize their attendance. The virtual platform did not supply ankle weights due to budgeting limitations and shipping costs, but participants were encouraged to acquire them if possible.

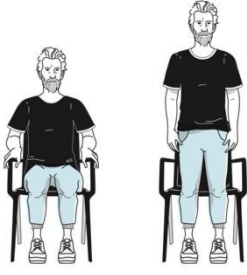



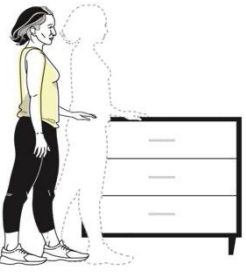
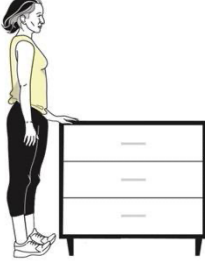
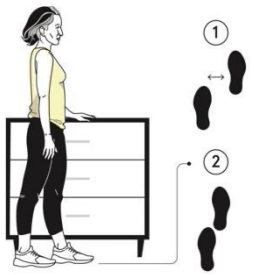

Two weeks after completing the program, we followed up via phone to check in with all of the participants. Check-ins consisted of asking the participants how often they were performing the exercises and if they had made any lifestyle or behavior changes based on what they had learned. Based on the feedback given, participants were encouraged to continue

implementing fall prevention strategies into their daily lives. The participants were also reminded of the booster session that was being held three months following the check-in phone call. During the booster session, we reviewed the exercises to check the participants' performance and helped them progress or regress if needed. This session also guided participants in discussing implemented safety strategies, reviewing program elements, and sharing overall thoughts about the program. Participants verbally provided informal feedback on the program's effect on their daily behaviors and reported any falls that have happened since the program.

Table 1. Stepping On Weekly Session Outline

Session 1	Introduction and Overview of Program
Session 2	Exercises and Moving Safely
Session 3	Home Hazards
Session 4	Vision and Footwear
Session 5	Medication Management, Vitamin D and Calcium, Sleeping Strategies
Session 6	Travel Safety and Safe Mobility for Inclement Weather
Session 7	Community Safety and Planning Ahead
Session 8	Booster Session

Table 2. Balance and Strength Exercises for the Stepping On Program ^a

BALANCE EXERCISES	STRENGTH EXERCISES
<p>Sit-to-Stand</p> 	<p>Side Hip- Strengthening Exercise</p> 
<p>Sideways Walking</p> 	<p>Knee Extension- Strengthening Exercise</p> 
<p>Heel-to-Toe Stand</p> 	<p>Heel Raises</p> 
<p>Heel-to-Toe Walking</p> 	<p>Toe Raises</p> 
<p>^a Images taken from the WIHA Stepping On Exercise Manual¹⁸</p>	

Measuring Outcomes

The first aim of our project was measured quantitatively through participant attendance in each program. This aim was also measured qualitatively through collaborative analysis of our experiences as well as through participant, guest expert, and community partner feedback. The outcomes of our second aim were measured qualitatively through our student reflections. These outcomes were used to determine the various benefits and limitations of the project through multiple perspectives of those involved.

During each session, attendance was taken with a sign-in sheet to determine participant attendance throughout the entirety of the program. Weekly emails and texts reminded participants to attend the program, aiming to strengthen attendance. Participants were encouraged to let us know ahead of time if they were planning on missing a session while providing a reason for their absence. Participants who missed a session without explanation beforehand were followed up with a phone call to determine reasons for absences. The reasons for absences were informally noted.

Four months after the booster session, we met to analyze our experiences and formally discuss the outcomes of our respective platforms. Key points such as the unique differences of each platform, feasibility of delivery, and areas for future work were recorded via a shared Google document. These key points were used to determine successes and limitations. Participant, guest speaker, and community partner feedback was also sought four months after the booster session. These individuals were contacted via email to voluntarily provide informal feedback regarding the program and any barriers they may have encountered. Specific questions asked in the emails are provided in table 3. The feedback collected was recorded verbatim to provide insights into the overall success of the program and to highlight any barriers that could

be reduced in future workshops (table 4).

To measure student professional growth and competency, we wrote self-reflections at scheduled points during the project. The reflections aimed to make meaning of the experience by examining personal growth relating to the core values of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). We wrote a reflective piece after the following events: the Stepping On training, the balance and memory screenings, the first week of the Stepping On program, the seventh week of the Stepping On course, the follow-up phone calls, the booster session, and the four-month collaborative analysis. These reflections allowed us to critically look at the project to determine the outcomes as it relates to ourselves and the community impact.

Table 3. Questions for Participants, Guest Experts, and Community Partners

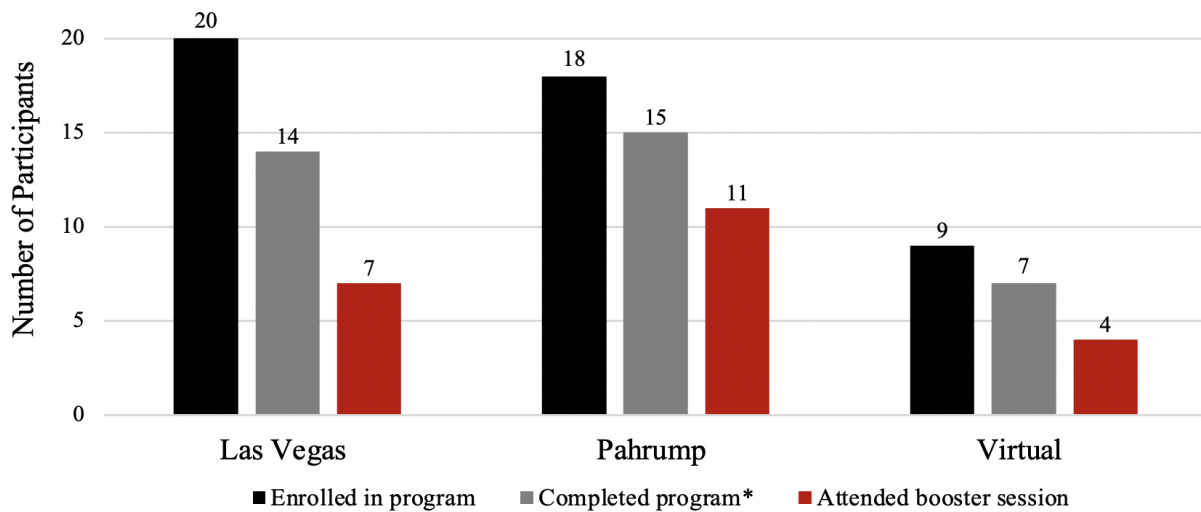
<p>Participants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What did you think of the program overall?2. Did this program cause you to change any behavior in your everyday life?3. What was your favorite or least favorite part of the program?4. How did you hear about the program? Have you participated in anything similar in the past?5. What feedback do you have for the program? Is there anything you would change?
<p>Guest Experts/Community Partners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Comments, thoughts, and feedback regarding your participation in the Stepping On programs?2. What impact do you think a program like this might have on the geriatric population?3. What barriers did you encounter during your participation in the Stepping On class?

Section 4: Outcomes

Participant Attendance

Across the three platforms, there were a total of 47 enrolled participants. By the end of the seven weeks, 77% of the original participants had completed at least five out of the seven sessions. These numbers can be broken down further to look at the results of each platform. The Las Vegas, Pahrump, and virtual platforms resulted in 70%, 83%, and 78% participant completion respectively. Finally, at the 8-week booster session, Las Vegas had 35% of original participants attend, Pahrump had 61%, and the virtual platform had 44%. Participant attendance is recorded in figure 1. Participants who missed sessions did so mainly due to travel plans, loss of interest, illness, or other social activities; however, gathering more information about reasons for absences in future programs would be beneficial in addressing barriers to participation.

Figure 1. Attendance and Completion Rate for Each Setting



**Completed program is defined as attending 5 out of 7 sessions*

Collaborative Analysis

When comparing our experiences from each platform, several individualized successes and limitations were noted. For the Las Vegas platform, there was a high volume of individuals interested in registering for the Stepping On program, demonstrating the need for this type of program in the community. Although there was substantial interest, we were only able to support a limited number of participants at one time due to an enrollment cap. This limitation resulted in many interested individuals being unable to join, but this could have been mitigated by offering additional programs to help accommodate more participants. Interested individuals who were not included in the program were given local resources for older adult fitness programs and the option to join the virtual program, however, most residents verbally expressed disinterest in signing up for the virtual platform.

The Pahrump platform succeeded in achieving the goal of improving access by offering the program in a rural community. Out of the three settings, the Pahrump platform had the largest percentage of participants completing the program. Offering the program in a rural area may have alleviated transportation barriers, as participants could drive themselves or carpool within their community instead of having to commute to Las Vegas. Still, some senior Pahrump residents who had expressed interest during recruitment events shared that they relied on limited free bus services that couldn't take them to Great Basin College, which prevented potential participants from joining the program. Some also explained that the Stepping On classes were going to interfere with other social events or free community meals.

Another limitation found with the Pahrump platform was difficulty finding local guest experts regardless of various soliciting efforts. The guest experts that were recruited all commuted from Las Vegas. While they brought valuable expertise to group discussion, they had

difficulty addressing participant questions and concerns specific to living in a rural community.

Although there was difficulty in finding local guest speakers, the facilitators of the Pahrump platform connected with a local Qigong instructor who was interested in providing free Qigong classes for participants after the Stepping On program ended. These classes served as an additional resource for residents to improve their health and decrease their fall risk. The instructor of the Qigong class was able to utilize the same room on the same day of the week to maintain an ongoing exercise routine. Six months after Stepping On concluded, the instructor reported through email correspondence that there were still five participants attending the free Qigong class.

When compared to the in-person platforms, hosting the program virtually presented with unique challenges, one of which being technical issues. On several occasions participants experienced problems with their sound, video, or internet connection, resulting in disruption of the group discussion or exercise practice. Additionally, it was difficult to monitor participant technique during exercise practice since everyone's home setup was different, and video cameras needed to be adjusted once they stood up to begin exercises. We had less control over the types of chairs and support surfaces used, and participants were sometimes distracted by other family members and phone alerts. Virtual participants may also have been at a disadvantage since they were not given 5lb ankle weights to practice with.

A key point that differentiated the virtual platform from in-person was that participants were afforded the opportunity to attend sessions even when traveling or didn't want to leave home because they were sick. The virtual platform also offered class recordings for participants who were absent or wanted to reference the material at a later time if needed, enhancing participant access to the program's content.

Throughout all three platforms, a common struggle amongst us facilitators was managing time with the participants. The Stepping On sessions were very structured with time limits for each portion of the class, but group discussions often led to participants getting off track from the topic being discussed. Redirecting the group back onto the topic at hand proved to be a challenge for everyone. By the end of the program, we acquired valuable skills of being able to keep participants focused on an assigned task while also building rapport. This skill can be translated into future work as physical therapists when working with easily distracted patients.

Another limitation we noted was the ability to sound authentic and relatable while leading the program. The Stepping On facilitator manual has a strict script to follow in order to maintain the program's fidelity; however, the structure often made the classes seem forced and ingenuine. As a group, we felt that it was difficult to follow the script accurately and found ourselves shifting from it to stay natural with the participants. An area for growth as facilitators includes learning how to abide by the script while maintaining genuine discussions with the participants. By acknowledging our limitations, we can work to become capable and proficient future physical therapists. With more time and experience working with this population, we expect that this process will become more streamlined/natural in future programs. Self-reflection, seeking feedback, embracing challenges, continuous learning, collaborating with peers, utilizing resources, and developing time management skills have all contributed to our growth and improvement throughout this experience.

Future work for this project should consider the various reasons for absences in each platform. Some potential ways to reduce these absences include exploring other locations or time frames to administer the program and providing additional incentives. Future work should also focus on additional marketing efforts. Despite efforts to recruit participants throughout the state,

no residents of northern Nevada expressed interest in the program. Earlier marketing efforts may be necessary to help recruit more residents from other parts of Nevada to improve outreach. Additionally, it may be useful to investigate ways to make virtual classes seem more appealing since most interest was notably for in-person courses.

Since the aim of this project was not to directly measure falls or loss of balance, future work on similar projects could look at these specific metrics by providing a before and after survey or outcome measure, such as the Activities-specific Balance Confidence Scale³⁶, to measure significant changes during ambulatory activities. Implementing a prospective longitudinal study to observe participant behaviors or reported falls after taking this course may also be beneficial. This type of study would be especially pertinent as at least one participant from each setting reported a fall within three months of completing Stepping On. The participants verbally recounted these falls during the Booster session. Similarly, it may be a point of future research to look at whether or not attending a fall prevention course might make participants more fearful of falls and subsequently engage in fear avoidance behaviors.

Participants, Guest Speakers, and Community Partners

Participant, guest speaker, and community partner feedback was another aspect of the project to measure overall successes and limitations. This feedback was informal, with some individuals being selective with their responses or providing additional comments outside of the original questions provided. A common theme across all participants was their behavior change after the program ended. This included the implementation of exercises and fall prevention strategies as well as having more awareness of their surroundings. One participant stated, “...there are many things that have stayed with me. I particularly found the exercises simple to do at home. They have been beneficial these past few months since I took the class”. Another

participant reported getting rid of worn-out shoes and purchasing more stable shoes for walking. In addition to lifestyle changes, the participants also expressed appreciation for the facilitators and guest speakers, stating they were “knowledgeable”, “patient”, and “interesting”. While there were many perceived benefits of the program, the participants also provided areas for improvement. Constructive feedback included adjusting the length of the program, changing the program to a more convenient time, adding a few more exercises during the balance/strength portion, and having smaller class sizes. Future work can look into strategies to resolve these potential barriers while keeping the fidelity of the program in order to enhance program success.

Feedback from guest experts and community partners provided additional insight into the program’s success. The observations from these groups demonstrated a positive perception of the program and supported the multimodal approach to a fall prevention program. One guest expert said, “I like that this program includes a vision education portion. Oftentimes, people do not relate vision, good or bad, with everyday tasks including walking”. Feedback from these groups also supported the importance of educating older adults in rural areas with statements such as “Pahrump is a rural community, and we have a high number of underserved and economically challenged individuals living here”. One community partner also suggested to recruit future participants from a few local programs. Specific comments made by the participants and community partners of each program are in Table 4.

Table 4. Participant, Guest Speaker, and Community Partner Perceptions of the Program

Participant Comments
<p><u><i>Rural Setting (Pahrump, NV)</i></u></p> <p>“The program helped me learn a lot about falling and how to maintain my balance. I learned about the program from the senior center. I still do some of the exercises and check my medications but I wish the program was longer.”</p> <p>“It helped me a lot with my balance. It made me more aware of my surroundings. I heard about the program from the pahrump Valley Times and this was the first time participating in a program like this. You and hanna did a great job, thank you for coming to our town.”</p> <p><u><i>Metropolitan Setting (Las Vegas, NV)</i></u></p> <p>“Overall we thought the program was great. You covered a lot a material and had a lot of patience with us. We learned a lot about how to stay strong and try to minimize falls. Other than my mom’s fall on 1 January, broken hand, and subsequent physical therapy, there have been no falls. My mom has completely recovered and has forgotten she fractured her hand. In terms of changing our behavior in everyday life, we both got rid of some shoes that were old and worn out and have purchased new Hokas for stability and walking. I remind my mom daily about the importance of getting vitamin D and hydrating and say “remember what we learned in our class?” I still do the balance exercises but my mom not so much. I like using the weights as they make my workout more intense. I invested in an Apple Watch (another thing that came up in our class) and am going on 93 straight days of closing all my rings with a fairly rigorous move/exercise/stand goals and feel better and stronger and have even lost some weight!! My mom doesn’t have a smart phone so a smart watch really doesn’t work for her. We heard about the program when participating in the Balance and Memory Expo at Desert Vista put on [by] UNLV. We tried to sign up for this course but were told it was full but subsequently received a call inviting us to attend. I appreciated you let me accompany my mom because the workshop was more geared toward her age (86) than my age (59) but I think we both got a lot out of the program. We had never participated in anything like this before. I highly encourage you to continue the program in places like Sun City where seniors can take advantage of techniques to prevent falls. I have mentioned how useful it was to many people including today. I volunteer for Sunshine Services where we loan out wheelchairs, walkers, canes, transporters, and other medical equipment. One of the people who came in today mentioned needing equipment for her father who recently fell and also has a mother with Parkinson’s who is a bit unsteady on her feet. I mentioned the Expo we attended last fall and encouraged her to have her parents attend in order to sign up for the program we took with you if UNLV continues it. There really is nothing I would change except for maybe incorporating a few more exercises into the balance and strength training. I also thought it was a great idea to reconvene about two months after the course ended as a refresher and to see how much we remembered and the progress we had made.”</p> <p>“I thought the program was very well presented. You were very well prepared and thorough. I was already doing many of the things suggested, however, I have been doing more exercises for balance. My friend who also attended, had not had any previous instruction on fall</p>

prevention. He was given an abundance of information that he has used. We both have practiced the walking techniques of backwards, sideways, and foot over foot. The program was presented at a health screening in Sun City Summerlin. I attended a similar one at the YMCA. The only possible change would be to have fewer sessions. The time slot could have been more convenient. Otherwise it was a very good program.”

“The program was comprehensive in teaching us how to maintain balance and in fall prevention. The facilitators were knowledgeable and answered questions well. I try to beware of potential causes of falls/fall risks and to watch where I'm walking so as not to trip. Referred by the UNLV group after the balance and memory testing held in Sun City. It was a worthwhile workshop and hopefully will be offered again in the future.”

“I learned about the program through the Link magazine. I went to a meeting at Desert Vista community center and was told of this informative program that meets on Friday from 1 to 3 pm for several weeks. I signed up for this program and found it very interesting and informative. Very good program.”

Virtual Setting

“The "Stepping On" program was a win-win program as it targeted the age group of individuals most vulnerable to falls, and we were taught and practiced proper means to avoid stumbling and falling. In addition, our feet and legs were viewed in action to verify the proper movements were learned.”

"I recently attended UNLV's Stepping [On] program which was led by Kerry Margolin and [Kanosha Grady]. I was impressed with the class overall. And, there are many things that have stayed with me. I particularly found the exercises simple to do at home. They have been beneficial these past few months since I took the class. I feel my balance and strength are much better as a result of [Stepping On]. I also found the guest speakers interesting. They were clearly knowledgeable in their respective fields. As participants we were encouraged to ask questions. The course overall was well-structured and the audience small enough that by the end of the class, comradery was evident. As older adults we were able to discuss aging issues comfortably with each other. To summarize, the course was organized and led by knowledgeable women who were clearly interested in their students. I am so glad to have been a participant. I know this was an assignment for the student leaders involved. The leadership in this class was knowledgeable, caring, and patient. I wish them the best as they conclude their studies and become top-notch physical therapists."

“To answer your questions the program was overall beneficial and in fact yesterday I referred to the exercise handout meaning what we learned is beneficial and still relevant. My favorite part of the program was the professional guests that helped to reinforce the information you were sharing. My least favorite part is we had a classmate that seemed to dominate the conversation despite not being able to hear what was being said on her Zoom. Maybe a side conversation on how to set up the Zoom audio would have helped. I still do the exercises about 3-4 days a week. I wish we had other exercises to practice. To that end, I did trip over my dog's chain and fractured my kneecap so I did get more exercises that way. Finally, I liked the teamwork approach between you and [Kanosha]. You both took different sections in the

lesson which made it easier to understand. What I would change is to make the class size a little smaller say around 5 people. Other than that I appreciate your time and know you will do great things with your clients.”

“Overall, I thought the program was efficient and very well presented. It covered information on various issues affecting balance, aging and safety. My least favorite part of the program was hearing too many stories from other participants. I can’t say I changed my habits every day, but the program did make me aware of daily issues. It helped me decide to get physical therapy. Thank you for including me in this excellent program.”

Guest Speaker and Community Partner Comments

“I like that this program includes a vision education portion. Oftentimes, people do not relate vision, good or bad, with everyday tasks including walking. Visual impairments often times increase the risk of falls which can lead to serious injury. Educating the participants on vision health and age related eye diseases, I feel, encourages participants to seek out vision care and in return can help reduce the risk of falls. I think quite a few participants are surprised to learn about the impact poor vision can have not only with mobility but also with their overall health. The most often barrier is when participants feel like they see just fine and therefore do not have to seek routine and annual eye care. So many eye diseases are asymptomatic until a very advanced stage. Just because your distance vision is good, is not a determination of good eye health. Overcoming the stigma of vision care as just needing eyeglasses is a huge barrier.”

“I am privileged to know many of the participants who attended the Stepping On Program from their interactions in my community fitness classes and the Eating Smart-Being Active program that I teach in Pahrump. I heard from several of the participants that they enjoyed the program and learned new information. They were complimentary of the presenters and enjoyed the interactive nature of the class. It turned out to be a good strategy to follow up the completion of the Stepping On Program with my Qigong classes which are offered on the same day at the same location. I have (5) participants from the Stepping On Program that are still attending my Qigong class that started on January 6, 2023 on a regular basis. I feel that offering Balance training is an essential part of serving our aging community. The number one reason as to why my students want to learn Tai Chi/Qigong is because they want to improve their balance. Pahrump is a rural community, and we have a high number of underserved and economically challenged individuals living here. We need more lifestyle and health prevention type programs to serve Pahrump. Keep in mind that the public transportation in Pahrump is very limited. For soliciting more participants in the future, I suggest connecting with the Friends of Parkinson’s Support Group, the Humana Guidance Center, and Pahrump Senior Center. Nye Communities Coalition is an implementing agency for the SNAP-Ed grant. SNAP-Ed funding provides the resources for myself to deliver (4) weekly Yoga/Qigong classes free to the community as well as the Bingocize program. The Bingocize program meets 2x per week at the Pahrump Senior Center.”

“Being a healthcare provider in family medicine, I include a functional assessment when seeing older adults which includes falls risk factors. The experience I had as a guest speaker

for this project was overwhelmingly positive as the team was spot on with inclusion of falls risk factors. In addition, I would believe the impact on the participants would be positive too as the literature supports fall prevention programs significantly reduces falls and falls risk factors. Furthermore, fall prevention programs can reduce the costs associated with falls.” “I heard from several of the participants that they enjoyed the program and learned new information. They were complimentary of the presenters and enjoyed the interactive nature of the class.”

Student Reflections

Through participation in self-reflection, each of us acknowledged our professional growth through the core values developed by the APTA (Table 5). We were also tasked with challenging personal assumptions, recognizing issues contributing to the community's specific needs, and understanding the project's impact on promoting service. The reflections provided us with a framework to critically reflect on the sense of civic responsibility and professional development as future clinicians. The reflections following the final Stepping On class, also noted as “Session 7” are included in the appendix.

We saw many similarities in our experiences facilitating the program across three separate platforms. The most frequently referenced APTA core values throughout all settings were collaboration, caring, compassion, and duty. We “collaborated” on an interdisciplinary team to ensure the participants received a holistic fall prevention education. Our “caring and compassionate” approach to providing this education created a supportive environment for the participants, addressing their unique needs with empathy and kindness. Upholding our “duty” as healthcare professionals, we actively worked to prevent falls and create safer communities.

A common theme of professional growth was noted within our learning experiences. We learned to adapt our teaching and communication styles to engage individuals of different personalities, learning styles, and abilities. We also established rapport and trust with the participants through active listening and showing empathy which enhanced our competence

when it came to instructing older adults in exercise. These experiences have provided us with skills that can translate into our future careers as physical therapists.

A key area of professional growth was the acquisition of leadership skills. These skills were developed by leading the participants through exercises, fall prevention strategies, and discussion. Building relationships, providing support, and fostering a sense of empowerment among our participants were contributors to our growth as leaders. We also demonstrated leadership by directing our colleagues on how to safely administer the STEADI measures during the screening event and collaborating with guest speakers during Stepping On sessions. Additionally, we gained insight in how to co-facilitate with each other, providing us with a framework of how we can lead with a collaborative approach in future settings. As a result, we developed a deeper appreciation for how leadership plays a role in providing service to the community.

Table 5. Student Reflections and Key Milestones for Each APTA Core Value

APTA Core Value	Student Reflections	Key Milestone
Accountability	<p><i>“By demonstrating accountability, I was able to seek feedback and response from the participants to see how the Stepping On program has been implemented into their daily lives, any barriers that have been faced, and any related matters. Through this communication, I took responsibility to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives of the program following the final session. This gave me the opportunity to understand what aspects of the program were benefiting the participants and what I could improve upon in future programs.”</i></p> <p><i>-Taylor</i></p>	3-Week Follow-Up

Altruism	<p><i>“Knowing that this fall prevention movement is also supported by the National Council on Aging and that there are many other programs across the country simultaneously supporting a common interest (safety and fall prevention among seniors), it is profound to be part of something bigger than just our UNLV service-learning project. It helped me grow as a professional and I have a stronger appreciation for future pro-bono work.”</i></p> <p><i>-Kerry</i></p>	Balance and Memory Screenings
Collaboration	<p><i>“One way I felt personal growth within myself was through learning different communication skills, and how to facilitate group discussions. Through observation of and working with the master Stepping On trainers, I was able to elevate my leadership skills. I learned more about creating a judgment free environment in which to build trust and facilitate open group communication, and that social influence and storytelling are powerful drivers for behavior change. Using these new skills I feel more confident collaborating with my co-facilitators, guest experts, community partners, and future participants.”</i></p> <p><i>-Kerry</i></p>	Stepping On Facilitator Training
Compassion and Caring	<p><i>“Through this service project I was able to help the participants of Pahrump, but I believe it also helped me as a professional to love what I do in a way that was separate from school. It allowed me to not only gain confidence and leadership skills, but also led me to care deeply and be compassionate for these individuals through the fall stories they shared.”</i></p> <p><i>-Hanna</i></p>	Session 8 of the Stepping On Program
Duty	<p><i>“By providing Stepping On in a rural community, I saw first-hand the lack of resources available to these locals. This made me realize the importance of community service, and the duty that we as future physical therapists have to our community to share our knowledge.”</i></p> <p><i>-Hanna</i></p> <p><i>“While not everyone consistently practiced these exercises, there was an increased confidence and steadiness among all participants. It was a gratifying moment, as if our duty to this group had been fulfilled.”</i></p> <p><i>-Jordynn</i></p>	<p>Session 8 of the Stepping On Program</p> <p>Session 8 of the Stepping On Program</p>

Excellence	<p><i>“As a future physical therapist, I recognize the importance of providing effective services to positively influence the health of the community while understanding my personal limitations as a student. I made sure to act quickly on my feet and answer any questions with an evidence-based response to support my professional reasoning... By sharing my knowledge, participating in a collaborative effort, and seeking outside resources, I was able to contribute to an enhanced experience for the participants. I put a lot of effort and time into this program to ensure that the participants received a course that was individualized, engaging, and empowering.”</i></p> <p><i>-Taylor</i></p>	Session 7 of the Stepping On Program
Inclusion	<p><i>“An instance of inclusion highlighted in my reflections occurred when my partner and I vetted each participant confirming eligibility in our virtual Stepping On while each committed member logged into the online video chat. Though there was initially much nervousness regarding my capabilities in leading such a significant movement as a student, I quickly adjusted while creating a welcoming and equitable environment for participants.”</i></p> <p><i>-Kanosha</i></p>	Session 1 of the Stepping On Program
Integrity	<p><i>“While participating in the three-day training for Stepping On, I learned how getting participants to tell stories would help them open up and trust the process (as it did for us trainees). I will not only use this method during the Stepping On program, but I think it’s also vital to being a good PT. As a PT, trust is everything, and allowing your patients to share their stories in a safe space is one way to gain the trust you need to work with them.”</i></p> <p><i>-Jordynn</i></p>	Stepping On Facilitator Training
Social Responsibility	<p><i>“By taking initiative and recognizing the community’s issues as it relates to healthcare access, I was further able to demonstrate social justice as a student physical therapist. As a future healthcare professional, I want to continue to recognize the needs of society and advocate for those who are often underserved.”</i></p> <p><i>- Taylor</i></p> <p><i>“I am excited to see how our participants grow, and I hope I can continue to be a source that aids them in their confidence with fall prevention.”</i></p> <p><i>-Jordynn</i></p>	<p>Balance and Memory Screening</p> <p>Session 1 of the Stepping On Program</p>

Section 5: Conclusion

Through a multimodal approach, our group improved access to an evidence based-fall prevention program by reaching older adults in urban, rural, and virtual settings. Each platform had a positive impact on the target population, evidenced by continued compliance with exercises and healthy habit changes as stated in the participants' feedback. In addition, this project provided us with knowledge of fall prevention as well as an appreciation of the value of community service. We developed skills that elevate our ability to care for older adults as future physical therapists. We expanded our understanding of the impact falls have on the health and well-being of older adults by partaking in various online training courses, including the STEADI online training and Stepping On facilitator training. All five of us agree that we grew in the following areas: confidence, leadership, and interpersonal skills, aligning with the APTA's core values. We also gained a deeper understanding of the unique needs and challenges of the senior community, like isolation, loss of independence, and the stigma of falling.

While this project demonstrated success in many ways, there were also various areas for improvement. In terms of attendance, we could do more to motivate participants to make the weekly sessions a bigger priority. Constructive feedback from the participants also suggested changing the classes to a more convenient time and incorporating more exercises. Earlier marketing efforts and recruitment strategies could also be implemented for the overall success of the program. Finally, it's important to note that as our first time as Stepping On facilitators, there were opportunities for improvement on how we articulated the subject matter, our interpersonal skills with our participants and our co-facilitators, and our proficiency with the Stepping On content. Overall, this project provided us with knowledge of fall prevention as well as an appreciation of the value of community service. By gaining a greater understanding of fall risk

factors in older adults and the need for preventative type programs across Nevada, this service-learning project accomplished its aims of accessibility and professional growth through the implementation of the Stepping On Fall Prevention program.

Appendices

Hanna Brunty's Reflection

This Friday, Jordynn and I had our last Stepping On class in Pahrump, NV. As we drove out there, we reflected on the past seven weeks and how fast they went by. Not only did we grow attached to our participants and saw so much growth in them, but we were amazed by how much growth we felt in ourselves. We talked about our feelings going into our first class and how nervous we were to talk in front of a group. We then compared this to how we felt more confident with each passing class. I told Jordynn that I was very proud of how adaptable we were during this process and how I felt this experience had helped me to take a step in the right direction of being able to talk in front of a group of people and to be confident in myself. After the class, the participants handed over their evaluations which sang praises of “Please come back to Pahrump,” and hugged us as they walked out the door. I feel fortunate to have had this class with our participants, especially in a rural setting.

These past weeks have opened my eyes to the health disparities and barriers rural communities face regarding access to health care. There were multiple instances during our class when our participants would inform us of the lack of access to things in Pahrump, NV, and told us how important our classes were to them. They even said they wished it could continue forever and asked whether we could return. This made me realize how capable we are of providing so much good within a community by sharing the knowledge we have acquired throughout school. I think it is especially valuable in a rural city where there is limited access to group exercise classes, gyms, or physical therapists. The participants we had were so eager for the knowledge we provided and for any classes available to them. We were lucky enough to set up a Qigong class in the same room at the same time after our class was completed. This ensures they will

have a source of exercise after we leave and can continue to make balance and strength gains even after our class.

After hearing firsthand the lack of access to care these individuals have and doing our research to try and find resources to provide for them, it was quite shocking how little we could find. The packet we gave them at the end of the class had Las Vegas and Pahrump resources. We were able to compare side by side the resources available in a large city versus a small rural town, the difference was mind-blowing due to much more Las Vegas has to offer. Most of these individuals are retired and likely have less money than those in Las Vegas, but they also have access to far less resources. This creates a community that is starving for healthcare options. However, one thing that I did notice about Pahrump is that they have a strong sense of community. The senior center where we got most of our participants has a loyal group of members. When they find out about an opportunity, they tell all their friends about it, carpool with whoever needs help, and take full advantage of them. This mixture of lack of free resources and the great want for programs like Stepping On is why Pahrump is a great candidate for any community service that UNLV can provide. Before entering PT school, I always heard how Dr. Kin's is a great proponent of helping in rural communities, and I now understand why. They are in such dire need and so thankful for it.

When entering this program, I assumed that we would not teach any participants anything new and that they would just come for the exercises and "physical therapy" aspect of it. This led me to think we would have a significant attrition rate after they realized it was not physical therapy. However, I was wrong about both assumptions. Our participants were fully engaged throughout the program and always told us how they acquired so much useful information every visit. We also found that only two people stopped coming to our classes and had a full room

every week. These were terrific surprises and made me feel like Jordynn and I made a difference in these people's lives. Through this experience I learned how vital community service is, especially in rural communities, and how much we have to offer. Not only are we helping the participants, but I feel like it helps us as professionals to love what we do in a way separate from work or school. I also believe it helps us remain connected to our patients, gain confidence, remain compassionate, and network.

I believe that this program allowed for immense personal growth within myself. I saw this growth mainly with the following APTA core values: accountability, collaboration, and compassion/caring. I feel that this program put a lot of responsibility on Jordynn and I's shoulders as it was up to us to set up the meetings, show up on time, well prepared, and deliver the material in a fun and effective manner. This required us to have a high level of accountability to reach out to the participants every week to ensure that they were coming, to prepare weekly to provide a good class, and to own up if we made any mistakes in the material we provided.

In addition, we were required to collaborate between the guest experts, Great Basin College, and the participants in order to have a successful session each week. Through this collaboration, we solidified a room through a community college, a Qigong class that the participants signed up for and will continue after we are gone, and the pleasure of having excellent guest speakers, which the class loved. This collaboration was so important to experience as we will need this skill when we become Physical Therapists practicing in the field.

This experience opened my eyes to how prevalent fall risk is in the older population. It also made me realize how much support rural communities need. These things allowed me to empathize with the participant's situations and fueled a passion inside of me to want to do more, which I hope to continue with me throughout my career. I am thankful for the opportunity to

provide the Stepping On program to Pahrump, NV. I hope to be a facilitator for many more years to continue to help this population.

Jordynn Cowan's Reflection

I am very grateful for being part of this service-learning opportunity. I saw how crucial it is for healthcare professionals to go out and meet the communities they may treat. After creating a page of resources for the Las Vegas and Pahrump groups, I realized how few resources rural communities have compared to bigger cities. I learned that Pahrump doesn't have shoe stores other than Walmart, there are few resources in home safety, and there is a considerable deficit in the number of exercise opportunities offered compared to Vegas. When I become a physical therapist, I want to ensure I provide my community with free senior exercise programs because it promotes health, but keeping them active prolongs their independence. Witnessing this group's progress over the seven weeks was enough to help me see I made the right career choice.

I remember the first day of Stepping On and feeling worried that this program might not give this group what they needed, and I feared they wouldn't find it helpful. I made it a point to ask if they saw any benefit from the knowledge we taught them or improvement in their balance and strength. Every time I asked this, I got a positive response, making me feel like I was making a difference in this group's lives. Our most lively class was the week we covered medication management. Bringing in that guest expert who was closer to them in age kept the participants engaged and encouraged them to ask plenty of questions. The guest expert was accommodating and patient with all the questions they had for her. Having someone their age helped them open up to us afterward. When going into the program, I feared they might not want to listen to us because they might think we weren't knowledgeable. After the program finished, I found out they learned a lot from us.

The most significant area for growth I saw myself improve upon was adaptation. Interacting with this fantastic group allowed me to adapt to different personalities, questions, and situations throughout the program. I never thought of myself as someone quick on their feet, but I am much more confident in providing examples, being put on the spot, and communicating with people who are much different from me. My partner and I tried to go above and beyond for these folks. We put a lot of work into ensuring our participants could understand the program details. We could have prepared better for the costs of getting snacks. We ended up paying for all the extras with our own money, but it was worth seeing everyone's faces at 10 am on Friday mornings.

Taylor DeRose's Reflection

During the past seven weeks, I delivered a weekly evidence-based fall prevention program to older adults in Las Vegas, Nevada. The program started with 20 participants enrolled. Throughout 7-weeks, there were a few dropouts due to health issues or personal reasons, but the program ended with 14 consistent individuals who were actively involved. Initially, I was worried about keeping everyone engaged because the participants varied in age, physical activity levels, personalities, and backgrounds. Throughout the weeks, however, I noticed that the multifactorial aspect of the program made it extremely engaging for a diverse group of individuals. Some participants stated that they enjoyed the exercises the most, while others valued the storytelling aspects of the program. Through these conversations and understanding what the participants valued, I recognized how implementing a multifactorial program can reduce the complexity of assuring interaction and engagement amongst various individuals. The community aspect of this program also provided a sense of unification and connectedness, and the participants could share vulnerable stories about their fall experiences with each other. This

experience gave participants a safe place to share their stories to learn from each other. As a future clinician, I plan to use multifactorial interventions and group-based strategies to promote inclusion, enhance salience, and improve compliance.

Throughout the program, I asked the participants for feedback to ensure the program was beneficial. The participants would always provide positive comments regarding the program and the benefits they were experiencing. One participant stated that he never thought he could regain his balance, but this program showed him that he could be in control of his life and improve. Another participant came to show support for his friend. He stated that he viewed himself as a fit person and originally didn't think he needed the program. As he continued through the seven weeks, he explained that he learned a lot from the program, and it exceeded his expectations. I observed notable changes in the participants' balance and exercises throughout the weeks. It made me proud to know that I was making a difference in these people's lives by delivering the Stepping On workshop.

After the seventh week of teaching the Stepping On program, I felt a huge sense of professional development. I have grown the most regarding the APTA core values of compassion, caring, collaboration, and excellence. I demonstrated compassion and caring by wanting to empathize with others' experiences, and I gained an understanding of their perspectives. This workshop involved a lot of storytelling and the expression of ideas. I used this APTA core value to empower each participant to be determined to take control of their lives and reduce their risks of falls. I also felt a sense of growth by collaborating with various healthcare providers and community leaders to enhance the program's quality. I contacted and collaborated with an optometry clinic, a pharmacist and pharmacist student, and the local fire department to discuss fall-related topics. The interdisciplinary aspect of the program was extremely engaging

and provoked insightful conversations. I appreciated the ability to work with other professions to achieve a shared goal of educating older adults on ways to reduce their risk for falls and injuries. As I continue my professional career, I plan to collaborate with other health professionals frequently to address all aspects of a patient's care and optimize treatment.

In addition to compassion and collaboration, I also saw myself grow in terms of professional excellence. As a future physical therapist, I recognize the importance of providing effective services to positively influence the community's health while understanding my limits as a student. I made sure to act quickly on my feet and answer any questions with an evidence-based response to support my professional reasoning. When there were complex questions that I was unsure of, I conveyed intellectual humility and referred to external sources or guest experts to answer the questions effectively. By sharing my knowledge, participating in a collaborative effort, and seeking outside resources, I was able to contribute to an enhanced experience for the participants. Reflecting on the past seven weeks, I notice positive changes and growth in the participants and myself. I put much effort and time into this program to ensure the participants received an individualized, engaging, and empowering course. I learned how to effectively communicate with a wide range of individuals while using my educational foundation to provide answers and educate participants on various situations. This experience has given me more confidence to provide treatment in a group setting, and I will continue to develop these strategies and core values in forthcoming involvements.

Kanosha Grady's Reflection

The virtual group completed their seventh week of coursework with a new perspective on fall prevention. I guided the participants in a review of information and associated exercises alongside my partner. Before providing the virtual group members with their certificates of

completion, we received insight through a verbally expressed evaluation of the course.

Participants also expressed their journeys related to community mobility and safety topics. I understood their opinions concerning areas we, as facilitators, excelled and areas for growth.

There is an issue within society following the impact of the most recent pandemic that challenges the connection between gathered people. My assumption that our participants joined the virtual class due to fear or avoidance behavior was challenged in this final session debrief when parties solidified friendships with plans for future outings. They coordinated with each other very well, insisting on a project for further outreach outside of our video call course. The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) staff benefits as program facilitators like my classmates and I work to spread their mission of empowering the senior community. I felt overwhelming gratitude towards the group for the continued trust in my capabilities while facilitating the Stepping On program. The appreciation expressed by the group towards my partner and I supported my perspective concerning the impact we made, and we immediately reciprocated.

While expressing farewells and providing reminders about the scheduled follow-up, the participants were delighted about the realization of all they had learned. At this moment, all that I had learned also came to fruition. This experience showed me how well I can encourage people and illustrate unknown topics, which I will incorporate in future interactions as a student in clinical rotations. This session enhanced my understanding of the APTA core value of social responsibility, highlighted in the mutual trust between our participants and my partner and me as physical therapy students responding to societal needs for health and wellness within the community.

Kerry Margolin's Reflection

After completing my final Stepping On session, I recognize I have grown as a leader. I have sharpened my abilities to listen and receive feedback, acknowledge different perspectives, and understand the struggles that others face, which I can easily take for granted. I've learned how important it is to show compassion and support a population that is so prone to isolation and is easily preyed upon. I feel a sense of responsibility to share my knowledge on fall prevention with my community. I had the privilege of watching my participants grow over the past seven weeks, seeing them realize how they could control their well-being by modifying their behavior and creating good habits, not just for the duration of the workshop but for the long term. Older adults should have free access to these types of services. I've come to believe that it's our duty and responsibility as healthcare practitioners to inform them about the normal and abnormal processes related to aging.

Barriers to receiving community service programs can often include transportation issues, financial resources, time constraints, and lack of motivation or support. By providing this course virtually, participants could still attend even if they had to travel out of state or weren't feeling well and couldn't leave the house. Additionally, there was no cost to this course, and recorded sessions could be provided to those who had to miss a class. Although providing community service through a virtual platform may exclude other people who do not have access to a computer or the internet, it does provide solutions to the aforementioned barriers.

Culturally this was an important service-learning project because it helped to challenge the stigma of falling and losing independence in the older adult population. It was important to bring to light the idea that everyone falls, it's ok to ask for help, and it's possible to grow and adapt to new challenges. My participants not only gained knowledge in multiple domains about

fall risk but also received consistent social interaction, which can help mitigate mental and emotional decline sometimes seen in the elderly population. The social component significantly impacted their continued attendance over the seven weeks. I underestimated just how much they would learn from each other and not just the material in the course.

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Curriculum Vitae

Hanna Marin Brunty, SPT, DPT

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Education

2021-2024

Doctor of Physical Therapy - University of Nevada, Las Vegas

2016- 2020

B.S Kinesiology, Suma Cum Laude – San Diego State University

Licensure

- Nevada Physical Therapy Board, license pending graduation in May of 2024

Clinical Rotations

January 2024 – March 2024.

Outpatient Neuro Clinical Rotation,

Fyzical

- I worked as a student physical therapist at Fyzical. At this location I worked with a variety of different patient populations including vestibular, Parkinson’s, MS, stroke, and general orthopedic. I worked one on one with the patients, with my CI helping to guide the process and give feedback when needed.

September 2023 – December 2023

Inpatient Rehab Specialty Hospital, St. Elias

- I worked as a student physical therapist in an inpatient rehab facility where I saw mostly stroke, SCI, amputation, and some general orthopedic patients. I worked with an interdisciplinary team including nutritionists, SLPs, OTs and physicians. This rotation was in Anchorage, Alaska where many cultural differences were seen due to our patient population mostly being native to rural Alaska.

July 2023 – September 2023

Acute Care Clinical Rotation, Mountain View Hospital

- I worked as a student physical therapist in an acute care setting, where I saw patients with a wide range of diagnoses. Throughout my rotation I was moved through the different floors and gained experience with all the different roles a PT holds in a hospital setting. I was able to work in Med Surg, ICU, IMC, and shadow wound care specialists.

June 2022 – July 2022

Outpatient Orthopedic Clinical Rotation, Galena Sports PT

- I was a student physical therapist at Galena Sports PT. This was my first clinical rotation where I was able to complete evaluations, carry out patient’s POCs, and practice my manual skills with my CI’s guidance.

Certifications

August 2022 – Present

Stepping On Fall Prevention Program: Facilitator Certification

October 2022

OTAGO Certification

August 2022

STEADI Initiative Certification

Employment History

May 2020 – May 2024

Physical Therapist Technician, Synergy Physical Therapy

- I worked part time as an aide where I administered exercises to patients, utilized ultrasound technology, set up electric stimulation, ice, heat, and kept the facility clean. I was able to work in three different clinics where I observed many different therapists predominantly with general outpatient orthopedic patients, but one therapist who specialized in neuro.

Aug. 2019 – May 2020 Physical Therapist Technician, San Diego Sports Medicine PT

- I worked part time as an aide where I worked with patients to administer their exercises both inside the clinic and within the pool. I set the patients up on electric stimulation, ice, heat, cervical traction and kept the facility clean.

Volunteer Work

January 28, 2023

Balance and Memory Screening, Pahrump

- The Cleveland Clinic held a balance and memory screening for older adults in Pahrump, NV. I watched a presentation about brain health tips and then helped conduct balance testing to determine those at risk for falls and then provide them resources.

March 31, 2023

Texas Hold'em Wheelchair Rugby Tournament

- I helped set up the rugby tournament before the events began. I then volunteered on the day of one of the tournaments as a timekeeper. I was trained before the event began and kept score the first half of the tournament.

November 2022

Texas Hold'em Wheelchair Rugby Tournament

- I helped set up the rugby tournament before the events began. I then volunteered on the day of one of the tournaments as a scorekeeper. I was trained before the event began and kept score the first half of the tournament.

October 29, 2022

Shelby Estocado Golf Tournament

- I volunteered at the golf tournament where my role was to measure the distance the ball was from the hole. I met individuals with spinal cord injuries and was able to talk about their therapy journeys.

September 2022 – November 2022

7 week Stepping On Program

- After being trained to be a facilitator of the program, I helped to recruit a class of 18 people from the rural area of Pahrump, NV to participate in a fall prevention program. During this program, we taught this group of older adults about topics that could cause a fall. These topics included: teaching about balance/strength exercises, footwear, medications, vision, and more.

September 20, 2022

Balance and Memory Screening, Sun City Anthem

- I helped with a balance and memory screening located within Las Vegas, NV. This was a large-scale screening where the entire G2 UNLV PT and G1 OT cohorts came to participate. We had over 300 participants, where I helped run the results room and create goodie bags.

September 16, 2022

Balance and Memory Screening, Pahrump

- I helped to advertise the event, coordinate a classroom at the community college, recruit an interdisciplinary team, and run the event. This event then allowed the individuals at risk for a fall to sign up for a 7-week program or investigate other resources that we provided for them.

September 18, 2022

Down Syndrome Connections Las Vegas

- I helped the founder of Down Syndrome Connections Las Vegas pass out Aviator tickets to the members who were attending the event. I was able to meet many of the family members and connect with them and hear their stories.

September 2022

Rock Steady Boxing

- I volunteered at Rock Steady Boxing where I helped with the workouts for individuals with Parkinson's Disease. While volunteering I was paired with one of the participants and helped implement their exercise program for the day.

May 2019 – July 2019

International Volunteer HQ Barcelona, Spain

- While studying at SDSU I studied abroad in Barcelona, Spain with a program called IVHQ. This is a volunteer-based program where I helped at a facility for individuals with Cerebral Palsy. While

at this facility I helped implement the individual's therapy sessions, as well as taught English classes.

Jan. 2019 – Dec. 2018

Adaptive Fitness Clinic, San Diego State University

- This was a pro bono clinic that I volunteered with at SDSU. At this clinic I had a patient who had a stroke and suffered from aphasia, generalized weakness, and balance deficits. Her goals were to improve her LE strength and balance and this is what I designed her program to do and helped her accomplish.

Sept. 2017 – May 2019

Med Life, San Diego State University

- While at SDSU I volunteered in Mexico where we would set up mobile clinics. There would be interdisciplinary teams that would provide dental, medical and nutritional support to the locals. My job on these trips was to help check vitals and teach about health and nutrition.

Membership/Professional Organizations

2022 - Present

Member Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition

2022 - Present

Member Academy of Geriatrics of the APTA

2022 - Present

Member Academy of Orthopedic Physical therapy of the APTA

2021 - Present

Member American Physical Therapy Association

Continuing Education

October 2023

Removing the Kid Gloves in Neurologic Rehabilitation

October 2022

APTA Professionalism Module 1: Introduction to Professionalism

October 2022

APTA Professionalism Module 2: History of Professionalism in PT

October 2022

APTA Professionalism Module 3: Ethical Compass

Jordynn Cowan, SPT

Email: jordynn.jc@gmail.com

Education

- Doctor of Physical Therapy, University of Nevada Las Vegas 2021-2024
- B.S in Health Science and Minor in Psychology, Cum Laude, McPherson College 2016-2020

Licensure

- Texas State Board of Physical Therapy -License Pending Graduation 2024

Clinical Experience

- Student PT at BSA Hospital (Amarillo, TX) January 2024 – March 2024
 - I served as a Student of Physical Therapy at BSA hospital on the Med-surg unit where I primarily evaluated and treated patients with Metabolic, GI, Ortho, Pulmonic, and Cardiac pathology. I would help determine safe as well as appropriate therapy discharge recommendations. I was able to observe surgery and experience different units such as ICU and IRF within the hospital.
- Student PT at Encompass Inpatient Rehab Facility (Las Vegas, NV) September 2023 – December 2023
 - I served as a Student of Physical Therapy at Encompass Rehab Hospital in Las Vegas. My primary role was to evaluate and treat patients with neurologic and orthopedic conditions. I collaborated with a multidisciplinary PT, OT, SLP, and nursing team to provide quality patient care.
- Student PT at Banner Churchill Community Hospital (Fallon NV) June 2023 – August 2023
 - I treated and evaluated various patients, mainly those with orthopedic injuries but some inpatients in this rural community. I collaborated with a multidisciplinary team of PTs with backgrounds in aquatic therapy, dry needling, and postural alignment—performed evaluations on patients with neurologic, sports, and upper extremity injuries.
- Student PT at Carson Valley Medical Center (Gardnerville, NV) June 2022 – July 2022
 - I served as a Student Physical Therapist in a rural community at Carson Valley Medical Center. Here I taught patients how to perform home exercise programs properly. I also participated in the care of patients post-op and made sure protocols were followed closely.

Scholarships

- BSA Physical Therapy Scholarship 2024
- UNLVPT Department Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, January 2024
- UNLVPT Department Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, January 2023
- UNLVPT Rural Health Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, January 2023
- UNLVPT Rural Health Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, January 2022

Volunteer Work

- Rock Steady Boxing (September 2022-October 2022)
 - I partnered with Tony Cress Training Center to aid the boxing class for people with Parkinson's. Lead a group through different boxing patterns and exercises.
- Nevada Senior Games at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (October 2022)
 - I assisted the 65+ year-old high jump athletes by adjusting the position of the crossbar in between jumps.

- Sun City Summerlin Fall Screening Day (September 2022)
 - I led a multidisciplinary team in administering the Mini-Cog to older adults as a part of the screening. I also assisted with the results table, where I interpreted the tests for participants and talked about what they could do about their results.
- Annual Native American Vegas Junior Nationals Basketball Tournament (June 2021)
- I assisted in setting up plinths and equipment, taped ankles, and provided basic first aid.

Membership in Professional Organizations

- Member Texas Physical Therapy Association (2024-present)
- Member Academy of Clinical Electrophysiology & Wound Care of the APTA (2022-Present)
- Member Academy of Geriatrics of the APTA (2022-Present)
- Member Nevada Physical Therapy Association (2021-2024)
- Member American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) (2021-Present)

Professional Service

- UNLVPT Class of 2024 Food Officer, University of Nevada Las Vegas, 2021-Present

Certifications

- OTAGO Exercise Program: Fall Prevention Training Certification, October 08, 2022
- CDC STEADI: Empowering Healthcare Providers to Reduce Fall Risk Certification, August 30, 2022
- Stepping On Program: Facilitator Training Certification, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging, August 11-13, 2022
- Basic Life Support Provider Certification (CPR and AED), American Heart Association, April 8, 2022

Continuing Education

- Learn How to Pay off 300k in Debt NV SSIG Lecture (October 2023)
- Medbridge- Evidence Based Examination of SIJ/ Pelvis (August 2023)
- Medbridge- Shoulder Arthroplasty: Return to function- An Update (August 2023)
- Medbridge- Evidence Base Examination of Lumbar Spine: An Update (July 2023)
- Lift and Learn- TPTA Panhandle district (April 2023)
- APTA Learning Center
 - Professionalism Module 1: Introduction to Professionalism, October 9, 2022
 - Professionalism Module 2: History of Professionalism in Physical Therapy, October 9, 2022
 - Professionalism Module 3: Ethical Compass, October 9, 2022
- Core Values Self-Assessment, September 01, 2022

Taylor DeRose, SPT

Email: tayderose@gmail.com

Education

- Doctor of Physical Therapy, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2021-2024
- B.S. Community Health Sciences, Magna Cum Laude, University of Nevada, Reno, 2015-2019

Licensure

- Nevada State Board of Physical Therapy- License Pending Graduation May 2024

Clinical Experience

- Physical Therapy Student Intern, Encompass Rehabilitation Hospital, January 2024- March 2024
 - Performed evaluations and designed individualized treatment plans for patients of varying complexities to help improve functional independence
 - Gained experience in weekly patient rounding with occupational therapists, speech language pathologists, nurses, physicians, and case managers to optimize patient outcomes and establish purposeful steps towards discharge
- Physical Therapy Student Intern, Centennial Hills Hospital Medical Center, September 2023- December 2023
 - Determined a comprehensive treatment plan to achieve established goals and progress functional mobility for a variety of patients in the IMC, ICU, med-surg unit, and orthopedic unit
 - Worked closely with an interdisciplinary team to improve patient outcomes and reduce length of stay
 - Coordinated a full patient caseload consisting of functional evaluations, treatments, and assessments in addition to wound care consultations and treatments
 - Used clinical reasoning to determine post-acute care discharge recommendations and communicated these recommendations with physicians and other healthcare providers
- Physical Therapy Student Intern, PRISM, July 2023- September 2023
 - Administered initial and on-going assessments for orthopedic patients and high-level athletes
 - Planned and carried out individually designed treatment programs to alleviate symptoms, restore optimal physical functioning, and enhance performance
 - Performed innovative manual therapy techniques including blood flow restriction training, shockwave therapy, joint mobilizations, cupping, muscle energy techniques, and soft tissue mobilization targeted to enhance movement, function, and performance
- Physical Therapy Student Intern, Registered Physical Therapists, June 2022-July 2022
 - Collected patient histories, performed initial evaluations, and devised creative treatment plans for post- op patients and individuals with a variety of orthopedic conditions
 - Performed therapy interventions utilizing evidence based physical therapy techniques and skills

- Utilized WebPT to chart patients' progress and update records with data according to healthcare documentation regulation
- Operations Support Specialist, ATI Physical Therapy, August 2020-May 2021
 - Instructed and monitored exercise plans to ensure proper form in patients with various orthopedic conditions

Scholarships and Awards

- ACAPT National Physical Therapist Student Honor Society Inductee, March 2024
- UNLVPT Department Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, January 2024
- UNLVPT Department Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, January 2023
- UNLV Graduate Access Scholarship, University of Nevada- Las Vegas, August 2022

Volunteer Work

- Elite Basketball Rehabilitation Conference, July 2023
 - I volunteered with check-in, attended presentations, and networked with other professionals in the sports medicine field.
- Texas Hold'em Wheelchair Rugby Tournament, November 2022
 - I served as a volunteer to gain better understanding of adaptive equipment used in sports.
- Bishop Gorman Athletics Baseline Concussion Testing, November 2022
 - I administered baseline concussion testing for high school athletes at Bishop Gorman.
- Stepping On Fall Prevention Workshop, October 2022- November 2022
 - I planned, organized, and led a seven-week evidence-based fall prevention program at Desert Vista community center as a part of a service-learning project. Through this program, I helped educate older adults on fall risks and preventative measures as well as collaborated with other healthcare professionals in the community who served as guest speakers during the workshop.
- Shelby Estocado Annual Charity Golf Tournament Event, October 2022
 - I helped with fundraising and raising awareness for individuals with spinal cord injuries.
- Rock Steady Boxing, September 2022- October 2022
 - I participated in a group boxing class that focused on increasing aerobic activity and cognitive function through boxing sequences in individuals living with Parkinson's disease.
- Balance and Memory Screenings at Desert Vista Community Center, September 2022
 - I was a lead during the screenings by helping with setup and directing OT/PT students during the STEADI performance measures to ensure the smooth flow of participants.
- Balance and Memory Screenings at Great Basin Community College, September 2022
 - I planned and organized a balance and memory screening for older adults in Pahrump, Nevada during Nevada's Fall Prevention Awareness Week.
- Cleveland Clinic Health Brains Health Communities Event, July 2022
 - I supported the Cleveland Clinic team during their community event in Mesquite, NV by screening for fall risk through the STEADI performance measures.
- UNLVPT Interview Day, January 2022

- I facilitated conversations with the interviewees, offered information regarding the UNLV Physical Therapy department, and provided direction throughout the day.

Membership in Professional Organizations

- American Physical Therapy Association, 2021-Present
- Academy of Research of the American Physical Therapy Association, 2022-Present

Committees

- UNLV Multidisciplinary Sports Medicine Didactics, 2021-Present
- UNLVPT Sports Medicine Club, 2021-2023

Professional Service

- UNLVPT Class of 2024 Historian, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, 2021-Present

Certifications

- OTAGO Exercise Program: Fall Prevention Training Certification, October 08, 2022
- CDC STEADI: Empowering Healthcare Providers to Reduce Fall Risk Certification, August 30, 2022
- Stepping On Program: Facilitator Training Certification, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging, August 11-13, 2022
- Basic Training Certification: Essential Elements for Facilitation of Evidence-Based Health Promotion Programs, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging, June 30, 2022
- Basic Life Support Provider Certification (CPR and AED), American Heart Association, April 8, 2022
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Certification, Department of Family Services, August 31, 2021
- Personal Training Certification, National Academy of Sports Medicine, March 14, 2020

Continuing Education

- APTA Learning Center
 - Professionalism Module 1: Introduction to Professionalism, October 9, 2022
 - Professionalism Module 2: History of Professionalism in Physical Therapy, October 9, 2022
 - Professionalism Module 3: Ethical Compass, October 9, 2022
 - Core Values Self-Assessment, September 01, 2022

Seminars and Webinars Attended

- UNLV Multidisciplinary Sports Medicine Didactics
 - Glenn Barnes, DO “From Berlin to Amsterdam: What has Changed in the Consensus Statements?”, January 2024
 - Wade Gaal, MD “Movement of the Hip- Arthrokinematics/Osteokinematics and Rehabilitation”, September 2022
- APTA Nevada Third Wednesday Education Seminar Series
 - Aaron Simon, PT, DPT, CSCS “Common Climbing Injuries- Assessment and Conservative Management of Climbing Athletes”, August 2023
 - Vladimir Sinkov, MD “Surgical Approaches to the Lumbar Spine and Postoperative Rehabilitation”, February 2023
- UNLV Distinguished Lecture Series
 - Ellen Hillegass, PT, EdD, CCS, FAPTA “Tales of the Heart: Inspiration to Motivate Change in Clinical Practice and Education”, October 2022

- Julie Fritz PT, PhD, FAPTA “Evidence-Based Physical Therapy for Patients with Low Back Pain: Past, Present, and Future”, November 2021
- Julie Fritz PT, PhD, FAPTA “Pain Management in a Time of Dueling Pandemics”, November 2021
- UNLVPT Sports Medicine Meetings
 - Erik Meira PT, DPT “Critically Reading and Appraising Research”, September 2022
 - Chris Lefever PT, DPT, SCS, CSCS, USAW and Haley Anderson “Treating Olympians: Perspectives from Both Ends of the Pool”, September 2022
 - Kyle Moore “The Unique Needs of Hockey Athletes”, September 2022
 - Brooks Kline PT, DPT and Katie Stone PT, DPT “Professional Baseball”, February 2022
 - Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD, OCS “Psychological Aspects of Return to Sport and Shared Decision Making”, January 2022
- APTA Nevada SSIG Meetings
 - Divya Raghavan, PT, DPT, OCS “Corporate Physical Therapy”, September 2022
 - Yonas Tekeste, PT, DPT “Travel PT”, August 2022
- UNLVPT Brown Bag Lectures
 - Merrill Landers, PT, DPT, PhD “Becoming a faculty member: pathways, tips, and strategies”, February 2022

Kanosha Gray, LAT, ATC, SPT
Grayk4@unlv.nevada.edu | kanoshagray@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Doctorate Physical Therapy, University of Nevada Las Vegas 2021-2024
B.S. Athletic Training, Cum Laude, Xavier University 2014-2018

Licensure

- Nevada State Board of Athletic Trainers, License 0506498

Certifications

- Certified Athletic Trainer (May 2018 – present)
- National Provider Identifier (March 2017)
- American Red Cross CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers (March 2025)

Clinical Experiences

- Jan 2024 – Mar 2024 **Student Physical Therapist** – Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Rehabilitation, 255 E Bonita Ave, Pomona, California 91767
Provide and modify skilled interventions through therapeutic procedures and techniques to produce changes in the condition consistent with the diagnosis and prognosis. Maneuver patients of differing weights and sizes, with varying functional deficits and abilities, to assist with transfer and other mobility activities, including more strenuous physical activities in cooperation with other staff or utilizing transfer/therapy equipment. Interpret referrals; examine, evaluate, develop, and modify the physical therapy care plan, including anticipated goals and expected patient outcomes.
- Sep 2023 – Dec 2023 **Student Physical Therapist** – Sunrise Hospital, 3186 S Maryland Pkwy, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109
Develop and administer physical therapy evaluations and treatment plans for patients by providing assessments and selecting appropriate techniques and therapies to restore function and prevent disability. Select and administer appropriate physical therapy evaluations and treatment plans and provide patient, family, and caregiver education. Participate with other team members in patient discharge planning through verbal and written communications.
- July 2023 – Sep 2023 **Student Physical Therapist** – Dignity Health Pediatric Physical Therapy, 2850 W Horizon Ridge Pkwy Suite 320, Henderson, NV 89052
Act as an integral part of the treatment team and instruct and advise the patient, family, and other health team personnel in the intervention designed to increase the patient's strength and control and ensure that the plan of care addresses all target goals. Help children learn to move their bodies correctly, make their

movements less painful, increase the functions of injured body parts, and heal from injuries.

June 2022 – July 2022 **Student Physical Therapist** – Synergy Physical Therapy, 1710 W Horizon Ridge Pkwy Unit 110, Henderson, Nevada 89012
Assess and interpret patient evaluations and test results. Develop treatment plans using a variety of treatment techniques. Create personalized fitness-orientated healthcare programs for patients.

Employment History

July 2018 – present **Per Diem Contract Athletic Trainer Certified** – Dignity Physical Therapy, 4980 W Sahara Ave Unit 260, Las Vegas, Nevada 89146
Determine the need for and administer proper athletic training before and during games/practices to decrease the risk of injury. Athletic training techniques include taping, wrapping, bracing, and minor wound care. Perform, with interpretation, selected measurement procedures such as isokinetic testing, range of motion, gross strength of muscle groups, length and girth of body parts, and vital signs.

July 2022 – present **Per Diem Contract Athletic Trainer Certified** – Limitless Therapy Services, 6230 S Decatur Blvd Unit 101, Las Vegas, NV 89118
To reduce injury risk, help patients and clients with proper athletic training services or wellness center treatments before and during competitions/practices. Select appropriate examination and assessment tools for participants across athletics, including dance. Athletic training techniques include taping, wrapping, bracing, and minor wound care. Recovery services include instrument-assisted soft tissue massage, compression massage, cupping therapy, and percussion massage. Perform, with interpretation, selected measurement procedures such as isokinetic testing, range of motion, gross strength of muscle groups, length and girth of body parts, and vital signs.

Volunteer Work

April 2023 – Wheelchair Rugby Tournament

I followed instructions about the location set up for the western semifinal tournament under the direction of the site directors. Wheelchairs, tournament equipment, and scorekeeping devices were placed in spots throughout the site. The additional setup included marketing documentation and team score sheets.

March 2023 – Rock Steady Boxing

I was contributing as an aide during exercise drills and stations for boxing class participants diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

Oct 2022 – Shelby Estocado Annual Charity Golf Tournament

Participate as a spotter on the course by measuring the distance of those involved in the tournament. Checking the results, hooking, and final measure for closest to the green among participants.

Aug 2022 – Stepping On Facilitator Training

Completed modules and participated alongside other master trainers to develop the knowledge about facilitating this evidenced-based fall prevention program.

Jan 2022 – UNLVPT Interview Volunteer Day

They participated as campus tour guides, department tour guides, and student minglers for the incoming class of students during their introduction to the school.

Memberships

- Member of American Physical Therapy Association (2021 - present)
- Member NV Student SIG (2021-2024)
- Member Academies of Geriatrics of American Physical Therapy Association (2021-present)
- Member Academy of Hand & Upper Extremity of American Physical Therapy Association (2021-present)
- Member Research Qualitative and EBP Research SIG of American Physical Therapy Association (2021-present)
- National Association of Black Physical Therapists (2021-present)

Professional Service

- UNLVPT Class of 2024
 - President (2021-2024)
- UNLVPT Sports Med Club
 - Member (2022-2024)
- UNLVPT DEI Club
 - Member (2021-2024)
- Spanish Club
 - Member (2022-2024)

Continuing Education

- 9/30/22: Bob Donatelli, PT Ph.D. “Eccentric Loading: the Best Way to Build Strength.”
- 9/27/22: Erik Meira “Critically Reading and Appraising Research.”
- 9/20/22: Chris Lefever and Haley Anderson “Treating Olympians: Perspectives from Both Ends of the Pool.”
- 9/13/22: Rick Joreitz “D1 Football, Basketball, and Academia.”
- 9/10/21: Danielle Parker, PT, DPT, GCS, CEEAA “iPT: There’s an App for that? Enhancing your practice and learning through mHealth technology.”
- 9/6/22: Kyle Moore, “The Unique Needs of Hockey Athletes.”
- 9/2/22: Kate Addis, PT, DPT “Non-clinical roles for a physical therapist: what these look like, how to find them, etc.”
- 4/1/22: “DEI Brown Bag Discussion: Interrupting Microaggressions.”
- 3/3/22: Nicole Piemonte, Ph.D. “Cultivating the Habits at the Heart of Patient Care: Compassion, Vulnerability, and Imagination”

Honors/Achievements

2024: UNLVPT Recognition of Achievement Award

Kerry Margolin, SPT

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EDUCATION

University of Nevada, Las Vegas – Las Vegas, NV

Doctor of Physical Therapy 2021-2024

University of Arizona – Tucson, AZ

Bachelor of Fine Arts: Dance, 2004-2008

LICENSURE

Nevada State Board of Physical Therapy- License Pending Graduation May 2024

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Encompass Desert Canyon - Las Vegas, NV

January 2024 - March 2024

- Independently managed full caseload of ~6 patients per day in an inpatient rehabilitation setting.
- Evaluated and designed comprehensive plans of care for post-op patients, amputees, geriatric populations, and various neurological conditions while consulting with the patient, families, and other members of the healthcare team.
- Participated in home evaluations, family/caregiver training, team conferences, and communication with entire interdisciplinary team to ensure proper discharge planning and collaborative approach in patient centered care.

Valley Health System Centennial Hills Hospital - Las Vegas, NV

September 2023 - December 2023

- Managed a full caseload of ~10 patients per day in an acute care inpatient setting with distant supervision. Caseload was 50/50 wound care and functional evaluations/treatments.
- Sharpened skills in evaluation, functional mobility, transfers, discharge planning and patient/caregiver education in various settings including MedSurg, ICU, ED, orthopedics. Developed skills in wound assessment and evaluation, dressing selection and application, wound-vac application, and mechanical debridement.
- Opportunities shadowing and learning the physical therapist's role in the NICU and observing total joint arthroplasties in the OR.
- Participated in collaborative treatment with other disciplines to provide effective, quality care to improve patient outcomes and reduce length of stay.

Boulder City Hospital - Boulder City, NV

July 2023 - September 2023

- Managed a full caseload of 8 patients per day with >75% independence in outpatient orthopedics setting.

- Opportunities evaluating and designing treatment plans for various populations and conditions, most notably: geriatrics, amputees, CVA, joint arthroplasties, CIDP, and various orthopedic conditions.

Sports Plus Physical Therapy - Las Vegas, NV

June 2022 - July 2022

- Managed a full caseload of eight patients per day with 75% independence in outpatient orthopedics clinic.
- Developed skills in initial evaluation, manual therapy, plan of care progression and regression, PNE, shockwave therapy, post-op precautions and contraindications.
- Opportunities working with special populations such as Guillain-Barre, adhesive capsulitis, Charcot-Marie-Tooth, Achilles tendon repairs and ACL reconstruction.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Pilates Instructor/Master Trainer - Pilates + Yoga - Las Vegas, NV

March 2022 - PRESENT

- I lead progressive Pilates reformer and mat classes to enhance physical fitness, muscular strength, endurance, and flexibility for a variety of ages and fitness levels while ensuring safety and wellness.
- I serve as a master trainer for the studio's teacher trainee program, leading anatomy and apparatus courses.
- I am responsible for opening/closing the studio when necessary, selling retail and managing clients through MindBody Online.

Certified Pilates Instructor - Life Time Athletic - Henderson, NV

February 2017 - August 2021

- Worked in a team-based environment to provide clients with progressive, prescriptive Pilates apparatus classes and private 1:1 sessions.
- Worked with customers to understand personal goals and provide excellent service while upholding high safety standards.
- Demonstrated successful marketing and sales techniques and hosted special department events to meet monthly sales goals.

Fitness Instructor - Barre3 - Henderson, NV

April 2016 - September 2019

- Lead safe, appropriate and energized exercise classes for clients of various fitness and physical abilities.
- Utilized MindBody software system to manage memberships and retail sales.
- Participated in team-building activities and provided a continuing education workshop on anatomy and biomechanics for the teaching staff and managers.

Certified Pilates Instructor - A Body In Balance - Las Vegas, NV

March 2016 - June 2017

- Provided well rounded group and 1:1 Pilates sessions focusing on strength, balance and flexibility while prioritizing safety.

- Effectively explained and demonstrated use of exercise equipment and worked with clients to understand goals in order to provide excellent service.
- Kept facilities and equipment clean and organized at all times.

Production Dancer - Norwegian Cruise Line - Tampa, FL

January 2015 - October 2015

- As Aerial Captain, I conducted weekly safety checks and trained staff members to ensure performance quality and uphold safety standards.
- Coordinated with choreographers and production staff to enhance and refine movements to properly enact intended vision.
- Provided the highest level of concierge and hospitality services for guests for all areas of the cruise experience.

Showgirl in Donn Arden's Jubilee! - Bally's - Las Vegas, NV

March 2011 - September 2014

- Danced in the last running traditional showgirls revue in Las Vegas.
- Collaborated with choreographers and helped record a tap track that was used during one of the most iconic scenes in the show.

Radio City Rockette - Cast & Crew - New York, NY

October 2008 - January 2014

- Precision dancer for the world famous Radio City Christmas Spectacular touring production starring the Rockettes, performing six days per week up to four shows per day.
- Designed and lead master training workshops for aspiring young dancers.
- Delegated spokesperson for television, radio, and print interviews, branding and promotional appearances with MGM's sponsors and partners.

VOLUNTEER WORK

Rock Steady Boxing

September 2022 - PRESENT

- I am a volunteer trainer for evidence based non-contact boxing classes designed to the unique limitations of people with Parkinson's Disease to help improve quality of life.

Three Square Food Bank

February 2021 - PRESENT

- I volunteer several times per year at various events to scan, package, and/or distribute food items.

GiGi's Fit Acceptance Challenge

March 2023

- I assisted with the operations of a charity walk to help establish a Gigi's Playhouse, a national chain of achievement centers which provide therapy-based programs to individuals with Down Syndrome, in Las Vegas, NV.

Balance and Memory Screenings

September 2022

- Team lead for fall risk screening events in Pahrump, NV and Las Vegas, NV during Fall Prevention Awareness Week 2022. Responsibilities included organizing and managing the flow of the event, directing and delegating to fellow PT and OT student volunteers, implementing fall risk screening for older adults in congruence with the CDC STEADI algorithm, and providing results interpretation to the participants.

Party Ever After

April 2020 - December 2022

- I volunteered at annual charitable events such as Candlelighters Cure for Childhood Cancer and Make-A-Wish Foundation of Southern Nevada Walk For Wishes.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Fall Prevention Service Learning Project

August 2022 - May 2024

- I was a team lead for *Stepping On*, an evidence-based falls prevention course for older adults by the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging. I co-directed a seven-week virtual class that provides a multimodal approach to fall prevention for community dwelling older adults at risk for falls.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

- APTA Combined Sections Meeting Attendance 2022, 2023, 2024
- The OTAGO Exercise Program: Falls Prevention Training (3.00 contact hours)
- APTA Professionalism Modules 1, 2, 3 (0.7 CEU)
- STEADI: Empowering Healthcare Providers to Reduce Falls Risk (0.1 CEU)
- Stepping On: Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (21 hours)

CERTIFICATIONS

- Basic Life Support Provider Certification (CPR and AED), American Heart Association (2024)
- OTAGO Exercise Program: Fall Prevention Training Certification (2022)
- CDC STEADI: Empowering Healthcare Providers to Reduce Fall Risk Certification (2022)
- Stepping On Program: Facilitator Training Certification, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (2022)
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Certification, Department of Family Services (2021)
- National Academy of Sports Medicine CPT (2018)
- Barre3 Instructor (2016)
- BASI Pilates Comprehensive Teacher Training (2011)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- APTA, August 2021 – present