

# HHP TODAY

## HEALTH and HUMAN PERFORMANCE

Fall 2014

### From the Chair



We're full speed into the fall 2014 semester! Not only have we had a record enrollment in HHP, but also a record enrollment across the university. In this issue of HHP Today, you can get a glimpse of some current

activities and accomplishments throughout the department. For more information about our academic and research opportunities, you can always keep up with us on our website at [www.hhp.uh.edu](http://www.hhp.uh.edu).

I'm pleased to introduce new faculty members, who joined HHP this fall. Their addition continues to show our commitment to prepare students for success as tomorrow's leaders in the exercise, health and fitness, nutrition and sport administration fields.

HHP hosted the annual Great Strides: Taking Steps to Cure Cystic Fibrosis on campus on May 17, 2014. Almost 1,000 participants helped to raise \$780,000, which goes to support lifesaving research, quality care and education programs.

On Dec. 7, 2014, we will host the third Graffiti Run Houston on the UH campus. A portion of the proceeds from the 5K run goes to support the HHP Undergraduate Scholarship fund. For more details and to register for the event, visit [www.thegraffitirun.com](http://www.thegraffitirun.com).

Through the newsletter, we want to keep you, our alumni, up-to-date with your UH department. I would love to hear from you and learn what you're doing as well. Please feel free to contact me at [clayne2@uh.edu](mailto:clayne2@uh.edu).

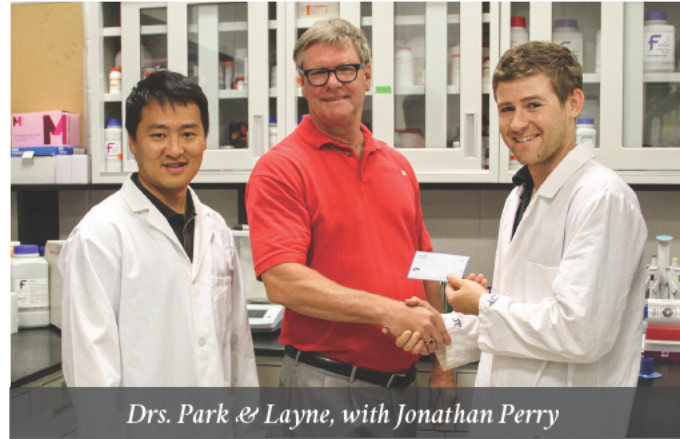
Dr. Charles Layne  
HHP Department Chair

### Student Makes Good on His Promise

Although Jonathan Perry and his artist friend, John Painter, were from different generations, they forged a close friendship and made a promise with far-reaching impact. The two friends collaborated on paintings and drawings and made a promise that if any of the artwork was sold, half the proceeds would go to cancer research.

Painter had beaten cancer multiple times, only to succumb to complications this June. True to his word, Perry has donated proceeds from the sale of some of the paintings to further research being conducted in HHP.

"We would have 'art days' whenever we could on weekends, where we would work on each other's art," Perry explained. "Sometimes we came up with masterpieces, other times just



*Drs. Park & Layne, with Jonathan Perry*

odd mash ups. Due to his medication, John had difficulty holding a steady line, which seems to compliment my OCD about geometric shapes and lines," he said.

To see the full collection, contact Perry at [walwynperry@gmail.com](mailto:walwynperry@gmail.com). ■

### HHP Professors Tapped for Panel Discussions



*Dr. Dan O'Connor*



*Dr. Daphne Hernandez*

As part of commemorating the opening of the new TDECU Stadium this fall, three unique panel discussions were held Aug. 26-28.

HHP professors served as panelists and moderator in two of the three sessions. Dr. Jasper Smits (University of Texas, Austin)

was the featured speaker for the first session, titled "Exercise for Mood and Anxiety: Efficacy and Mechanisms." HHP faculty member Dr. Dan O'Connor moderated the panel discussion, which included HHP's Dr. Daphne Hernandez, Dr. Leigh Leasure (UH Department of Psychology) and Dr. Smits.

In the third session, titled "Sports Concussion Safety and Treatment: Past, Present

and Future," Dr. Kenneth Podell (Methodist Hospital, Houston) was the featured speaker. Carl Lewis, UH track and field coach and nine-time Olympic gold medalist, moderated the panel discussion, which was comprised of HHP faculty Drs. Josh Yellen and Mark Knoblauch, and Dr. Podell. ■

## Faculty Focus: Dr. Josh Yellen

"I never had any intention of going to college," Dr. Josh Yellen said. But, he has come a long way from that thought, to mastering the art of being a student and forging his way to reach his goals.

Yellen is an HHP clinical assistant professor and director of the master of athletic training (MAT) program, which began this summer. Before joining UH, he was a faculty member in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Studies at Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, where he also received his doctorate of education. His master's in kinesiology, with an emphasis in sports injuries studies, is from California State University (CSU), Long Beach, and his bachelor's in kinesiology with an emphasis in athletic training is from CSU, Northridge.

His journey has been a series of connecting the dots. As a boy, Yellen was fascinated by sitting and watching his father, a high school head football coach, tape the ankles of players. When he was injured playing football, an athletic trainer guided him through rehabilitation. In a college anatomy class, where he realized that he was

a kinesthetic learner, he sealed the connection between athletic training and education.

Fast forward to UH, where Yellen says he is living his dream job. "We're the only athletic training program in Houston, we're associated with the largest medical center in the world, and our affiliates have large market shares in Houston," he said.

Clinical instruction and rotations from affiliates are available through a growing list of major industrial and commercial organizations based in Houston, who also are healthcare providers for the Texans, Rockets, Astros and the Dynamo athletes.

"These are all opportunities I've seen individually before," Yellen said. "I've never



seen these opportunities packaged the way they are here in Houston."

All that makes the MAT program so unique will also be accompanied with the director's firm belief, "If you can observe your surroundings enough, the universe will tell you where you're supposed to be. It's up to you whether you listen or not." ■

## Alumni Spotlight: Crystal Batson



*Crystal Batson & Dr. Charles Layne at NASA-JSC, Houston*

Crystal Batson is a research scientist in the Neuroscience lab at NASA-Johnson Space Center in Houston. The 2008 graduate says "the central focus of the laboratory is the development of countermeasures to mitigate the space flight related changes in nervous system function associated with adaptation to microgravity and return to gravitational environments."

she said, "The distinguished faculty at UH and within HHP are involved in a variety of research projects with collaborators at UH, the Texas Medical Center, NASA and other investigators throughout the world, and I knew this would provide numerous opportunities for me after graduation. And it did!"

The laboratory supports ground-based and in-flight investigations, crew health monitoring, risk mitigation operational activities and countermeasures evaluation and validation research.

Although Batson began her degree at UHCL, she transferred to the main campus, where she graduated with a 4.0 GPA, because

Her bachelor's degree is in kinesiology exercise science, with a minor in nutrition. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle and a fascination with the effects of nutrition and exercise on the human body have always been an interest to Batson and is also what drew her to HHP.

She has also established a personal business. "It's an incredible opportunity to apply my HHP academic studies and my passion for health and wellness to both my career at NASA and the successful business that I have built outside of the lab," she said.

Concerning her dream job, she says, "I work side-by-side of some of the most innovative, skilled and deeply knowledgeable scientists in the field of aeronautics who make it easy to love my job.

I also have the flexibility to continue developing my personal business so that my accomplishments enhance the lives of my friends, family and extended network. With that, I can honestly say that I am living the dream and leaving behind a legacy of wellness." ■

## 2014 Faculty Excellence Awards



Dr. Lisa Alastuey was awarded the 2014 Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award in the clinical faculty category by the University Commission on Women. The UH commission awards faculty who demonstrate a commitment and contribution to gender equity in academics, research and the mentoring of others.

The 2014 UH Excellence in Research and Scholarship Award for the associate professor level was given to Dr. Dan O'Connor. This award is presented to those individuals who have established a growing record of outstanding research, scholarship or creative contributions.

Pictured to the left with Dr. Alastuey and O'Connor at the awards luncheon is Dr. Andrew "Tony" Jackson, HHP emeritus professor and Fellow in the American College of Sports Medicine. He is also the director of the Udde Research Institute and Rowing Club. Jackson's research is in the area of measurement of human performance, focusing on body composition of physically demanding jobs. ■

## Research on Impact of Heroin Use

Dr. Tracey Ledoux is the principal investigator on a sub-project, which will study the long-term use and health consequences of heroin use. Patrick Bordnick, professor in the UH Graduate College of Social Work, is the principal investigator of the overall five-year, \$1.25 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The project will investigate the hypothesis that former heroin users will replace their drug addiction with food. Researchers will aim to study the association between adiposity, diet and food addiction tendencies. Participants in the study will be Mexican-American men from ages 45-60 years old. Learn why this group is the focus and why food may be a possible substitute for heroin addiction at <http://tinyurl.com/Ledoux-HHP>. ■



## WELCOME

### New Faculty

**Mr. Kevin Haubrick**

Clinical Assistant Professor, Nutrition

**Dr. Dong Hun "Don" Lee**

Assistant Professor,  
Sport Administration

**Dr. Melissa M. Markofski**

Assistant Professor, Nutrition

**Ms. Constance Raineri**

Instructional Faculty, PEB Program

**Dr. David Walsh**

Clinical Assistant Professor,  
Sport Administration

## Nutrition Faculty Awarded Grant



The HHP nutrition program faculty won a Teaching Innovation Program (TIP) grant to implement new and innovative approaches to teaching. The project is titled "Joint Undergraduate Mentorship Program (JUMP)" and is led by (pictured left to right) Ms. Claudia Scott and includes Ms. Ann Svendsen-Sanchez, Dr. Lisa Alastuey, Ms. Carla Ferrell, Dr. Sharon Bode and Mr. Prashant Mutgekar. ■

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*Learn about HHP research projects at <http://hhp.uh.edu/>*

**CNBR**

CENTER FOR NEUROMOTOR AND BIOMECHANICS RESEARCH

**LIP**

LABORATORY OF INTEGRATED PHYSIOLOGY

**TORC**

TEXAS OBESITY RESEARCH CENTER

# INNOVATION

## HHP on the New TDECU Field

Some HHP faculty, staff and students gathered on the new TDECU Stadium field, wearing their 2014 Welcome Back Week t-shirts for a group picture. TDECU, the largest credit union in the Houston area, was awarded the naming rights to the new stadium in July. The 40,000-seat facility opened Aug. 29, when UH hosted UTSA in a nationally-televised game.

