



OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

College of Health Sciences

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Class of 2023: Kelsey Blake's Journey from Disney on Ice to Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology



Kelsey Blake's journey from professional figure skater to honors graduate in the speech-language pathology & audiology program is nothing short of inspiring.

A transfer student at ODU, Blake's story begins on the glittering ice, where she spent much of her life perfecting her figure skating skills. Starting at age 4, her passion for skating led to a professional career with Disney on Ice, touring North America for three years before finding herself in the middle of her fourth tour in Indonesia when the world came to a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The abrupt end to her career with Disney on Ice left Blake in a challenging position. Despite initial uncertainty, she decided to return to school, first enrolling in classes at Virginia Peninsula Community College before transferring to ODU in January 2022.

"I chose speech pathology because it captures my interest in science, working with people and

education,” Blake said.

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

David Swain's Legacy: A Four-Decade Commitment to Health and Fitness



After four decades of dedicated service to the field of Exercise Science, Dr. David Swain, a distinguished Professor at Old Dominion University (ODU) in Norfolk, Virginia, is set to retire at the end of this semester. His extensive career has been marked by groundbreaking research, influential publications, and a passion for promoting health through fitness.

Dr. Swain, who earned his Ph.D. in Physiology from the University of North Carolina Medical School in 1984, has been a driving force in the study of cardiovascular and metabolic responses to exercise. Notably, he originated the concept of oxygen consumption reserve (VO₂ reserve) for exercise prescription, a groundbreaking contribution that has shaped exercise guidelines.

Throughout his 30.5 years at ODU and a total of 40 years in the field of exercise science, Dr. Swain's impact extended beyond research. As a university professor, he taught courses in exercise physiology, exercise prescription, exercise testing, and wellness. His teaching philosophy, marked by humor and personal anecdotes, aimed to humanize complex lessons and engage students.

[Click here to continue reading.](#)

Beyond the Classroom: ODU Recreational Therapy's Senior Wellness Program



The Recreational Therapy Program at Old Dominion University (ODU) goes beyond textbooks and classrooms, making a tangible impact through the Senior Wellness Program. Spearheaded by Shelly Beaver, a Senior Lecturer in the program, this initiative brings together students and senior residents, creating a unique space for shared experiences, growth, and connection.

Shelly Beaver's journey with the Senior Wellness Program began at Penn State, where she initiated a similar program that continues to thrive. Upon joining ODU, Shelly took the program to Maimonides Health Center (MHC), formerly Beth Shalom Village, in Virginia Beach, leveraging an alumni connection. Junior and senior students play a pivotal role, constructing and executing the program during the Fall semester.

Adapting to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program embraced a virtual format, focusing on cognitive and social activities to maintain connections. With the resumption of in-person activities, the program found a new home at Harbor's Edge, a senior living community in Norfolk. This move not only doubled its reach to 12 visits per semester but also opened doors for students to explore the diverse facets of recreational therapy.

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Steven Morrison, Who Studied Human Fall Risk and Prevention, Dies at 59



Steven Morrison, who devoted much of his career at Old Dominion University researching fall risk and prevention, died Nov. 23 after a bout with skin cancer. He was 59.

Morrison came to the University in 2007 and served as a Batten Endowed Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences. He was named department chair in 2018.

He studied how humans control movements and how to address the breakdown of those movements caused by aging, injury or disease for decades. He collaborated locally with clinicians and researchers at the Strelitz Diabetes Center, Sentara Neurology Specialists and Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters.

He spearheaded the creation of Monarch Balance for Life, a structured assessment program that measures and identifies an individual's risk factors for falling. Morrison and his team collated this information to generate a personalized report containing an individual's overall risk profile and suggestions for evidence-based interventions.

Among his innovative approaches was working with neurologists from Sentara Healthcare to incorporate fitness-tracking technology into socks as a way to track movement and detect early signs of trouble related to clinical disorders that impact walking.

"Steve poured a lot of his time" into the Monarch Balance for Life program, said Bonnie Van Lunen, dean of the College of Health Sciences.

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Exercise Science Program Partners with Businesses in Semester-Long Community Health Project



Throughout the semester, the Exercise Science program engaged in a comprehensive health project as part of the EXSC 431 Wellness Programming and Administration course. Collaborating with Busch LLC, Prime Plus Senior Recreation Center, and the City of Chesapeake, the class provided ongoing health assessments, including blood pressure and body composition evaluations. In addition, fall prevention screenings were provided to seniors at the Prime Plus Senior Recreation Center.

As a culmination of their efforts, the class successfully screened and educated 45 seniors, over 40 employees at Prime Plus, and more than 30 employees from the City of Chesapeake.

The collaboration between Exercise Science program students and the partnering organizations proved to be a valuable and enriching experience. Over the course of the semester, more than 50 students gained practical, hands-on experience, contributing to the success of this service-oriented project. The program looks forward to future opportunities to continue making a meaningful impact on the health and well-being of the community.

Sentara Scholars Program Benefit 26 ODU College of Health Sciences Students

The ODU College of Health Sciences is delighted to announce that 26 juniors and seniors have been selected to benefit from [Sentara Healthcare's generous Sentara Scholars program](#). Sentara Scholars, a \$3 million initiative, aims to break down financial barriers hindering student enrollment and retention in healthcare programs. The selection process is based on criteria such as expected family contribution and unmet financial need.

In November, college leadership carefully reviewed eligible students to ensure that the scholarships were awarded to those with the highest need. While more students were eligible than could be accommodated, the impact on the 26 recipients is considerable. One student expressed gratitude, stating, "Your generous scholarship will play a pivotal role in helping me achieve my academic goals. With reduced financial strain, I can concentrate on excelling in my studies and pursuing my dream of obtaining a Master's degree."

The ODU College of Health Sciences looks forward to featuring some of these scholars in the upcoming newsletters.

Registration is open for Dental Hygiene's Winter Weekend, a Continuing Education Program



Dental Hygiene's Winter Weekend Continuing Education Program returns on February 23-24, 2024, offering dental hygiene professionals a valuable opportunity to expand their expertise. Designed for an immersive learning experience, the program presents a curated lineup of courses, providing participants with 15 CE hours. Courses are offered virtually, allowing attendees to engage in live and recorded webinars at their convenience.

Complementing the virtual offerings, an in-person Winter Weekend Exhibit Hall awaits attendees on February 24, 2024, at the Priority Club in S.B. Ballard Stadium from 6 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This exclusive event provides a space for networking, exploration of exhibits, and gaining insights in a more interactive setting. [Event details and registration information can be found on the official website.](#)

Featured Photos: Alpha Eta Society Induction Ceremony







Recent Publications

[Limits of Ultra: Towards an Interdisciplinary Understanding of Ultra-Endurance Running Performance](#)

Patrick Wilson, School of Kinesiology and Health Science

This was a collaborative effort among researchers from multiple countries (US, UK, France, Italy, New Zealand) to review all the various factors that impact performance in ultra-endurance running. Ultra-running has become increasingly popular over the past 2 decades, but it is a difficult sport to study because the events are hard to simulate in laboratories. They last 5+ hours and often take place in extreme environments. My contribution was to the nutrition and gut sections of the paper. As you can imagine, fueling plays an important role in performing well in such competitions, but it can be very challenging because many athletes suffer from gut problems, especially in the latter stages of races.

[Word retrieval treatments in aphasia: A survey of professional practice](#)

Stacie Raymer, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

While clinical researchers have developed many assessment and treatment approaches for use in clinical services to overcome word retrieval difficulties associated with stroke-induced aphasia, translation of that research takes time and efforts in implementation science to integrate those approaches in clinical practice. A survey of practicing clinicians is a first step in that process.

[Evidence-based guidance for alphabet knowledge across service delivery models](#)

Danika Pfeiffer, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

SLPs should consider a variety of service delivery models, which may include both direct and indirect services, when planning intervention targeting emergent literacy skills for children with developmental language disorder.

[Speech-language pathologists' perceptions of effective language and literacy instruction for pre-K children with developmental language disorder](#)

Danika Pfeiffer, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Speech-language pathologists identified a need for ongoing collaboration with caregivers and teachers to maximize early language and literacy experiences for children with developmental language disorders.

[Diagnostic certainty during in-person and telehealth autism evaluations](#)

Danika Pfeiffer, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

This study found lower diagnostic certainty rates for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder during ASD diagnostic evaluations at an autism speciality center when the evaluations occurred via telehealth during the pandemic compared to those conducted in person before the pandemic. Additionally, diagnoses of depression and behavioral disorders were made more

often during the pandemic.

[Short-term removal of exercise impairs glycemic control in older adults: A randomized trial](#)

Leryn Reynolds, School of Kinesiology and Health Science

The study found that three days without exercise negatively affects blood sugar control in both older and younger adults. The removal of exercise led to increased variability in blood glucose levels, indicating worse glycemic control. The findings emphasize the importance of regular exercise, especially for older adults, to maintain better blood sugar levels and potentially prevent cardiovascular disease.

Call for Stories, Publications

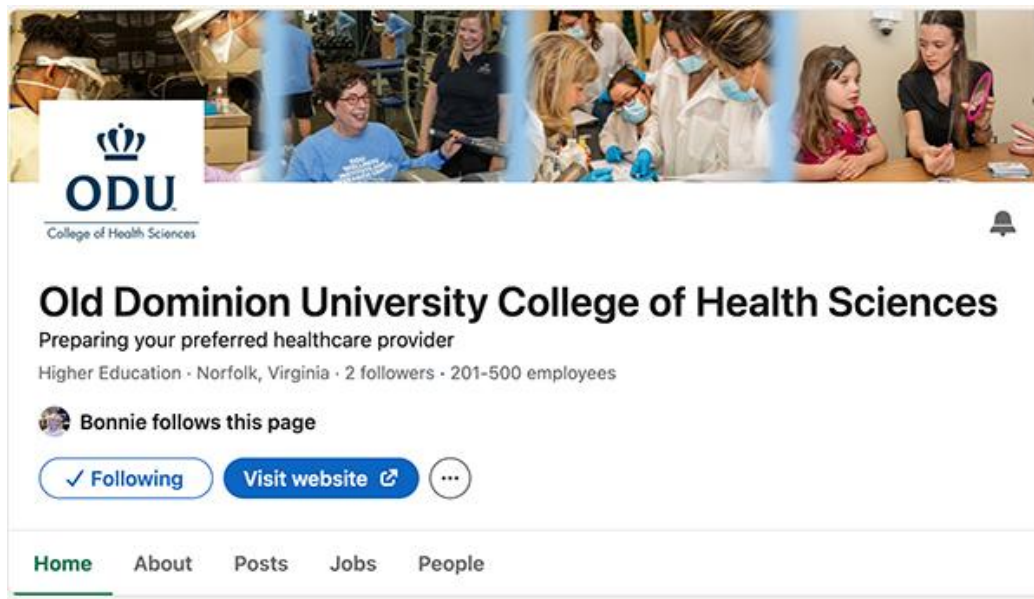
The College of Health Sciences will be listing recent faculty publications. If you've published a paper this semester, [click here to share your publications](#).

Share your stories about:

- Research
- Grants
- Teaching success
- Awards and honors
- Student success
- Alumni success
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Students getting experience in the field
- Community service
- Events
- Anything else that shows how unique our programs are and how great it is to be a Monarch!
- If you are featured in the media, please share that as well.

Deadline to be featured in the next newsletter is January 16, but the "call for stories" is constant. Please share your story ideas with Erica Howell at ehhowell@odu.edu.

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We've just launched the official Old Dominion University College of Health Sciences LinkedIn page. Follow us for the latest updates on events, research, and important announcements. Join the conversation as we share and discuss publications, articles, and industry insights. Your engagement helps us build a vibrant community, fostering connections between faculty, staff, prospective students, and alumni. [Click here to follow and stay connected](#).



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