

School of Hard Knocks



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New faculty member tackles concussion issue

By Irvin B. Harrell

The prevalence of concussions, particularly among football players, continues to make headlines in the National Football League. In fact, the recent movie “Concussion,” starring Will Smith, brought to the forefront the severity of recurring hits to the head in the sport. In the movie, Smith plays a crusading forensic pathologist who discovers a neurological deterioration (chronic traumatic encephalopathy) in football players that resemble Alzheimer’s disease.

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Assistant Professor Eric J. Schussler, received his PhD from Ohio State University before coming to ODU in August.

Dean's Message

College continues legacy of teamwork, success

The College of Health Sciences, its advisory board, and its faculty and staff are heading into the holiday season with another successful year. The strides we have made as a team and as individuals continue to energize our vision to improve health and quality of life at home and around the world through education, research, service and professional development.

Among our accomplishments in 2015-2016:

- We had more than 41 grant awards and \$8 million in external grant funding
- The college unveiled a new degree program: a PhD in Kinesiology and Rehabilitation.
- We awarded 641 degrees.
- Our masters and doctoral enrollment hit an all-time high.
- Enrollment and student credit hours have continued to increase.
- All of our professional programs are fully accredited with exceptional pass rates; four programs achieving 100 percent.



Dean Shelley Mishoe

The College met its fundraising goals and established two new endowed funds: Atlantic Anesthesia established the Atlantic Anesthesia Endowed Scholarship for Nurse Anesthesia Students, and the Jon and Sharon Stull Community Oral Health Impact Scholarship.

Also to note, Monarch Physical Therapy continues to grow and is now providing pediatric services.

Future initiatives

On Jan. 1, I am stepping down as dean and turning the reins over to Dr. Richardean Benjamin who was chosen to serve as Interim Dean. I know the college will be in good hands with Dr. Benjamin as the Captain of our "*College of Health Sciences Ship*." Although the State and the University may be facing an austere budget this coming year, I have full confidence that the college will continue to thrive and achieve great outcomes. Pending initiatives include additional offerings of the PhD to include tracks in Translational Sciences and Bioelectrics, expanded services through Monarch Physical Therapy, a proposal to offer a Doctoral Degree in Athletic Training, expansion of the Doctorate in Nursing

Practice, a proposal to evolve the graduate certificate programs in Global Health and Molecular Diagnostics into Master's Degree Programs, and more! I have no doubt the college will continue to display the utmost accomplishment and ingenuity.

Farewell and thank you!

It has truly been an honor and a great blessing to serve as the fourth dean of the College of Health Sciences for almost six years. These years have brought me great joy from being able to lead and work with such a dedicated and talented group of people. The Dean's Office, Chairs of the Schools, faculty and students have been supportive of me and accepting of my leadership in ways that have exceeded my greatest expectations. The amount and level of accomplishments have raised me and the college to new heights. This would not have been possible without the teamwork and cooperation that you have shown. My time as your dean has been the fondest years of my career. I cannot thank you enough for the wonderful gala in my honor and celebration of the College of Health Sciences 30th Anniversary. I look forward to my new role and I am enthusiastic on what the future holds not only for me, Ken and our family, but for you and for the College.

I wish you smooth sailing wherever your journeys take you and all that you need to forge ahead with confidence and grace. Happy Holidays and Bon Voyage!

Shelley C. Mishoe

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From the Editor

Cheers to an inspirational boss, mentor

“Funny how time flies when you’re having fun.” – *Janet Jackson, 1986*

A little more than two years ago, Dean Shelley Mishoe and her fabulous faculty and staff welcomed me to the College of Health Sciences. It has truly been an enriching and exciting experience working with so many people dedicated to making the world a better place.

I’ve been able to tell a lot of great stories, attend many special events, and pick the brains of students and researchers. I’ve worked on several special projects and this year I was able to design a magazine commemorating the college’s 30th anniversary.

I was also able to help coordinate a special holiday gala this year where the college honored Dean Mishoe, who will be stepping down.

I have enjoyed much success at the college and Dean Mishoe has been a major influence and inspiration for me. Thank you Shelley for letting me take risks and reap many rewards. And thank you for leaving me in good hands.



Irvin B. Harrell,
Coordinator of Strategy
& Marketing

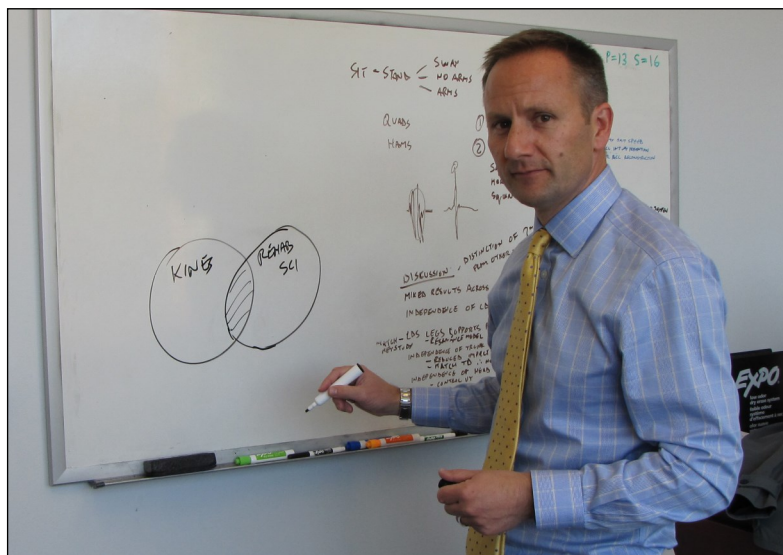
VNA Legislative Day



Students and faculty attended the Virginia Nurses Association Legislative Day on Nov. 11. Back row from left: Beth Tremblay, Elizabeth Wine-land, Richardson Benjamin, Joel Ellis, Jason Rowe, James Hurst, Sabrina Cittadino. Front row from left: Jennifer Alviar, Rena Baradi, Gem Morido, Sara Ragaza, Madeline Hughes, Erika Hall, Sarah Bender.

By Irvin B. Harrell

Students in the program will complete six core courses in kinesiology and rehabilitation, three research methods/statistics courses, as well as research and teaching experiences and elective courses. Each student has a mentor to help them through their studies.



Assistant Professor Daniel Russell is director of the PhD in Kinesiology and Rehabilitation program.

New faculty member tackles concussion issue

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Eric J. Schussler, an assistant professor of physical therapy and athletic training at Old Dominion University, was raised on football and is well aware of its potential detrimental effects. He played through high school in Harrison City, Pa., and played a couple years in college.

“My grandfather played and coached; my uncles and other family members were all involved in football,” he says. “Every Thanksgiving, the conversation at the dinner table revolves around the football season.”

His love of the game has stoked Schussler’s current research. He is developing a program that incorporates the tackling techniques of rugby players, and plans to test his strategies with children in the late stages of Pop Warner football – ages 9 to 12. He believes his work could lead for far less injuries on the football field from helmet-to-helmet contact.

Schussler, who received his Ph.D. from Ohio State University where he conducted much of his concussion research, arrived at Old Dominion University in August of this year.

As we started understanding more and more of what can happen when you have a concussion, it’s become an issue that’s staring football square in the face now,” he says. “We need to see what we can do to minimize its effect on the game.”

Diagnosed concussions increased by nearly 32 percent in the 2015 NFL season, according to league data.

There were 271, up from 206 in 2014 during all preseason and regular-season games as well as all practices since the start of training camp. The NFL also noted that reported concussions in regular-season games increased 58 percent from 2014 to 2015. Contact with another helmet was the most common cause of concussions. Sports-related concussions also affect more than 5 percent of high school and collegiate football players.

Schussler’s research is looking at mechanisms to try to



The Boston Globe

prevent concussions in youth football players. His objective is to teach players how to tackle properly and teach them how to be safer and prevent injuries from happening in the first place.

“There’s a lot of focus on treatment, which is great and I think is absolutely important, but if we can stop or minimize the number of people who have concussions in the first place, we can shift to focus to prevention,” he says.

For years, Schussler says, football players were taught to focus their eyes on the numbers and head in the middle when hitting another player. This technique has led to leading with the head. That type of tackling has been scrapped in favor of leading with the shoulder, with no real scientific basis for effectiveness, Schussler says.

“I want to take a step all the way back and take a look at what we’re doing and see what can we learn from other disciplines. What can we learn from studying this with a scientific mind?” he asks.

Schussler plans to start with children ages 9 through 13, “because they are at the age where they have organized drills, can listen to instruction, and there is a limited amount of ‘chasing butterflies’ at that point.”

By using that approach, he expects to change the thought process in young athletes, and give them the right mechanics from early on. So as they can move forward – getting big-

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SCHOOL OF DENTAL HYGIENE

Students donate free dental hygiene care

On Saturday, Nov. 12, Old Dominion University senior dental hygiene students organized and participated in their annual Dental Hygiene Access Day at Chesapeake Care Dental Clinic.

Twenty students provided preventive dental hygiene services for 18 patients, many of which had not had a comprehensive examination or any preventive dental hygiene oral healthcare services in many years. Most of these patients would have waited much longer for preventive therapeutic dental hygiene care without this student community outreach. Chesapeake Care, Inc. on South Military Highway, offers medical and dental care to low-income and uninsured individuals. Fulltime faculty members Sharon Stull and Dr. Lee Melvin supervised the student care.



From left, seniors Jamie Curley and Kayleigh Dow coordinated the event.

Funding for this event was made possible by the Sharon and Jon Stull Oral Health Community Impact Scholarship. Students Kayleigh Dow and Jamie Curley were awarded funding and exclusively coordinated the event.

The staff at Chesapeake Care Inc. significantly contributed to the success of the event. Senior dental hygiene students donated more than \$4,400 in preventive dental hygiene services during the eight-hour community-based oral healthcare event. The senior dental hygiene students gained valuable experience in both treating patients at the community clinic and learning about interprofessional medical/dental clinics in Hampton Roads.

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ger, faster and stronger – when they are able to do much more damage, they will be coming from a better level of understanding about tackling.

“So we would not be re-teaching and removing bad tackling habits; it would be ingrained from the very learning of the sport,” he says.

In college and pro football, rugby-style tackling has been gaining momentum in the past few years. Ohio State’s former defensive coordinator Chris Ash convinced head coach Urban Meyer to employ the rugby style in the team’s 2013 season as opposed to the “head across the

bow” model that has been used historically in football.

Ash was inspired by Seattle Seahawks head coach Pete Carroll and now has been spreading the gospel as head coach of the Rutgers Scarlet Knights.

“Athletics is always top down. Whatever they are doing at the pros, college is going to do; whatever they do at colleges, high schools are going to do,” Schussler says.

Schussler plans to combine that top-down momentum with his bottom-up approach, but emphasizes that the key is buy-in.

“The players aren’t usually aware of what they should be focusing on, so we need to get the coaches and the parents on board to help both from a culture standpoint as well as a knowledge and education standpoint,” he says.

CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

Students deliver presentation on Zika project

By Angelica Walker

During the summer, the Center for Global Health collaborated with the Norfolk Department of Public Health and the Eastern Virginia Medical School (Old Dominion University Master of Public Health program) to give students the opportunity to learn about the Zika Virus prevention efforts that are taking place in their local community. The desire to learn more about Zika Virus and its connection to climate and health began in spring 2016, when students traveled to the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Rockville, Md. While at the NIH, students learned that the best way to control the outbreak now is to control the vector for the virus.



From left, students Angelica Walker, Lorenza West and Malik Outram give a presentation on their experiences from a Zika virus project.

In response to the student's experiences with the NIH, the Mosquito Control and Surveillance project was launched to give students first-hand field experience in identification, control, surveillance, and education. Students from ODU, the Master of Public Health program and Christopher Newport University (CNU) participated throughout the summer. The program was organized into weekly learning sessions that included backyard inspections and mosquito identification. Another learning opportunity was a mosquito education session with elementary students. After the summer program was completed, students prepared a presentation detailing their learning experiences and observations.

The presentation took place on Nov. 15 during International Education Week and was co-sponsored by the ODU Office of Intercultural Relations. Angelica Walker, an MPH student; Lorenza West, an ODU BSHS Public Health senior; and Malik Outram, a senior at Christopher Newport, presented *Zika Virus a Global Health Emergency: Mosquito Control Service Learning Project*. Among the many attendees were Dr. Muge Akpinar-Elci, director of the Center for Global Health; Dr. Brain Martin, director of the EVMS/ODU MPH program; Norman Grefe with the Norfolk Department of Public Health; Dr. Demetria Lindsay, director of the Norfolk Department of Public Health; and Dr. Janice Hawkins, the chief academic adviser for the ODU's School of Nursing. They sat on a panel to discuss the program, prevention and control initiatives in the area and plans sustain the program for future summer terms.

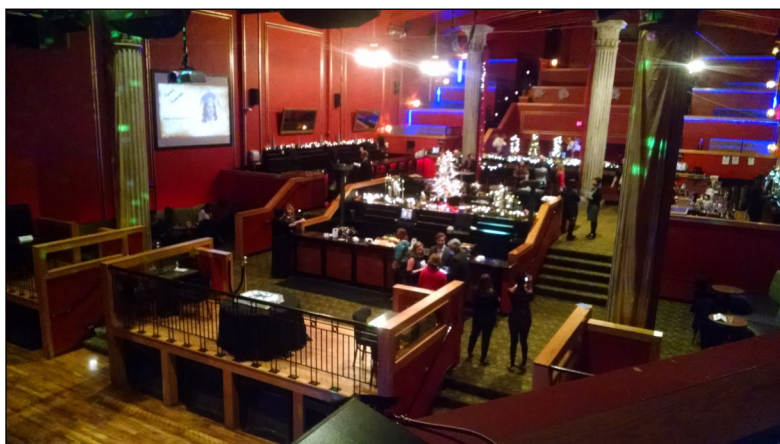
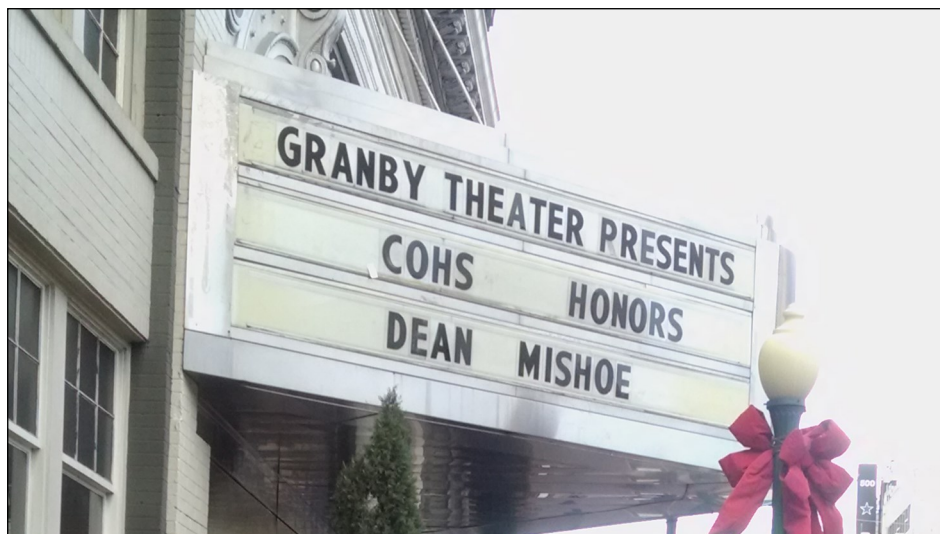
West spoke about outreach efforts with elementary students. Outram recounted his experiences with backyard inspections and surveillance. Walker focused her discussion on the identification and control aspects of the project.

While answering questions from the audience, the students said that the program would be a great opportunity for health sciences students as well as students in other disciplines that are interested in learning more about vector control and surveillance in their area.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES HOLIDAY GALA

Fit for a Dean

This year's gala at the Granby Theater featured a special surprise: a tribute to Dean Shelley Mishoe for her five years of service to the college. The evening was packed with food, photo opportunities, kind words, music and dancing.



LEARNING TOGETHER. HEALING THE WORLD.

Upcoming Events

December

December 15	Student Honors and Awards, 6:00 p.m. Webb Center, Hampton/Newport News Room
December 17	Fall Commencement, COHS 2:00 p.m. Location: Ted Constant Convocation Center
December 20	University Faculty and Staff Holiday Reception, 3:30 -5:30 p.m. Location: Webb Center, North Mall
December 23 -Jan 2	University Closed for Holiday

January

January 3	University Reopens
January TBD	Faculty Retreat - Time: TBD - Location: TBD
January 7	Spring Classes Begin
January 14 - 16	No Classes
January 16	Martin Luther King Holiday - University Closed

