East Carolina University.

Tomorrow starts here.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE

Celebrating 20 Years of Leadership

DISCOVER, EDUCATE, AND MOTIVATE FOR A HEALTHY TOMORROW
Our Mission

The mission of the College of Health and Human Performance is to improve health, well-being, and quality of life. The college strives to discover, educate, and motivate for a healthy tomorrow.

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From the Dean

T
oday, the College of Health and Human Performance celebrates 20 years of leadership.

Looking back, we can say we have been a part of the East Carolina mission from the beginning. Courses in hygiene and fitness were offered from year one. By the time East Carolina became a university, a large Department of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Safety had been established. In 1993, that department became the 11th professional school on campus, with Dr. Christian Zauner serving as founding dean. In 2003, that school—Health and Human Performance—became a college.

Our legacy of successful growth continues. Our academic programs are nationally accredited and highly ranked for providing excellence. Our faculty are honored as university teaching, research, and service excellence award recipients, named fellows for our collaborative efforts. Our researchers have increased external funding and national visibility.

We address emerging health challenges from an interdisciplinary perspective in pursuit of answers with international significance such as the psychology of exercise, metabolic syndrome, tobacco cessation, and physical movement during aging. Other areas of research include wastewater management, crowding on national seashores, and using recreation to enhance well-being for older adults.

We are known for our culture of service, which impacts citizens’ lives. The college has a long history of sponsoring and coordinating a blood donation challenge, providing students the opportunity to become lifelong donors and doers. Through well-established departmental organizations, our students volunteer and contribute to the community.

Our passion for making the world a healthier place continues. We look to the future with a commitment to the values that have always shaped our work. Thank you for helping us invest in a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Glen G. Gilbert, PhD
Professor and Dean
College of Health and Human Performance
Obesity is a national health problem, but the College of Health and Human Performance (HHP) continues to battle the bulge.

While universities around the country are dispensing with mandatory exercise and health courses, East Carolina University is moving in the opposite direction. ECU continues to require students to take such courses in order to graduate. As such, the classes have become part of the university’s foundations curriculum, which focuses on providing each student a solid foundation in the core disciplines in the liberal arts, a multidisciplinary education in the areas of health promotion and physical activity, and mastery of writing and math competencies.

Requiring college students to participate in a kinesiology and a health education class has proven to provide the skills necessary to help young adults develop lifelong healthy habits. College is a time when many young adults can start developing sedentary behaviors. Courses such as HHP’s EXSS 1000, Lifetime Physical Activity and Fitness, and HLTH 1000, Health in Modern Society, are seen as fundamental in preventing the development of unhealthy habits. These courses enable university students to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make responsible, informed decisions regarding their health and well-being. The goal is to promote informed decision-making by students, particularly as such decisions relate to initiating and sustaining health-enhancing behaviors.

Students receive specific tools they can use to lead a healthy life while at ECU and after they graduate. One example from the exercise course is using technology to assist in active lifestyles. Students are required to use several mobile applications such as MapMyRun and NikePlus to track their activity.

In the health class, students complete a variety of personal health assessments to identify their areas of concern. The HLTH 1000 course helps students develop an understanding of their personal responsibility in relation to their health. It also helps them develop skills that will have a positive impact on their well-being. The course takes a risk-reduction approach in the areas of alcohol and illicit drug use, eating disorders, and sexually transmitted diseases. Students develop skills in stress management, healthy eating, weight management, and communication.

On the annual student perceptions survey for the course, at least 88 percent of the students report that the course made a positive difference in their health knowledge, attitudes, and skills, and 83 percent indicated that the course should be a graduation requirement.

Learning healthy habits is an integral part of an education at ECU. That’s why these courses are included in the university’s foundations curriculum.
Windsor Mayor James Hoggard’s mom couldn’t keep him out of the water when he was a boy. He grew up hunting and fishing on the Roanoke and Cashie rivers in the northeast corner of North Carolina, and he still enjoys putting on his boat for some solitude.

“Within two minutes I can be in an area where there are no people,” Hoggard said.

Now Hoggard wants to lure paddlers and fishermen to his piece of heaven, creating a ripple effect in the local economy.

Hoggard and 11 mayors from towns connected by the Roanoke River are collectively marketing their region, spurred by a two-year grant combining faculty and graduate students in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies and affiliate faculty members in the Center for Sustainable Tourism. The Roanoke River Mayors Association project.

“This initiative helped these towns tell their story,” said Schneider, professor in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies and affiliate faculty member in the Center for Sustainable Tourism.

“We have rich natural resources and history here in eastern North Carolina,” said historian Harry Thompson of Windsor, who serves as a board member of the Roanoke River Lighthouse & Maritime Museum in Plymouth. “I think that is one of the jewels that we have and that we have to protect because it gives us something that’s different from everybody else.”

Promoting the Common Good

At first, the towns had to put aside a “me” mentality and start thinking as “we.”

“The mayors banded to promote the common good,” Hoggard said. “All the mayors get along well. All of us would pitch in to help the other.”

The mayors began coordinating and promoting events, meeting bimonthly, sharing ideas, and talking about the challenges—and assets—that they have in common. The river was a common thread along with the history and culture of the region, from cotton and tobacco farming to local foods to Civil War history.

“We are trying to bring jobs and money to an area through visitors that might come enjoy what we have with the river that runs through the communities,” said Tommy Roberson, mayor of Williamston. “If you ask anyone in our county to give you a list of assets, they will list the river.

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It also benefits the towns individually as other eco-tourism projects have spun off the initial marketing effort. In Bertie County alone, a millpond is undergoing renovation to help with flood control, a heritage museum has opened in Windsor (population 3,579), and a small boat launch has been added on the Cashie River with plans for a river paddle and camping trail. Simultaneously, Windsor was accepted in the N.C. Small Town Economic Prosperity Program.

In the past three years, 10 new businesses including campsites, outfitters, guide services, and restaurants have been created in eight of the 12 municipalities.

“To go to the grocery store and see four or five kayaks on top of cars is exciting, and it’s starting to make a difference,” said Lucia Peel, operator of a bed and breakfast in Williamston and chair of the Roanoke River Partners, a nonprofit formed in the ’90s to highlight the five counties along the river. A centerpiece of RRP’s work has been the development of a system of 15 camping platforms to give paddlers exploring the region a unique place to stay overnight.

The Roanoke River Mayors Association has joined with Roanoke River Partners to enact the marketing plan for the region.

“The work of this group including ECU as a source for expertise and research support is incredibly important to the future of eastern North Carolina,” said Dr. Deb Jordan, chair of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. “This is really a model for how small communities can come together to make a difference—for themselves, their local communities, the environment, and the future of the entire state.”

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Beyond Borders

HHP students receive a world of opportunity

Global educational opportunities are vital to students’ personal and professional growth.

As part of a conscious commitment to global awareness, the College of Health and Human Performance regularly welcomes scholars from international institutions as visiting faculty members or postdoctoral fellows. Visitors have included faculty from South Korea, Russia, Germany, and South Africa.

All of the college’s departments provide international opportunities; students have participated in summer academic offerings involving travel to Chernobyl, New Zealand, Ireland, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, and Australia.

Whether snorkeling in the waters of the largest coral formation in the world, experiencing the viability of tourism within a village community in the South Pacific, or studying global health initiatives or the cultural implications of sport in European countries, students’ academic work comes alive when the world is their classroom.

While visiting Scotland’s St. Andrews Links, the home of golf, students learned about the origins of the sport and the managerial aspects of the current operation of this historical course.

Kaliah Lewis, recreation and park management major, was among the participants who traveled to Australia and Fiji. “The most memorable part of the trip was visiting the Namusa Fijian village and meeting the chief,” she said. “The chief gave us permission to kayak down the Lava River.”

In addition to the stay in the village, this study abroad program featured projects involving critical analyses of sustainable tourism industries.

While attending an ECU summer study abroad program in Geneva, 23 HHP students met with the U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland, Dr. Betty King, at the U.S. Permanent Mission. King conducted a special briefing for the students on the U.S. Mission’s global health initiatives. The group studied at the World Health Organization, the international headquarters of the Red Cross, the United Nations, and the University of Geneva Hospital.

Studying Abroad, Staying Home

Additionally, HHP’s Global Initiatives programs present students with an academic platform in which they can learn about and collaborate with their peers from other cultures without leaving home. These programs are an especially excellent option for students who would like to travel abroad but are not able to do so.

Individuals share and discuss their points of view with each other, and by having these conversations with Korean students, HHP students learn about a different culture and educational system.

Students communicate and collaborate, and share learning resources electronically, that enables a group of people to interact with one another in a virtual online setting.

Along with these interactions comes an understanding of other cultures. HHP students interact with students from Korea via technology tools such as e-mail, Internet blogs, and SabaMeeting. SabaMeeting is a web conferencing program that enables a group of people to interact with one another in a virtual online setting.

ECU students are also expected to learn and understand Korean culture, including Korean food, folk dance, the educational system, college life, family, and language.

Finally, students complete and exchange research papers related to the material they studied and present the papers to ECU and Korean students through SabaMeeting. Then, everyone in the class participates in interactive discussions about U.S. and Korean educational systems after each presentation.

Dr. Bomna Ko, professor in the Department of Kinesiology, teaches a course, Professional Issues in Physical Education Teacher Education, as part of this initiative.

The course examines current issues in physical education; course content is based on nationally recognized issues and policies related to the discipline. Along with the commitment to global awareness, Ko incorporates international perspectives related to the course content. The ultimate goal of the Global Initiatives program, she said, is to provide students with “live opportunities” through which they can interact with individuals from other countries.

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“Those global link opportunities allow both HHP and Korean students to find and reflect on commonalities and differences related to course content and culture between two countries,” said Ko. “The experience of live interactions appeared to impress the students, especially when they compared this experience to reading or texting about the information with others.”

Interactive activities involved with the class include getting-to-know-you portion of the class, students learn and post their partners’ profiles, including their backgrounds, favorite sports, hobbies, and future plans, via a discussion board in Blackboard. Blackboard is a virtual learning environment that enables instructors and students to share learning resources electronically, communicate and collaborate, and evaluate student progress.
At the end of the day, we trust that our water at home is clean, the kitchen in the restaurant where we ate lunch is sanitary, and our garbage is being disposed of properly when it's picked up from the curb.

Someone has to ensure these things happen. In order for the public to be safe, certain standards must be set and followed. That task falls to environmental health specialists.

The College of Health and Human Performance trains these essential professionals by offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in environmental health through the Department of Health Education and Promotion.

HHP’s undergraduate and graduate programs are accredited by the National Environmental Health Sciences Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC). HHP has the only nationally accredited master’s program in North Carolina and the only environmental health master’s degree program offered completely online in the United States.

Graduates of the programs can work in areas such as air pollution control, water and wastewater management, disease vector control, epidemiology, solid and hazardous waste management, food sanitation, and radiation protection.

Not only are the subject areas diverse but the workplace environments offer several options, including local and state health departments, federal agencies, and universities.

Professors in the department are conducting vital research that has an impact on public health and safety. For instance, Dr. Jo Anne Balanay’s research aims to minimize discomfort for outdoor workers while increasing their compliance with workplace safety requirements through the design of a lighter, thinner, and more efficient respirator mask.

“Wearing respirators against airborne pollutants is important for worker protection,” Balanay said. “The correct respirator can keep workers from inhaling dangerous substances and reduce their risk of developing exposure-related diseases.”

According to the United States Department of Labor, 5 million workers are required to wear respirators in more than 1 million workplaces throughout the country. But worker compliance with respirator requirements drops in the summer when temperatures rise. “It is not easy to wear tight-fitting respirators for prolonged periods because it can be uncomfortable, especially in the hot and humid conditions of eastern North Carolina,” Balanay said.

Balanay is aiming to resolve the problem by evaluating designs of respirator cartridges and filters made of activated carbon fibers. Her research assesses the designs against airborne toluene vapors, a risk for workers in manufacturing, automotive body repair, construction, and janitorial processes.

“If we can make it comfortable for workers to use respirators, it will pay great dividends in reduced health-care costs down the road and greatly improve the quality of life for the users,” said Dr. Glen Gilbert, dean of the College of Health and Human Performance.

Richards’ interest in the research is driven by the need to improve public health. “It’s not that I like bugs,” she said. “These vectors can cause serious illness and even death to humans. The public health aspect of my work is where my real interest lies.”

“I am so blessed to have received this scholarship and thankful for the relief it has given me toward my college finances. It will benefit me greatly toward pursuing my professional goals.”

Canden Byrd
Recipient of the Mike Bunting Scholarship

Richards’ research is just one element of solving the mosquito problem, her work “will significantly impact the health of the public we serve,” said Dr. Don Chaney, chair of the Department of Health Education and Promotion.

“Although adults can become infected, severe cases are most commonly seen in children.”

“There are no vaccines for these diseases,” said Richards. “That is why it is so important to prevent mosquito bites in regions where the diseases are endemic.”

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On a basketball court at East Carolina University, 9-year-old Tolbert Wangila gets a firm grip on the ball and bends forward, manipulating his legs, arms, and wrists for a smooth release. Faster and faster he goes, counting the number of shots he makes, while an ECU student monitors his progress.

Wangila is one of 50 Pitt County children participating in the ECU adapted physical education program. The program teaches ECU students best practices for meeting the physical and motor fitness requirements of children with disabilities. At the same time, children and educators in the Pitt County Schools system benefit.

Training Future Leaders

The program pairs ECU undergraduate and graduate students with Pitt County children in a controlled and supervised environment. The on-campus practicum provides training for future physical educators, adapted physical educators, recreational therapists, special educators, and other allied health professionals.

Dr. Jim Decker, professor in the Department of Kinesiology, includes an adapted physical education practicum in three relevant courses. “Students make a connection, one human to another. They may forget my lectures, but they will never forget who they worked with in the practicum,” Decker said.

Adapted special education major Hayley Goff has found it helpful to gain practical experience through the program. “It’s the first time I’ve been assigned to only one student, creating lesson plans solely on that one child,” she said.

David Liebfreund, special education teacher and teacher of the year at Wahl-Coates Elementary School, works with Wangila in the ECU program. “One session working hands-on with these children will teach more about students with autism than any course or textbook ever will,” he said.

Helping the Children

Liebfreund said that Wangila loves numbers and geography and that he learns things rapidly. Populations and the different languages people speak fascinate him.

“The first year we took him to ECU, he would simply shut down and say that this is too hard,” Liebfreund said. “He was even absent on some of the days we were scheduled to visit ECU, and he never misses school.”

With an incentive reward-based system Liebfreund established, gradually Wangila started to participate. He began by walking around and counting the seats in the arena looking for specific numbers in the seats.

Last year was a turning point for him, Liebfreund said. Wangila began new activities including basketball and cycling. “He has come full circle,” said Liebfreund. Now he looks forward to participating and working with his new friends.

Liebfreund has worked with the ECU program for five years. He said the program provides an excellent outlet for the children to socialize and communicate with others.

“Students with autism often have deficits in communication skills, and this class helps them to open up to someone other than me or their parents,” he said.

Decker said it is important for teachers, parents, and siblings to include children with disabilities in their activities, while emphasizing ability rather than disability. “That in turn builds confidence,” Decker said.

Supporting Local Educators

Decker has long been an advocate for facilitating better adapted physical education programs in Pitt County Schools. This advocacy has promoted awareness and highlighted a genuine need.

While the program at ECU provides an extracurricular experience, it does not take the place of the physical education that all public schools must provide for exceptional children. ECU’s program served as a catalyst for Pitt County’s specially designed education program, said Pitt County’s Exceptional Children’s Program director Cathy Kreeter. “Without Dr. Decker’s support, our program would not exist,” she said.

In 2009, Pitt County Schools hired ECU physical education graduate Lara Brickhouse as the certified adapted physical educator for the system. Now, the system has three adapted physical education teachers, all ECU alumni, who serve almost 300 students with special needs in 27 schools.

“The ECU practicum experience has brought awareness regarding students with special needs within our county and the importance of including physical activity in their lives,” Brickhouse said. “It affords children with special needs the opportunity to get out into the community and interact with persons outside of their school setting.”
Meeting State Needs

ECU ranked top producer of recreational therapists.

East Carolina University’s recreational therapy program has been ranked the largest producer of certified therapeutic recreation specialists in the University of North Carolina system. Recreational therapists provide treatment services to individuals with illnesses and disabilities in rehabilitation, mental health, long-term care, and other facilities. According to the North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy licensure, East Carolina University contributed 41 percent of the newly licensed recreational therapists in 2012. “This accomplishment reflects both the ability of our faculty to educate quality licensed recreational therapists and the need for those specialists in the state of North Carolina,” said Dr. Glen Gilbert, dean of the College of Health and Human Performance. ECU graduates have been successful in finding employment, and prospects look good for the future. The U.S. Department of Labor projects that employment of recreational therapists will increase by 17 percent from 2010 to 2020 based on the therapy needs of an aging population.

Lacey Burgess graduated from ECU in 2010 with a bachelor’s degree from the health fitness specialist program and in 2012 with a master’s degree in recreational therapy administration and a certificate in aquatic therapy. Offered a few jobs before graduation, Burgess accepted a position at a psychiatric residential treatment facility for at-risk youth in Wilmington. Now she’s starting a recreational therapy program for the company’s new location in Charlotte.

“I am proud to be a part of the growing field of recreational therapy,” said Burgess. “When I first learned about it, I was intrigued that it involves all domain areas: physical, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual.”

Whitney Sauter earned a master’s degree in recreational therapy from ECU in 2011. She accepted a position in the Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation program at Vidant Medical Center.

Sauter was attracted to the program at ECU because of its concentration on evidence-based practice and research. “The curriculum provided me with the education and hands-on experience necessary to provide quality, goal-driven recreational therapy treatment services,” she said.

Sauter’s thesis examined how interactive video-gaming exercises can improve balance, prevent falls, and maintain activity involvement of seniors.

Jim Barrett, manager of the Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program at Vidant Medical Center, has worked with ECU recreational therapy students for 35 years. “I have supervised hundreds of students and many interns,” said Barrett. “The students I’ve hired are well versed in the field of recreational therapy and have a good background of hands-on experiences.”

The recreational therapy curriculum at ECU is “one of only a handful of programs that has earned accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs through the Committee on Accreditation of Recreational Therapy Education,” said Dr. Susan McGhee, professor in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. The program offers 16 recreational therapy courses in the undergraduate and graduate degree programs and two postbaccalaureate certificates in aquatic therapy and biofeedback.

Eight faculty members in the program are all nationally credentialed and state licensed,” according to Dr. Deb Jordan, chair of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. “These are clear demonstrations of faculty talents and program quality.”

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Hannah Priest

Health always has been a passion for Hannah Priest. Priest earned a BS degree in physical education in 2008 and an MAEd degree in health education in 2010. “My experience as an undergraduate student fostered my personal and professional growth,” she said. “I am so proud to be a Pirate. My love for ECU coupled with my passion for teaching and coaching led me to continue my graduate education at ECU.”

Priest said the distance education component is one of the great characteristics of the program. “I feel that distance education is valuable for many people with its flexibility,” she said. “Many students in my master’s program were already working full time, and distance education provided them with the flexibility they need.”

Along with a stellar education, HHP also offers its students other excellent opportunities through which they can grow academically, professionally, and personally.

Priest had the chance to serve as a graduate assistant within her department, where she taught HLTH 1000, Health in Modern Society. She was also a research assistant to a professor who specialized in athletic training. She was part of the varsity women’s tennis team for four years, and she served as the assistant coach for the women’s tennis team.

“Health is about the ‘whole person.’ Health is not just about what you look like on the outside; it is also more than how you feel on the inside,” Priest said. “I believe that all ‘body systems’ are interrelated. That is to say, we must take care of our mental health in order to meet the needs of our physical health; we must also take care of our physical health in order to maintain a healthy mental state.”

Priest is pursuing a PhD in health education and health promotion at the University of Alabama. After her targeted graduation in 2016, she hopes to obtain a faculty position at the university level.
When you work on a college campus and focus your research on college students, they are much more than just subjects in a study. That’s what Dr. Ryan Martin and Dr. Jennifer Cremeens, professors in the Department of Health Education and Promotion, have found through their investigation of comorbidity on the ECU campus. They have identified issues among the university population, and equally important are their recommendations for curtailing unwise behavior and moving into a healthy collegiate lifestyle.

The emphasis of their work is comorbidity, or the idea that students who are engaged in one unhealthy behavior are often struggling with other issues as well. Martin’s work has addressed comorbidity through the lens of gambling, while Cremeens’ work originates with student alcohol abuse. “Especially when you’re looking at college students, you’re looking at a population that’s just high risk in general, for many reasons,” Cremeens said.

To identify trends within the ECU student body, the two professors have used the responses to a survey distributed for extra credit in HLTH 1000, Health in Modern Society, which is a required foundations curriculum course. Because the survey was developed within the College of Health and Human Performance, faculty designed the questions specifically to their research. They study about 1,500 students annually.

In one sample, Martin found that 81.7 percent of the students who identified themselves as having a gambling problem also abused alcohol, and 40 percent of them experienced depression, painting a classic picture of comorbidity and the issues it presents for student health and counseling specialists.

Both Martin and Cremeens are advocates of a student screening process that would detect multiple issues and allow for a broad-based approach to treat concerning problems. Such screening is not common, but the more they learn the more convinced the researchers become that a preventive approach with comorbidity at its focus can help chart a healthier path for many students and may even save lives.

“If they’re coming in to receive treatment for depression, or if they’re coming in to receive treatment for anxiety, maybe we should screen them for other disorders as well,” Cremeens said. “What we tend to do is focus on one without looking at the broad spectrum of what’s going on in these students’ lives.”

In Martin’s research, another important theme is one not often emphasized to students who are struggling with gambling or alcohol abuse: the value of self-help. In his research of gambling problems, he has found that most people who want to help themselves recover do succeed in doing so.
A s a former dean and professor in the ECU School of Music, Charles Schwartz already appreciated the value that a university can add to its community. But when he moved outside the arts world and became a participant in several studies at ECU’s Biomechanics Laboratory, Schwartz saw a new dimension of gown serving town.

When he responded to a newspaper advertisement looking for older subjects willing to participate in a biomechanics lab study, Schwartz was drawn to the opportunity to aid in the lab’s innovative research and possibly improve his own fitness level. The first study he completed examined optimal walking form for seniors, and as a result of his time in the lab, he has lengthened his stride when he walks around the ECU campus. He is seeing the benefits of that adjustment, he said.

“Now I’m involved with a study where I’m pushing weights around with my legs, and I’m already noticing that my legs are stronger,” Schwartz said.

For more than 20 years, the lab has offered a dynamic training ground for graduate and undergraduate students and an unparalleled outreach opportunity for community members, like Schwartz, who take both their health and the pursuit of academic research seriously.

While the primary objective of the research is to advance the science, hundreds of Pitt County residents have benefited from one or more of the studies conducted at the Biomechanics Laboratory within the Department of Kinesiology.

Dr. Paul DeVita has worked in the biomechanics lab for 18 years and has been the director since 2011. In that time, he has seen graduate students direct numerous studies, primarily in the areas of healthy human aging and the biomechanical issues associated with obesity and osteoarthritis. Through the combination of classroom work and the hands-on experience in the lab, graduate students in the program have found employment at medical schools, physical therapy facilities, private biomechanics labs, and businesses like Nike. The lab provides invaluable research practice and leadership opportunities for undergraduate students in the department.

“We have received eight undergraduate research awards from ECU,” DeVita said. “I would be surprised if we were not one of the leaders in undergraduate research promotion at ECU.”

Through studies like a recent one devoted to osteoarthritis knee pain and the beneficial effects exercise can produce, subjects can leave with an abundance of information about their body and an exercise plan that can help them improve strength and flexibility. Practical life-changing steps like those—and the professionalism of the students in the lab—keep people like Schwartz coming back for one study after another.
When students enter college with the general ambition to teach children, they are likely to end up in a broad-based major like elementary education, based major like elementary education. But if a student is committed to the idea of teaching youngsters how to make healthy choices, they usually find their way to the College of Health and Human Performance’s school health education program.

“The kids we get truly want to be health teachers,” said Ms. Jamie Williams, the undergraduate program director. “Our students have a passion about health.”

Because health education is part of North Carolina’s K–12 state-mandated curriculum, students who finish the degree usually find jobs teaching at public middle or high schools, Williams said, although a few have landed in county health departments or at the central school system facilities. However, they aren’t limited to teaching health and physical education classes; those who pass the Certified Health Education Specialist exam also can teach health occupation classes on high school campuses.

Ten undergraduates finished the program in 2013, with a unique mix of education and health promotion courses that provided them with the tools to set children and teens on a healthy path while they are still young enough to establish lifelong habits.

Students who pursue a graduate degree in the program open a wider spectrum of career doors for themselves. Some graduates opt to stay in K–12 grade-school settings, while others find employment at the college or university level, nonprofit health organizations, and state and district education agencies, said Dr. Michele Wallen, who directs the MAEd in health education program. Graduates often find opportunities through the growing network of program alumni.

Unlike those who pursue health education as undergraduates, the master’s students are often already working in the field and thus choose to earn credits through distance education. Wallen said. East Carolina University offers the only accredited MAEd degree in health education in the state.

Health professionals have embraced the online option because of the flexibility it affords them. “We can serve a larger audience through the distance learning option,” Wallen said. “Students can continue their education even though they have multiple professional duties outside of the traditional workday.”

Instead of a typical thesis, the master’s students choose a health education topic to explore and complete a teacher action research project in which they combine hands-on observation, research, and statistical analysis to tackle the background and solutions for their specific issue.

“Students have the opportunity to investigate questions based on their own experiences and curiosities about student learning and development,” Wallen said. Teacher action research focuses on issues that affect education at a level under the teacher’s purview, which helps students build research skills while refining and enhancing their own practice.
An innovative combination of biofeedback techniques and gaming technology is being used to help U.S. military personnel recover from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

In February 2008, Dr. Carmen Russoniello, director of the Center for Applied Psychophysiology and professor in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, founded the Training for Optimal Performance program. The goal of the program is to build resiliency, decrease stress-related symptoms associated with exposure to combat, and improve functional performance.

The center partners with the Wounded Warrior Battalion East at Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina, to help Marines and Navy Corpsmen who experience PTSD and TBI using biofeedback. The participants travel to the center at ECU once a week for training, and a representative from the center visits the base once a week, as well.

“I found that people have this incredible ability to heal themselves with the aid of technology,” said Russoniello. “So I started to look at biofeedback as a treatment intervention. I soon found it was also an excellent psychophysiological measurement tool.”

Biofeedback, the real-time recording and playback of the human body’s physiological response signals, together with psychophysiology, the psychological interpretation of those responses, is a unique intervention because it allows the client to see—via numerical and graphical readings on a computer screen—how the mind and body are connected. Unlike medications that often are used to treat stress disorders by decreasing activation of the nervous system, biofeedback training teaches the patient to decrease the activation themselves.

When Russoniello, a Marine Vietnam combat veteran, was approached by the Marine Corps with the opportunity to work with Marines returning from Iraq, he saw an opportunity to not only help warriors recover from PTSD, but also test the efficacy of biofeedback-assisted autonomic and central nervous system training with an ideal group of subjects.

The Marine Corps’ commitment to PTSD rehabilitation, especially to new treatment approaches, is evidenced by its involvement with ECU. Never before has the Marine Corps reached out to an academic institution for assistance on this field. Traditionally the Marine Corps has relied on the conventional treatments of PTSD: counseling and medication.

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The biofeedback provides assistance to injured service personnel until they return to duty, are medically discharged, or successfully readjust to civilian life. Russoniello believes this program can accomplish those goals by helping the Marines and Navy Corpsmen learn to appropriately process prior traumatic experiences and rebuild positive relationship skills.

In the program, a training circuit comprising several biofeedback modalities is used to teach the participants to control their own autonomic and central nervous systems. In addition to the biofeedback modalities used for cognitive retraining, counseling is used for relationship and resiliency training.

Russoniello has received Department of Defense grants to study the effectiveness of the biofeedback training program in reducing symptoms of PTSD and to develop mobile-phone-based biofeedback assessments and training protocols.

Russoniello received the 2012 HHP Award for Outstanding Professional Service and the 2013 HHP Award for Outstanding Researcher. Russoniello’s service with the Tarboro public schools after Hurricane Floyd and his current work with Marine Wounded Warriors were reasons cited by East Carolina University when awarding him the inaugural Scholarship of Engagement Award in 2011. This award recognizes scholars who help ECU accomplish its mission to be a national model for public service.
It’s a foundational principle for a public health professional: The first step toward implementing change in a community is gaining a better understanding of its assets and needs. With that objective in mind, one health education professor has earned national acclaim for her innovative approach to gathering information.

Dr. Melissa Haithcox-Dennis’ “virtual windshield tours” are a marriage of good old-fashioned observation and the newest satellite technology. These tools offer students in her classes a unique street-level view of communities both close to home and across the globe.

Using Google Maps and Google Earth, Haithcox-Dennis has guided her students through the process of plotting relevant factors within a community, entering the information into the program to create a living record, and analyzing data to propose changes that will boost the wellness of a community or address a specific public health issue.

“The technology has evolved so quickly,” she said. “It’s not that difficult, and what’s best about it is that it’s free.”

Students in her classes undertake a three-step process designed to paint a thorough picture of the community they are studying. They interview a public health professional, analyze existing public health data, and conduct the windshield tour. For nearby areas, they drive the streets, take their own pictures, and enter their information into Google Earth to create a living record of what they observed.

But not all windshield tours are conducted in areas that the students can actually reach in their cars. Haithcox-Dennis believes they can benefit from studying communities much different from their own, so she has also encouraged true virtual studies—using Google Earth to glean detailed information about an inner-city Harlem neighborhood or a small town in Germany.

“They can use that information in figuring out what kind of intervention or what kind of strategy a community needs,” said Haithcox-Dennis, who was recognized by the American Association of Health Education in 2011 for her pioneering use of technology.

For example, in analyzing one small Pitt County town, students in Haithcox-Dennis’ class learned that the town doesn’t have a grocery store, a doctor, or a dentist. From those data, students crafted the type of presentation that would resonate with a person or group who cares about enriching that community and has the energy and means to intervene.

“You make an emotional connection with policy makers and funding sources,” she said. “Then you take that information and figure out what needs to go there, maybe a farmer’s market or a medical clinic. That’s the last piece of helping students understand how health principles can impact a community.”
The College of Health and Human Performance has long been dedicated to promoting overall good health and improving individuals’ quality of life. Through such programs and facilities as its Human Performance Laboratory (HPL), the college discovers real-world solutions to real-world problems thanks in large part to the cutting-edge research that is conducted on a daily basis.

In the HPL, researchers determine how physical activity reduces the risk for diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and heart disease. “We are examining many of the issues we deal with in a sedentary society,” said Dr. Joe Houmard, director of the HPL and professor in the Department of Kinesiology. “We are studying issues we have to deal with that affect the welfare of our region but also apply to the whole world.”

Numerous research projects in the HPL have received funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is the primary federal agency involved with conducting and supporting medical research. Investigators associated with the HPL are involved with many of the NIH-funded projects at ECU. Obtaining NIH funding is an extremely competitive process, with grants typically encompassing five years of work and total budgets approaching or exceeding $1 million per grant.

“Funding agencies are really interested in determining what type of exercise is effective and how exercise works in preventing diseases,” said Houmard. “Although many know that exercise is ‘good,’ it is not clear what type of exercise works the best and the biological mechanisms by which exercise functions.”

This research also contributes to the focus of the doctoral program in bioenergetics and exercise science, ranked as a top 10 program in the nation by Academics Analytics and by the National Academy of Kinesiology. The interdisciplinary degree is housed in the Department of Kinesiology.

“We have been very lucky to have collaborative ties with faculty and departments in the Brody School of Medicine,” said Houmard. “We are thus able to have a biomedical slant to our education and research opportunities and take advantage of the rapid progress occurring in the biomedical field.”

Houmard added that the interdisciplinary aspect is also especially beneficial for students. “They get the best of both worlds,” he said. “They get to look at different angles of a complex problem, and that’s the only way to solve those problems.”

Also, said Houmard, research helps enhance students’ educational experiences in several ways. “We are able to employ undergraduate students to help with our research projects, which often sparks an interest in them that leads to further education and seeking a profession related to research and/or a health-related field,” said Houmard. “It also helps undergraduates to know that they have the opportunity to work in such a lab if their interests lead them here.”
altering a community

Partnership helps chart a healthier course for all ages in Hyde County

With a population of only 5,822, it’s not unrealistic to speculate that nearly every person in Hyde County will receive benefits by an ongoing wellness initiative spearheaded by two Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies professors and an ECU alumna.

Several years ago, aware of research that showed a higher-than-average risk of diabetes and obesity in Hyde County, Dr. Kindal Shores approached Dr. Clifton Watts with an idea. The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust was looking to invest in the needs of rural communities, and Shores thought a partnership with ECU might attract grant money and make a marked difference in the lives of the people there.

Watts already had a presence in the county’s public schools as an evaluator, so he and Shores partnered with officials from the county health department and schools to secure funding for a community-wide health intervention. Their aim was to reduce obesity through the promotion of physical activity and nutrition. The plan called for assessing community needs, installing walking trails and gardens, providing programs through schools, forming community walking groups, and developing worksite physical activity programs. Shores oversaw assessment and technical assistance in the community, while Watts worked with schools and worksites.

Focus groups with community residents assessed how best to reach county citizens and promote walking groups. The partners also mapped facilities and walking trails in the county. During this time, walking trails were installed in the town of Fairfield and resurfaced at Mattamuskeet schools. Schools offered in-school wellness classes and after-school programs focused on walking, running, dance, and intramural sports. A new school garden provided similar programs focused on gardening and nutrition. Every other weekend, the school gym and grounds opened for family programs. Meanwhile, residents throughout the county were recruited to participate in walking programs. Programs recruited leaders to sustain the walking groups following the 10-week class.

The final piece of the project is a worksite walking challenge. The challenge engages walking teams from businesses in the county who compete by racking up miles that are tracked by the health department. Watts oversees the design and evaluation of the walking challenge.

A key player in the project is Elizabeth Mumm, who received her BS in community health from East Carolina in 2002 and has worked as a Hyde County public health educator since 2011. Mumm is largely responsible for forging new ties between community leaders and agencies so that the work can expand, Watts said.

“It’s very grassroots-driven,” Mumm said. “We are trying to capacity build and get the communication out there to get the community connected.”

Under Mumm’s leadership, private and public organizations have joined to form the Hyde Partners for Health. The coalition, as proclaimed in its mission statement, “envisions Hyde County being the healthiest county in our state.” The strategies for achieving that goal include accessible walking and bike trails, community centers with fitness activities for teens, and directed efforts toward reducing diabetes and the need for pacemakers in the county’s population.

As Hyde County residents improve their health, the project serves an ongoing educational purpose at ECU. Students perform service-learning work annually at the Mattamuskeet after-school program for the RCLS 4170 course, Youth Development Programs and Services. The project also benefited from the thesis research of Justin Moody and Jessica Burkhart, who investigated constraints to enrolling youth in after-school programs.

“Under the leadership of Dr. Ralph Steele and other professors at ECU, I received the foundation for a tremendous career in parks and recreation. Through relationships initiated during those years in school, I have been blessed to work collaboratively with many ECU faculty and staff to help develop programs like Special Olympics and Senior Games for the citizens in North Carolina. Together we are exemplifying our ECU motto—Servire.”

Ms. Alice F. Keene, Class of ’73
Retired Director
Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation
Going Global

Students explore international and cultural implications of sport

Dr. Melanie Sartore-Baldwin

College of health and human performance

Colleges students who are sports fans have an innate understanding of how their favorite team affects their own community. But do they grasp the implications and cultural aspects that exist in other countries, because oftentimes we do see it in a vacuum?” Williams said. “It was very unique to see how sports exists in other countries, because international context. The course asks each student to choose a country and thoroughly investigate every aspect of that nation’s key sports—the history of sports, how the political conditions govern sports, how athletes are chosen and trained for international competitions like the Olympics, and other topics unique to that country.

“I feel these students need to leave the classroom with a recognition that all people aren’t just like them,” Sartore-Baldwin said. “I hope they get beyond the next level and they see that sports is so much beyond what you get in the box scores.”

One of Sartore-Baldwin’s students in the spring of 2013 was Betney Woodhull-Smith, who did her research on Iceland and discovered that while wrestling is king there, handball is growing in popularity across the nation. Woodhull-Smith’s classmate Joshua Williams went to the other side of the globe and learned that while football (American soccer) is the most prominent sport in Costa Rica, more than 60 sports are actually recognized by the Costa Rican governing body, including chess.

Neither Woodhull-Smith nor Williams are pursuing international careers at this point, but both embraced the chance to see the broader world through the lens of athletics.

“As an American, it’s sometimes easy to conceptualize sport around the world as we see it here,” Williams said. “I fell in love with the science, passion, and culture that exists in the Center for Applied Psychophysiology beginning in 2007. "I had the opportunity to work with Marines from Camp Lejeune helping them to recognize and control symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury," said Fish. He assisted with many grants and studies conducted in the laboratory and taught biofeedback classes. Fish says the greatest thing about biofeedback is that anyone can use it for his or her health.

When Matt Fish met with his academic advisor to plan course work in recreational therapy, he received more than a list of requirements for the undergraduate degree. He received an introduction to biofeedback and his career path.

One alumus of ECU’s sports studies program, Zac Sponhaltz, was so intrigued with his introduction to international sports during his undergraduate years that he followed that path to a master’s program in international sports management, a dual degree by SUNY—Cortland in New York and London Metropolitan University.

After spending a year on each campus and completing his course work, Sponhaltz secured a job as a venue logistics manager for the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics, a dream job that also served as his internship.

He since has completed his program and moved to Colorado Springs to pursue a career with the United States Olympic Committee, and he gives ECU’s global-minded professors credit for setting his course.

“When I initially decided to pursue a sports studies degree, I thought that because I watched SportsCenter I knew a lot about sports,” Sponhaltz said. “My classes and professors at ECU forced me to consider aspects of sports I had never really considered.”

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

Matt Fish

When Matt Fish met with his academic advisor to plan course work in recreational therapy, he received more than a list of requirements for the undergraduate degree. He received an introduction to biofeedback and his career path.

Biofeedback is a training technique that enables clients to learn how to balance their nervous system by using signals from their own bodies. Fish developed an interest in biofeedback initially to learn about ways to improve his own health. "I fell in love with the science, passion, and culture that exists in the Center for Applied Psychophysiology in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies,” said Fish.

He graduated in 2008 with a BS degree in recreational therapy. In 2011 he earned an MS degree in recreational therapy administration and a certificate in biofeedback. As a student, Fish worked in the Center for Applied Psychophysiology beginning in 2007.

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Fish is a doctoral candidate in the ECU Department of Addictions and Rehabilitation Studies in the College of Allied Health Sciences. After his intended graduation in 2014, he plans to continue working in academia as a professor.

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East Carolina University graduate assistants who are certified athletic trainers are serving Pitt County Schools in a partnership that benefits both the community and the university.

The athletic trainers work to prevent life-threatening injuries and improve safe return to play while helping local school systems meet requirements for a designated health-care provider. At the same time, ECU gains an opportunity to enrich student education through real-world experience.

“We are pleased to help support this project, as it is not only good for the community—it provides valuable experience for our students,” said Dr. Glen Gilbert, dean of ECU’s College of Health and Human Performance.

This successful partnership between East Carolina and Pitt County Schools was featured in the CNN documentary Big Hits, Broken Dreams, which focused on concussions in high school football.

**Making Athletics Safer**

Ron Butler, athletic director of Pitt County Schools, initiated the partnership in 2009 after he heard ECU professor Dr. Sharon Rogers, Department of Health Education and Promotion, lecture on emergency preparedness in secondary athletic programs. Rogers now coordinates the initiative and manages the athletic trainers.

“It is now safer to compete in athletics at our high schools,” Butler said. “A comparison of the care our student-athletes receive now with the care they received before having these certified athletic trainers is shocking,” said Butler. “I feel like I signed a lease for a Toyota Camry, but I am actually receiving a Rolls-Royce with a chauffeur.”

Athletic trainers help the school systems meet North Carolina State Board of Education requirements that each high school designate either an athletic trainer or a first responder to attend all football activities. Athletic trainers are medical professionals with a four-year undergraduate degree who have passed a national board certification exam and have earned state licensure. A first responder is any individual who passes a first aid and CPR course and maintains that credential.

**Enhancing Awareness**

Research has pointed out devastating effects when concussive injuries are mismanaged. A state law addresses this by requiring players be taken out of an activity if they might have sustained a concussion. Before the athlete can return to play, he or she must be cleared by a qualified health-care provider.

The Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act was named for two young athletes who died from concussions sustained while playing high school football. Matthew Gfeller played at R. J. Reynolds High School in Winston-Salem, and Jaquan Waller was a running back at J. H. Rose High School in Greenville.

Pitt County athletic trainers cover all football activities in the fall and assist injured athletes in other sports. In the winter season, they cover basketball and wrestling; and in the spring, they serve soccer, baseball, and softball. The athletic trainers also cover practices if not scheduled to be at a home game.

Rogers said the presence of an ECU athletic trainer in high schools relieves untrained personnel of the responsibility for assessing potentially life-threatening conditions and, more importantly, provides appropriate care and enhanced safety to athletes.

“Parents would not leave their child at a pool without a lifeguard, nor should they permit their child to engage in collision sports such as football without an athletic trainer present,” she said.

“The athletic trainers educate and trained to help prevent injuries but also to evaluate, treat, and rehabilitate the physically active individual when needed,” she added.

Dr. Sharon Rogers (center) with athletic trainers Ashley Yelmini and Kevin Reilly at Farmville Central High School

“Thank you so much for the opportunities this scholarship has allowed me to pursue. This award allows me to truly focus on my academics and has alleviated a lot of the financial burden that comes along with an education.”

Britney Woodbull-Smith
Recipient of the Ronnie P. Barnes Scholarship
Wrightsville Beach Police Chief Dan House has been a believer in ECU’s Cardiovascular Health Assessment Program for years. The police officers at his last two posts went through screenings in the Human Performance Laboratory, located within the Department of Kinesiology. When House accepted the job as Wrightsville Beach chief in 2011, he made sure his officers participated in the program. But never was House more sold on the value of ECU’s personal heart health evaluation program than when two different officers he served alongside at the N.C. State University Police Department received information in the lab that saved their lives. In both cases, an irregular result from an EKG sent the officers straight to a hospital, where surgical intervention prevented a heart attack. “I personally see huge value in this program,” said House. “We want our people to be as healthy as they can be.” All new police hires in Wrightsville Beach are required to go through the lab’s regimen, and veteran officers are reassessed at least every three years—more often if they exhibit certain risk factors. Wrightsville Beach is not the only police force utilizing the service; the police and fire squads from Greenville and the police departments at N.C. State University and East Carolina University all pay regular visits to the ECU Human Performance Lab. Hassan Aden, who took over as the chief of the Greenville Police Department in 2012, was gratified to learn that his officers were the beneficiaries of the Cardiovascular Health Assessment Program. The regular screenings give him peace of mind, especially because policing is a profession that often lends itself to unhealthy habits. “This is of huge, huge, value to have this partnership with ECU and to participate in the Cardiovascular Health Assessment Program,” Aden said. “There are so many risk factors with this career choice, and you have to maintain a certain level of fitness, not just for the physical side of the job but for a healthy lifestyle in general.” The program started in 1983 and has expanded its scope over three decades while retaining its chief purpose—detecting early signs of heart disease and mitigating cardiovascular risk through a personalized wellness follow-up plan. Individuals can make an appointment and pay for the service, but much of the activity in the lab comes from contracts with police forces like House’s or other organizations. East Carolina University faculty and staff are also frequent participants in the health screening and the subsequent exercise program conducted in the facility. The convenience of the lab allows them to keep close tabs on their health and fitness goals, said Jessica Van Meter, coordinator of the program. Recipients of the lab’s cardiovascular health screenings aren’t the only ones who see benefits from the program; the graduate and undergraduate students who lead the assessments get invaluable experience in testing procedures, data collection, and interpersonal communication. “The students gain experience not only with assessments such as body composition, but they also receive hands-on practical experience of how to conduct graded exercise tests,” Van Meter said. “They learn what the risks are for heart disease and diabetes, how to modify those risks, and skills in communicating with individuals that go beyond their course work.”
A commitment to service is the foundation of leadership, two alumni with distinguished military careers said while speaking to cadets in ECU’s Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corp (AFROTC). Air Force Brigadier General Catherine Dreyer Chilton and Major General William “Dutch” Holland (retired) met with cadets in small groups and talked about leadership as a practical tool they used to advance their careers. Chilton and Holland both graduated from East Carolina while serving as cadets in the campus AFROTC unit, Detachment 600.

Holland is an HHP alumnus, receiving his degree in recreational therapy. Both have received the East Carolina Alumni Association’s Outstanding Alumni Award.

Leadership is “about being genuine,” Holland said. “The foundation of leadership is concern for others around you and being committed to doing the right thing. Leaders also need to learn, and you can’t do that if you’re talking. So, to be a leader you have to listen more than you talk.”

He told cadets the Air Force is noted for developing leadership skills in its officers, and that Chilton is an excellent example of a leader. “I give the military lots of credit for civil change. We were always ahead of society on important issues, like desegregation, women in leadership and in combat, and now with gays.”

Chilton works at the Pentagon as the mobilization assistant to the military deputy of the assistant secretary for acquisition of the U.S. Air Force. She oversees research and development of weapons systems worth more than $40 billion. A 1981 graduate of ECU, she is married to General Kevin Chilton, who has flown on three NASA space missions.

Holland retired recently after serving as commander of the 9th Air Force at Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, South Carolina. The 9th Air Force comprises six wings in the eastern United States and two direct reporting units with more than 350 aircraft, and 24,000 active-duty and civilian personnel. He now serves as executive coordinator of the Governor’s Military Base Task Force in that state.

Both said military service did the most to develop their leadership skills. Chilton said the number of career opportunities for women in the military is growing. Military service is more than a way to see the world; it’s “the whole world in itself.”

Detachment 600, chartered in 1948, is one of the oldest AFROTC units in the nation. Along with Chilton and Holland, the unit has produced many more military leaders, including retired four-star General Gary L. North, who was ECU’s graduation speaker in 2009. North graduated from ECU in 1976.

In addition to the service it provides through its on-campus military programs, East Carolina for decades has been noted for its regional partnerships with the military, from providing distance education opportunities to developing programs that assist military families.

As such, East Carolina has been recognized for its leadership and outstanding support of all the men and women of our nation’s armed forces, including those called to active duty who are also faculty, staff, and students. The Department of Defense honored ECU with the 2010 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award in recognition of the university’s support of employees who serve in the National Guard and military reserves. ECU is only the second university to receive this national award.

In 2008, the College of Health and Human Performance proudly became home to ECU’s Departments of Aerospace Studies and Military Science, which house the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army ROTC programs.

“Doing the Right Thing U.S. Air Force generals speak on leadership

U.S. Air Force generals speak on leadership

Air Force Brigadier General Catherine Dreyer Chilton and Major General William “Dutch” Holland (retired)
The ECU Army Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) was established in 1983 as a partnership school with N.C. State University, and the Pirate Battalion became an independent program 14 years later. More than 400 lieutenants have been commissioned. Distinguished officers have commanded battalions in combat and have reached the rank of colonel. Along with its extensive history, the program also has had its share of successes. Cadets from Army ROTC have distinguished themselves with a winning record in contests such as the All American Brigade Ranger Contest, in which they prove their mettle at navigation, rifle marksmanship, and physical fitness against teams from other states. ECU cadets also have been invited to participate in the elite Sandhurst competition at West Point. Army ROTC sponsored an annual 5-mile run for the past six years in support of the Wounded Warrior Project at Fort Bragg. For four consecutive years, the Army ROTC program was ranked among the top 25 in the nation out of 273 such programs, according to the U.S. Army Cadet Command.

With its excellent track record, it is no surprise that this program presents cadets with exciting educational experiences that prepare them for the rest of their lives.

Allison O’Kelly graduated in 2012 with a bachelor’s degree in the health fitness specialist program. She said ROTC had a positive impact on her education. “ROTC is special because you are taught things you may not learn in a normal class,” she said. “I learned more about myself, especially more about responsibility and being a good leader.”

O’Kelly said that job security also is a major benefit of the program. “Even with the economy like it is, I know that I won’t have to worry about my future because I was part of ROTC,” she said.

ECU graduate Nathan Rimpf also was a top cadet in the Army ROTC program. Rimpf graduated in 2010 with a bachelor’s degree in exercise and sport science. In an injury sustained while serving as an infantry platoon leader in Afghanistan in July 2012, Rimpf lost the lower portion of both legs. Fitted with prosthetic legs, the Army first lieutenant made a remarkable recovery and inspires others with his strength and courage.
FACULTY AWARDS

Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching
• 2009–2010 Dr. Tom Raedeke (Department of Kinesiology)
• 2006–2007 Dr. Matt Mahar (Department of Kinesiology)

Board of Governors Distinguished Professor for Teaching Award
• 2012–2013 Dr. Richard Williams (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)
• 2007–2008 Ms. Karen Vail-Smith (Department of Health Education and Promotion)
• 2006–2007 Dr. Tom Raedeke (Department of Kinesiology)
• 2005–2006 Dr. David Rowe (Department of Kinesiology)
• 2002–2003 Dr. Cheryl Stevens (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)
• 1998–1999 Dr. Boni Boswell (Department of Kinesiology)
• 1998–1999 Mr. Mike McCammon (Department of Kinesiology)
• 1997–1998 Dr. Matt Mahar (Department of Kinesiology)
• 1996–1997 Dr. Sharon Knight (Department of Health Education and Promotion)

Centennial Award for Excellence
• 2007–2008 Ms. Karen Vail-Smith (Department of Health Education and Promotion)
• 2006–2007 Dr. Jim Decker (Department of Kinesiology)

Five Year Research Award
• 2007–2008 Dr. Ron Cortright (Department of Kinesiology)
• 2005–2006 Dr. Bob Hickner (Department of Kinesiology)
• 1999–2000 Dr. Tibor Hortobagyi (Department of Kinesiology)

Scholarship of Engagement Award
• 2010–2011 Dr. Carmen Russoniello (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)

Lifetime Research Award
• 2011–2012 Dr. Walter Pories (Adjunct, Department of Kinesiology)
• 2004–2005 Dr. G. Lynis Dohrn (Adjunct, Department of Kinesiology)
• 1996–1997 Dr. Joe Houmard (Department of Kinesiology)

Linda Alfred Profiles in Leadership
• 2007–2008 Dr. Sharon Knight (Department of Health Education and Promotion)

Max Ray Joyner Award for Faculty Service through Continuing Education
• 2004–2005 Ms. Karen Vail-Smith (Department of Health Education and Promotion)

Women of Distinction
• 2008–2009 Ms. Karen Vail-Smith (Department of Health Education and Promotion)
• 2007–2008 Dr. Patricia Dunn (Department of Health Education and Promotion)
• 2007–2008 Dr. Mary Glascoff (Department of Health Education and Promotion)
• 2007–2008 Dr. Sharon Knight (Department of Health Education and Promotion)

University Alumni Award for Outstanding Teaching
• 2009–2010 Dr. Kindal Shores (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)
• 2009–2010 Ms. Wendy Whisner (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)
• 2006–2007 Ms. Karen Vail-Smith (Department Health Education and Promotion)
• 2006–2007 Dr. Richard Williams (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)
• 2005–2006 Dr. Tom Raedeke (Department of Kinesiology)
• 2001–2002 Dr. Cheryl Stevens (Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies)
• 1997–1998 Dr. Boni Boswell (Department of Kinesiology)
College of Health and Human Performance
Dean's Advancement Council

The Dean's Advancement Council provides advocacy, consultation, and engagement in the search for private funds in support of the college and continuing development of its undergraduate and graduate programs. Serving as an advocacy group, the council helps promote a positive image and strong relations for the college with its peers, the university, as well as with the region, state, and nation.

Mr. Dave Alexander, Retired
Potomac Services Inc.

Mr. Ronnie Barnes, Senior Vice President
Medical Services, New York Giants Football

Mr. Mike Bunting, President
Rubbermill Inc.

Mr. Jim Dill, President
The Virginia College Fund

Ms. Carolyn Fulghum, Retired
ECU Assistant Vice Chancellor

Major General “Dutch” Holland, Retired
U.S. Air Force

Mr. John Hudson, Senior Vice President
Morgan Stanley

Mr. John A. Israel, Recreation Specialist
Department of Defense, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia

Dr. Thomas Johnson
ECU Professor Emeritus

Ms. Alice Korne, Retired Director
Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation

Lieutenant Colonel Mike Myrick, Retired
U.S. Air Force

Mr. Jim Post, Retired
Former Owner, Post’s Nursery

Mr. Si Seymour, Retired
ECU Pirate Basketball Radio Analyst

Lieutenant Colonel Vincent C. Smith, Retired
U.S. Air Force Board Member, Air Force Personnel Security Appeal Board

Ms. Emilie Tilley, Retired Principal
Virginia Beach City Public School System

Dr. Jerry Tolley Sr., Retired
Elon University

Mr. Clay Walker, Vice President
Publisher Relations, USA TODAY Sports

Mr. George Whitley, Retired
Athletic Director and High School Baseball Coach

Ms. Betsie Wilkinson, Tutor
Lee County Schools

Dr. Wilfrid Williams, Vice President
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Department of Health Education and Promotion (HEP)
Department of Kinesiology (KINE)
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies (RCLS)
Department of Aerospace Studies (Air Force ROTC)
Department of Military Science (Army ROTC)

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Mary Greyard, exercise physiology intern, examines the effects of exercise on muscles, chronic pain, and Alzheimer's disease.