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7-10-2019

## College of Health Professions News

Georgia Southern University

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### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "College of Health Professions News" (2019). *Waters College of Health Professions News*. 12.

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## Students Gain Experience in Costa Rica

July 10, 2019



Assistant Professors Nancy Henderson, Ph.D., PT, DPT, and Haley Worst, PT, DPT, OCS, accompanied eight students, all from the Waters College of Health Professions, to Costa Rica on a service trip this past May.

This was the second time faculty and students have made the trip to Costa Rica to spend time volunteering in the community and experiencing the culture. The group consisted of five undergraduate rehabilitation sciences student, an undergraduate nutrition and food science student and two graduate physical therapy students. During the five-day trip, attendees spent three days volunteering in a skilled nursing facility in the Manuel Antonio area and two days learning how to surf as well as experience sightseeing.

“The main reason we were in Costa Rica was to shadow both a physical therapist and nurse to see the differences in health care in Costa Rica compared to the United States,” stated Brooke Alley, senior rehabilitation sciences major. “While shadowing we were able to help with transfers, help during feeding time, we played games with the patients, helped brushed their teeth, and were there to support the staff.”

Mary Carpenter, second year student in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, and Alley both recalled visiting the newly completed nursing home and meeting the residents as one of their most memorable experiences on the trip.

“I speak limited Spanish and only one of the patients could speak English, but the lack of communication did not deter the relationships I formed with these patients. One of the residents taught me how to play dominoes and preceded to beat me almost every time. I got to dance with some of the patients and they taught me some of the exercises that they had to do for physical therapy. It was special learning about their passions and family. When it was time to leave, it was hard to say goodbye, and sad when they asked us when we were coming back, and we had to tell them not until next year,” stated Alley.

To learn more about study abroad opportunities please visit the [Office of International Programs and Services](#).

## **The Biodynamics & Human Performance Center Awarded \$9,965 Grant**

July 10, 2019

The Biodynamics & Human Performance Center on Georgia Southern University's Armstrong Campus has been awarded an internal grant from the Faculty Research Committee in the amount of \$9,965 for their project entitled "Heart Rate Variability: A Versatile Health Biomarker."

The research project will be led by Department of Health Sciences and Kinesiology faculty members Bryan Riemann, Ph.D., Greg Grosicki, Ph.D. and Andrew Flatt, Ph.D. and will aim to optimize a heart rate variability (HRV) assessment protocol, and then will explore associations between HRV and a variety of health and fitness related measures.

Located in the Waters College of Health Professions, the Biodynamics & Human Performance Center is dedicated to providing high quality education, research and service activities related to the study of human movement.