

HP NEWS

WINTER 2003

College of Health Professions

Spring semester marks new era for Health Professions



As spring semester began Jan. 6 at the University of Florida, students in the colleges of Health Professions, Nursing and Pharmacy were the first to attend classes in the colleges' sophisticated and technologically advanced new home.

The 173,133-square-foot complex, called the Health Professions/Nursing/Pharmacy Complex, provides educational, administrative and research space for the three colleges. Each college has its own entrance and facilities, and a 500-seat auditorium is available to faculty and students from the entire UF Health Science Center for special events. Construction on the five-story, \$24.7 million structure began in December 2000.

Shared classrooms, lecture halls and teaching laboratories are located on the ground and first floors. Faculty and staff offices, which will be occupied in March, are on the upper floors. A covered walkway links the complex to the Health Science Center.

A student services center for all three colleges offers admissions materials, program information, and academic and financial counseling. The merging of the three colleges' support services space is in keeping with UF's strategic plan, which emphasizes the sharing of resources.

Specially designed classrooms, wireless technology and videoconferencing capabilities enhance the three colleges' nine distance learning degree programs.

The completion of the new complex signifies the end of decades of space insufficiencies for the College of Health Professions and gives the college its first permanent home. The college's six departments have never shared a common space, having occupied locations in five separate buildings prior to moving into the new facility.

"For the first time in our history, the College of Health Professions has a unified space with the majority of our programs under one roof," said Dean Robert Frank, Ph.D. "Our students and faculty members have more opportunities to interact, and we are now able to create more interdisciplinary research and education programs."

Unique features of the Health Professions' area of the building include a practicum testing center with one-way observation windows and video recording capabilities for rehabilitation counseling students. Cameras and TV screens in a large physical therapy skills laboratory display live camera shots of various exercises and movements of parts of the body.

The building also includes an "activities of daily living" laboratory with a working kitchen, bathroom and living room, designed to resemble a typical home

environment where occupational therapy students can practice training patients to regain skills such as bathing, dressing, grooming and meal planning.

The new facility provides the College of Nursing with approximately three times the space it previously occupied, with room for faculty offices, state-of-the-art classrooms and research facilities.

The college's expanded and enhanced Nursing Resource Center comes equipped with advanced technology, including wireless Web access, projection screens for each laboratory, two human patient simulators and an intravenous simulator. The human patient simulators guide students through difficult invasive procedures so they can practice before treating real patients.

"We are very pleased about the opportunities this state-of-the-art facility will offer nursing students and faculty members," said Kathleen Ann Long, Ph.D., R.N., dean of the College of Nursing. "The new building complex provides visibility for all three colleges on the UF campus and facilitates our sharing of resources and ideas."

The new building gives the College of Pharmacy a chance to expand access to its educational programs while providing opportunities for hands-on learning.

"Our building is unique from the standpoint that it probably is the first college of pharmacy in the country that is completely wireless in design," said William Riffie, Ph.D., dean of the College of Pharmacy.

A skills laboratory and a new, fully equipped practice pharmacy, donated by national pharmacy chain CVS, emulate a state-of-the-art community drugstore where students can gain real-world experience in pharmacy practice. A modern computer library with prescription software and hardware, donated by the Eckerd Corp., also sets the building apart from all other pharmacy education facilities in the country, Riffie said.



Toni Chiara, a physical therapy teaching assistant, brings a load of department supplies into the Health Professions/Nursing/Pharmacy Complex. The physical therapy department is the first Health Professions' department to occupy the new building, with the rest of the departments completing the move in March.



Student News



Robert G. Frank,
Dean

The true story of the Health Professions/Nursing/Pharmacy Complex, or how we finally got our own building

Any graduate of the College of Health Professions knows that although the education at UF is great, classrooms and offices have left much to be desired. Each HP graduate has stories to tell of attending classes in cramped rooms and not seeing sunlight for days.

Current students will have to find new sources for stories because this is a great time to be a Gator, especially in the College of Health Professions. Our faculty and students now enjoy sparkling classrooms, streaming sunlight and attractive offices in the new Health Professions/Nursing/Pharmacy Complex.

Every moment of this move is worth savoring because it has been a very long time coming. As we celebrate the opening of the HPNP Complex, it is appropriate to remember a few of the heroes who made this building possible.

In 1980, Dean Emeritus Richard Gutekunst assumed the deanship. The college, assigned the least space of all Health Science Center colleges, was crowded into the basement of the health center building. Dean Gutekunst worked diligently to obtain more space for the college. In 1992, he succeeded in funding the Broad Physical Therapy Educational Building. Gutekunst then arranged for health services administration to move to the new 1329 Building and the occupational therapy department to occupy the remodeled Jennings Hall. Even with these significant improvements, the college had only 27 percent of the space dictated by university space formula.

In 1995, a new group of deans was appointed in the Health Science Center. Kathleen Ann Long, Ph.D., was named dean of Nursing and I was appointed dean of Health Professions. Long recognized the College of Nursing faced an even greater space crisis than Health Professions, and she suggested our two colleges join together and seek a common building. We invited President John Lombardi and Jerry Schaffer, vice president for administrative affairs, to join Long, David Challoner, M.D., then vice president for health affairs, and me in a Nursing conference room in the basement of the Health Science Center. The room, which was routinely used by Nursing, had been salvaged from unused space. It was a small, airless room with a six-foot ceiling. Everyone, regardless of height, ducked when they entered the room. We carefully prepared our presentation to match the impact of the room, and we ended by asking to be placed first on the UF building list.

After several more discussions, we secured a commitment that the Health Professions-Nursing building would be added to the UF list as the second priority for the university. Challoner asked we expand the project to include the College of Pharmacy and being remarkably altruistic, we agreed.

As we completed the complex's design process, the new provost, Betty Capaldi, Ph.D., informed us she was reducing the budget for the building by about 30 percent to support development of classrooms on campus. We scrambled to redesign the building, examining ways to increase the size of the building to accommodate the majority of our faculty and students. We were forced to use bonds that obligated the college to \$1.4 million in debt.

The complex faced another funding crisis when the first of two payments for the \$32 million facility was due in 2000. UF's building projects had fallen below the statewide threshold for funding. Gerry Schiebler, M.D., associate vice president for external relations and chief lobbyist for the Health Science Center and Shands HealthCare, came to the rescue by working with key legislators, including the Alachua County delegation, to restore the state's funding.

Seven and a half years after we began planning for the building, and 23 years after Dean Gutekunst began discussing our needs, the College of Health Professions proudly occupies our new home. We hope you will visit soon.

Carrie McDonald, a doctoral student in the clinical and health psychology department, has received the International Neuropsychological Society's annual Laird Cermak Award, which includes a cash award and the opportunity to present her research in February at the society's annual meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii. In her research, McDonald examines problems with attention and memory in patients with frontal lobe epilepsy who have received brain surgery to prevent seizures.

Laura Frakey, a doctoral student in the clinical and health psychology department, has received a Predoctoral Research Fellowship from the Epilepsy Foundation. The \$16,000 award will be used to support her doctoral training and research in computer-based techniques to assess spatial learning and memory in patients with epilepsy who have undergone surgery to relieve seizures.

Karen Bearss, a doctoral student in the clinical and health psychology department, received a \$1,000 award from the American Psychological Association's Science Directorate Dissertation Research Award program. The Science Directorate grants the awards to approximately 50 students nationwide whose dissertation research reflects excellence in scientific psychology. In her research, Bearss is studying whether custody disputes during a divorce affect the way parents report their children's behavior to the courts.

back Looking

Paul Metts (standing), former CEO of Shands at UF, poses with health services administration students Tim Rearick (left) and Mike Sullivan in this early 1980s photo.



Health Professions honors health policy expert



As the recipient of the Mase Leadership Award, Dr. Diane Rowland presented a lecture on the issues and challenges in health coverage for the low-income population. Photo by Madelaine Cajal

Rowland is the executive vice president of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and the executive director of the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. Rowland's federal health policy experience includes a staff position on the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Energy and Commerce. She also has held senior health policy positions in the Department of Health and Human Services and the Health Care Financing Administration.

An associate professor of health policy and management at Johns Hopkins University, Rowland specializes in issues related to health insurance coverage, access to care, and health-care financing for low-income, elderly and disabled populations.

Established in 1985, the Mase Award honors the memory of Darrel J. Mase, Ph.D., the College of Health Professions' founding dean.

Following an afternoon lecture by Rowland, the award was presented at a dinner on February 13. Mase Award honorees receive a bronze medal in the likeness of Mase and an honorarium.

College recognizes

employee
the of
year

Aleida Levine, an administrative assistant in the department of clinical and health psychology, has been named the College of Health Professions' Employee of the Year.

Honored at the college's 21st annual staff and faculty appreciation dinner, Levine was praised for her willingness to help others, professional demeanor and overall contributions to the operation of the department. She received a \$500 check and a plaque.



Center works to prevent school violence, bring behavioral health care to rural Floridians



Dr. Garret Evans

The National Rural Behavioral Health Center, a collaborative effort between the College of Health Professions and the UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), is the recipient of a federal grant to prevent violence and substance abuse among children of Columbia County, Fla.

A joint program with the Columbia County school district to integrate and evaluate violence and substance abuse prevention strategies for children in that county, Project CATCH (Columbia Acting Together for Children's Health) is supported by a three-year, \$3 million grant through the Safe Schools/

Healthy Students Initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Center for Mental Health Services.

By coordinating community agencies and existing violence and drug use prevention programs, the project's researchers are developing a master plan to promote safe schools and environments, lower juvenile violent crime rates, and reduce alcohol and drug use among children in Columbia County.

"Project CATCH is a perfect example of how the National Rural Behavioral Health Center can reach out to help rural communities solve local needs," said center Director Garret Evans, Psy.D., an associate professor in the College of Health Professions' department of clinical and health psychology and in IFAS' department of family, youth and community science. "Columbia County has a great need for preventive and behavioral health services, particularly when considering that its juvenile violent crime arrest rate consistently ranks among the top three counties in Florida, a high crime state."

With a \$1.1 million portion of the grant, the center will expand prevention and mental health services offered to Columbia County school children by the UF Psychology Center Family Support Service, a program initiated by the department of clinical and health psychology, and will evaluate the impact of Project CATCH's components and services.

The center also is working with the colleges of Health Professions and Medicine and the Suwannee River Area Health Education Center to expand clinical services and training in behavioral health at rural sites throughout North Central Florida.

The project, titled "Education and Training in Rural Behavioral Health," aims to provide interdisciplinary training through coursework, seminars and supervised clinical practice to doctoral students in clinical psychology to instruct them in the delivery of behavioral health services in rural primary care settings. The project allows students and faculty to expand behavioral health services to five rural counties in North Florida.

Russell M. Bauer, Ph.D., a professor in the department of clinical and health psychology, serves as lead investigator for the project, which is supported by a \$160,000 grant from the Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration Bureau of Health Professions.



Project CATCH's researchers are developing a master plan to promote safe schools.



National study shows mind-training exercises help healthy seniors stay mentally sharp

by Arline Phillips-Han

4 Mind exercises can help healthy individuals over age 65 improve their memory, concentration and problem-solving skills, researchers report at the close of a federally funded study involving more than 2,800 seniors at six sites around the nation.

“The findings from this large-scale rigorous clinical trial put to rest the assumption that you can’t achieve substantial new learning in late adulthood,” said UF

psychologist Michael Marsiske, Ph.D., who traveled to Detroit to lead field studies with 481 residents of that metropolitan region.



Dr. Michael Marsiske

“The cognitive improvements we observed in this group of people are significant,” said Marsiske, interim director of the UF Institute on Aging and an associate professor in the department of clinical and health psychology and the College of Medicine’s health policy and epidemiology department. “We believe that through this large study, researchers have added one useful piece to the bank of resourceful strategies that older individuals can apply when needed to help them stay mentally sharp.”

Results of the study, published in the Nov. 13, 2002 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, also show the beneficial effects persisted for two years after the initial mind-training sessions, which were conducted two hours a day for five weeks. Study participants included 2,146 women and 686 men between the ages of 65 and 94 (average age 74), all of whom were living independently. Close to one-fourth of them were African-Americans.

“The trial was highly successful in improving certain thinking and reasoning abilities in older people,” said Richard Suzman, Ph.D., associate director for behavioral and social research at the National Institute on Aging. “However, the data did not show that participants’ improvement in thinking and reasoning also improved their ability to perform everyday tasks like preparing food or handling medications. Achieving this transfer will be our next challenge.”

Karlene Ball, Ph.D., the study’s corresponding author, added, “The improvements in memory, problem solving and concentration following training were sizeable, roughly counteracting the degree of cognitive decline we would expect

to see over a 7- to 14-year period among older adults without dementia.” Ball is with the department of psychology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Seniors taking part in the study were divided into four groups, three of which received either memory training, reasoning training or speed-of-processing training. A fourth group received no training. All participants were assessed prior to training, immediately after training and again at one and two years later.

Mind exercises that were employed included testing ability to look at patterns of letters, words or symbols to figure out what should come next in repetitive sequences. Participants were taught ways to identify a pattern and were given an opportunity to practice the strategies in individual and group exercises. Memory training included tests of ability to recall lists of items and to remember details from stories that one had heard or read. Participants were instructed how to organize word lists into meaningful categories and to form visual images and mental associations to recall words and texts.

Speed-of-processing training focused on visual search skills and the ability to identify and locate visual information quickly when it is presented simultaneously in multiple places. Participants practiced increasingly complex tasks on a computer.

While the formal training sessions were conducted over a short time, Marsiske said participants were encouraged to apply the strategies they learned to everyday life.

“All of us (researchers with this study) think that incorporating these strategies in daily life over a long time would make a positive difference,” he said.

The National Institute on Aging and the National Institute on Nursing Research, both branches of the National Institutes of Health, funded the study aptly named the ACTIVE trials—an acronym for Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elders.

“This study, in my view, reflects the interest of NIH in conducting rigorous training studies to obtain information that may inform health professionals who care for the elderly,” Marsiske said. “Follow-up studies may help us determine whether the cognitive benefits that we now know can result from effective training can help to reduce the rates of decline in mental function among people 65 and older.”

The beneficial effects persisted for two years after the initial mind-training sessions.

HP researcher examines use of mental health services by the elderly

Jeffrey Harman, Ph.D., an assistant professor of health services administration, is the recipient of a \$490,000 National Institute of Mental Health grant to identify the impact of social and economic factors on the use of mental health services by the elderly.

The Mentored Research Scientist Development Award supports an intensive, supervised career development experience by a postdoctoral researcher. The award will support Harman's continued development as a geriatric mental health researcher while he examines the use of mental health services to treat depression in the elderly.

Harman chose to study treatment rates for depression among seniors because although they are at increased risk for depression due to declining physical health, bereavement and cognitive impairment, they are less likely to get care for their mental health conditions.



Dr. Jeffrey Harman

It is estimated that more than 20 percent of older Americans suffer from minor depression while 5 million Americans over age 65 have clinically significant depressive symptoms.

Multiple medical conditions, worsening health status and the loss of loved ones, such as spouses and friends, can trigger a depressive episode in an elderly person, Harman said.

Elderly people may not seek care for depression because of stigma related to mental illness and a lack of social support and financial resources.

"Additionally, most older people do not seek treatment from mental health specialists and rely on their primary care providers to coordinate all of their care," Harman said. "Many of these primary care providers do not have adequate training or the time to address depression."

Harman will survey 300 Medicare HMO enrollees who suffer from depression to determine their attitudes toward treatment and mental illness and the level of financial burden associated with treatment. He also will evaluate HMO claims data of the survey participants to assess their usage of mental health services.

Harman hopes that by identifying the barriers to care, interventions can be developed that will reduce these barriers and improve treatment rates of depression in the elderly.

"If my research shows that social support is a strong predictor of utilization of mental health services by depressed older people, while out-of-pocket costs are not, then we would know that the addition of a prescription drug benefit to Medicare would be unlikely to improve treatment rates for depression in this population," Harman said. "Instead, changes in health policy or other interventions that help individuals with little or no social support recognize their depressive symptoms and provide support and encouragement will be more likely to result in higher rates of depression treatment."

Pamela Duncan, Ph.D., director of the Brooks Center for Rehabilitation Studies and a professor of health services administration, serves as Harman's research sponsor.

Rozensky leads clinical and health psychology to new level of research excellence

The leadership of Ronald H. Rozensky, Ph.D., chair of the department of clinical and health psychology, has been marked by tremendous growth in research funding since he accepted the position only four years ago.

Under Rozensky's guidance, departmental research support has more than quadrupled – from \$1.3 million in fiscal year 1996-97 to \$5.5 million in fiscal year 2001-02.

In fact, it was the chance to develop an infrastructure that would encourage faculty to pursue research funding, along with the outstanding faculty and students and the extent of the department's clinical services, that attracted Rozensky to the post.

"The departmental faculty have always been known as national and international leaders in their areas of research in neuropsychology, health psychology, emotion and attention, and child/pediatric psychology," Rozensky said. "We simply organized a system that allowed them to support each other and write and submit more grants. The funding naturally followed."

Rozensky has been honored individually as an outstanding educator, winning the 2001 Distinguished Educator award from the American Psychological Association's (APA) Association of Medical School Psychologists. He also received the Classroom Teacher of the Year honor and the Hugh C. Davis Psychotherapy Supervision Award last year from the department's own graduate students.

"Dr. Rozensky not only provides the necessary senior leadership as it relates to long-term strategic planning for our department, he also is a major contributor to the daily training of students," said graduate student Jason Demery. "His classroom teaching style coupled with his unique approach to supervising neophyte psychotherapists has allowed him to play an integral role in our professional development."

Rozensky's own research and professional writings have focused on health psychology and quality of life. His career accomplishments include five books on psychology and health care, over 60 journal articles and chapters, and the journal he founded 10 years ago to highlight basic and applied clinical psychology research in health-care settings, the *Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*. Rozensky also serves as the journal's editor-in-chief.

Rozensky chairs the APA's Board of Educational Affairs, which works to enhance the quality of education and training programs in the profession and oversees continuing education, undergraduate and postgraduate education, and the role that psychology and psychologists play in secondary and elementary schools.

As his department continues to grow, Rozensky is keeping an eye on the challenges the department faces, including limits to state support and supporting faculty members' multiple duties of research, education and clinical services.

"We continue to provide, and have expanded, our 24/7 psychology clinical services to the entire Health Science Center, even while we have increased our research funding," Rozensky said. "We have psychological services that receive referrals from almost all specialties and subspecialties in Shands. The faculty members are model scientist-practitioners."

In his free time, Rozensky enjoys relaxing on his sailboat with friends and family. He and his wife, Patti, have two daughters: Sarah, a senior aide for U.S. Senator Evan Bayh of Indiana, and Jordyn, a junior at Smith College in Massachusetts.



Dr. Ronald Rozensky. Photo by Ray Carson, UF News and Public Affairs.

Alumni updates

6

1970s

Rhona Gorsky Reiss, Ph.D., occupational therapy '75, is the director of clinical services at The Spectrum Center in Bethesda, Md. She treats autistic children using sensory integration and the Tomatis Method of listening therapy. She resides in North Potomac, Md.

Linda King Thomas, occupational therapy '77, is the director and owner of Developmental Therapy Associates Inc., a private occupational and speech therapy clinic in Durham, N.C. Developmental Therapy Associates recently celebrated its 20th anniversary.

Charles Young, health services administration '77, is the administrator of Shriners Hospitals for Children – Spokane (Wash.). He also serves as board president of the Spokane Ronald McDonald House Charities and the Spokane Kiwanis Charities.

Tim Rearick, health services administration '83, recently left a position at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida to join the State of Florida's State Technology Office, where he leads the state's Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) compliance program. He lives in Tallahassee with wife Paula and children Sarah, 7, and Olivia, 5.

Michael Belbeck Jr., health services administration '90, is the vice president of Baptist Health South Florida, the region's largest not-for-profit health-care organization. He and wife Janice reside in Miami.

Kimberly (Huckeba) Galloway, physical therapy '93, is a physical therapist at Brooks Rehabilitation Hospital in Jacksonville, Fla. She and husband Mark have one child, Aidan, 4.

Alan Levine, health services administration '92, CEO of South Bay Hospital in Sun City Center, Fla., has been named deputy chief of staff to Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

Elizabeth Ann Coate Ellington, occupational therapy '00, resides in Orange Park, Fla. As an occupational therapist with Heartland Rehabilitation Services of North Florida, she is the first civilian occupational therapist to provide resource sharing health-care services at Jacksonville Naval Hospital Hand Clinic.

Christina Jenkins, rehabilitation counseling '01, is an adult outpatient therapist for Suncoast Center for Community Mental Health in St. Petersburg, Fla.

1980s

1990s

2000s

Gifts to the College of Health Professions

The College of Health Professions would like to express gratitude to the following supporters who made gifts to the college during 2002.

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Alumni spotlights

Alumna focuses career on serving children

Mary Ann Clark, Ph.D., a 1986 graduate of the clinical and health psychology internship program, was drawn to the field of child and adolescent psychology because of a desire to better understand human behavior and the factors that successfully influence behavior change.



Dr. Mary Ann Clark

“A better understanding of the developmental needs of young children provides us with the opportunity to intervene and prevent or ameliorate future problems as well as to provide insights into adult psychopathology,” Clark said.

In her Bradenton, Fla., independent practice, she provides psychological evaluations and psychotherapy for adults, adolescents and children.

In addition, Clark has worked with the Manatee County Child Protection Team for 11 years, offering psychological evaluations, forensic consultations and expert witness testimony. The Child Protection Team is a statewide program that evaluates and determines the existence of child abuse and assists in coordinating services for victims and families.

“Although the state has limited resources, these are the cases which require the greatest amount of time and the utmost skill and compassion in providing appropriate evaluations and treatment,” she said.

Clark also serves as a parent coordinator for Florida’s 12th Circuit Court, working with separated or divorced parents in custody and visitation disputes to facilitate solutions that are in the best interest of the children involved.

Clark, who received her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of South Florida, said she chose to participate in the UF internship program because it offered specialized training in child and adolescent as well as health psychology. UF also is one of the premier internship sites for neuropsychology and is actively committed to implementing the scientist-practitioner model.

While collecting data for her dissertation on cognitive and neuropsychological performance in children with diabetes, Clark gave birth to a son. Geoffrey suffered from Trisomy 13, a rare chromosomal disorder that causes severe birth defects, and lived for only two weeks.

“We wanted his name to live on and his life to have had a positive impact,” Clark said. “We chose to establish an endowment to support other UF clinical and health psychology students doing pediatric research in the hope that it would help other parents who had been through the heart-wrenching experience of watching their child struggle with a serious illness.”

In the past 15 years since the endowment was established, Clark has often had the opportunity to attend a dinner with recipients of the Geoffrey Clark-Ryan Memorial Award.

“I tell them that I like to think of Geoffrey as a somewhat impish guardian angel of UF graduate students,” she said. “For a little guy who lived only two weeks, he has already impacted the lives of at least 15 students.”

Rehabilitation counseling grad helps clients plan for the future

As the owner of a rehabilitation counseling company, John Roberts evaluates the impact of disability and develops a plan that will guide health-related decisions for the rest of a person’s life.

Roberts’ Jacksonville-based company, Roberts Disability Consultants, provides vocational evaluations, life-care plans, labor market surveys and job site analyses. Roberts, a 1984 graduate of the UF rehabilitation counseling program, has given testimony as an expert witness in over 1,000 worker’s compensation, personal injury and discrimination cases.

In addition, Roberts represents clients throughout the process of claiming Social Security disability benefits, a new trend among rehabilitation counselors. Although not required by federal law, individuals seeking Social Security disability benefits are usually represented by attorneys.

“As rehabilitation counselors, our areas of specialty are impact of disability on a person’s life and the earning capacity of an individual with a disability,” said Horace Sawyer, Ph.D., a professor and chair of rehabilitation counseling. “These areas are unique to our field, and because of this expertise, rehab counselors are very well qualified to represent claimants.”

As a UF student athlete on a track scholarship, Roberts developed an interest in rehabilitation counseling after meeting athletes whose careers were ended by injury.

“I came in contact with athletes who focused on sports as a career instead of

academics,” he said. “Their aspirations would end at the time of the injury. They needed help to find out what other alternatives were out there.”

Roberts was influenced by Sawyer and UF alumnus Paul Deutsch, authors of “Guide to Rehabilitation,” the first textbook that included life-care planning, the practice of preparing a comprehensive plan to project the future needs, services and equipment a person with a disability may require for the rest of his or her life. Roberts describes the preparation of life-care plans for clients as the most rewarding aspect of his job.

Roberts faced his own life-changing injury when he broke his neck in 1992 while training for a triathlon. A vertebrae fusion, halo brace and years of therapy brought about his recovery.

“The injury gave me a better understanding of rehabilitation and what my clients face,” he said.



Roberts with daughter Danielle (from left), who works in her parents’ company after school, daughter Gabrielle and wife Terri, co-owner of Roberts Disability Consultants.

What’s New?



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