

# LINK

PCHCS

Nova Southeastern University Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences



# HIGHLIGHTS



*Pictured is a downtown Utuado building painted by an artist who paints the flag of Puerto Rico on buildings around the island.*



*NSU provided home health physical therapy services to homebound patients in downtown Utuado.*

## NSU SHARKS MAKE WAVES IN PUERTO RICO

Last November, a group of 11 students and 3 faculty members from the Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the Tampa Bay Regional Campus provided physical therapy (PT) services to the underserved in the communities of Utuado, Caguas, and San Juan, Puerto Rico. These services were provided in free clinics, as well as at health fairs and home health environments.

The group, which provided care to about 40 patients daily, offered PT evaluations and treatments such as manual therapy, neuromuscular reeducation, exercise programs, gait and balance training, and patient education. Thanks to money raised by the students and donations provided by faculty members and the Student Physical Therapy Association, patients received vital assistive devices, braces, and topicals for improved function, mobility, and pain management.

During the trip, students assisted patients who had limited access to medical services and identified individuals who required additional medical attention. Additionally, they learned the importance of providing medical outreach services to underserved populations. To further the students' involvement in this important work, the college recently established the Student Outreach Committee.

“We have been blessed to continue our work with the communities of Puerto Rico and are combining efforts with other disciplines to provide the most comprehensive health care experience we can,” said Elizabeth De Marse, D.P.T., PT, MTC, ONC, assistant professor and assistant director of clinical education. “We hope others will join us in these efforts and help us continue to make waves on the Puerto Rico shores.” ■

*Department of Physical Therapy—Tampa Bay*

### COVER IMAGE

*NSU students and Elizabeth De Marse on a staircase used for a movie being filmed in downtown Utuado.*

# SPOTLIGHTS



## A CARDIOVASCULAR SONOGRAPHY SUCCESS STORY

In 2019, Courtney Stocks Collazo, M.H.Sc., CVS, RVT, RDCS, was part of the sixth graduating class from the Cardiovascular Sonography program in Tampa Bay, Florida. Even before she graduated, Collazo was offered a position at her clinical site—Sarasota Memorial Health Care System in Sarasota, Florida.

“I am currently a lead cardiovascular sonographer at Sarasota Memorial—a large hospital where I oversee echo and vascular sonographer education and aspects of our cardio-oncology program. The cardiovascular sonography skills I learned at Nova Southeastern University helped me to enter the field with great success,” Collazo explained.

“I was also able to obtain a graduate degree in health care sciences—higher education while earning my Bachelor of Science in Cardiovascular Sonography,” she added. “To be a lead sonographer at my hospital usually requires five years of experience. Since I also have a master’s degree in health science, my managers were able to use the two years from this degree

to meet the experience required of being a lead cardiovascular sonographer—something I wouldn’t have if I went anywhere else.”

In 2020, Collazo was a recipient of the Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography Emerging Leaders Grant and was also a nominee for the recent graduate commissioner for cardiovascular technology position at the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

In 2022, she married her husband Alexander Collazo. They reside in Parrish, Florida, and are the proud parents of an eight-year-old border collie and a three-month-old miniature Australian shepherd.

**“I appreciate the opportunities I’ve been given in my career,” said Collazo. “I am very thankful for my time at NSU, which has helped me stand out as a professional, advance in the field, and obtain the role I have today.”** ■

*Department of Health Science—Cardiovascular Sonography,  
Bachelor of Science Program—Tampa Bay*

# HIGHLIGHTS



Viktor Gustafsson instructs a patient in a therapeutic exercise.

## SWEDISH STUDENTS EXPERIENCE CULTURE, PT PRACTICE, IN THE UNITED STATES

Nova Southeastern University began a student exchange program in 2007 with the Karolinska Institutet in Sweden, allowing physical therapy students to complete clinical education experiences in the United States or Sweden, respectively. The program restarted in 2022, following the COVID-19 shutdown.

The experience is hosted by Howard Layne, D.P.T., PT, CKTP, a 1998 NSU alumnus and co-founder/owner of OrthoSport Physical Therapy, who has worked with more than 17 Swedish students. He serves as the program's

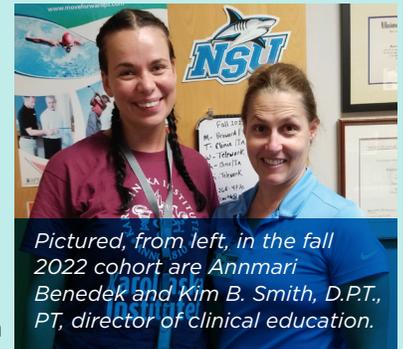
clinical instructor and is responsible for educating, mentoring, and assessing performance. Differences in outpatient physical therapy (PT) practice are noted, including manual therapy techniques, modalities, visit frequency, and patient interaction.

Melina Shiva, a winter class of 2023 PT student, was surprised by the outpatient physical therapy services in Sweden, mainly because she immediately began assessing postsurgical conditions and witnessed patients being seen multiple times per week (which is common in Sweden) vs. only once.



Pictured, from left, in the winter 2023 group are Viktor Gustafsson, Howard Layne, and Melina Shiva.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Annmari Benedek, a fall class of 2022 PT student said, "I had multiple opportunities to practice soft-tissue treatment, which is something physical therapists don't do very often in Sweden," she added. "I also learned to approach different patients in another way than in Sweden and apply different exercises to patients' programs than the ones I was used to doing."



Pictured, from left, in the fall 2022 cohort are Annmari Benedek and Kim B. Smith, D.P.T., PT, director of clinical education.

As a cultural exchange, students are encouraged to explore South Florida. A common theme expressed by the students is the friendly and helpful nature of Americans. "People are personable as opposed to the environment in the clinics back home, where people tend to be more reserved and overly professional," said spring class of 2022 PT student Alexandra Wittborg. ■

*Department of Physical Therapy, Doctor of Physical Therapy Program—Fort Lauderdale*

## PH.D. STUDENT RECEIVES NATIONAL RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP



Claire Mireau, an occupational therapy Ph.D. student, was awarded the 2022-2023 American Occupational Therapy Foundation Bonita Kraft Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student Scholarship for her dissertation project “Effectiveness of Occupational Therapy Services for Individuals with Co-Occurring Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders in Intensive Residential Treatment: A Retrospective Study.” ■

*Department of Occupational Therapy—Fort Lauderdale*



## LYNDSEY ZURAWSKI EARNS UNSUNG HERO AWARD

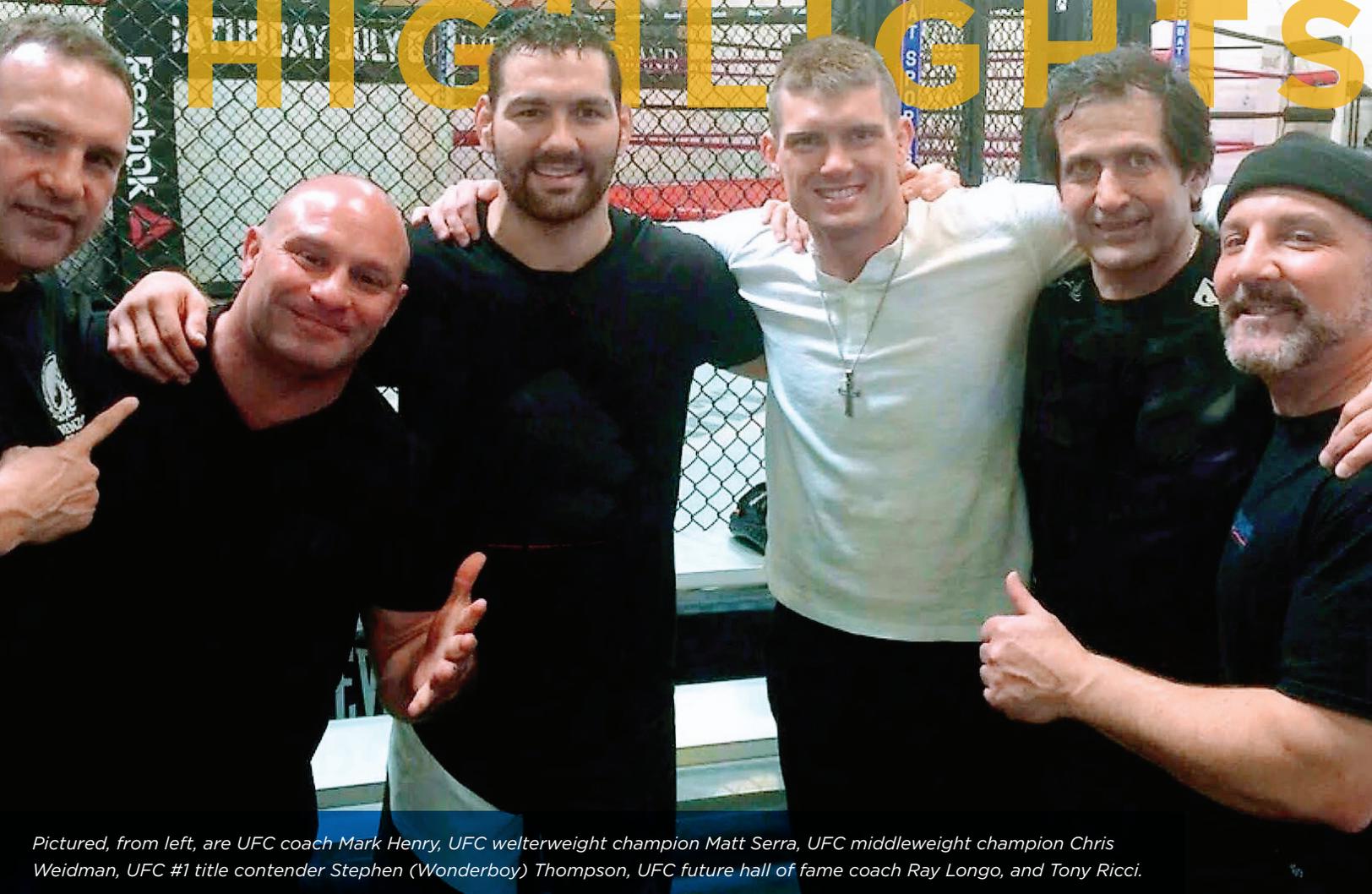


On February 9, Lyndsey Zurawski, SLP.D., CCC/SLP, a speech-language pathology alumna, received the Unsung Hero Award from the Circuit 15 Juvenile Justice Board for her dedication and commitment to local youth. She is the first school district employee to earn this honor.

Zurawski is currently employed by the School District of Palm Beach County, where she provides services to incarcerated youth in alternative education settings, as well as inclusive services to pre-K through high school students. She also supervises and works as a district diagnostician, advocates for youth in the juvenile justice system, and provides literacy-based therapy. Additionally, she advocates for students in alternative education, as well as those impacted by reading disorders.

In 2016, Zurawski received the Rhonda Work School Clinician of the Year award from the Florida Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (FLASHA). She is a past president of the FLASHA and the Council of State Association Presidents. ■

*Department of Speech-Language Pathology—Fort Lauderdale*



Pictured, from left, are UFC coach Mark Henry, UFC welterweight champion Matt Serra, UFC middleweight champion Chris Weidman, UFC #1 title contender Stephen (Wonderboy) Thompson, UFC future hall of fame coach Ray Longo, and Tony Ricci.

## HHP AND THE UFC PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE BUMP FISTS

Nova Southeastern University is the only institution in the world the Ultimate Fighting Championship Performance Institute (UFCPI) chose to partner with to advance the sport of mixed martial arts.

Tony Ricci, Ed.D., assistant professor, joined the Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences' Department of Health and Human Performance (HHP) in August 2021. Because he is attracted to research productivity, particularly in fight sport studies, he worked with the HHP department on their shared vision to create the Fight Science Lab, which was established in 2022. Along with 14 years of university teaching, Ricci has worked in the fight sport field as a performance coach for 30 years.

In 2021, Ricci assisted in building a relationship between the UFCPI and the HHP department. Until this point, the UFCPI collected substantial

data from the fighters on their roster and had never shared this data or collaborated with any academic or research institution.

Since the official partnership was established, the HHP department and the UFCPI joined forces on a paper that was published in the *Journal of Morphology and Kinesiology*. Ricci and his faculty colleagues are also writing a position paper for the International Society of Sports Nutrition on "Nutritional Recommendations for Fight Sport Athletes" with the UFCPI vice president of performance and the UFCPI director of nutrition science.

In addition to developing this novel collaboration, Ricci teaches classes in strength and conditioning, exercise physiology, performance psychology, and sport psychology. He also conducts interdisciplinary research with NSU's neuroscience program. ■

*Department of Human Performance—Fort Lauderdale*

# SPOTLIGHTS



Gaffney has distinguished herself as a superior professor in the Department of Audiology, where her demanding didactic courses, clinical supervision, and research mentorship have earned her high respect from her students and faculty colleagues. Gaffney, who has been teaching doctoral audiology students since joining the faculty team in 2007, teaches multiple courses in vestibular science and amplification, where she skillfully weaves theory to practice from classroom to clinic.

In the clinical realm, Gaffney precepts students and provides care to patients in the NSU Audiology Clinic. Most of her clinical focus is on seeing adult and pediatric patients with vestibular complaints. This is where you can truly see Gaffney's impact, as students start translating what they have learned in the classroom to clinical practice.

Gaffney's teaching philosophy is simple. "Make our students into the best audiologists. When you produce good audiologists, that speaks for itself in the profession. The impact of well-trained audiologists is a continuous process, because it means patients will be treated in the way they need, and when the graduate becomes a preceptor, it will enhance the knowledge of the next generation of audiologists," she explained.

**Every day when I teach, that is in the forefront of my mind," she added. "This guides how I plan my semester, write lectures, precept students in the clinic, and counsel them." ■**

*Department of Audiology—Fort Lauderdale*

## PATRICIA GAFFNEY NAMED OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Each year, the American Academy of Audiology asks colleagues, friends, and mentees to peruse their professional circles and select those who are deserving of recognition for their outstanding service to audiology and the hearing sciences. In 2023, Patricia Gaffney, Au.D., professor in the Department of Audiology, was chosen as the recipient of the Outstanding Educator Award.

Nova Southeastern University admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, military service, veteran status, and national or ethnic origin. • Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate's, baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist, doctoral, and professional degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Nova Southeastern University may be directed, in writing, to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)).

## WAYS TO SUPPORT

### ESTABLISH A SCHOLARSHIP OR PROGRAMMING ENDOWMENT

With a minimum gift of \$25,000, which can be paid over multiple years, individuals or companies can establish an endowed fund to support the general operations, student scholarships, research projects, or outfit a space/area with the latest technology. Endowed funds can be named for the donor, the donor's family or business, or in memory of a loved one.

### NAME A ROOM, LAB, OR COMMON AREA IN THE NEW SIMULATION COMPLEX (SimCom)

Individuals can name a specific room, lab, training space, or common area in the SimCom for themselves or a loved one. Companies interested in branding their business or product in a high-traffic area can secure a naming opportunity for up to five years.

### LEAVE A LEGACY

Leaving a legacy gift is simple and, in most cases, does not impact your current financial situation. We accept gifts of life insurance, retirement assets, and bequests. Our advancement professionals will work with you (and your legal and financial advisers, when appropriate) to create a philanthropic plan customized for you.

All gifts to NSU are tax-deductible and can be customized. You will be provided with a receipt for your records.

#### Interested in Partnering?

Contact: Shannon Wayte, CFRE  
[Shannon.Wayte@nova.edu](mailto:Shannon.Wayte@nova.edu) / C: (954) 529-6776



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- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy

- Physician Assistant
- Speech-Language Pathology

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