Center for Exercise & Aging Turns 17

Dr. Susan Kaplowitz, a senior fitness specialist and personal trainer certified by the American Council on Exercise, established the Center for Exercise and Aging at Rutgers in 2001. Dr. Kaplowitz’s expertise in exercise gerontology and her specialization in adapted physical education, helped her create a multitude of programs held for seniors in the community.

The Center for Exercise and Aging began with the goal of educating older adults about health, exercise and the process of aging. A three-credit elective course was later added. The Exercise and Aging course is designed to focus on the beneficial effects of exercise on the older adult population, led by Dr. Kaplowitz and Dr. Tracy Davis. The combination of both the Center for Exercise and Aging and the Exercise and Aging course, provides students with an opportunity to learn more about the demographic, physical, and psychological characteristics of this given population. In addition, students get the chance to work directly with older adults as well as run programs for them within the community.

Practical Experience for Students in Many Areas

Dr. Kaplowitz emphasized that her students are able to take what they learn in the classroom and use it when they go out into the field to pursue careers as doctors, physicians, physical therapists, etc. Each year, Dr. Kaplowitz selects three top students to become CAs or course assistants to help her organize, run, and implement these programs, enhancing their leadership skills. A former CA for Dr. Kaplowitz and current department faculty member is Dr. Nicole Nagle, who has a doctorate in physical therapy and specializes in rehabilitation and sports medicine. Due to experiences inside and outside the classroom, other former students and CAs have gone on to great careers within this field.

Dr. Kaplowitz teaches two courses within the department including Foundations of Kinesiology and Health and Exercise & Aging. As founder and director of the Center for Exercise and Aging, Dr. Kaplowitz has worked with hundreds of older adults over the years and has brought exercise programs to facilities other than Rutgers, such as senior centers and assisted living facilities. She continues to work with this population by lecturing and presenting her expertise about older adult’s fitness and health. Visit cea.rutgers.edu for more information.

“I feel very proud and honored to know that we advocate for seniors and help them to understand the importance of staying fit and exercising. And so many of my students have taken the experience that they have gotten from this class and parlayed that into careers in the field.”

Dr. Susan Kaplowitz, Founder, Center for Exercise and Aging

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2nd Alumni Event a Success

The Department of Kinesiology and Health hosted its second alumni event Connecting with Alumni, on Monday February 26, in the Busch Student Center. The event provided students with the unique opportunity to network with Rutgers alumni and explore a variety of careers within their major.

The event began with an introductory panel discussion, and then alumni and current students table-hopped in a series of one-on-one networking and advisement interactions.

A current sophomore said, “This is a wonderful chance for our students to see how tangible their job aspirations are and to learn the steps that are necessary to make those aims a reality.” The Connecting with Alumni event helped students learn the steps necessary to their achieve their career goals from those who have already done it.

All current students and alumni are encouraged to attend future alumni and department events. Stop by the Kinesiology and Health booth on Rutgers Day, April 28 on Douglass Campus.

2018 Kickoff Event Recap

On December 4, 2017, the Department of Kinesiology and Health held a Fall Kickoff Event in the College Avenue Student Center. This free event provided students with a networking opportunity with faculty in Exercise Science and Sport Management. Students met one-on-one with department professors and learned more about opportunities available for those interested in department programs.

The evening’s entertainment was provided by Josh Sundquist, bestselling author, motivational speaker, comedian and Paralympic ski racer. At age nine, Josh was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer and given a fifty percent chance to live. He spent a year on chemotherapy treatments and his left leg was amputated. Doctors declared Josh cured of the disease at age thirteen and he took up ski racing three years later.

Students also learned about Research/Teaching Assistant positions, club involvement, the Study Abroad program in Greece, and much more! There were also water bottle giveaways, and raffles.

Kinesiology and Health Senior Celebration

January 2018, May 2018 & August 2018 Graduates

Tuesday, May 8
6:00 p.m.
College Avenue Student Center

Register at kines.rutgers.edu

Visit us on social media & tag your posts #RUKines
Where Are They Now?
James Thomas, ‘15
Regional Account Coordinator,
Les Mills International

James Thomas, a recent graduate from Rutgers, is one of the department’s great success stories. James graduated in 2015 with a degree in Exercise Science and Sport Studies. James works for Les Mills International fulfilling a variety of roles including National Trainer, National Presenter, Assessor as well as Regional Account Coordinator. At Les Mills, James has the benefit of traveling the entire country to instruct workshops and teach masterclasses at conventions. During his travels, James has met a variety of people from all around the world.

When asked about the burden of traveling so often James responded, “I love the travel! It’s one of the best parts of the job. I get to meet so many people across the US and outside the US as well. It’s great to be exposed to different regions.”

If you are interested in becoming involved in a profession similar to that of James Thomas, here’s some advice: Les Mills programs taught by James are incorporated through Rutgers fitness so any student can sign up for, stop in and try them out. Specifically, James teaches classes Monday at 12:15 p.m. and 1:15 p.m., and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and 8:15 p.m.. After gaining some experience, you can move up to the next step by attending an initial training module and possibly get certified as a trainer. Good Luck!

Winter Service Learning Program
Students Learn About Sustainable Lifestyle & Refugee Crisis in Greece

On January 2, Kinesiology and Health Department Chair Dr. Labros Sidossis and his team brought seven students to Greece as part of a two-week service learning program titled Sustainable Lifestyle and Refugee Crisis in Greece.

Students of any major had the opportunity to engross themselves in Greek culture while spending time in Athens and Nafplio. They visited monumental sites in both cities and participated in cooking classes to learn more about the healthy Mediterranean diet. From learning what herbs make food more flavorful to making marmalade, students learned that eating food should be more than just a process; it is an enjoyable experience to share with family and friends.

A Great Learning Experience for Students

Nicholas Amabile, a Rutgers student, said, “Diet includes more than just food. Physical activity and socialization are both important aspects of a diet and contribute a lot to your health. Look at the body as a whole – mental, physical, social, and spiritual health all impact the feeling of well-being. The whole trip was an amazing experience.”

Students also gained awareness of the refugee crisis in Athens and took action to help create a better world for less privileged people. They volunteered with non-governmental organizations where they engaged with migrants and refugees by helping garden, cook and distribute food, and building warehouses.

The program was a life-changing experience for these students. They learned to adapt a healthier lifestyle and more realistic approach to dieting, as well how to give back to a community in need.

The program is open to anyone, including alumni. For more information about future trips, please reach out to Saharish Javed at saharish@rutgers.edu.

Did You Know: The Department of Kinesiology and Health has more than 1000 declared undergraduate majors - making it one of the largest departments at Rutgers.
Contact Us

Please visit us in person or on our website for more information about the Department of Kinesiology and Health in the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers.

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Introducing Mary Kate Schiff

Mary Kate Schiff is a newcomer to the Department of Kinesiology and Health, but her impact is already being felt. She joined the Department as Undergraduate Academic Advisor in the summer of 2017. She received her Master's Degree from Rider University in Organizational Leadership with a concentration in Higher Education after earning her Bachelor's in elementary and special education. Mary Kate has been working in Higher Education since 2009, serving the areas of both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

As the Undergraduate Academic Advisor for the department, Mary Kate advises Exercise Science and Sport Management majors on course plans, degree progress, career options and educational goal fulfillment. She is also the Program Coordinator for the new DPT 4+3 Program which begins in Fall 2018.

After settling in during the Fall 2017 semester, Mary Kate officially took over all academic advising in the department in January. She has embraced the role and is excelling in it. Her philosophy is that the position involves much more than simply planning a schedule for each term. She feels very strongly about having an open mind, listening, being an advocate, and investing in the students rather than simply giving them advice. Mary Kate helps students identify their personal and academic strengths, and empowers them to strive for excellence. Her ultimate goal is to be a knowledgeable resource from whom students can feel comfortable seeking advice. Mary Kate has done a wonderful job thus far. The Department welcomes her and wishes her the very best in her Rutgers career. We are excited for her contributions to the department moving forward.

Research Corner

Dr. Andrea Spaeth is a relatively new face in the Department of Kinesiology and Health, but she has wasted no time getting down to business, heading up a lab and study on sleep deprivation. Dr. Spaeth graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a Ph.D. in Psychology with a focus on behavioral neuroscience. She has previously assisted NASA in studies conducted regarding the sleep patterns and sleep issues of astronauts while in space.

The lab study she is conducting at Rutgers deals with sleep deprivation in healthy adults, and will be conducted over the course of two-to-three weeks. The focus is on how the lack of sleep affects performance on a day-to-day basis and if sleep deprivation affects eating habits and a person's metabolism.

The research project on which Dr. Spaeth is currently working is sleep deprivation in adolescents. This project examines glucose levels, and aims to improve the profile of adolescents and their sleeping habits. It is conducted using the Phillips Actiwatch 2, “an advanced FitBit-like device,” by monitoring sleep cycles and performance over the course of twelve days. The device will also record sleep patterns for the week before the project is conducted, and a week after it is concluded. Dr. Spaeth will then take the results and collaborate with Dr. Alderman to see how sleep deprivation affects cognition and overall health. The goal of the project, as stated by Dr. Spaeth, is to “get adolescents to sleep more and realize the importance of sleep on everyday life.”

Dr. Spaeth will be offering a new course she has created: Sleep, Health, and Performance. This course will deal with topics such as the biology of sleep and circadian rhythms as well as causes and consequences of insufficient sleep. Sleep, Health, and Performance will be available for the 2018 Summer Session and the Spring 2019 semester so keep an eye out during registration week!