



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF HEALTH & KINESIOLOGY

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023





GROWTH & SUCCESS

For the School of Health and Kinesiology, the trajectory is upward! We are proud to share just a small part of our story in this Annual Report. We look forward to continued growth and success in the coming years.

12%

ENROLLMENT INCREASE
BETWEEN 2019 AND 2022

\$4.6M

TOTAL RESEARCH AWARDS
2018-2022, AN INCREASE
FROM PREVIOUS PERIODS

\$250k

TOTAL STUDENT LED-RESEARCH
AWARDS, 2018-2022, AN INCREASE
FROM PREVIOUS PERIODS

LIVING THE MISSION

At the UNO School of Health and Kinesiology (H&K), we live the metropolitan mission of the university through teaching, scholarship, research, service, and community engagement. We are dedicated to improving lives locally, nationally, and globally.

The mission statement for UNO says that we are an institution that “transforms and improves the quality of life locally, nationally, and globally.” H&K lives this mission in everything that we do, including preparing students for meaningful careers, leading research to support childhood development, supporting our public and clinical health systems, and engaging communities throughout the state, nation, and world.

Our diverse, yet cohesive, portfolio allows us to extend our impact to meet the needs of our constituents. We have the only undergraduate public health program in Nebraska, which is nationally accredited. Our public health graduates are the next generation of the Nebraska public health workforce. Our accredited graduate program in Athletic Training graduates licensed medical professionals who not only support athletes, but also provide front-line services in pediatrics, orthopedics, and emergency medicine.

We work closely with both urban and rural schools and childcare providers across Nebraska. Our faculty and students conduct research to develop programs that are used by teaching

professionals to train them in child development, particularly in the areas of nutrition and physical activity.

Our faculty were among the first to produce an educational series to help teachers implement lessons either in classroom or virtual settings to respond to the pandemic. Additionally, we study infant movement behaviors to ensure that healthy children become

Research from H&K supports our military through conducting applied and transnational research with the US Department of Defense. Our work focuses on optimizing the performance and safety of soldiers in extreme environments and addresses new concerns that continue to emerge about soldier training, readiness, and safety. We fulfill the responsibility to optimize our national defense.



Our diverse, yet cohesive, portfolio allows us to extend our impact to meet the needs of our constituents.”

healthy adults. Akin to our work in education, we also work closely with children with intellectual and physical disabilities. These children experienced some of the greatest negative impacts of the pandemic, facing issues like reduced access to care, high-risk status for negative health outcomes, and psychological and behavioral challenges.

Our work directly addresses educational disparities through a dedicated focus on academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

At H&K, we live the mission. The impact of our work transforms the quality of life for people. Our work contributes directly to the workforce, health and education sectors, national defense, and to the economy. Undoubtedly, our school is an often under-recognized gem in the state of Nebraska, a hub of innovation, and a training ground for the future.

-Dr. Jason D. Coleman

DIRECTOR’S REFLECTION

When I began my role as Director in 2018, none of us had a clue how dramatically the world would change in just a few short years. As we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic together, we quickly adapted to pivot instructional modes, rethink research, and explore new ways to serve our community. We embraced our student-focused approach as we made decisions on how to provide the best experience possible given limitations that none of us previously experienced.

I am particularly proud of the role our faculty, staff, and students took in the medical and public health response through partnerships with the UNO Office of Health Security, the Douglas County Health Department, and other responding agencies. Coming out of the pandemic, the School of H&K is poised to excel to reach aspirational goals as we move into the future. As you’ll read in our annual report, our enrollment is strong. Our research portfolio and associated funding are growing. Our role in the community is expanding.

I am excited to introduce many of you to REACH for the first time in this report. Our Research, Engagement, and Community Hub is a truly transformational opportunity for the School, campus, and community. We will continue to build a culture of success as we achieve truly great things together.

As I reflect on the past year, I’m truly grateful for all of the stellar faculty, staff, students, and other community members with whom I have the pleasure of interacting regularly. I hope that you’ll enjoy reading about the wonderful work that we do in this annual report. The information featured here is only a sample of our work over the past year. We’d love the opportunity to share more of our story with you—simply reach out.



Jason D. Coleman, PhD, MSPH
Director, School of H&K

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FACULTY HONORS

UNO FACULTY EXCELLENCE IN ENGAGEMENT AWARD Dr. Sofia Jawed-Wessel

Sofia Jawed-Wessel, Ph.D., MPH, teaches and generates new knowledge in the area of public health as an associate professor of health and kinesiology and as the director of the Midlands Sexual Health Research Collaborative. Her work centers broad philosophical, cultural, and political implications of existing in a gendered and sexist world. Community engagement is crucial to her pedagogical and scholarly work; receiving this award is both affirming and motivating. Dr. Jawed-Wessel is a social justice advocate who has provided expert testimony for the Nebraska Unicameral, the Nebraska School Board of Education, and the Omaha Public School Board of Education. She was recognized in 2017 with a Ten Outstanding Young Omahans (TOYO) award and has also been honored by her colleagues with the 2017 Outstanding Achievement Award and the 2015 Mary Ann Lamanna Award for Excellence in Women and Gender Studies.



UNO EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD Dr. Song-young Park

Dr. Song-young Park, an Associate Professor in the School of Health and Kinesiology, embodies the qualities of the Excellence in Teaching Award, leaving a permanent mark on the landscape of teaching and mentorship. With a multifaceted approach that combines a solid foundation in physiological sciences, cutting-edge teaching methodologies, and an unwavering commitment to student success, Dr. Park has risen as a shining example of educational excellence. Since joining the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 2017, Dr. Park has continued to elevate his teaching craft. He has assumed responsibilities for diverse courses ranging from Laboratory Methods and Clinical Exercise and Prescription to Advanced Exercise Physiology and Research Methods. Notably, Dr. Park’s teaching philosophy centers on creating a learner-centered environment that motivates students and kindles their curiosity by relating physiological and methodological concepts to real-life examples.



DISTINGUISHED PARTNER AWARD FOR NEBRASKA CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION Dr. Adam B. Rosen

Associate Professor Adam B. Rosen, Ph.D., ATC, was honored by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) with the 2023 Distinguished Partner Award for Nebraska Career and Technical Education (CTE). The Distinguished Partner Award recognizes a business, group, or individual who has made significant contributions to the success of Career Education at a statewide level. Dr. Rosen is an associate professor in the School of Health & Kinesiology and director of the UNO Athletic Training Program. The Distinguished Partner Award recognizes Dr. Rosen’s work with the Benson Health Professions Academy where he has served as board member and co-chair of the Career Academy Advisory Board since 2019.





REACH: A TRANSFORMATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR UNO

The new Research, Engagement, and Community Hub, a project of the School of Health and Kinesiology, is a transformational opportunity not only to advance the school into the future but also to change the way people see and access the UNO Campus.

It all began with a vision while walking through the squash and racquetball court corridor on the lower level of the Health and Kinesiology Building. Once a thriving activity space, this area became infrequently used over the years as the popularity of racquetball and squash took a backseat to other sports like pickleball.

REACH, which stands for Research, Engagement, and Community Hub, promises to accelerate the growth of the School of Health and Kinesiology through advanced research laboratories, innovative teaching spaces, and community-centered engagement areas. Planning for this renovation and addition project began in early 2019 with the support of

the UNO Academic Affairs Office, which supported an initial feasibility study.

THE SPACE Renovation and Addition

The new facility will include over 40,000 square feet of space, with approximately 32,000 sq. ft. of renovated space and an addition of approximately 8,000 sq. ft.

Laboratories

REACH will include modern labs to support H&K research. Re-imagined labs will accelerate the current work in Exercise

and Vascular Physiology and Sports Medicine. New to campus will be dedicated labs for Early Childhood Development, Physical and Intellectual Disabilities, and Sports Biomechanics.

THE WORK Student Engaged Applied Research

H&K faculty have extensive expertise in STEM, public health, and health care related fields. This initiative space will increase the focus on student-centered research, allowing experiential learning in the training of future clinicians, researchers, and practitioners who are equipped to handle complex issues and improve health outcomes in a variety of populations. For example, students currently work alongside faculty who partner with the Department of Defense. They investigate human performance in extreme environments through large-scale funded collaborative research projects that also support a faculty research fellow with the Naval Health Research Center's Warfighter Performance Laboratory and a National Strategic Research Institute fellow. Additionally, faculty and students conduct NIH funded health-related projects, such as vascular function, musculoskeletal injury, and medical device fabrication, design, and testing. These projects leverage existing collaborations with both internal and external partners. This expanded facility will dramatically increase our capacity and competitiveness for external funding while at the same time enhance opportunities for students experiential learning, thus accelerating the training of

our future STEM, public health, and health care workers.

Community Engaged Research and Practice

H&K faculty focus extensively on research and teaching to promote and enhance the health of the community, particularly among underserved populations. Through applied research funded by entities including the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, and community-based partnerships with entities such as the Special Olympics, faculty research and programs improve the quality of life of individuals with and without disabilities across the lifespan. Our faculty consistently engage in industry-sponsored research from local entities, leading to local economic impact. Additionally, faculty lead programs to promote health equity in critical areas, largely focused on marginalized populations through grant and philanthropically funded initiatives that center and further diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.

THE FUTURE

H&K faculty excel at building capacity for teaching, research, and practice. REACH will provide much needed space to expand our enterprise, as well as provide a means to attract and retain talented faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students. Further, this initiative fully embodies our UNO values: excellence, engagement, inclusion, discovery, integrity, and Maverick spirit.



ACCREDITATION UPDATE

This year, both the Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) and Master of Arts in Athletic Training (MAAT) programs received re-accreditation from their accrediting bodies. The BSPH program, the only accredited undergraduate program in Nebraska, received a full 7-year accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health. The MAAT program received a full 10-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education.



COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

HIGH SCHOOL DAY • In April, the Athletic Training team hosted their annual High School Day for teens interested in the Athletic Training health care field. Eighty students from Omaha-area high school Dual Enrollment programs joined faculty and graduate students on UNO's campus to participate in rotations of hands-on rehab, emergency care skills, and casting lab demos.

FEI WORLD CUP • Kinesiology and Athletic Training students conducted demos for kids at the education pavilion during the FEI World Cup event at the CHI Health Center in downtown Omaha. Event attendees participated in hands-on activities like ultrasound demonstrations and interacted with 3D-printed bones and a full-size horse skull to compare horse and human anatomy.

EMERGENCY CARE TRAINING • Each August, the Athletic Training team welcomes clinicians and students to UNO's campus to practice emergency skills such as equipment removal, cervical spine immobilization, rectal thermometry and cold water immersion for the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care workshop with the Nebraska Medicine Sports Medicine Program.

BENSON HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACADEMY • Benson High Magnet School's award-winning Health Professions Academy, supported by H&K faculty Dr. Adam Rosen and Dr. Marcia Adler and led by H&K alumna and Benson teacher Robyn Jernigan, helps high schoolers prepare for careers in health care while introducing an academic pathway to UNO.



CONGRATS, EXERCISE IS MEDICINE ON CAMPUS!

H&K student organization Exercise is Medicine on Campus (EIM-OC), advised by Dr. Michaela Schenkelberg, received Silver Campus Status from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), recognizing activities related to physical activity promotion, education, and EIM integration across UNO's campus. EIM-OC also won ACSM's 2022 Mascot Challenge.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Students from across our programs continued to raise the bar for student achievement in '22-23, earning local, regional, and national recognition.

» Recent PhD program graduates, **Dr. Liz Pekas** and **Dr. JP Rech**, received annual scholar awards from the American Kinesiology Association.

» **Dr. JP Rech** studied the effectiveness of physical activity interventions in preschool to third grade classrooms as a '22-23 Buffett Early Childhood Institute Graduate Scholar.

» **Zoe Miller**, Public Health student and co-director of UNO's Women & Gender Equity Center, received the 2022 Marian Ivers Community Service Leadership Award. Zoe was also honored with the Student Scholarship Award at the 33rd Annual Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Gender Equity Luncheon.

» Kinesiology student and aspiring physical therapist **Brandon Schutt** ran 364 miles across Nebraska to raise money for four nonprofits. In recognition of his altruistic journey, Good Morning America and KETV featured Brandon's story.

» H&K doctoral student **Tomohiro "Tomo" Ide** completed a second summer internship with the Iowa Cubs, the minor league AAA affiliate of the Chicago Cubs. WOWT interviewed Tomo about his experience with the team and in the UNO Pitching Lab.



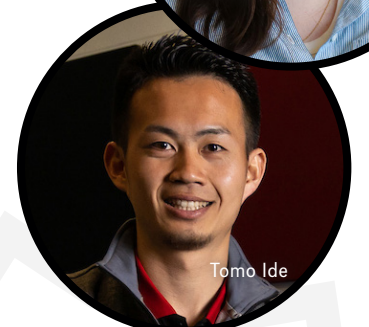
Dr. Liz Pekas



Dr. JP Rech



Zoe Miller



Tomo Ide

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

» **Dr. Song-young Park** and H&K doctoral student **Cody Anderson** received the 2022 Most Promising New Invention Award at UNeMed's Innovation Awards.

» **Dr. Jason Coleman** received the Community Collaborator of the Year Award from the Great Plains IDeA-CTR.

» **Dr. Sofia Jawed-Wessel** named a 2022 Changemakers in Family Planning grantee from the Society of Family Planning Research Fund. The funding supports scholars of color to develop their research skills and leadership.



UNeMed Innovation Award Ceremony

STUDY AWAY!

H&K STUDENTS EXPERIENCE EDUCATION BEYOND CAMPUS

H&K offered two study away experiences in the '22-23 academic year. Study Away offers students exposure to new cultures, ideas, and hands-on experiences through carefully crafted courses and opportunities.

STUDENTS EXPLORE SPORTS MEDICINE AND BIOMECHANICS WITH THE PROS DURING MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL EXPERIENCE

Over spring break, students from the School of Health and Kinesiology and the Department of Biomechanics traveled beyond the classroom for a sports medicine- and biomechanics-focused Major League Baseball (MLB) Spring Training Experience in Arizona.

Accompanied by faculty members Adam Rosen, Ph.D., ATC, Sam Wilkins, Ph.D., ATC, and Brian A. Knarr, Ph.D., and eighteen students from UNO's Kinesiology, Athletic Training, and Biomechanics programs spent a week immersed in MLB spring training activities while meeting with sports medicine clinicians and sport scientists from the Cactus League.

Students attended spring training games at Goodyear Stadium and Surprise Stadium, and toured the Kansas City Royals facilities with Athletic Trainer Brad Groleau, a 2019 H&K alumnus. They also visited Creighton University's Phoenix Health Sciences Campus, where they were given a tour and lecture by former director of performance integration for the Los Angeles Angels, Ryan Crotin, Ph.D., CSCS, RSCC, a baseball injury expert and VP of ArmCare.com.

"It was an incredible experience to talk with people within professional baseball to learn more about rehabilitation measures and what it is like to work with professional athletes", said Chu-Han Chen, a first-year graduate student



in UNO's Athletic Training Program.

Other highlights included watching Team USA at the World Baseball Classic and attending a game at Peoria Sports Complex. A post-game tour of the complex by biomechanist Kate Weiss, Ph.D., CSCS, the sports science director for the Seattle Mariners, showcased the facility's state-of-the-art simulated pitching system and customized baseball bats.

"As someone who wants to work in professional baseball, it was amazing to see how things are done behind the scenes," Chen said. "Biomechanics plays just as big a role in professional baseball as Athletic Training does. I hope to work closely with biomechanists in the future."

“As someone who wants to work in professional baseball, it was amazing to see how things are done behind the scenes.”

*- Chu-Han Chen
AT Grad Student*

MOTIVATION FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Associate Professor Dr. John Noble, together with ten students and H&K Advisor Courtney Luxon, traveled Australia's east coast. Following a route from Cairns, to Townsville, to Magnetic Island, to Sydney, they explored both natural environments like the Great Barrier Reef and built environments in towns and cities to see how they impact the locals' motivation for participating in physical activity.

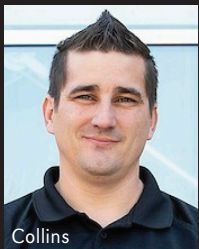




Olagoke



Gehr



Collins



Norgelas

NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

This year H&K welcomed three new faculty and one new staff member.

DR. AYOKUNLE "AYO" OLAGOKE

Assistant Professor of Public Health and Health Behavior

SHANNON GEHR, MA, ATC

Instructor, Athletic Training

CHRISTOPHER COLLINS, MS

Instructor, Kinesiology

SARA NORGELAS, MS

Office Associate and Graduate Programs Coordinator

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