

Newsletter

North American Federation of Adapted Physical Activity



President's Message

Justin A. Haegele | Old Dominion University | Norfolk, VA

Hello from ODU! Like how many of us have now transitioned from Summer into the Fall semester, our NAFAPA leadership team is moving quickly toward the 2024 meeting (hosted by John Foley, Cathy MacDonald, and their team in New York) as well as creating new opportunities for organization members.

Within this newsletter, and from recent email and social media blasts, our NAFAPA members should have learned about our upcoming virtual panel on October 27th that will feature several NAFAPA members seeking to address the question: "Are we asking good questions?" within the field. I am greatly looking forward to this conversation. I would be remiss not to mention that this panel, which was inspired by similar panels held during COVID and led by Chloe Simpson and Emily Bremer, would not be possible without the work and dedication of our MALs (Jin Bae, Ueli Albert, Kate Rozendaal, and Nancy Huynh) as well as our secretary, Dr. Nancy Spencer.

In addition to this panel, members should also be aware of a call for applicants to host the NAFAPA 2026 meeting, which is due on May 1st, as well as calls for nominations or applications for our Patricia Austin Award, Allen W. Burton New Investigator Award, and Dale A. Ulrich Leadership Award. Please see specific details, including nomination due dates, here (<https://www.nafapa.net/awards>)

With that, I invite you to enjoy our Fall newsletter!

Researcher Highlight



Dr. Laura Andrea Prieto

Community Spotlight



ParaSport Spokane

Student Highlight



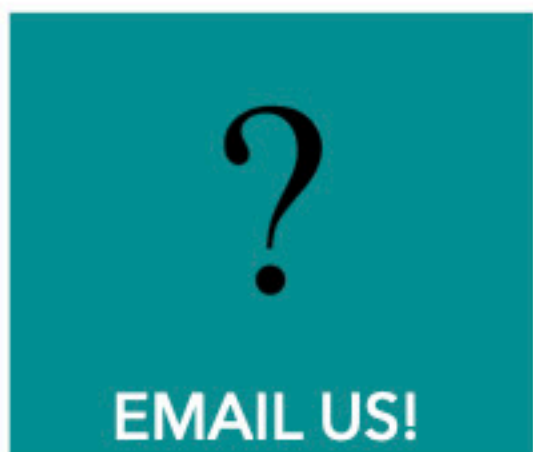
Wellington De Luna Vazquez

Tips for Young Scholars



Dr. Lauren Lieberman

Announcements



Researcher Highlight

Dr. Laura Andrea Prieto | University of Wisconsin-Madison | Madison, Wisconsin

Dr. Laura Andrea Prieto (she/her/hers) is a postdoctoral research fellow in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Prieto earned her Ph.D. in Kinesiology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a concentration in Motor Control and Behavior and Adapted Physical Activity. She is excited to be completing her postdoctoral fellowship in the same institution where she completed her Ph.D. as a way to stay connected with the community of older adults and families she worked with during her time in her doctoral studies.



Dr. Prieto is supported by the University of Wisconsin Primary Care Research Fellowship, funded by grant T32HP10010 from the Health Resources and Services Administration. She is always happy to talk about how she learned about this postdoctoral fellowship and her application process. Dr. Prieto began her research career working with Dr. Columna and the Fit Families program, a parent-mediated fundamental motor skills intervention. She has helped implement several research studies on the Fit Families program including a randomized controlled trial of Fit Families. One of her favourite parts of working with Fit Families was interacting with the parents and learning about how to conduct intervention research. As a postdoctoral research fellow, Dr. Prieto now applies the skills she learned during her doctorate work to designing, piloting, and evaluating community-based programs for Latine/x older adults and their care partners.

Born in Bogotá, Colombia and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, Dr. Prieto is a proud Latina and bilingual scholar who is passionate about working with the Latine/x community. Her research aims to describe the physical activity experiences and opportunities of Latine/x older adults with a focus on understanding factors that impact access and motivation. By learning about the experiences of Latine/x older adults and their families, Dr. Prieto aims to design and evaluate community-based physical activity programming that can promote socialization, and improve mobility and balance. Dr. Prieto's research is currently funded by the American Parkinson's Disease Association and the Wisconsin Institute of Healthy Aging.

Dr. Prieto has two major research projects she is currently conducting in collaboration with Dr. Kristen Pickett and Dr. Luis Columna from the Department of Kinesiology. The first project is on the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary efficacy of a community-based dance class, hosted by a local non-profit organization, which aims to engage Spanish-speaking older adults in dance to improve socialization, mobility, and balance outcomes. The aim of the project is to build capacity and infrastructure for the long-term sustainability of the program. As such, Dr. Prieto has completed measurements of the participants' balance, mobility, fear of falling, and social network across two sessions of the dance class. She currently is conducting interviews with participants on their experiences in the dance class. Furthermore, in order to aid with sustainability, a co-instructor for the program was trained to continue the program.

The second project is a qualitative study on the physical activity experiences of Latine/x older adults with Parkinson's disease and their care partners. The purpose of this research project is to delineate the factors that impact physical activity participation within this community. Throughout this research, Dr. Prieto then aims to identify the strategies and resources that will

be necessary to develop a meaningful physical activity intervention. Dr. Prieto has just received institutional approval and is in the process of testing the interview protocol of the study.

Dr. Prieto is grateful to be a part of the NAFAPA community and can be contacted at: laura.prieto@fammed.wisc.edu.

Community Spotlight

ParaSport Spokane | Spokane, Washington



ParaSport Spokane is a multi-sport, multi-disability para sports program based in Spokane Washington. Currently celebrating its 10th year of life-enhancing programs, ParaSport Spokane (PSS) has shown success in staying core to its mission.

“With integrity, ParaSport Spokane will provide training, recreational, and competitive opportunities for youth and adults with physical disabilities that promote success, self-worth and independence. ParaSport Spokane uses adaptive sports as a catalyst for life.”



With a focus on the athlete's growth mindset, while employing a transformational coaching philosophy, PSS supports sporting pursuits within the Paralympic sport system. An entirely volunteer-run organization utilizing an organizational strategy grounded in athlete development principles, the impact amongst PSS athletes is profound and evident.



At a PSS practice, one may find youth, adults, beginners, and Paralympians all participating, growing, and sharing reps together, no matter what their level of skill set. A spirit of mentorship and a pay-it-forward philosophy abounds. One will also find a distinct community. A supportive environment, a safe space for self-exploration and growth. The ParaSport Spokane family is evident in the hashtag #redherd, PSS shows up at events all wearing their red team kit, this not only aids the staff in keeping track of athletes but also breaks down social and economic barriers within the team.

Athletes participate in a variety of sports as well as a general group Strength & Conditioning program and for the youngest athletes, the Futures Play Group for birth to approximately 7 (dependent on developmental skill progression). Wheelchair Basketball and Para Track & Field are PSS's cornerstone programs with growing Sled Hockey, Swimming, and Fencing squads. Sport season dependent, PSS offers programming up to seven days a week and believes in ongoing programs offering to support athlete development, motivation, and health outcomes. Many PSS athletes support multiple teams through coaching and mentorship roles.



Primarily led by Teresa Skinner and David Greig, veteran coaches who've coached at five Paralympic summer games each, who rely on skilled volunteer coaches with backgrounds in Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Doctors, Social Workers, Counsellors, and Sport Management professionals all with a passion for ParaSport. Spokane, Washington is a sport-minded city and has embraced ParaSport Spokane athletes and teams to allow for easy integration of athletes and teams at a number of its amazing community events. It truly does take a village to utilize sport as a Catalyst for Life.

To find out more visit: www.parasportspokane.org

Student Highlight

Wellington De Luna Vazquez | Doctoral Student | Georgia State University

Wellington De Luna Vazquez is a third-year Ph.D. student at Georgia State University in the Department of Kinesiology and Health working alongside Dr. Deborah Shapiro. Wellington earned his bachelor's degree in physical education and a master's degree in special education and differentiation from the University of Puerto Rico. During his time as a teacher of Integrated Physical Education at Tasis School in Dorado, Puerto Rico. Wellington helped to pioneer the field of Adapted Physical Education in Puerto Rico promoting parasport units within the PE curriculum. This commitment to inclusive sports education was showcased at the 2019 Pan American Convention of Sports and Physical Activity in Puerto Rico.

As the current Head Coach of the Puerto Rican National Goalball team, a Paralympic sport for blind athletes, Wellington's efforts have been highly successful and recognized. His initial interest in the sport began as a strength and conditioning trainer, but his passion and dedication quickly saw him rise to the position of head coach. Under his guidance, Team Puerto

Rico achieved a historic milestone by reaching the top 50 countries in the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) goalball ranking for the first time ever. His outstanding work in this capacity was acknowledged with an award from the House of Representatives of Puerto Rico in 2017. Wellington's coaching skills also led to silver and bronze medal wins at the 2022 USABA National Goalball Championship with the teams from the Georgia Blind Sports Association.

Wellington came to Georgia State to pursue his Ph.D. through the support of the Multi-Institution Adapted PA Mentorship Consortium doctoral training grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services. Wellington's primary line of research focuses on parasport coaching, athlete development, and strength and conditioning training in parasports. He has conducted research on coaching behaviours in blind sports and is currently conducting a systematic review and meta-analysis investigating the effect of strength and conditioning training on sport-specific performance outcomes in athletes with disabilities. Wellington's secondary line of research focuses on the inclusion of parasport in physical education and physical education teacher education curricula. Wellington has published several practitioner articles on topics related to the use of the Paralympic School Day and sports education model to increase awareness and inclusion of students with disabilities in PE, implications of cognitive load of students with learning disabilities in integrated physical education, and the inclusion of parasport in net/wall and target/field games within teacher education.

Wellington has shared his expertise as a practitioner and coach in the capacity of instructor of several courses at Georgia State University where he has taught undergraduate classes in invasion games, motor learning and development, and supervised student teachers. At the graduate level, he is currently teaching the Adapted Physical Education course for master's students.

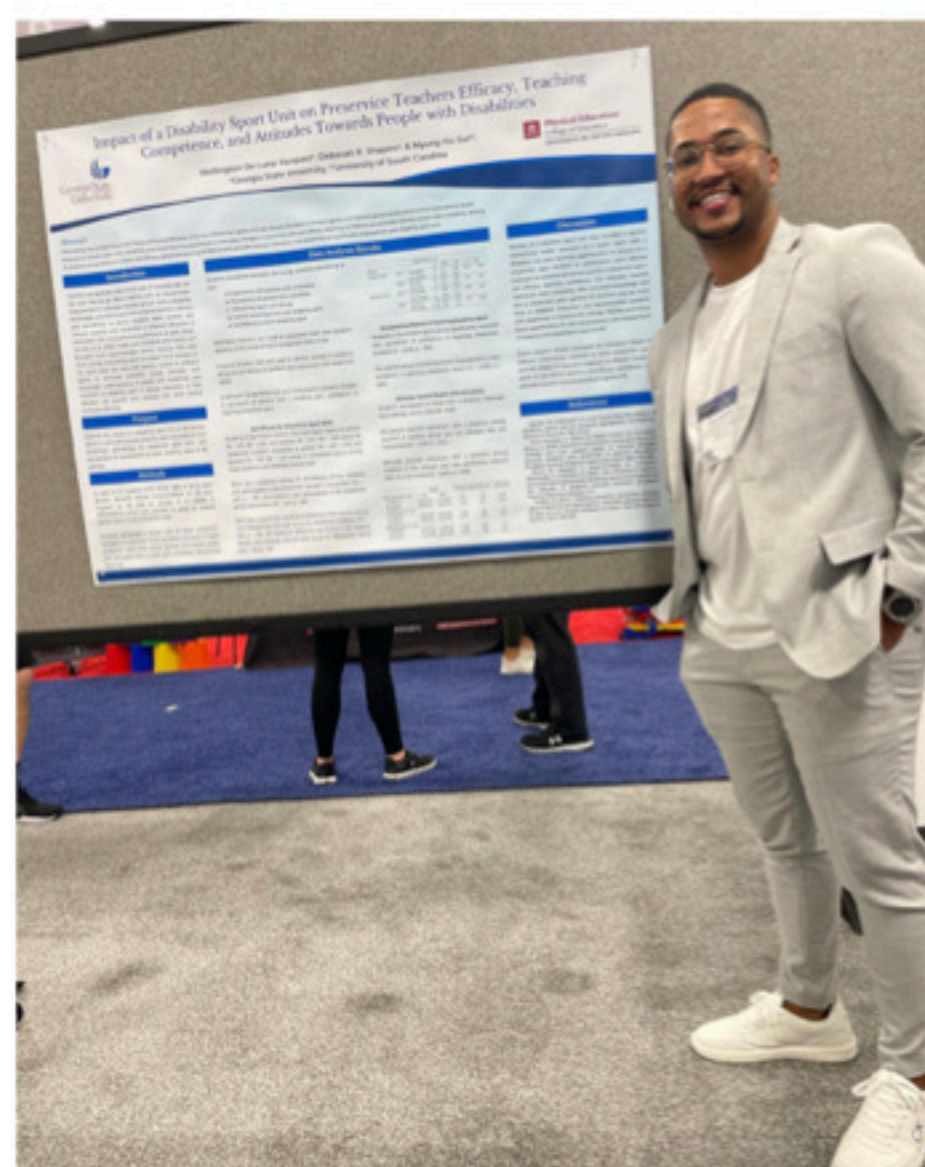
Wellington will serve the APE/APA community professionally as a student representative with the National Consortium for Physical Education for Individuals with a Disability where among his roles he will assist with the planning of the organization's annual conference.

Wellington's work in the field of parasport was acknowledged with the 2023 Roslyn Hirsch Balbirer Memorial Scholarship from Georgia State University's College of Education and Human Development, awarded for his commitment to promoting opportunities in physical activity and sport for persons with disabilities.

When Wellington is not in school or coaching goalball he enjoys spending time with his spouse, attending church, working out at the gym, composing music, and travelling.

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Email: wdeluna1@student.gsu.edu



Tips for Young Scholars

Dr. Lauren Lieberman | SUNY Brockport University | Brockport, NY

This article is written in first person by Dr. Lauren Lieberman, and edited by Kate Rozendaal and Ueli Albert.

Who am I?

I am a Distinguished Service Professor at SUNY Brockport in the Kinesiology, Sport Studies, and Physical Education Department. I have been at SUNY Brockport for 28 years and before that, I taught at the Perkins School for the Blind in the Deafblind Program. I completed my Ph.D. at Oregon State University, my Master's degree at the University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse, and my undergraduate degree at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. I am the founder and director of Camp Abilities an educational sports camp for children with visual impairment or deafblindness. I have published over 200 peer-reviewed articles and 24 books. I love what I do and I am happy to share my tips for young scholars and NAFAPA readers.

General Advice

As a young professional, you will be expected to be “active” in teaching, research, and service.

These three areas can be successfully fulfilled with one program, project, or activity. For example, Camp Abilities brings in children with visual impairments and deafblindness to my campus each summer. My students are the coaches of the children in the community. We conduct both descriptive and intervention studies at Camp Abilities. It has also been a wonderful vehicle to obtain grants of over \$100,000 per year. Therefore, I have been very successful at fulfilling my High Impact Practice (HIP) of teaching. The camp itself is a major service to the community with the research informing the field in many ways. My passion for improving the lives of children who are visually impaired or deafblind has helped me attain the highest rank in the SUNY system. Because it is my passion, it was not painful or stressful to meet these obligations. I continue on this journey to this day 29 years later.

Finding your passion is one of the most important things to do in our field. What do you love that will help children with disabilities, their families, and teachers? How can you fulfill that passion and infuse your teaching and research?

Mentoring and Collaboration

It is very important to find a colleague or mentor who is willing to work with you at the beginning to ensure you have the right research design and you are approaching the study in an appropriate way. It often helps to look at previous research in the field and contact the person who has done similar research to see if they are willing to work with you. Many of us are willing to help the next generation of researchers. For example: when you are looking at an intervention should you use a single-subject design approach? A scoping or systematic review? A comparison study with a control group? Or should you do a qualitative study with interviews of teachers and parents? These all may be viable options, but which one matches your vision? A mentor can help you determine the best approach.



If they help enough, you can add their name to your manuscript. Make sure you discuss this with your co-authors from the beginning and throughout. This can enhance the process and ensure that everyone is comfortable with the authorship and research designation.

Choosing a Journal

Young scholars may need to choose journals that have a high impact factor. This is only one consideration for determining the outlet for your study. Other important questions to consider are Who reads that journal? And will the readers benefit from your study? It is helpful when these two factors overlap, but that is not always possible. This is when I suggest writing a follow-up article that is practical. These research-to-practice articles help get the pedagogical approach that you might have found beneficial out to readers who can benefit. For example: if your study found that children with autism benefit from social stories before going into the community and utilizing PECS when there, you can write an article in a practitioner journal that can share these strategies with examples. This research-to-practice helps more people, improves the lives of more children, and helps you publish additional articles.

Taking the Long View

Publishing is a journey that requires patience. It is important to ask “novice” readers to read your manuscript when it is in process so they can ask questions about terms, and concepts that may be difficult to understand for the layperson. You can even present your study as a poster as you are developing it to get feedback from professionals and scholars in the field. Once you make these concepts clear and concise and you feel you have finished writing, ask a person who is considered an “expert” in the field to ensure the writing is clear and understandable to readers. This process ensures that your research document or manuscript is well thought out and can be understood by all readers. Also, it can be very helpful to have thick skin. You might feel your manuscript is the best thing that ever happened to the field, but you may get it back in two weeks as a desk reject. Take a deep breath and think about what the editor said. Go to your second journal choice and know that you are making a good, informed decision. This is totally normal and part of the publishing journey.

Build Your Research Wall

Continue to build on your passion. Once you learn more about your chosen topic, you will come up with more questions. Continue to help the field and be proud of what you have done. Our field is small, and we all need to help each other. Lastly, volunteer to be a reviewer for journals that publish your type of research. You can give back to the research community and help the next young scholar as well.

If you are having trouble writing your manuscript or designing a research study, it can be helpful to examine research in the field for additional insight and ideas.

Contact information: llieberman@brockport.edu

Announcements

Congratulations!

Congratulations to NAFAPA Members Scott McNamara (Young Professional Award) and Meghann Lloyd (IFAPA Fellow) for receiving recognition at the IFAPA conference in New Zealand.



If you would like to congratulate a colleague, friend, mentor, mentee, or supervisor within the field of Adapted Physical Activity, please email the editors to put forth your nomination.

Register Now!

2023 Fall Virtual Adapted Physical Activity Panel

A conversation about whether we are asking **good** questions in our current scholarship.

HOSTED BY THE NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ADAPTED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

GUEST SPEAKERS:

- **Dr. Nancy Spencer**
University of Alberta
- **Dr. Emily Bremer**
Acadia University
- **Dr. Cathy MacDonald**
SUNY Cortland
- **Dr. Joonkoo Yun**
East Carolina University

REGISTRATION:



[HTTPS://ODU.CO1.QUALTRICS.COM/JFE/FORM/SV_0B2H3VD8UZVBA8M](https://odu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/sv_0b2h3vd8uzvba8m)

12:30 to 2:00PM (EST)
OCTOBER 27TH
2023

Join the NAFAPA community this year as we meet virtually on October 27th from 12:30-2:00 PM (EST) to have a conversation about asking **good** questions.

Please use the QR code provided here to sign up for the event!





North American Federation of Adapted Physical Activity

Applications to Host the 2026 NAFAPA Symposium

The NAFAPA Board is seeking applications to host the 2026 NAFAPA Symposium. Applications should be no more than 10 pages and must be received by May 1st, 2024. Applications should be sent to NAFAPA President, Justin Haegele, Ph.D. at jhaegele@odu.edu.

Applications should include information on the following:

- Proposed location of the conference
- Rationale for why your institution is interested in serving as a host for a NAFAPA symposium
- Key personnel (names of chair and members of conference planning team)
- Description of conference venue
- Tentative plans for institutional and other supports
- Closest airport
- Hotels and accommodations
- Budget plans
- Proposed additional activities (social events, area attractions, etc.)

Application will be reviewed by the NAFAPA Board, and the Board will aim to notify applicants of the board's decision around July 1st, 2024.

Submission: Each application is to be submitted via e-mail to NAFAPA President Justin Haegele, Ph.D., e-mail: jhaegele@odu.edu

Deadline: May 1st, 2024

Applications to Host the 2026 NAFAPA Symposium

If interested, please submit your application to our president Dr. Justin Haegele by May 1st, 2024 via jhaegele@odu.edu

Opportunity to Submit Announcements

Do you have an announcement to be featured in the November 2023 issue of the NAFAPA Newsletter? If so, please contact the editors today!

Edited by:

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