

Maine PT Students Raise Funds for Physical Therapy Research

By: Catherine Cunningham, SPT; Katherine De Lara, SPT; Emily Schaefer, SPT

Students from physical therapist (PT) programs in Wisconsin were among the 178 schools that participated in the 2017-2018 Mercer-Marquette Challenge, raising \$328,456, with a record number of returning schools. Since its inception in 1989, more than 300 schools have participated in the Marquette Challenge in raising more than \$4 million

The Marquette Challenge is a grassroots, student-led fundraising effort to advance the mission of the Foundation for Physical Therapy. Each year, hundreds of physical therapist (PT) and physical therapist assistant (PTA) students, with the support of their program directors and community, hold fundraising events across the U.S. to fund physical therapy research. Since its inception, the Challenge has funded over 26 physical therapy research grants and scholarships.

"Students are really connecting with research in a way that matters," said Emily Schaefer. "The Challenge raises more funds each year than any other Foundation activity."

The students of Marquette University and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee raised \$20,002 in support of the Challenge in the 2017-2018 year.

This year's top fundraisers include:

- 1stPlace: University of Pittsburgh
- 2ndPlace: Virginia Commonwealth University
- 3rdPlace: University of Colorado

As the top fundraiser, University of Pittsburgh earned first place by raising \$50,552. University of Pittsburgh will serve as co-host and won naming rights for this year's Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge.

"The Foundation is so grateful for the hard work the students put into making this such a successful fundraiser," said Erica Sadiq, Foundation Director of Development. "These students pour so much passion and energy into making their future profession stronger through research."

The Challenge supports grants, scholarships and the rigorous peer review process which results in the awarding of all Foundation scholarships and grants. Using a review process modeled after the National Institutes of Health, the Foundation

identifies and funds the best qualified candidates to develop the next generation of physical therapy research leaders.

Stephanie Di Stasi, MSPT, PhD, an Assistant Professor and Research Scientist in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at The Ohio State University, is the recipient of the \$40,000 **Mercer-Marquette Challenge Research Grant**. The goal of her 2-year project, "Load Modification versus Standard Exercise to Inform Treatment for Individuals with Greater Trochanteric Pain Syndrome (GTPS)," is to evaluate the short-term effects of a single-session of load modification education by a licensed physical therapist on pain and function in individuals with GTPS.

Margaret A. French, PT, DPT, a research assistant and PhD student at the University of Delaware, is the recipient of the \$7,500 **PODS I Scholarship** funded by the Mercer-Marquette Challenge. Her work, entitled "Strategic Learning in Locomotion Post Stroke," focused on how stroke survivors can use visual feedback to develop a new walking pattern and how different factors, such as cognition, may impact their ability to learn new patterns. This work advances how rehabilitation interventions can be structured and tailored to achieve the best possible outcomes for stroke survivors.

Faculty and students of PT programs in the state of Wisconsin are encouraged to visit the Marquette Challenge website at marquettechallenge.com to learn how they can support the Foundation for Physical Therapy and physical therapy research through the 2018-2019 Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge. Contributions for the Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge should be submitted by April 18th, 2019. Donations are tax deductible and can be made online at Foundation4PT.org or sent to its headquarters at 1111 N Fairfax St, Alexandria, VA 22314.

About the Foundation for Physical Therapy

The Foundation for Physical Therapy was established in 1979 as a national, independent nonprofit organization to fund physical therapy research to optimize health and movement. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$17 million in research grants, fellowships and scholarships. Many of today's leading physical therapy researchers, clinicians, and academicians began their careers with this support. Foundation-funded researchers have gone on to secure more than \$800 million in follow-on funding.

To donate or learn more, visit www.Foundation4pt.org or call **800/875-13678**.