

# WE HAVE **HEART**



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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# THE RIPPLE EFFECT

OUR WORK GOES BEYOND THESE BUILDINGS. WE ARE CHANGING LIVES.



Dean Nancy Edick, right, and her son Cole

Because this publication is about reflecting on the past academic year, I want to take you back to the very beginning of Aug. 2017. My youngest son, Cole, had recently moved to New York City to start his career in the nonprofit industry. After settling in—and after a long day of exploring his new city—I received an email from him with this profound line:

"I feel like I am witnessing the American Dream unfold in every moment. I am filled with a lot of new hope, and am so proud and grateful to be able to do work that will secure more of these moments for all of us."

Cole's sentiment reminds me of what we do best in the College of Education (COE). Although the work being done in our six academic units and three buildings can seem vastly different at times, it is connected by a common core value. **Our work is making people's lives better.**

We are changing lives through our research and service, and by educating and training a professional workforce, but if you look even deeper, we have profound impact on this community through our partnerships and interdisciplinary work. That's our ripple effect.

Take our Teacher Education Department's (TED) creation of a Dual Enrollment Model for high school students who aspire to be teachers. TED faculty have worked to establish partnerships with high schools throughout the city and helped align the curriculum in those schools' Introduction to Education courses. This gives districts an opportunity to grow their own teachers and provide a quality pathway for enhanced diversity in the teaching field.

Or one of our newest and fastest growing degree programs, Early Childhood Inclusive (ECI), which is responding to the community's need for a larger and higher-skilled early childhood workforce. ECI is an interdisciplinary program through two of our academic units: Special Education and Communication Disorders and Teacher Education. The first ECI graduates received their diplomas this May, and they are bringing a wide range of skills to their new jobs.

You'll also read about our fellowship partnership with UNMC's Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN), which offers internship opportunities and stipends to master's students in our Department of Counseling. BHECN fellows are completing their clinical hours at sites like correctional facilities and integrated health care clinics—giving our counseling master's students experience in diverse treatment settings with interdisciplinary teams of medical and mental/behavioral health professionals.

Whether it's working to improve access to information or healthcare; training educators, practitioners, and clinicians to work with the most vulnerable populations; developing leaders in education; or performing cutting-edge research, our unique degree programs have tremendous impact on this campus and beyond. Our people and programs are responding to the needs of the community.

**Because you are a part of the College of Education as alumni, donor, student, or friend, you are changing lives along with us. Thank you for joining us on this journey.**

Nancy A. Edick, EdD  
Lois G. Roskens Dean





# PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS: DUAL ENROLLMENT

## Career-focused Dual Enrollment Model strengthens student-to-teacher pipeline, addresses lack of diversity in the field

In the College of Education, a partnership between the Teacher Education Department (TED), the UNO Dual Enrollment Office, and several Omaha high schools is creating a strong, quality pathway to UNO for high schoolers who aspire to be teachers.

This partnership is known as the Dual Enrollment Model, and it emerged in the summer of 2014 when TED faculty and area high school educators joined for a workshop to intentionally revise curriculum for the career-focused, dual enrollment course Introduction to Education, which high schoolers can take for UNO credit. Introduction to Education is the dual enrollment version of Educational Foundations, the first core class for a pre-education student in the College of Education.

"Prior to our workshops, the high school programs had their own spin on the content and assessments of their school-based courses," explains Assistant Professor of Teacher Education Dr. Kelly Gomez Johnson, who served as a Dual Enrollment Liaison for the last four years.

"In order to offer dual enrollment credit, we needed to make sure key learning outcomes matched for our courses, whether they were being taken in a high school setting or UNO classroom. Now that all of our programs and courses are aligned, students earn credit for a TED course, rather than purely an elective credit. It's a win-win. Students do not need to re-take a course they took in high school, and we are gaining extremely dedicated and passionate future educators from the start."

Partnerships have increased over the last four years. Eight partner high schools first offered the course in 2014, which is now up to 13 schools in 2018—a 62.5 percent increase. Dr. Gomez Johnson enjoys working with teachers in the summer and visiting classrooms during the school year. "Recruiting from dual enrollment is the goal. By building strong relationships with teachers and students, they see UNO as the best and most supportive place to become a teacher. Our goal is to prepare the best teachers we can while tapping into the potential of the entire city. We have so many

different types of students across Omaha, and UNO is trying to diversify the teachers who are in front of those kids. We're trying to engage future teachers who look like, come from the neighborhoods, and have similar upbringings as kids in front of them."

Sam Bojanski, a dual enrollment teacher at Omaha South High Magnet School, describes the impact this partnership has on the lives of his students, "Currently, Omaha South has more students attending UNO than any other high school, and that is by no accident. Over 60% of South's student body will be the first generation to graduate high school in their family. Because the majority of our students do not have college experience in their family, offering a college atmosphere in South's dual enrollment classes has helped push our students—80% of whom are Hispanic—to attend college with confidence. It has both motivated students to attend UNO and eased some fears of what a college course demands."

The numbers are promising, showing that students of color are enrolling in the COE teacher education programs using dual enrollment as a pathway. Between Fall 2016 and Spring 2018, 52 out of the 225 Intro to Education high school participants went on to attend UNO after graduation, and 63% of those students funneled directly into the teacher education program. Almost half of those aspiring educators identified as people of color and 58% were first-generation college students.

Dual enrollment creates a stronger pathway to college for high schoolers and helps with college success. According to recent research by the Community College Research Center (CCRC), students in dual enrollment programs are more likely to attend college than their non-participating peers, and they enter with a defined academic path. They also have higher GPAs and show greater retention. Benefits are most pronounced for students in career-focused courses and for typically underserved students. A 2017 study by the Nebraska Department of Education states that students who earn credit in dual enrollment classes "have better odds of going on to college compared to those who do not earn dual credit."

Students from dual enrollment programs also bring a special perspective to the teacher education program. Dr. Gomez Johnson explains, "As we talk about topics such as culturally responsive teaching in class, students who come from these dual enrollment programs bring in real experiences because they have worked in real internships already. It enriches the entire class"

"It is a particularly empowering experience for first-generation college students," explains Dr. Gomez

Johnson, who was a first-generation college student herself. "They now come in a step ahead of their peers with classroom experiences from a teacher's perspective. They come in with confidence, being able to apply their prior experiences to new theories or strategies they are learning in college coursework."

"They don't look around and say to themselves, 'I don't belong here,' instead, they say, 'I have something to contribute, and I can impact my future students. I am needed here.' It's affirming, and I have seen students persevere because they have had these experiences."

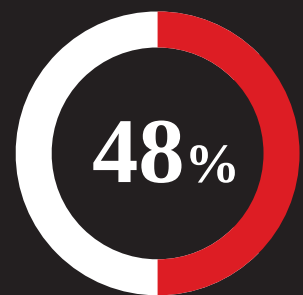


**SUMMER CURRICULUM WORKSHOP | JULY 2018**  
TED faculty welcomed Dual Enrollment teachers to the Play Lab at Roskens Hall for their biennial summer workshop.



## DIVERSIFYING THE FIELD

**% OF STUDENTS OF COLOR MAJORING IN EDUCATION AT UNO WHO TOOK INTRO TO EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOL**



**FALL 2016 - SPRING 2018**  
\*n=33





# EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSIVE

A new degree program in the College of Education is growing the field, providing high-quality skills to Omaha's early childhood workforce.

"Every student is capable of learning, and I can teach every single student," explains Alex Weaver confidently. "There are strategies for all kids and all situations. There are ways to reach them all."

Weaver is a recent graduate of one of COE's newest and fastest growing degree programs: Early Childhood Inclusive (ECI). ECI brings together faculty from two academic units—Teacher Education and Special Education and Communication Disorders. The program prepares future early childhood educators to support the wide range of needs of young children, ages birth to grade 3.

Developed in response to the growing cultural, social, and physical diversity of today's youngest learners along with Omaha's need for more early childhood professionals with higher-quality skills, the degree program was approved in 2016 by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE).

In May 2018, the first five ECI graduates walked across the stage at Baxter Arena to receive their degrees.

Dr. Miriam Kuhn, assistant professor in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders, explains the need for this type of interdisciplinary

***"Every student is capable of learning, and I can teach every single student. There are strategies for all kids and all situations.***

***There are ways to reach them all," explains ECI graduate Alex Weaver.***

degree program, "There is a huge focus now on high-quality early childhood education because of the growth in research about brain development during the early years along with the growth of a culture of inclusion in the classroom."

Dr. Kuhn continues, "The ECI educator will be able to take one of a variety of jobs—preschool teacher or special educator, kindergarten teacher, early intervention home visitor, or early Head Start family educator, to name just a few. They have to develop this wide range and depth of skills, and be able to apply those skills. We equip our candidates with a research-based understanding of the learning and development of young children. We also address the broad diversity posed by different cultures and language. Our students have hands-on opportunities to apply their knowledge in diverse and inclusive practicum sites."

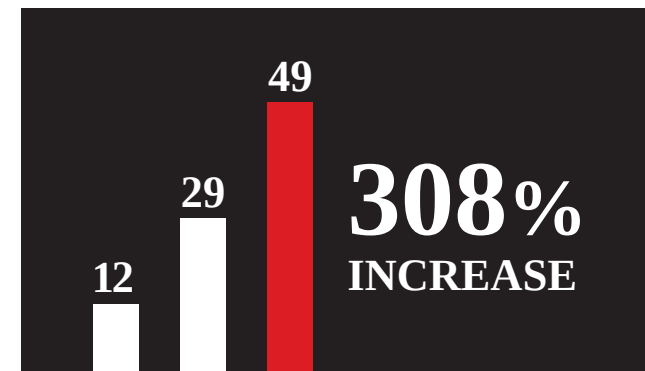
Weaver emphasizes the importance of serving children and their families during this critical time of development. "Kids in the early years—that's when needs are identified. Now that I've taken these classes, there is more knowledge on my end. Having this background will give me an advantage in helping to identify children in my classroom who would benefit from a special service or an Individual Education Program (IEP). I am prepared to work with families and the specialists who will help me support my students."

Weaver is taking the next year to continue her education and work in the field. She is pursuing an accelerated

master's degree and teaching a kindergarten class at Twin Ridge Elementary School in Bellevue through COE's CADRE program.

Coral Masek, another recent ECI graduate, started her career this August at Omaha Public School's Yates Community Center. Yates serves refugee and immigrant families and offers early childhood classes to assist children in school readiness. Masek is one of Yates' two Native Indigenous Centered Education (NICE) Pre-K teachers.

Masek explains, "I feel well-prepared and ready to take on this journey, thanks to my time at UNO. The program's focus on both special education and early childhood is important because peer modeling is a huge benefit for all children in inclusive rooms. Everyone gets the chance to learn from each other."



# OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSIVE DEGREE PROGRAM | 2016 - 2018



**OUR FIRST ECI GRADUATES | MAY 2018**  
Alex Weaver, left, and Coral Masek, third from left, join their fellow ECI graduates for Spring Commencement at Baxter Arena.





**MY PASSION IS HELPING WOMEN. ENCOURAGING THEM, HELPING THEM WORK THROUGH ISSUES."**

After a journey across the world, Counseling master's student and BHECN Fellow Gina Mujinga Kadima is on track to complete her goal of becoming a licensed mental health provider.

Born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gina moved to Ghana as a young woman to pursue modeling and obtain a marketing degree. She was interested in changing careers and sought out better academic opportunities in America. A few Ghanaian friends living in Omaha urged her to come here for its low cost of living.

She attributes her strong faith to finding her specific career path. After graduating from Metropolitan Community College in 2013 with a science degree—while learning to speak and write English (one of the four languages she speaks)—she went through a particularly difficult time maneuvering the education realm as an international student. One night she went to bed with a prayer: "God, I am tired. I want to go back to school. What is it that am I supposed to be doing?" She awoke from a striking dream that morning with the word "counseling" in her head.

She enrolled at UNO because of the high-quality, affordable programs, and she has flourished here. She was supported by her professors as she recovered from a kidney transplant in November. "I took my exams while healing on my couch."

In addition to her BHECN fellowship, Gina has an internship at Heartland Family Service's Nebraska Family Works program, working with mothers in residential substance abuse and mental health programs.

Gina is very insightful about the cultural differences between America and Africa, especially when it comes to mental health. She describes Africa as more traditional. "Mental health isn't treated like it is here. In Africa, you don't complain or discuss emotions, you just have to be strong and do your job. As I've looked at my own trauma—and I have been through a lot—if I can help one person or one women overcome similar experiences, that will be an achievement."

**GINA MUJINGA KADIMA,**  
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

[ Counseling ]

# TRAINING FUTURE MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

**Students from the Department of Counseling share their experience with UNMC's BHECN program.**

**BHECN offers a benefit for students: a \$10,000 fellowship for completing clinical hours.**

According to the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN) website, 88 of Nebraska's 93 counties are recognized as mental health professional shortage areas by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration.

In 2009, the Nebraska Legislature created the BHECN program to address Nebraska's shortage of behavioral health professionals in rural and underserved areas by recruiting, retaining, and increasing competency of the state's behavioral health workforce. Located at UNMC, BHECN is a collaborative of academic and professional stakeholders. Through their fellowship program, BHECN partners with academic institutions across the state by offering stipends to students studying in specific mental health programs.

In the College of Education, 13 students from the Department of Counseling have received funding from BHECN, with six currently holding these fellowships at BHECN-affiliated sites as part of their clinical internship requirements. These sites provide Counseling students with valuable opportunities to gain advanced clinical training in a variety of mental health settings, including the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), integrated health care clinics, and at correctional facilities run by the Nebraska Department of Corrections, the largest provider of mental health services in the state.

BHECN Fellow Ashley Weich-Petti, an aspiring clinical mental health counselor with an interest in couples and family counseling, is interning at the Omaha Corrections Center (OCC). Although Ashley had not worked in a corrections setting before, she is enjoying her experience. She is learning to apply different theoretical models and interventions to the issues presented by clients in a correctional setting.

"For the past four months, I have been seeing clients individually and co-facilitating [behavioral health] treatment groups for clients in the Violence Reduction Program, Anger Management Program, and oHeLP Outpatient Sex Offender Program. The clinicians at OCC have helped me become more familiar with Dialectical Behavior Therapy, which will be very useful in my future practice."

Weich-Petti continues, "I am also grateful for the opportunity to be supervised by an accomplished, very knowledgeable

psychologist. Going forward, I expect to becoming more comfortable leading group therapy sessions, as well as continuing to develop my theoretical orientation."

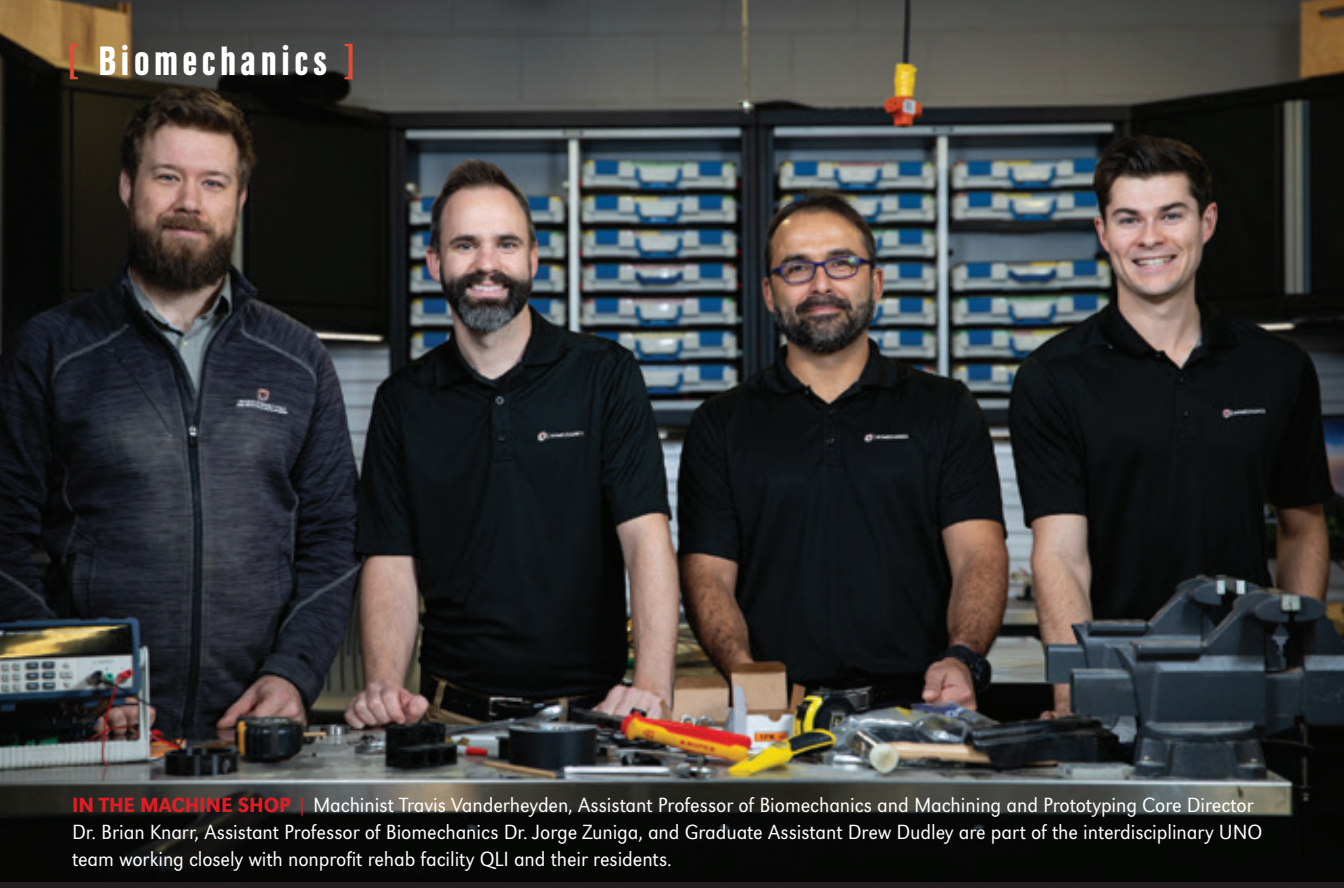
BHECN Fellow Gina Mujinga Kadima also appreciates the opportunity to work in tandem with the mental health professionals at her internship location, the Children's Physicians, Dundee clinic. Her favorite undergraduate class was Behavior Moderation, and she loves seeing that therapy in action with the children, teens, and families served at the clinic.

"They use a behavioral model and a 6-week, solution-focused therapy at the clinic. It looks very different from what I learned in school, so I like seeing the application and the changes compared to the theory. I also like the experience of working in a medical setting. The doctor can see the behavior discussed by the parent or caregiver, and clients receive immediate mental health treatment right next door. Catching issues faster means better outcomes."

According to BHECN Clinical Director, Dr. Joseph Evans, "We are proud to offer opportunities for Counseling students to do their internships with our BHECN programs in Corrections and Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Medical Care. There are major opportunities for graduates to work in these fields and BHECN has invested grant and state funding to support students, all with the support and cooperation of an excellent UNO faculty!"

UNO Department of Counseling Chair, Dr. Dan Kissinger, describes the strength of his unit's partnership with BHECN, "Collaboration between medical and mental/behavioral health programs is critical to the prevention and care of our citizen's medical, behavioral, and mental health needs—and their ultimate wellness. Our partnership with BHECN provides students with opportunities to provide direct care to a diverse range of clients in a variety of clinical settings. Students also benefit from the opportunity to work, learn, and train alongside skilled clinicians, educators, and researchers. As a result, our students are better prepared to provide care to clients across different treatment settings and to work in tandem with interdisciplinary teams of medical and mental/behavioral health professionals."





**IN THE MACHINE SHOP** | Machinist Travis Vanderheyden, Assistant Professor of Biomechanics and Machining and Prototyping Core Director Dr. Brian Knarr, Assistant Professor of Biomechanics Dr. Jorge Zuniga, and Graduate Assistant Drew Dudley are part of the interdisciplinary UNO team working closely with nonprofit rehab facility QLI and their residents.

# BIOMECHANICS IN ACTION

A collaboration between the Division of Biomechanics and Research Development and nonprofit QLI (Quality Living, Inc.), a post-hospital center for brain and spinal cord injury rehabilitation, has led to three initiatives which are benefitting individuals recovering from traumatic injuries, strokes

"I've always been a fighter, and I'm still a fighter," explains QLI resident Boston Bieler. "I'm fighting to get back all I can." Bieler, who suffered a severe spinal cord injury from a gunshot wound in March, has been able to regain greater use of his arms with help from an assistive device—a QLI prototype—that was redesigned and improved upon in the Biomechanics Research Building (BRB).

"When I first got to QLI, I was completely paralyzed. The mobile arm support helped me strengthen my arms. It's kind of like a crane—it held my arm up in a sling so I wasn't fighting gravity. I could move left or right, side-to-side depending on the tightness. I could lift my arm up and push down. As I got stronger, I found different ways to angle it to work my arms. Now, I no longer have to use the mobile arm support. It has allowed me to be more independent. Without it, I'd need someone to go with me everywhere."


## CUSTOM DEVICES AND ACCESSORIES

Bieler's mobile arm support is one of over 200 devices and accessories that have been developed—with QLI's involvement—in the BRB's Machining and Prototyping Core Facility over the last year. Through this initiative, assistive devices and accessories are custom designed

and fabricated in the BRB's machine shop based on the unique needs of QLI's residents, therapists, and clinicians. Broken components are also replaced and new tools are designed and created to enable more effective treatment. QLI pays UNO for these services.

The Machining and Prototyping Core Facility, run by Assistant Professor and Core Director Dr. Brian Knarr and machinist Travis Vanderheyden with support from UNO student workers, is the first service center on the UNO campus. A service center is an area that charges for services to support internal or external research objectives.

Establishment of this service center was a component of the recent submission for the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Phase II grant funding. Additional support for the service center has been provided by the Nebraska Research Initiative.

 [Read more about the Biomechanics \\$10.1 million NIH COBRE Phase I grant funding and the Center for Research in Human Movement Variability \(MOVCENTR\) at coe.unomaha.edu/cobre](http://coe.unomaha.edu/cobre)

Robust collaborations with regional research communities—like the partnership with QLI—will help the Core achieve its goal of independent financial sustainability. According to Dr. Knarr, "Our hope is that the Machining and Prototyping Core Facility is a resource for UNO and the community through our development of new and innovative devices to treat and prevent movement related disorders."

## UPPER ARM STROKE REHABILITATION RESEARCH

The partnership between the Biomechanics team and QLI began in 2016 when a donor with an interest in stroke recovery reached out to Dr. Knarr and connected him with QLI. Dr. Knarr used his background in stroke rehabilitation research to assemble a team of specialists who began work on their very first initiative: an affordable and accessible upper arm stroke rehabilitation tool.

The interdisciplinary team, guided by Dr. Knarr, is developing this rehabilitation tool with input from the occupational therapists (OT) at QLI. Efforts to expand the collaboration to clinicians at CHI Health Immanuel Rehabilitation Institute and Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals are underway. The tool consists of two components: an exoskeleton hand utilizing 3D-printed prostheses technology from Assistant Professor Dr. Jorge Zuniga and collaborator Jean Peck, OT at CHI Health, and a virtual reality (VR) system developed by Assistant Professor Dr. Brian Ricks' team in UNO's Department of Computer Science.

"In the BRB, we are designing a 3D printed exoskeleton to help stroke patients extend their affected hand. Many exoskeletons can be difficult to acquire or are unable to leave the lab they were built in. This exoskeleton is inexpensive, custom made for each patient, and is easily accessible as it is 3D printed in the Biomechanics Research Building," explains Dr. Knarr.

"The exoskeleton uses elastics to extend the patient's hand and has dials to tighten or loosen the tension. The goal is that this exoskeleton will help the patient use their affected hand in their own environment to grasp objects and improve mobility of their affected hand over time."

For the VR system, Dr. Ricks' team has designed several games for stroke patients, translating the rehabilitation experience into a virtual world. These exciting virtual settings mimic real-world situations and provide variation of traditional rehab methods. Benefits of gaming-style VR environments for stroke recovery patients include positive feedback of performance and assessment allowing for real-time adjustment, and a reward system which increases engagement and motivation.

*Continued on page 22*

# BIOMECHANICS & QLI: COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS



## EXOSKELETON HAND FOR STROKE REHAB

3D-printed prostheses technology is utilized to create these low-cost, customized assistive devices. The exoskeleton helps stroke patients extend their affected hand.



## DESIGN & FABRICATION OF DEVICES, PARTS

The QLI-prototyped, Biomechanics-revised mobile arm support device being assembled by Todd Schmitz, QLI's Adaptive Repair Technician. *Photo credit: Jon Pearson, QLI.*



## VOCATIONAL REHAB TRAINING

While recovering from a spinal cord injury, Shane Hultine enhanced his skill set through vocational rehab training in the Biomechanics Research Building. *Photo credit: Jon Pearson, QLI.*



# DEVELOPING SCHOOL LIBRARY LEADERS

To help preserve school libraries as vital sources of information, literacy and technology for children and teens, the Department of Educational Leadership has a new doctoral program training for the next generation of leaders in school libraries called NxtWave.

"It's about access to information. It sounds like an airy, conceptual argument, but it's beyond important. When I was a P-12 school librarian, I would purchase paperbacks because books about sensitive topics had a way of disappearing with my students who needed access to this information without fear of reprisal. Information must be available and it must be tangible," explains UNO Professor of Library Science Dr. Rebecca Pasco.

"Many kids are not within walking distance of a city library. If they don't have a school library, then they don't have a library. This leaves them without access to information and without access to technology."

In 2012, Dr. Pasco took her advocacy for school libraries to a new level. Through UNO's Department of Educational Leadership (EDL) and two partner universities, she helped develop the first doctoral program for school library leaders called NxtWave. The goal was to create a community of scholars and leaders for 21st century school libraries, trained in educational leadership best practices alongside principals and superintendents. The first cohort of NxtWave leaders graduated in 2017.

Recent NxtWave graduate Dr. Stephanie Burdic, teacher librarian at Millard North High School, says the program's focus on in-depth research and best practices along with the opportunity to learn and network with library professionals and education leaders from other school districts and cities outside Nebraska, "specifically changed her."

"I learned to be forward-thinking and make solid recommendations about where to go next. The courses broadened my knowledge of school operations and understanding of the educational realm and how the library fits in," explains Dr. Burdic.

According to EDL Chair, Dr. Kay Keiser, "NxtWave is the first truly specific doctoral program for school library leaders. It is a brilliant and unique concept. In addition to library science curriculum, a candidate takes 33 hours of research and leadership courses. Through this program, they qualify for an administrative certificate from the State of Nebraska."

Dr. Keiser continues, "Our first cohort came with a variety of new perspectives. Together, these emerging leaders presented and wrote meaningful new subject matter—we had dissertations on policy, on practice, on special populations."

When it came time to decide on a dissertation topic, Dr. Burdic says, "I thought for a long time about the foundation and importance of the school library. I thought about the ways school libraries interact with students to promote social justice."

"There is this idea of informational justice—no matter who the student is and where they are, they will have equitable access to the information and materials they need to be successful in school and beyond. School librarians do that! They don't always label it with that term, but the way we provide info to students is a function of social justice. For example, how librarians approach collection development to buy books that are inclusive of their school or their society—books that show diverse nature of our world."

"Or how policies and teaching practices in the library affect every student in the school, e.g., how to reduce or eliminate financial barriers that restrict access to information, or how to make sure every student feels welcomed. In the library, every student should get the instruction they need and be treated with the respect they deserve. The library is a safe haven."

“ *There is this idea of informational justice—no matter who the student is and where they are, they will have equitable access to the materials and information they need to be successful in school and beyond. School librarians do that!* ”

**DR. STEPHANIE BURDIC,**  
GRADUATE OF THE NXTWAVE DOCTORAL PROGRAM





## DOING THE CRITICAL WORK MEET DR. JASON COLEMAN

After a big name change in Fall 2017, the School of Health & Kinesiology (H&K) enters the 18-19 school year with more exciting news to share. H&K announces a new director, Dr. Jason Coleman.

"I feel like we've grown up together," Dr. Jason Coleman jokes in his slight South Carolinian drawl, explaining his transformative professional experience over the last eight years at UNO. "Even though I'm relatively new to Omaha, I feel like I've grown up alongside UNO."

"I have a strong research background, and I've seen UNO move toward a culture of innovation. I've also seen the impact we have as faculty and as an institution—how deep we reach out into the community, the good we do."

Dr. Coleman doesn't shy away from distinctive projects or innovative ideas. Arriving at UNO in 2010 as Assistant Professor of Public Health, Dr. Coleman dug right into groundbreaking research with colleagues from UNMC and UNO Associate Professor of Sociology Dr. Jay Irwin. They formed a working group that would eventually be known as the Midland Sexual Health Research Collaborative (MSHRC).

Sensing a need for advocacy, the MSHRC conducted the Midlands LGBT Needs Assessment, a research study gauging the physical, mental, social, and sexual health of LGBT persons in Nebraska. The health of LGBT Nebraskans had never before been studied, and data showed health disparities and barriers to health care access. Additional data from the assessment, showing that employment discrimination towards LGBT workers

exists in Omaha, informed an amendment passed by the city council in 2012 to expand Omaha's anti-discrimination laws.

Dr. Coleman became director of the MSHRC in 2014. Along with fellow co-director, Dr. Sofia Jawed-Wessel, colleagues Dr. Irwin, Dr. Aja Kneip Pelster, Liam Heerten-Rodriguez, and public health students, the MSHRC continues to provide contemporary, evidence-based research to inform policy for critical projects involving teen pregnancy; HIV and STI prevention; maternal and child health; comprehensive sexuality education; and issues of health access.

"The MSHRC recognizes that it is important work to improve the lives of people in the community and to take a structural approach to public health. We conduct research to identify gaps at the systems level and we work to develop evidence-based tools to share with policy makers and community partners," explains Dr. Coleman.

The power of collaboration, community engagement, and building strong health infrastructure was taught to Dr. Coleman early in his career. After graduating with an undergraduate degree in international studies, he spent over two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia, for the Community Action for Health program.

"My academic focus was on social justice and equity in the developing world. On the ground in Zambia, I learned that public health is the heart of everything to achieve those goals. I was trained to go into communities that had very basic health infrastructure and build capacity. I worked with community members to determine gaps or needs and then worked to find locally-based solutions and develop programs by working alongside government workers and helping connect them with local organizations. I saw a real impact of this work on health of the community."

Dr. Coleman returned to South Carolina with a passion for the field. He graduated from the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health with master's and doctoral degrees in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior.

Dr. Coleman is excited to use his global background and ability as a connector to develop more partnerships for the School of H&K. He explains, "Globalization is important, and H&K is planning a bigger stake in global education. Locally, we will continue to build relationships to strengthen program pathways with our

local community colleges and with UNMC. We have many exciting projects in the works."

As director, he will build on the strength of the H&K faculty and programs. "I work with wonderful faculty with so many diverse talents. They represent the best in all three pillars of academia: teaching, research, and service. Funders know we do rigorous, necessary, and innovative research. Students know they are getting a quality education. We will move forward as engaged school, building on the expertise of our faculty, with students as our research partners."



### H&K GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

H&K students, accompanied by Drs. Jason Coleman and Adam Rosen, spent a week in March immersed in the local culture of Managua, Nicaragua for a soccer and sports medicine focused service experience.





# STORIES FROM THE NU FOUNDATION



**John and Breta Jeter** enjoy their involvement with UNO's College of Education and College of Business Administration. Several years ago, John, a UNO alumnus and retired CPA, established a scholarship for Accounting students in the College of Business Administration.

Following their marriage in 2014, John and Breta established the John A. and Breta S. Jeter Speech Language Pathology Fellowship in UNO's College of Education. They established this Fellowship following Breta's career as a speech-language pathologist, working in medical settings across several states. She also was involved in teaching and supervisory activities and is a Life Member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. John and Breta say, "our giving back to others through these scholarships expresses our gratitude for the help we both received while preparing

## WHY WE GIVE

for our fulfilling careers. We're grateful for the opportunity to offer financial support and encouragement to UNO students through our giving to the Alumni Association and to the University of Nebraska Foundation. We enjoy the personal relationships we're able to have with the recipients of the Scholarships we've established. We like keeping in touch with them as they progress in reaching their educational goals."

Interested in supporting the College of Education? **Donate online at [www.nufoundation.org/UNOFundCOE](http://www.nufoundation.org/UNOFundCOE)** or contact COE Director of Development, Nicole Massara, at 402.502.4105 or [nicole.massara@nufoundation.org](mailto:nicole.massara@nufoundation.org).

## Make a difference in the lives of our students with a recurring gift

It's easy and convenient to set up a recurring gift to the College of Education at [www.nufoundation.org/UNOFundCOE](http://www.nufoundation.org/UNOFundCOE). After entering your email address, just select your gift amount, enter your donor and payment information, check the "Make my gift recurring" box, and select your giving frequency. **Thank you for helping us ensure a strong future of research and education at UNO.**



**\$10**

PER MONTH:

Covers the cost of one student's licensure exam



**\$25**

PER MONTH:

Sends a grad student to a conference to present research



**\$50**

PER MONTH:

Provides global engagement support



**\$100**

PER MONTH:

Supports student scholarships

## [ MEET THE STEM STARS ]

The STEM STARS (**S**cholars **T**eaching **A**nd **i**nspi**R**ing **S**tudents) are a cohort of teacher candidates who support the UNO Office of STEM Education in facilitation, preparation, and promotion of campus and community STEM outreach events. STEM STARS scholarships are generously funded by the Lena Hosman Neafus Fund and the Robert Kreitner and Margaret A. Sova STEM Stars Scholarship Fund.

## WHY IS STEM EDUCATION IMPORTANT?



"I believe that STEM education is both the necessity and fundamentality of human advancement. From a young age, I have taken a profound interest in the world of science and mathematics, this interest has imbedded into my way of thinking, rationalization, and personality as I have been dubbed the 'actually' guy among my peers. STEM Education is important to me because it is my passion."

**URI RUEDA-LICEA**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR



"From a very young age, I have had an unquenchable love for any scientific topic. I also have three engineers and a math professor in my family, so I have grown up surrounded by STEM all my life. I want to continue to contribute a love and enthusiasm for STEM in generations of students to come."

**JOY DEWILDE**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR



"In my opinion, STEM is one of the things that will help student not only right now but further down the road in their career. As a girl, I have always felt left out when it came to fun things such as robotics or even Math Club—nowadays I notice a lot more girls getting involved. I want to be a female role model showing that STEM is not just for boys."

**DANIELA KUEPER**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR



"STEM education has always been material that I loved in school and that my teachers in high school helped to cultivate. I am going into STEM education myself because I want to help to cultivate that in schools. I think STEM is only growing more and more as time goes on and its importance is growing as well. Schools are helping to introduce this material to our next engineers, mathematicians, and developers. I want kids to be encouraged to explore and learn more about STEM."

**ALEXANDRA DALEY**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR



"STEM Education is so important to me for a variety of reasons, but the first is because STEM is our future. STEM fields are the fastest growing fields for jobs and innovation, and I want to prepare my future students for a society where it is essential to know information about STEM. I also want to empower my students using STEM Education, as I believe this field is one where students often struggle because of a lack of motivation. I want my students to be excited about science or math class, by integrating cross-curricular subjects to make the lessons fun, engaging, and interactive. I look forward to inspiring and encouraging all of my future students to explore and discover in STEM."

**ALICIA LAUFENBERG**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR



"The overwhelming significance that STEM education has in our society is irrefutable. From innovation to better understanding the universe, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics have provided us with the tools to improve the lives of billions. STEM education is also important to me because of the effect it has on the individual by providing them with ways of thinking and attitudes that completely change one's perspective of the world around them and of themselves. I am very interested in creating communities of learning that celebrate the processes and ideas of STEM professionals that have shaped our world and continue to do so."

**PHILLIP V. BRUNETTI**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR



# 2017-2018 HIGHLIGHTS



## TEACHER EDUCATION

Early Childhood celebrated the opening of the Play Lab with "Play Day" in October 2017.

Graduate coursework moved to a hybrid format and all TED coursework moved to Canvas in Fall 2017.

First classes were offered in Spring 2017 for the Instructional Technology Leadership endorsement.



## SPECIAL EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Collaborated with OPS to develop a Career Ladder for Special Education to be implemented in 2018.

The Early Childhood Inclusive major continued to see significant growth (141%) in the second year of implementation.

The collaborative UNO/UNMC Special Education with Applied Behavior Analysis concentration accepted the first three students.



## HEALTH & KINESIOLOGY

The College of Education launched the newly renamed School of Health and Kinesiology.

Alternative Entry Master of Arts in Athletic Training from the Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology approved as a 3+2 program to the ATMS degree.



## COUNSELING

Implementation of Alternative School Counseling Endorsement.



## BIOMECHANICS

Construction begins on the 30,000 square foot, \$11 million expansion of the Biomechanics Research Building.

Established the Division of Biomechanics and Research Development, housing the Department of Biomechanics and Center for Research in Human Movement Variability (MOVCENTR).



## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Over 80% of candidates have successfully completed their EdD degrees in less than six years (compared to a national average of 42%).

Twenty-four Doctor of Education degrees awarded in 2017, and 214 have completed doctoral degrees in educational administration from 1986-2017.



## ADVISING

Lauren Bhogal named January's Awesome Advisor, and Hanna Solberg named July's Awesome Advisor.

Courtney Luxon received 2018 Academic Advisor of the Year Award and elected to the Staff Advisory Council.



H&K alumna Makayla Bell  
**May Commencement Speaker**



**Lewis & Clark Summer Program**



**Eureka!-STEM**



**Play Lab Opens**



**National Biomechanics Day**



**Eureka!-STEM**



**Successful Accreditation in Counseling (CACREP), Public Health (CEPH), and Athletic Training (CAATE)**



**30th Year of the Hollie Bethel Distinguished Alumni Luncheon**



**Online Library Science Program Ranked #1 by Best College Reviews**



# 2017-2018 HIGHLIGHTS



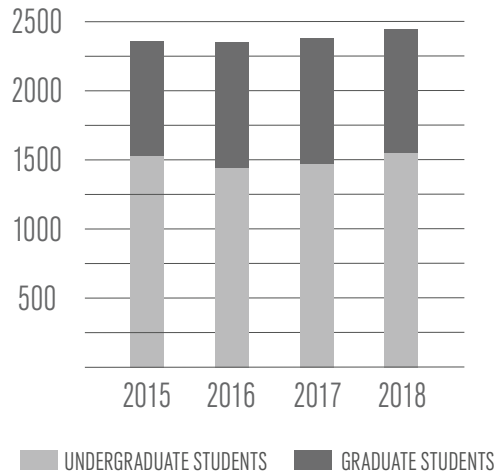
## ENROLLMENT

### NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER UNIT | FALL 2018

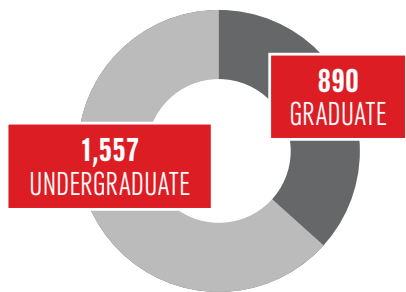
- Biomechanics: **48\***
- Counseling: **189**
- Educational Leadership: **125**
- Health and Kinesiology: **472\***
- Special Education & Comm. Disorders: **372\*\***
- Teacher Education: **1,314\*\***

\*Exercise Science PhD, duplication of 14  
\*\*Early Childhood Inclusive, duplication of 49

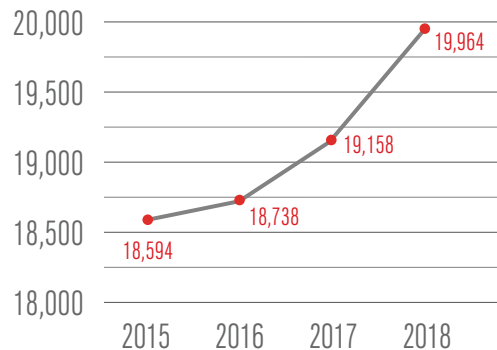
### TOTAL # OF STUDENTS (2015-2018)



### OUR STUDENTS | FALL 2018



### STUDENT CREDIT HOURS PRODUCED

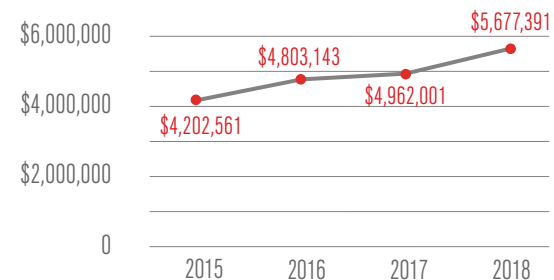


## EXTERNAL FUNDING

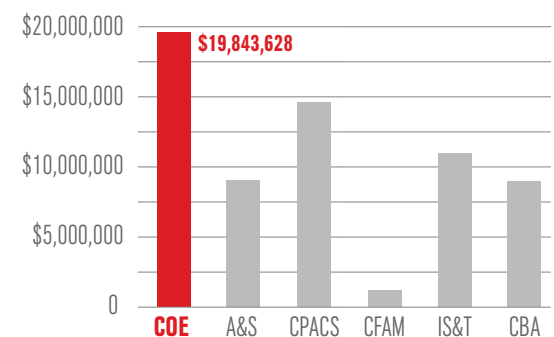
**\$38.4 MILLION**

in faculty grant proposals submitted in 2018

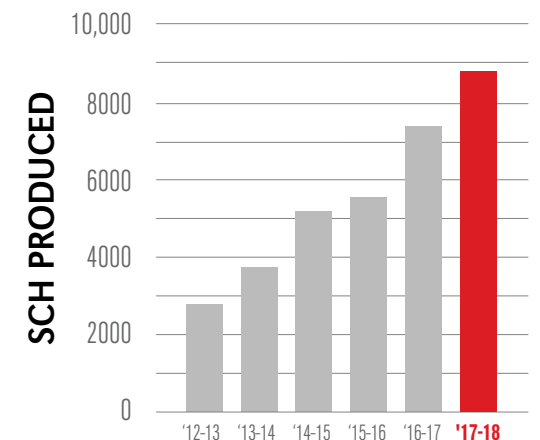
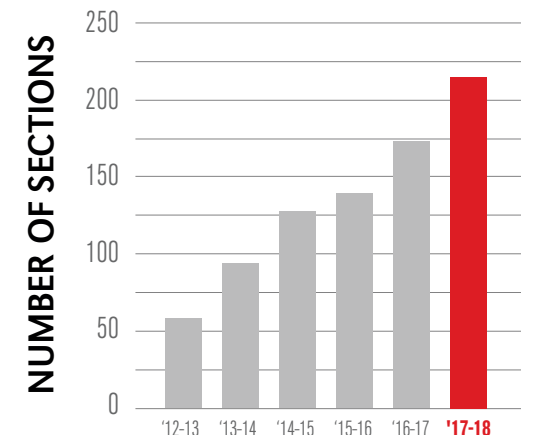
### GRANTS AWARDED (2015 - OCT. 2018)



### GRANTS AWARDED BY COLLEGE (2015 - OCT. 2018)



## DISTANCE EDUCATION



## AWARDS

Dr. Elliott Ostler received the 2018 UNO Award for Distinguished Research and Creative Activity.

Mr. Sam Wilkins was recognized by the Athletic Training Association MAATA 2018 with a Young Professional's Distinction Award.

Dr. Jessica Hagaman (2017) and Dr. Melissa Cast-Brede (2018) received UNO Alumni Outstanding Teaching Awards.

Dr. Ashley Blount awarded 2017 Best Practices in Research Award, American Counseling Association.

Dr. Janice Garnett was awarded a Legacy Award in Education from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Omaha Chapter.

Dr. Nick Stergiou was inducted into the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE), granted a Diaspora Fulbright Scholarship, received the Chancellor's Medal, elected as a 2017 American Society of Biomechanics Fellow, and received NU's 2018 Innovation, Development, and Engagement Award (IDEA).

Dr. Mitzi Ritzman received the 2017 Outstanding Service Learning Faculty Award and UNO Advisor of the Year, NSSHLA.

Dr. Sofia Jawed-Wessel was recognized as 2018 Ten Outstanding Young Omahans (TOYO!), received a 2017 Outstanding Achievement Award from the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women (CCSW), and was honored with a Women's Center for Advancement (WCA's) 2017 Tribute to Women Award.



## BIOMECHANICS IN ACTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Eventually, the two components will work together, allowing for a totally customized experience for stroke recovery patients. According to Dr. Knarr, "This is a system to be used by clients and therapists. During the research development phase, it's important to have a dialogue with our end users so we don't develop in a bubble. We have clients using prototypes of our exoskeleton hand and VR environment in both academic and therapy settings, and we are improving our designs based on the clinical feedback. Once we systematically understand all the components, we will put all the pieces together to get a better rehab tool in the hands of clinicians and their patients."

### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION TRAINING

Coordinator of PT/OT Services and Physical Therapist, Brad Dexter, is one of the Biomechanics team's main partners at QLI. As Dexter became aware of the tremendous resources and expertise in the BRB, he suggested another initiative to help engage QLI residents with backgrounds in engineering and manufacturing: vocational rehabilitation training. The BRB has welcomed five QLI residents over the past year who supplemented their traditional therapy with vocational rehab training. Participants visited 2-3 times a week, accompanied by a therapist, and their tasks included guided work with Vanderheyden in the machine shop on computer aided design (CAD), microcontroller programming, electrical circuit design, and physical fabrication.

"Through this initiative, the Machining and Prototyping Core provides an environment for QLI residents who have industrial or engineering backgrounds. These individuals gained new experience and honed existing skills to help them acclimate back into the workforce after their injury," explains Dr. Knarr.

A few weeks into his 4-month residency at QLI for a spinal cord injury, Shane Hultine started vocational rehab therapy at the BRB. His therapist knew of Hultine's industrial engineering degree and suggested CAD training to supplement traditional rehab.

"It was a place where I could apply my skills in a work-like setting. It was a more authentic experience than physical therapy, and my first 'real life' activity outside of physical rehabilitation," says Hultine.

"Previously, I was an assistant manager at a production plant, and I had a maintenance role. I'd crawl into the machine and troubleshoot it, but I'm not able to do that now. Now I'm on the design end."



Vocational Rehab Training participant Shane Hultine (center) with Dr. Brian Knarr (left) and Travis Vanderheyden (right). Photo credit: Jon Pearson, QLI.

After graduating from QLI in late 2017, Hultine moved back to Illinois, but has since returned to Omaha. He plans to look for a job in the CAD field but wants to gain more experience first. In early Oct., he returned to the BRB as a volunteer. "It will keep me up on the different software and methods for rapid prototyping."

After suffering a traumatic brain injury from an industrial accident, Jeff McEvoy spent five months at QLI, and is currently in outpatient treatment. He is also back to work part-time at his employer for over 20 years, a bearing factory in Atlantic, Iowa. Like Hultine, he has an engineering degree and came to the BRB for vocational rehab training a few weeks into his rehab at QLI.

"It really helped me to get back to work," says McEvoy, who builds tools and machine parts with a computer-controlled mill and lathe and makes repairs to the factory production line. "After the accident, my recall was difficult—designing a part, the names of things. Vocational rehab at the BRB helped bring that back."

McEvoy continues, "I loved the UNO part of my therapy. The technology at the BRB was amazing, and I was impressed with their engineering projects. Travis was really easy to talk to and work with—he did whatever it took for me to understand. And I did whatever I could to stick around!"

Dexter is enthusiastic about the partnership and looks forward to what the future holds, "Travis and Brian have been great partners to QLI over the last several years. We appreciate their enthusiasm, creativity, and willingness to jump in to help find a solution to everyday problems that exist in our world of rehabilitation. Thanks to our collaborative relationship the devices that we've been able to produce with the help of UNO's Biomechanics research team have enabled the individuals we serve to access their environment more independently, have given them a new sense of freedom, or, in some cases, have provided them additional safety. We're looking forward to continuing to work with UNO's Department of Biomechanics to help make some of our ideas reality!"

## COE ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018

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Nancy A. Edick

*Associate Dean*

Paul Barnes

*Assistant Dean*

Stevie Chepko

*Publications Editor/Design*

Mimi Boswell, Communications Specialist

*Photography*

Mimi Boswell

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Ryan Henrickson

and other collaborators

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