

NUPOC NEWS

*The official newsletter of the
Northwestern University Prosthetics-Orthotics Center*



IN THIS ISSUE

**CONGRATS MPO CLASS
OF 2024!**

**FACULTY & STAFF
UPDATE**

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENTS**

MPOR PROGRAM

**HITTENBERGER
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Congrats MPO Class of 2024!

On Friday, March 24th, NUPOC celebrated its Master's graduation ceremony for the 2024 cohort of MPO students. The in-person ceremony included guest speakers Elliot J Roth, MD, Chair, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, as well as Marianne Greene, MD, Vice Dean for Education, Chair, Department of Medical Education. The ceremony was completed with a reception in the beautiful atrium of the Simpson Querrey where graduates and guests continued to celebrate their commencement. Congratulations to the class of 2024!

Faculty & Staff Update

Gloria Lee, one of our faculty members, recently founded the Asian Pacific American Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (APAPO). She launched it at the 50th Annual Academy Meeting which took place in March of this year.

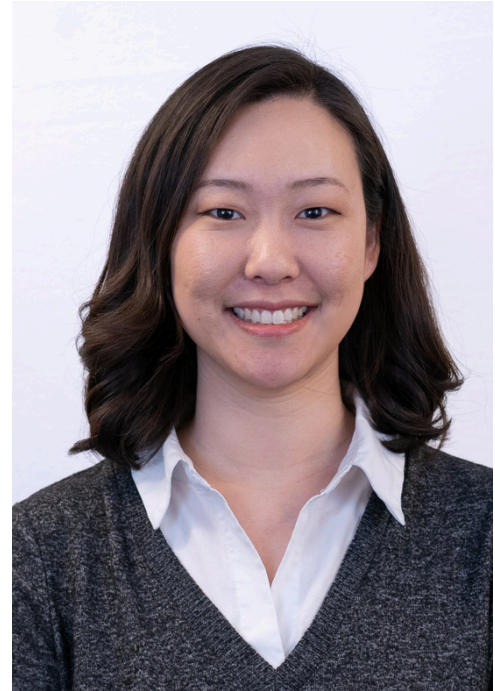
APAPO serves as a national platform for Prosthetic and Orthotic professionals and students to discuss the unique challenges of Asian American Pacific Islander professionals, implement strategic initiatives, enhance international collaboration, and foster a sense of camaraderie within the community.

This is a national professional organization committed to serving the community of AAPI prosthetists and orthotists.

For more information on how to get involved, please visit www.apaapo.org.

We are proud to share that Allie McGinnis, one of our faculty members, has recently had her first article accepted for publication. The article, Mobility Rates After Lower-Limb Amputation for Patients Treated with Physician-Led Collaborative Care Model will appear in the August volume of Annals of Vascular Surgery. To read her article, click the link [here](#).

Congratulations once again, Allie!



PICTURED: GLORIA LEE, MSPO, CPO

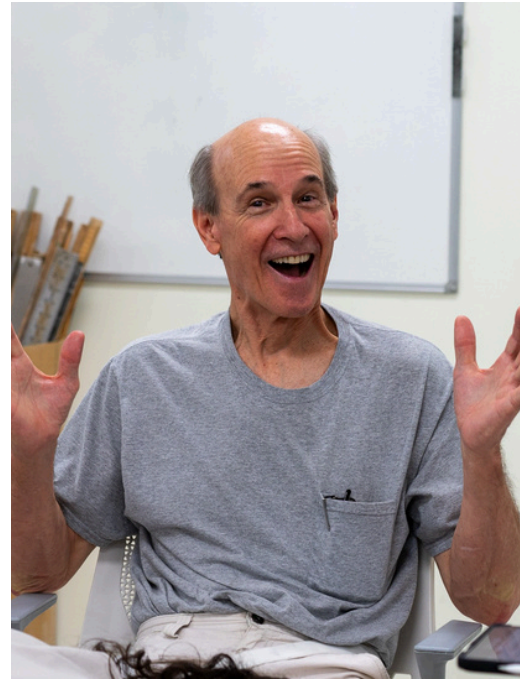


PICTURED: ALLIE MCGINNIS, CPO

Jeff Linton, one of our technicians has retired from his position at NUPOC. Jeff worked for NUPOC for over 8 years, and has been a valuable member of our team.

“My time at NUPOC has been enjoyable, challenging and rewarding. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with so many talented and dedicated faculty and staff. I have appreciated the openness and collegiality of NUPOC’s working environment and my inclusion with the students with each year’s new class.”

Jeff plans to do more volunteer work, read more books and spend time with family and friends. We wish him nothing but success in his future endeavors.



PICTURED: JEFF LINTON

Alumni Spotlight

From an early age, Nicholas LeCursi was interested in how things worked, and enjoyed building things. In college, he studied engineering and physics. It wasn’t until he was 38 years old that he discovered O&P.

“I recall the first time I walked into an O&P lab at Eastern Maine Medical Center (EMMC) and met John and Norman, the clinicians there. They allowed me to volunteer in their lab, and in that first experience I immediately felt ‘at home’ and knew that I should pursue a career in O&P.”

Coming from engineering and other industries, Nick felt somewhat out of place when he entered the Orthotics program at NUPOC. Prior to his arrival in Chicago, he had spent time studying musculoskeletal anatomy which helped a great deal in the fast-paced orthotics program there. At the time, the program was directed by Bryan Malas with Desmond Masterton and Jennifer Richards as instructors.

“They did a great job preparing us to enter the profession with courses in orthotic practice, pathology, anatomy, orthotic design, and applications. So, it was a great starting point for entry into the field. My residency at the University of Michigan was where I would begin piecing it all together into my clinical practice, and NUPOC was great preparation for my residency.”

When asked which mentors had the greatest impact on his career, Nicholas replied:

“Certainly, my parents have had the greatest impact on my career. I was very fortunate that they modeled creativity, self-sufficiency, and tenacity. They were also supportive, and they facilitated but did not interfere with my exploration, and that was a great gift. I have had several mentors along my path in O&P who modeled excellence and compassionate patient care, including Robert Rhodes and Lyn Haubenstricker, who showed me early on what a great pediatric clinical practice looks like.”

In terms of industry challenges, Nick states that we need to keep focusing not just on high level outcomes in our research, but on research that will allow us to distill out a few basic and theoretically founded principles of orthotic practice that can be applied to the derivation of the design of orthotic interventions to improve the consistency of clinical care. That theoretical foundation will also allow us to more effectively disseminate that knowledge.

For any aspiring O&P professionals, Nick’s advice is to be tenacious, skeptical and uncompromising and keep digging until you get to the root. Then share it, debate it and develop it.



PICTURED: NICHOLAS LECURSI

You’re likely already passionate, so add to that persistent questioning of what you think you know. Be tenacious, skeptical and uncompromising and keep digging until you get to the root. Then share it, debate it and develop it.

Student Achievements

NUPOC is proud to share some of the many achievements and awards our students have earned this past year. We take pride in our renowned educational program, and are consistently amazed by the determination, curiosity, kindness, and skill demonstrated by our MPO students.

During the 2024 graduation ceremony, several students were recognized for awards they earned throughout the year. Jacob Frelich, Kelbi Magnuson, and Abby Citterman received the 2024 Tamarack awards. This award was established in 2014 by the generosity of J. Martin Carlson, CPO, FAAOP, owner and chief engineer of Tamarack Habilitation Technologies (Blaine, MN). The Tamarack Award is given to students who demonstrate excellence in orthotics and who consistently prove their dedication to the field.



PICTURED: JACOB FRELICH (LEFT) KELBI MAGNUSON JOHN, ABBY CITTERMAN (RIGHT)

Breanna Poteat was announced as the 2024 Ken Harris Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scholarship recipient. This scholarship was established to honor the 30+ year career, service, and dedication of Ken Harris, and to provide support for students from marginalized backgrounds who are committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. The anonymous donor hopes such scholarship will be financially added to by others who seek to honor Ken Harris and provide support for students who are from marginalized backgrounds. We thank Breanna for her tremendous contribution to diversity, equity, and inclusion within Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.



PICTURED: BREANNA POTEAT, MPO'24

Abby Citterman, '24 MPO, was awarded the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (AAOP) Women in O&P Research Award at the AAOP's 50th Annual Meeting and Scientific Symposium in Chicago.

The award, which comes with a \$1,500 honorarium, recognized her research titled, "[Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation at the Wrist as a Method to Restore Sensory Feedback for Individuals with Partial Hand Amputation.](#)"

Congratulations Abby on this outstanding achievement!



PICTURED: ABBY CITTERMAN, MPO '24

Earlier in May, students Elijah Jones, Carson Pearson, and faculty member Gloria Lee had the pleasure of attending the International African American Prosthetics and Orthotics Coalition (IAAPOC) annual meeting in Houston, Texas. They were able to expand their knowledge in the O&P profession and hear from an individual with an osseointegrated limb. James E Dixon, a top 3 speaker in the world and an international #1 best-selling author, was an inspiring speaker! Elijah was also honored as one of three Sam D. Benson Scholarship recipients that the organization awarded this year for African American students pursuing a career in Orthotics and Prosthetics.



PICTURED: GLORIA LEE (LEFT), CARSON PEARSON, ELIJAH JONES (RIGHT)

Three of our MPO students were given awards at the 2024 American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists Annual Meeting and Scientific Symposium. We'd like to congratulate Megan Grunst, Pauline Porucznik, and Kate Grylicki for winning first place for their poster entitled "Effects of Prosthetic Design Features on Osteoarthritis Risk in the Sound Limb: A Scoping Review". To read more about their poster, click [here](#).

Amanda Kemper will be presenting at the American Society of Biomechanics Meeting in Madison, Wisconsin. The study she will be presenting was motivated by previous research done by Dr. Major where he determined upper limb prosthesis users generate larger ranges of motion in the upper limb and trunk when completing goal-oriented tasks, otherwise known as compensatory motion. "We know prosthesis users engage in compensatory motion throughout day-to-day prosthesis use, and wanted to investigate the risk of musculoskeletal injury due to compensatory motion and further understand if compensatory motions in prosthesis users contribute to the higher rates of shoulder pain in upper limb prosthesis users report. From Dr. Major's findings, we wanted to determine if larger ranges of motion lead to higher joint contact and muscle forces in individuals with upper limb amputation." We wish Amanda the best of luck with her upcoming presentation!



PICTURED: MEGAN GRUNST (TOP), PAULINE PORUCZNIK (LEFT), KATE GRYLICKI (RIGHT)



PICTURED: AMANDA KEMPER, MPO '24

Several of our MPO students were awarded prizes for best poster at the 2024 50th American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists Annual Meeting & Scientific Symposium!

Congratulations to all of this year's winners!

- ◆ 1st place: Do Clinical Assessments of Upper-Limb Prosthesis Users Sufficiently Capture All Dimensions of Anatomical Hand Function? Abby Citterman, Antonio Barron, Kelbi Magnuson, Renato Delos Reyes, Matty Major.
- ◆ 2nd place: Effects of unilateral myoelectric transradial prosthesis use on upper body musculoskeletal dynamics during goal-oriented tasks. Amanda Kemper, Michael Consentino, Russell Johnson, Wendy Murry, Matty Major.
- ◆ 3rd place: Effects of prosthetic design features on osteoarthritis risk in the sound limb: a scoping review. Megan Grunst, Kate Grylicki, Pauline Porucznik, Wendy Beattie, Matty Major.

NUPOSS, our student society, has recently elected new board members. We're pleased to share that John Andamarasis was voted President, accompanied by Olivia DeRodes as Vice President. Melina Livingston is treasurer, Emily Wambach is secretary, and Maddy Ball, Ana Paula Avila, Alex Segil, and Clare Hudak Lynerd make up the social media committee. Be sure to follow our Instagram to keep up with all things NUPOSS!

MPOR Program

We are proud to announce the launch of our new Masters of Prosthetics Orthotics Research (MPOR) Program this year. This program is an extension of the existing MPO program with a focus on clinical research. The goal of this program is to address the ever-changing landscape of the O&P profession. At the end of their studies, students will have become trained in both O&P clinical care and advanced research methods in rehabilitation science. We currently have 5 students enrolled in the MPOR program. We are excited about this new opportunity for our students and can't wait to see what they will accomplish during their time here at NUPOC!

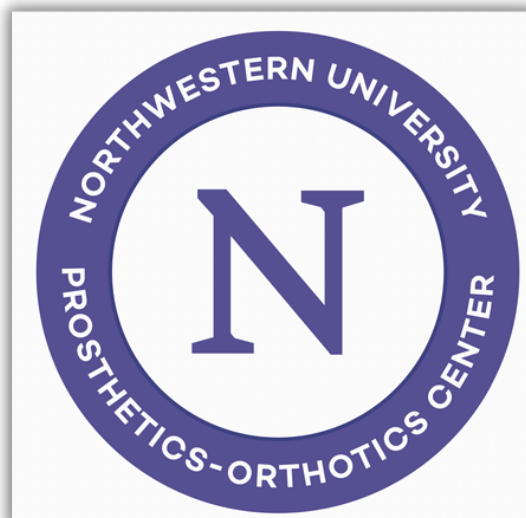
Hittenberger Scholarship

We are honored to share that the Hittenberger Legacy Fund Scholarship has been established to support the Northwestern University Prosthetic-Orthotic Center. The Hittenberger family has a long legacy of working within the prosthetic-orthotic profession. Tina Hittenberger, a NUPOC alum, and her siblings are the third generation to work in O&P. Ms. Hittenberger has made an initial gift of \$100,000 to honor her family's legacy and support future generations of prosthetic-orthotic professionals. We are grateful for the family's dedication to the field, and are thankful to have received such a generous gift. By establishing this scholarship, Ms. Hittenberger hopes to encourage others to support a new generation of practitioners. The scholarship will be awarded during the 2024-2025 academic year.

To read more about the history of Ms. Hittenberger and her family, click [here](#).

For ways to show your support, you may Contribute [online](#), or contact FSM Development by calling (T: 312-503-2706). Your gift can help support emerging researchers, P&O clinicians, students, and programs that will improve the lives of people who live with amputation or other physical impairment.

Your generosity is **greatly** appreciated!



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