

New dean, Dr. Katherine Beissner, poised for exciting developments

In October, **Katherine Beissner, PhD, PT**, became the dean of Upstate Medical University College of Health Professions. After three decades of serving in a variety of faculty and administrative roles in the Department of Physical Therapy at Ithaca College, Beissner joined Upstate as a professor and chair of the Department of Physical Therapy Education several years ago. Last year she served as interim dean bringing experience, knowledge and passion toward accomplishing her goals for the college.

“We have outstanding faculty who are committed to excellence,” said Beissner, noting the high energy and enthusiasm within the departments of the college. “Their commitment paired with our strategic planning process will help us reach our shared goals. We want to improve the college’s visibility both within the university and the community,” she added. “In 2017, 97.6 percent of our graduates passed their licensing exam, proving our widely recognized strength in education,” Beissner said.

Beissner noted that there has been a continuous movement toward health professions having higher educational standards. “Programs that have required an associate’s degree now require a bachelor’s degree, as well some requiring a graduate degree. There has been an increase in academic rigor to ensure our students are working at the top of their license. We want to be very selective in the students we attract,” she said. While another of Beissner’s goals is to increase enrollment, the faculty proves to be worthy of the ‘cream of the crop’ students with their graduates among the most in demand in the allied health field.

We want to increase community outreach and diversity at the college,” said Beissner. “We are working with the Syracuse City School District, faculty and students on a structured program called “Health Careers Coaching,” teaching high school students about the



health profession careers on which we focus. Knowledge creates interest in our many academic programs.”

As the college strongly benefits from being part of the SUNY Upstate Medical University, an increase in connectedness with other SUNY schools is also on the agenda for Dean Beissner. “We are already working with SUNY Cortland and will be working with other schools in the area soon,” noted Beissner.

Beissner added, “Another favorite aspect of our college is that we are small enough for faculty to know our students well. So, it is important to us to keep in touch and learn about our alumni. We hope that feeling is mutual!”

In keeping with the Upstate mission, Beissner intends to increase visibility, selectiveness, diversity, connectedness and standards in all ten allied health professions offered at the college. The college’s highly qualified team of faculty, staff and students will help build upon the successes of the past while looking toward the future to achieve their vision.

“We have a lot to be proud of and we are not afraid to show it,” Beissner said.

New! Academic Transcripts

Requests for academic transcripts can now be done online through the registrar’s webpage:
<http://www.upstate.edu/currentstudents/academic/records/transcript.php>
 Click the TranscriptsPlus Icon below the “Ordering Information for Alumni/Former Students.”



The Respiratory Therapy Bachelor of Science degree program received the 2016 Distinguished RRT Credentialing Success Award from the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC). Out of 405 respiratory therapy programs in the country, Upstate's program was included in the 87 programs to meet the objective criteria.

"We are very proud of this award," said **Claire Aloian, MS, RT '74, RRT-NPS, FAARC**. "We are looking ahead to even better things as we work to enhance our clinical laboratory through funds such as the Mikles and Sorbello fund." she said. Aloian is associate professor and interim RT program director and is shown accepting the award from CoARC President Brad Leidich.

Respiratory Therapy program marks 50 years

The Department of Respiratory Therapy Education is celebrating an important milestone with its 50th anniversary. Details about an upcoming reunion event will be announced soon.



*Stephen P. Mikles
EdS, RRT, FAARC
1952-2013*

Founded in 1967, the program initially offered the Associate in Applied Science in Respiratory Therapy. Through a Veterans Administration grant in 1976, the program was approved to provide an additional program at the baccalaureate level, with curriculum designed to prepare graduates for positions in management and leadership, advanced clinical practice and education. Today's students earn the BS in Respiratory Therapy and are prepared to earn the credential of Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT). Upstate Medical University has the only RT baccalaureate degree program in the state outside of Long Island/New York City. The program's 5-year pass rate on national examinations is 100 percent.

Work is beginning on the renovation and modernization of Silverman Hall, bringing with it an exciting opportunity for the Respiratory Therapy department. A dedicated fund will provide resources for the RT program to enhance



*Joseph G. Sorbello
MSED, RRT, RT, FAARC*

its educational equipment while also honoring two remarkable alumni. Funds raised for the **Stephen P. Mikles and Joseph G. Sorbello Room** will be used primarily toward the purchase of simulation equipment for the department.

Steve and Joe were classmates in the 1970s. At the time of **Steve's** untimely passing in 2013, he was president of CoARC (see sidebar) and had worked at all volunteer levels within that organization, helping it attain national prominence. **Joe** retired last May after a 39-year career during which he served as RT department chair from 2004 to 2017. He served as president of the New York State Society for Respiratory Care and was instrumental in achieving state professional licensure for respiratory therapists. He was also a founding member of the Health Professions Alumni Association and served as vice president from 2000 to 2002.

To honor Steve and Joe, and to support the program for its 50th anniversary, visit www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni/donate and select "Mikles and Sorbello Room" on the "Designation" dropdown menu.

Health Professions Alumni Connection

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PA students work to create new endowment for the Physician Assistant program



*Patrick Fontaine and Samantha Effinger,
2019 class officers*

The PA Classes of 2018 and 2019 are working with the CHP Alumni Association to create an endowment for the Physician Assistant Studies program. As the College's newest program, this is the only program without its own dedicated fund.

A dedicated fund would provide a direct way for current students, alumni and others connected to the program to give back. An endowment will provide funding for the program in perpetuity.

Patrick Fontaine, 2019 class president said, "We need the help of our alumni to make the PA Educational Enrichment Endowment a reality." The new PA endowment will be

used specifically to enhance the educational experiences of PA students and faculty. Potential uses include lab equipment, guest lecturers and professional development for students and faculty.

Samantha Effinger, 2019 class secretary added, "Support from our alumni means more than you could know as we begin our professional journey!"

To help reach the \$10,000 goal, simply go to www.upstatefoundation.org/CHPalumni and click "PA Educational Enrichment Endowment" or call 315-464-4416.

Give online at www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni or call 315-464-4416.

Thank You to our 2017 Donors!

We extend our gratitude to the alumni, faculty, students and friends who contributed to the Upstate College of Health Professions Alumni Association 2017 annual campaign, including restricted funds and endowments. Donors are listed below according to gifts received between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017.

A.C. Silverman Society*

Named in honor of respected pediatrician, epidemiologist and public health administrator A. Clement Silverman, the society recognizes donors who have given lifetime gifts of \$2,500 or more to the alumni association and/or have given annually for 10 or more consecutive years. Special thanks go to founding members who have given for 25 years – every year since the alumni association was formed.

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CLS program chair receives national award



Susan Graham

Susan Graham, MS, MT (ASCP)SH^{CM}, has received the Member Excellence in Education award from the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP).

The award recognizes Graham for demonstrating outstanding performance in teaching and for developing effective teaching methods and instructional materials. Graham, associate dean of the College of Health Professions and associate professor of Clinical Laboratory Science, accepted the award last fall at ASCP's annual meeting in Chicago.

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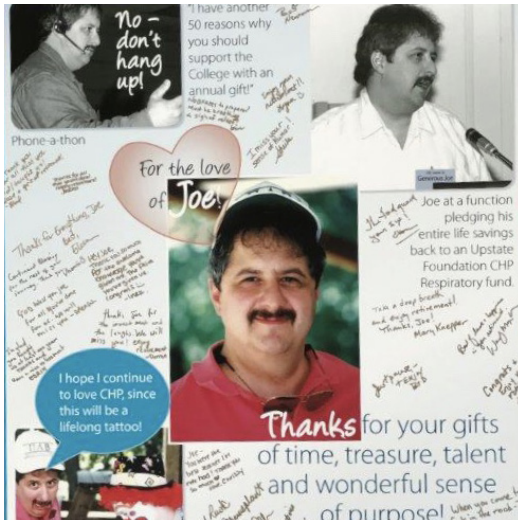
Alumni Connection

Health Professions Alumni Association News

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Poster of alumnus and longtime RT program chair Joe Sorbello signed by colleagues at his retirement party. A new fund to benefit the RT program was announced at the reception. See more on page 2

ALUMNI UPDATES



Amy DeBlois, DPT '15, PT, MPT, CLT-LANA, lead instructor in multiple Neuroscience courses in the Physical Therapy curriculum, has received the prestigious President's Award for Excellence in Teaching. DeBlois has begun research investigating the use of Google Glass technology as an intervention for patients with Parkinson's

Disease to improve mobility and quality of life, collaborating with Syracuse University to develop a research elective. DeBlois has also been praised for mentoring skills, sharing her clinical knowledge and making links between the classroom and real life scenarios for DPT students. DeBlois received her Post Professional Doctorate degree in Physical Therapy from Upstate in 2015.



Adam Rufa, DPT '08, PT, OCS, is focusing on the influence of cognitive factors on pain for his dissertation. Rufa, a faculty member at the College of Health Professions, is assessing the impact of a physical therapist's beliefs about the safety of activity and the connection between pain and tissue damage for patients with lower back pain.

Recently, Rufa, along with **Dean Katherine Beissner** and **Michelle Dolphin, DPT '07, PT, MS, OCS**, had an article approved for publication. The article is focused on teaching older adults with chronic pain about the importance of the nervous system and lessening the fear of movement and pain catastrophizing. It will be published this year in *Physiotherapy: Theory and Practice*.

IN MEMORIAM



We mourn the loss of adjunct professor, Lorraine A. Bédy, PhD

Lorraine Bédy, 69, of Syracuse, died at home in the company of her immediate family on December 26, 2017, after losing her battle with hepatobiliary cholangiocarcinoma. Lorraine was a secondary English teacher in the West Genesee district for 37 years. During that time she also attended the Syracuse University School of Education, where she earned a master's degree in English education and a doctorate in the cultural foundations of education.

After retiring from West Genesee, she became an adjunct professor at the College of Health Professions where she taught writing and teaching methods and mentored new faculty. She retired from Upstate at the end of November 2017.