



MACON & JOAN BROCK VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES
Ellmer College of Health Sciences
AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

Engaging Learners • Making Discoveries • Improving Health

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Brenda Bradshaw Appointed as Incoming Chair of the School of Dental Hygiene at ODU



Brenda Bradshaw, Assistant Professor and Program Director for the Undergraduate Entry-Level Dental Hygiene Program in the Gene W. Hirschfeld School of Dental Hygiene at Old Dominion University, has been appointed Chair of the school, effective summer 2025. A double alumna of ODU, Bradshaw earned her Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene in 2006 and her Master of Science in Dental Hygiene in 2014.

With 12 years of experience in private dental practice, Bradshaw transitioned to academia in 2018 as an assistant professor and undergraduate program director. She has taught both in-person and online across all three programs within the school, demonstrating a commitment to student success and adaptability in educational delivery.

Bradshaw's research explores innovative applications of dental hygiene to areas like forensic dentistry, earning her recognition through publications and presentations. She is also deeply committed to community service, providing care to underserved populations through the EVMS HOPES Clinic Esperanza.

In her new role, Bradshaw aims to increase national recognition for the master's and post-licensure programs, collaborate with community partners to expand patient services, and explore innovative methods to enhance community care delivery. She will work closely with Assistant Professor and Senior Clinic Coordinator Jessica Suedbeck on clinical initiatives.

Current Chair Ann Bruhn has led the school for the past seven years, achieving significant milestones alongside the school's dedicated faculty and staff. Reflecting on her time as Chair, Bruhn expressed confidence in Bradshaw's leadership, stating, "Her experience as undergraduate program director, combined with her strong work ethic and impeccable organization skills, makes her uniquely suited to guide the school into the future."

Bradshaw will train alongside Bruhn this semester, participating in meetings with the dean and other chairs to ensure a smooth transition. She has also proactively enrolled in a leadership training course for educators in dental hygiene, led by national leaders in the field, reflecting her commitment to professional development and excellence in education.

How a Service Learning Grant Transformed an ODU Physical Therapy Class



This past fall, Dr. Emily Hawkins and her second-year student physical therapists in PT 880: Psychosocial Aspects of Patient Care brought ODU's spirit of innovation and resilience to life with help from the Service Learning Mini-Grant Program.

With \$950 in funding, they created 100 wound care kits filled with essential medical supplies—bandages, dressings, saline, antibiotic ointment, and more—for neighbors experiencing homelessness. These kits were donated to the ODU Community Care Clinic at the Virginia Beach Housing Resource Center, ensuring vital support for a vulnerable population.

Every student also participated in hands-on service at the Housing Resource Center or PiN Ministry in Virginia Beach. These experiences deepened their understanding of the barriers to healthcare faced by those without stable housing, fostering empathy and real-world skills.

Reflecting on the initiative, Dr. Hawkins shared, "It was a highlight of my semester and year."

By combining academics with action, Monarchs are not just learning—they're leading.

Dr. Leryn Reynolds Receives American Heart Association's LIVE FIERCE Award



Leryn Reynolds, PhD, Associate Professor in the School of Exercise Science and director of the Wellness Institute and Research Center, has been named the recipient of the American Heart Association's prestigious LIVE FIERCE Award, which honors individuals who inspire healthier living within their communities.

Dr. Reynolds, whose research has been funded by the American Heart Association, shared her work at the October 31, 2024, Moving Monarch Campus Heart Walk. Coordinated by ODU's Office of Community Engagement, the event highlighted her dedication to advancing heart health and provided a platform for her impactful contributions.

She will be honored at the Hampton Roads Go Red for Women Luncheon on February 14, 2025, at the Hampton Roads Convention Center. The luncheon highlights the importance of heart health and celebrates leaders who make an impact in their communities.

This recognition underscores Reynolds' dedication to advancing health and wellness, and her achievements continue to reflect the innovative spirit of the ODU community.

Dr. Tom Campbell Honored with Statewide Awards for Research and Service



Dr. Thomas Campbell, Assistant Professor in ODU's School of Rehabilitation Sciences, has been recognized with two of the Virginia Athletic Trainers' Association's (VATA) highest honors: the 2025 Researcher Athletic Trainer of the Year Award and the Presidential Service Award. The awards were presented on January 4, 2025, at the VATA annual meeting in Hampton, Virginia.

Dr. Campbell was selected as Researcher Athletic Trainer of the Year for his innovative work on concussion biomarkers, specifically salivary microRNA, which aims to improve prevention, diagnosis, and management practices. His nominators highlighted his ability to bridge education and clinical research, calling his collaborative spirit "one of his greatest strengths."

The Presidential Service Award recognizes Campbell's outstanding contributions as VATA Secretary, a role he has held for multiple terms. VATA President Michael Kotelnicki praised his leadership, saying, "Tom has increased and fostered communication with our membership, kept our website organized, and played an instrumental role in running our executive council meetings."

These awards highlight Dr. Campbell's significant impact on the athletic training profession. ODU proudly celebrates his achievements.

Gabriel Rankin Receives Perry Honors College Research Grant

Old Dominion University undergraduate Gabriel Rankin has been awarded the Perry Honors College's prestigious Research & Creativity Award. The \$3,000 grant will support Rankin's work during the Spring 2025 semester under the mentorship of Dr. Tom Campbell, Assistant Professor in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences.

This competitive award, overseen by the Undergraduate Research Committee, funds student-led projects that demonstrate innovation and academic rigor. Rankin's research will be showcased at ODU's Spring Knowledge Expo in April, highlighting the impactful contributions of undergraduate scholars.

Rankin's selection reflects ODU's commitment to fostering experiential learning and research opportunities for its students. Congratulations to Gabriel Rankin on this exceptional honor!

ODU Doctoral Candidate Receives National Scholarship



Paige Agnew, a PhD candidate in Kinesiology and Rehabilitation at Old Dominion University, has been awarded the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) Foundation's Minority Scholarship for 2024. This scholarship recognizes Agnew's dedication and contributions to the field of strength and conditioning.

A scholar in ODU's Neuromechanics Lab, Agnew is focused on advancing research in kinesiology and rehabilitation. Her achievement highlights the university's commitment to fostering innovative research and supporting its diverse student body.

The Minority Scholarship encourages students from underrepresented ethnic groups to pursue careers in strength and conditioning. Agnew's selection followed a highly competitive review process by the NSCA Foundation Scholarship Committee.

"Paige is an outstanding student with a remarkably bright future," said Scott Caulfield, President of the NSCA Foundation Board. "We take pride in supporting her educational journey as she aspires to become a future leader in the strength and conditioning industry."

This honor reflects the excellence of ODU's graduate students and underscores the university's role in shaping future leaders who make meaningful contributions to their fields.

Philip Sabatini Retires from Competitive Weightlifting After an Accomplished Career



Philip Sabatini, Master Lecturer in the School of Exercise Science, has announced his retirement from competitive weightlifting. His departure was marked by a symbolic gesture at the 2024 USA Weightlifting National Championships, where he left his shoes on the platform, a traditional sign of retirement in the sport.

Reflecting on his 18-year career, Sabatini told USA Weightlifting, “Over 18 years, both as a lifter and a coach, you just get so caught up in the passion and the drive behind wanting to succeed. There’s rarely ever a time where you get to stop and smell the roses, and this has allowed me to do that.”

Beyond his athletic achievements, Sabatini has been a dedicated educator at Old Dominion University since 2014, inspiring students and athletes alike. As he transitions from competition, he plans to focus on coaching and family, stating, “This is a perfect time, and I’m in a really good place with everything.”

Old Dominion University acknowledges Sabatini’s significant contributions and looks forward to his continued impact in the classroom and community.

Featured Photos



In October 2024, Dr. Patrick Wilson teamed up with students to start the Exercise Science Run Club, giving Monarchs a fun way to stay active and connect through running.



Rosie Habib, co-president of the Old Dominion University Monarch Community Alliance (ODUMCA), Al King, ODUMCA VP for Programming, and Dean Bonnie Van Lunen of the Ellmer College of Health Sciences at the ODUMCA fall reception. After the event, Al King received high praise from attendee Kate Melhuish, who called it "the best Fall reception ever" and shared how the Faschini Wallach Center for Restorative Therapies played a vital role in her recovery, adding, "so much more is going on and available to us as members of the larger ODU community."

Call for Stories, Publications

The Ellmer College of Health Sciences will be listing recent faculty publications. If you've published a paper this year, [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
- Upcoming 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 March 21, but the "call for stories" is constant. Please share your story ideas with Erica Howell at ehhowell@odu.edu.





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