

Faculty

- Dr. John Oppliger, Chair
- Dr. Allison Barry
- Dr. David Boffey
- Dr. Mike Carper
- Dr. Laura Covert-Miller
- Dr. Scott Gorman
- Ms. Shelly Grimes
- Dr. Rick Hardy
- Dr. Shelby Hutchens
- Dr. Janice Jewett
- Dr. Cole Shewmake
- Dr. Julia Spresser

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

• Susan Downing

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

- Halle Brin
- Elizabeth Hayes
- Libby VanRheen
- Karissa Winkel

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Happy Holidays

Pittsburg State University

Health, Human Performance, and Recreation

Volume 1 Issue 24 Fall 2021 Edited By: Alyx VanRheen Halee Harpenau

Special Olympics Award to Laura Covert-Miller



I From left, John Oppliger (Chair, HHPR Department), John Lair (Special Olympics Kansas CEO), Libby Van Rheen (HHPR GA), Laura Covert-Miller (HHPR Associate Professor), Erin Fletcher (Special Olympics Kansas Director of Grants & Development), Duayne Vaughn (Special Olympics Program Coordinator at New Hope Services), and James Truelove (Dean, College of Education).

Special Olympics Kansas chose Dr. Laura Covert-Miller as the recipient for the 2021 Southeast Kansas Organization of the Year Award. Special Olympics Kansas CEO, John Lair and Director of Grants & Development, Erin Fletcher presented Covert-Miller the award in a ceremony at the SRC in November. Covert-Miller was chosen because of her dedication & commitment to improving the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

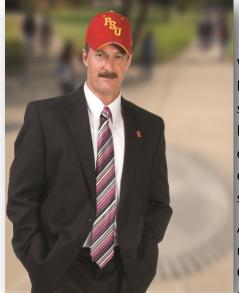
Dr. Covert-Miller and her students conduct several events each year including a fitness education program for Special Olympics athletes and the Special Olympics North America Move Challenge. Dr. Covert-Miller designed the TR-iffic Day which involves students in the Therapeutic Recreation Emphasis. Exercise Science majors are also involved with other events.

Student involvement with Special Olympics has provided opportunities for students to learn about people with intellectual disabilities and build lifelong relationships from their experiences. HHPR GA, Libby VanRheen, worked with Special Olympics Kansas for her senior year practicum and has done research with Covert-Miller involving the fitness of Special Olympics athletes. VanRheen also created a printed resource booklet for the athletes outlining nutritional information as well as exercises and activities that they could do at home. The Special Olympics Kansas partnership with PSU started 41 years ago.

Congratulations

Chair's Message

Dr. John Oppliger



Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2021 edition of the HHPR Newsletter. This has been the third semester of dealing with COVID and the manner in which both students and faculty have adjusted has been admirable. The University leaders created safety-oriented policies that enabled quality learning to continue. Of course, we encourage students as well as faculty and staff to be careful throughout the break and come back healthy and excited for the spring semester.

As usual, we have included many photos in this issue as we always try to record the numerous department endeavors. One of the first is Dr. Laura Covert-Miller's award from the Kansas Special Olympics as she is the recipient of the Southeast Kansas Organization of the Year Award. Getting

students involved in Special Olympics is a wonderful service activity and Dr. Miller's students always enjoy these interactions.

We would like to introduce readers to our new faculty. Dr. David Boffey and Dr. Shelby Hutchens bring new ideas and plenty of energy to the department and we will only get better. We have another outstanding graduate featured in our Alumni Spotlight, (Chelsey Davenport) and also shine a light on the various awards, recognitions, and happenings involving students and faculty.

A department strength has been the faculty's ability to provide students with real-world/career-related experiences and we have covered them well in the newsletter. Our students participate in activities in area schools and assisted living centers. Sometimes these activities are also just plain fun and such is the case in Dr. Scott Gorman's Camping and Outdoor Education class as they once again took their semester ending trip to Roaring River, MO. Ms. Shelly Grimes' Theories classes benefited from her involvement in the Fuel-Up-to-Play 60 Program and her connection with the Kansas City Chiefs enabling them to take a field trip to Arrowhead Stadium. The Chiefs organization were gracious hosts and everybody was impressed.

Our degree programs are doing well and we cover the activities and events of Exercise Science, Physical Education, and Recreation Services, Sport and Hospitality Management with an abundance of photos. We have a quality Exercise Science Program and Applied Physiology Lab and like to show them off when we can. We are pleased that another of our Recreation and Sport Management students, (Brittany Thomas) in now a Park Ranger in Arkansas. She is the second graduate to become a ranger in that state and we might add we also have a Game Warden in Kansas!

We hope this holiday season will be an enjoyable one for all. Dr. Janice Jewett (Dance Program Director) got us off to a good start as her students in the Dance Appreciation courses performed at the Pittsburg City Christmas Parade.

Finally, always remember we welcome visits from our alumni family. We would appreciate hearing from alums and with their permission, be able to include them in some manner in future issues of this newsletter.

John Oply

HHPR WELCOMES NEW FACULTY



Dr. David Boffey
Exercise Science



Dr. Shelby Hutchens
Recreation

The HHPR Department welcomed two new faculty this fall; Dr. David Boffey and Dr. Shelby Hutchens. Dr. Boffey received his PhD in Exercise Physiology August 2021 from the University of Central Florida. Dr. Hutchens received his Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Health, Sport & Exercise Science with a Recreation & Sport Management Concentration in May 2021 from the University of Arkansas.

WELCOME GENTLEMEN!

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT Chelsey Davenport



My name is Chelsey Davenport, and I am a graduate of Pittsburg State University with my Master of Science degree in HHPR with an emphasis in Human Performance and Wellness. Movement has always been an important part of my life. I took up dance at an early age, eventually dancing professionally for 16 years after receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance from Oklahoma City University. Being able to pursue my childhood dream was fulfilling, and taught me much about the importance of caring for my physical well-being in meeting the demands of a rigorous performing career. I also grew to appreciate how one's overall wellbeing is composed of equal parts physical fitness and a healthy mindset. Conse-

quently, I earned a yoga teacher certification, in part, to help foster my transition from a performing career to one focused on human health and wellness. Eventually, my path led to graduate study at Pittsburg State, which was one of the best decisions I could have made.

Upon arriving at Pitt State, I had the fortunate opportunity to work as an Admissions Graduate Assistant as well as Graduate Teaching Assistant for the Dance Minor in the HHPR Department. Both of these jobs helped support my pursuit of a graduate degree. As an admissions assistant, I had the pleasure of meeting many wonderful people on a daily basis while giving campus tours. I also learned about the university's computer system which was relevant to my degree plan. While working as a dance graduate assistant in the HHPR Dept, I was able to teach dance classes and share my past performing experience with aspiring artists. Teaching college classes helped me construct engaging presentations and develop my speaking skills. One particular high-



light of my time as a graduate assistant involved helping with the student showcase that was held in the Bicknell Performing Arts Center. Another involved my attendance at the yearly KAHPERD Conference in Emporia, Kansas where I proudly represented the HHPR Department.

The broad range of courses I completed at Pitt State were beneficial because they helped prepare me for a number of wellness management related career paths. The curriculum emphasized the importance of nutrition and financial fitness regardless of one's age or personal circumstances. These emphases, among others, helped me become a well-rounded wellness professional able to respond to the diverse needs of a diverse population. My time as a graduate student culminated in being awarded an internship with the Wellness and Prevention Department at Freeman Health Systems.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Chelsey Davenport

As an intern, I job shadowed the wellness coordinator at Freeman Hospital. This hands on experience familiarized me with the daily duties of someone working in the capacity of a wellness coordinator and gave me confidence in my own ability to aspire to such a position. I learned how to effectively create wellness challenges, including the development of employee incentives. I also actively participated in setting up of employee health fairs and navigating the intricacies of health insurance.

Shortly after completing my graduate degree I was hired by Freeman Health Systems to work on their Screen Team. My job responsibilities included helping set up community health fairs throughout the region and offering preventative health screenings to local businesses. These health screenings consisted of bone density, biometric/Tanita scale, blood pressure, and blood draw. During my time with Freeman, I also



taught fitness classes for the Freeman Advantage Program, a program geared towards seniors 55 years of age and above. This was fantastic and opened my eyes to the beauty of working with older populations, whom I learned much from week after week. These experiences have led me to my current position as the

Wellness Coordinator for the Neosho School District.



Today, I am responsible for overseeing the wellness goals of approximately 700 faculty and staff members. This effort includes identifying and helping implement ways to achieve healthier, more balanced, and ideally happier lifestyles—especially at such a challenging time as the present pandemic. The monthly health challenges and yearly health fairs I routinely work on are intended to bring greater awareness of the importance to tend to one's overall well-being toward reducing health care costs for the school district and enlivening a productive work force. Other particulars include, a district wellness website, onsite staff recreation center, and I offer free weekly Yoga classes. I am currently a member of WELCOA (Wellness Council of America), NWI (National Wellness Institute), and MOCAN (Missouri Council for Physical Activity and Nutrition). In

summation, I love my job and the continued support I receive from the Neosho School District's superintendent and staff. I sincerely believe that earning my graduate degree from Pittsburg State University put me on the best path to positively impact the people I work with and fulfill my own wellness goals. When not working, I spend time with my loving husband John, son Shelby, and dog Pretzel. We are habitual walkers who enjoy nature and spend much of our time together outdoors.

HHPR Graduate Assistants



Halle Brin

Exercise Science



Libby VanRheen

Recreation



Elizabeth Hayes

Dance



Karissa Winkel

Physical Education/Exercise Science

Excellence in Teaching Award

Dr. Laura Covert-Miller



Recreation Professional of the Year

Dr. Rick Hardy



HHPR HAPPENINGS

The HHPR Department would like to recognize these individuals for their years of service to Pittsburg State University.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Dr. Mike Carper

10 years





Dr. Janice Jewett

30 years



Dr. Laura Covert-Miller

10 years



HHPR HAPPENINGS

Teacher Award
Tyler Oestreicher - PE Teacher
USD 288 Central Heights
Richmond, Kansas



HHPR Alum, Tyler Oestreicher, received the Distinguished Service Award for Fall 2021.





Jerome Ewing (right) received the first
O'Neil Legacy Scholarship and was
presented a medal in recognition by
Department Chair, Dr. John Oppliger. The
scholarship is a gift of Solomon & Amanda
O'Neil and Walter O'Neil.



Shelly Grimes ran the 222nd leg (of 415) in the Great American Relay Race, which was the distance from Baxter Springs, KS to Quapaw, OK!



HHPR HAPPENINGS



Shelly Grimes, HHPR faculty member, and Fitness Professional for the KC Chiefs Fit Gym, spends her extra time teaching fitness classes for the Chiefs organization.



Dr. Scott Gorman and Ms. Shelly
Grimes were among faculty
featured at this year's University
Authors Reception held in the Axe
Library in October. Their publication was entitled, Lifetime Fitness
Concepts: Student Supplement.





Ashleigh Grimes begins her first year as a member of the Pitt State Athletics Staff. She serves as Director of Football Operations / On-Campus Recruiting Coordinator. Grimes earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Exercise Science with a Minor in Sports Management from Pittsburg State in December 2019.



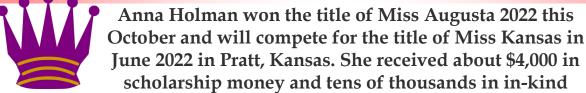
NFL Officials

Each of these NFL Officials took the Rules and Officiating Class from the HHPR Department during their course of study perhaps paving the way for their career as an NFL Official.

Joe Blubaugh
Mark Hittner
Tom Stephan
Mark Stewart







scholarships at schools around the state from other pageants. Anna competed through the Miss America Organization, and will continue to earn more money whether she wins the state title or not. Anna has competed in Miss Kansas' Outstanding Teen twice and placed 4th Runner Up in 2017 and 1st

Runner Up in 2019. She has also held the titles of Miss Columbus' Outstanding

Teen, Miss Augusta's Outstanding Teen, and Miss Columbus.

This year, along with scholarship money, Anna has received wardrobe assistance funds and will be coached by a Rockette dancer for her talent. The phases of competition are interview, talent, red carpet wear, and onstage question/social impact pitch. GPA and community service hours are also heavily encouraged.

Anna's social impact initiative is called "Fitness for All; Disability Inclusion Through Physical Activity". It has a two-pronged approach, disability inclusion and making sure caregivers have proper knowledge

and accessible resources to keep the disabled community healthy and active.



Picture courtesy of Every Day El Dorado

Anna is a Dance Minor with a major in Exercise Science and another minor in Nutrition and Wellness. Anna tapped for the talent part of her competition. One more cool thing about Anna - she is the grand-daughter of the late Al and Virginia Ortolani.

DANCE NEWS







Mr. Bryan Mahnken, Physical Education teacher at Lakeside Elementary, partnered with Dr. Jewett's Dance Appreciation Class to teach the 3rd Graders about square dancing!





Dance Students Perform in Southeast Kansas Symphony's Holiday Extravaganza

A select group of students from Elizabeth Hayes and Yana Feldman's dance classes danced with the Southeast Kansas Symphony Thursday, December 2nd at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts. The title of the program presented was "Holiday Extravaganza" and included approximately 14 songs played by the 50 person orchestra. Dancers performed in the Character Dances from the Nutcracker and Sleigh Ride as listed below:

The Nutcracker: Marche: Halee Harpenau and Grace Gibbs (choreographed by Elizabeth Hayes)

Sugar Plum Fairy: Gracie Cox (choreographed by Elizabeth Hayes)

Dance of the Mirlitons: Carissa Marrone and Katie Nelson (choreographed by Yana Feldman)

Sleigh Ride: Kassandra Lewis, Alyssa Strader, Halee Harpenau, Kassi Burns, Taylor Butcher, Kenzie Coester, Grace Hite, Anna Holmes, Dani Torgler, Kianna Write, Jolene Nirschl (choreographed by Elizabeth Hayes)

Elizabeth Hayes is a graduate student in the Department of HHPR and currently serving as the Graduate Assistant in Dance. Yana Feldman is an Adjunct Dance Instructor in the Department of HHPR.











Exercise Science News



A portion of the Applied Physiology Lab has been redesigned with some new exciting equipment for Exercise Science students. Lab students are also doing a research study with ROTC cadets to measure their strength and power, and see how it relates to performance on the new Army Combat Fitness Test. Students are gaining hands-on experience by helping with the study.

Emily Hanenburg, student lab assistant, performs a vertical jump. The jump mat is used to measure jump height, which is a common measure of athletic potential used in sports science. Emily is also a member of the PSU volleyball team.







Students in the Applied Physiology Lab use the Tendo device to measure barbell velocity, which tells us how fast and powerful students and athletes are (left).

ROTC cadet, Emmalee Jessip, is participating in a study, along with other ROTC Cadets, in the Applied Physiology Laboratory, looking at strength, power, and Army Combat Fitness Test scores. Camilla Roy is the Student Lab Assistant who is helping with this study.



Exercise Science News

BlastMask™ Study

The BlastMask™ is a unique piece of equipment used by firefighters to simulate reduced/restricted airflow they experience while wearing the SCBA apparatus during fire ground activities. In this study, lab students are attempting to determine the direct effects of the BlastMask™ on cardiorespiratory fitness, in the general population, during a graded exercise test. Lacking the support of current, reliable research, BlastMasks™ are currently used by multiple fire agencies as a training tool to increase the fitness levels of firefighters. In theory, an increase in fitness levels in this population may translate into more efficient fire ground work and decrease the chances of firefighters experiencing a serious health emergency. The collected data from this study may allow us to determine the validity and reliability of this device and how it may or may not be beneficial for increasing overall fitness levels in firefighters. The results may also have an impact on fire departments nationwide, especially smaller ones, as the BlastMasks™ are an inexpensive alternative training device when compared to complete SCBA units. Studies have revealed significant reductions in the time-to-exhaustion when personal protective equipment (PPE) was worn, which leads firefighters to fatigue faster during prolonged fire ground tasks. Thus, the importance of the study may emphasize the need for an improved health initiative among the firefighter population. This study may allow for the implementation of BlastMasks™ into the training regimens of firefighters to increase their overall cardio respiratory fitness.







This study is being led by undergraduate research assistant, Baylie Sigmund, who will be joining the Doctorate of Physical Therapy Program at the University of Kansas Medical School beginning in May 2022. Also assisting are undergraduate research assistant Emily Hanenberg and graduate research assistants Cami Roy and Halle Brin. Dr. Allison Barry is in charge of the project and is assisted by Dr. Mike Carper.

Exercise Science News

Approximately 70 prospective students and their parents toured the Applied Physiology Lab on October 31st, prior to attending Rumble in the Jungle. Guests were greeted by Exercise Science faculty, graduate assistants, and lab assistants.





Dr. Allison Barry along with Halle Brin (Graduate Assistant), Baylie Sigmund (Undergraduate Research Assistant), and Cami Roy (Graduate Assistant) explain what opportunities prospective students have in the Applied Physiology Laboratory. The current students discussed their experience in the classroom as well as the numerous opportunities they have had with hands-on experience in research.



Dr. David Boffey and Emily Hanenberg, undergraduate lab assistant, talk to parents and prospective students about the exciting opportunities for hands-on learning in the Applied Physiology Lab.



Dr. Mike Carper explains how students in the Exercise Science Program use the DEXA scanner to analyze and compare body composition for class and research.

Halle Brin's Research Study



Halle Brin, GA in Exercise Science, presented her thesis proposal to the department this past August. Halle's thesis was based on an eight-week high-intensity functional training (HIFT) study involving middle-aged women. For eight weeks, Brin led the group through aerobic and resistance exercises at Rebel Herd Fitness. Research assistants Emily Hanenberg, Camilla Roy, and Baylie Sigmund also helped with the study.

Tentative at first, the nine participants instantly fell into a workout routine. A typical evening featured one hour of warm-up activities, stretching, and intense exercises (e.g., weighted squats, burpees, pullups, etc.). Participants wore heart rate monitors and smartwatches while the research team tracked their performance on an iPad. Not only did participants gain fitness experience but also a small community that supported one another.

Individuals' changes in perceptions and beliefs towards exercise were assessed pre- and post-intervention, as well as weekly to see if HIFT influ-

ences these changes. This was measured using a questionnaire covering topics including their perceived barriers towards exercise, their perceived severity to illnesses, as well as any benefits they believe resulted from exercising.

It was not unusual to see participants rallying around each other to finish the last set of the night. One participant said, "The women in this group were tremendous supporters of each other. We wanted to see each other succeed. We laughed together while pushing each other to work through each exercise/workout."

As Brin had hoped, positive changes occurred by the end of the study. Participants felt they could exercise

independently and were more confident in their abilities. Another participant, who had been active in the past, found renewed motivation. She explained, "I now believe that I can find time in my schedule to exercise. I have to make it a priority to take care of myself. I think women my age are so focused on taking care of their families that they forget to take care of themselves. I have found someone to work out with, and we have decided to continue to work out at the same gym after the study."



Physical Education News







Mrs. Shelly Grimes' Theories I Class learned about sand volleyball. Swimming I students did a unit on snorkeling!



Physical Education News



At left Mrs. Grimes' Theories II Class having fun with Play60 Event!



Matt Harman, (right) one of PSU's quarterbacks, teaches a Yoga activity class. Activity classes are open to all students.





At left are the HHPR Fitness Instructors for the fall activity classes. Erick Leon, Chloe DeYoung, Shelly Grimes, Peyton Shaffer, Julia Spresser, Karissa Winkel, and Matt Harman!







Mrs. Grimes' Theories Class went to George Nettles to play flag football with PSU Alum, Amber Sullivan's, PE Classes.





Trey McClelland & Evan Troike, PE Majors, play mini golf on a home-made course in Mrs.

Grimes' Theories Class.

Students in Mrs. Shelly Grimes' Theories Class took a field trip to Arrowhead Stadium to learn protocols for their Fuel Up to Play60 event and tour the stadium!







GEHA.

GEHA

GEHA.

(



Dr. Julia Spresser's Theories III Class Activity



PE students Ally Lusk and Andrew Calhoun perfecting handstands with Braven Born and Zach Vance ready to spot while Dr. Julia Spresser instructs.





Cardio Kickboxing





Captain Erick Leon, Military Science Professor, teaches the Cardio Kickboxing Class for the HHPR Department. Here he is working with students on proper punch techniques. The class meets twice a week and will be offered in the Spring 22 semester.







Dr. Spresser's First Aid Class













Dr. Spressers First Aid Class













RECREATION NEWS



Dr. Laura Covert-Miller's Diagnostic Groups played Goal Ball in honor of the last week of the Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

RECREATION NEWS

Students in Dr. Covert-Miller's Diagnostic Groups in Therapeutic Recreation hosted Ron Tankel, Michael-Ray Pallares, and Leo Vega (pictured below). The trio presented information on their program, *Tennis at the YRC*, which focuses on helping participants with mental health issues while learning the sport. *Tennis at the YRC* is currently being piloted in Kansas City.









Brittany Thomas, Recreation Major, in November graduated from the Arkansas law enforcement training and is now a seasonal park ranger awaiting her permanent assignment with Arkansas State Parks.

Congratulations Brittany!

RECREATION NEWS





Pictured above are GA, Libby VanRheen and Dr. Laura Covert-Miller volunteering at GEEKS FOR KIDS. GEEKS FOR KIDS is a nonprofit organization that builds power wheels for kids with mobility impairments.



Libby VanRheen (left) presented at the Pittsburg YMCA to a group of older adults on Physical Activity & completed fitness assessments with the attendees. HHPR GA, Karissa Winkle also assisted in the presentation.

The following students passed the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Recreation Specialists!

Lorie Stonebarger
Shawn Davidson
Karlee Stanlee
Libby VanRheen

Congratulations!

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New Hope Activities









Students in Dr. Laura Covert-Miller's Interventions in Therapeutic Recreation Class are doing both virtual and in-person activities this semester with New Hope consumers!

Dr. Gorman's Camping Res 3 Outdoor Education Class



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PSU MAJORS FAIR





Graduate students and faculty were on hand for the Majors Fair held at the Axe Library in October. This event was open to all students on campus seeking information on the various majors PSU has to offer.





Dr. Scott Gorman is "reeling 'em in" to the HHPR booth during Majors

Fair....great job Dr. G!

Rumble in the Jungle





HHPR faculty & students came together in October for Rumble in the Jungle. The Rumble is an event featuring departments to interested students & parents. Approximately 1,000 people were in attendance.





CHRISTMAS PARADE



Photo credit to Cody Renfro, a PSU GIT grad who now works for the City of Pittsburg.







Department of Health, Human, Performance, & Recreation

Pittsburg State University

Interested in a Career in the Medical. Wellness, or Athletic Fields?

Make Exercise Science your Pre-Professional Degree for entrance to:

Physical/Occupational Therapy Athletic Training Program School

Chiropractic College

Medical School Pharmacy School











Congratulations to our Graduates!

Exercise Science

Lucas Kelley
Riley Mead
Kaleb Potts
Cameron Ratzlaff
Laura Ridings
Ian Smith
Kinsley Stewart
Noah Vaughn

Recreation

Makenzie Al-Arahshun Noemi Hernandez John Lucero Samantha Mills

Physical Education

Kylee Bohle Lauren Roberts



Graduate

Garrett Appier Sabryna Baca Ross Benevides Cole Brecheisen Ashton Clark Jalee Dollarhide Sam Esboldt Jared Vincent

Dance Certificate

Tami Burt

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A Special THANKS to Those Who Gifted The HHPR Endowment

Andrew & Shanna Albright John & Amanda Allen Tommy & Jill Ayers Bob Ahrens Scott Barry David Boffey Michael & Jeanna Church Dr. Mary Coplen Ron & Susan Downing Kylie Edgecomb Steve & Lori Erwin Patrick & Stephanie Forbes Stephen Foster Scott & Beth Gorman Michelle Grimes Richard & Stephanie Grinage Robert Hefley Clark Howard Deborah Newkirk John & Kathy Oppliger Matthew & Stacy Osterthun Pamela & Guy Owings Duane & Sheryl Rankin Cole & Jennifer Shewmake Marian Simpson Michael & Jo Slaughter Gary Thompson Randall Kathleen Wrensch

