Long-time Kinesiology department chair Deborah Feltz to step down, return to faculty

After 23 years of diligence and leadership as department chair of Kinesiology at the Michigan State University College of Education, Deborah Feltz has recently announced that she will step down from her position in August, and return to the department’s faculty.
Dan Gould, professor of kinesiology and director of the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports, appeared on ABC News twice this past fall.

In an Oct. 4 article, Gould provided insight about post-injury psychological effects, in regards to Indianapolis Colts defensive tackle Erick Foster’s ankle injury. Gould predicted that Foster may develop anxiety and obsession with his injury during his recovery, and that his athletic trainers should watch closely for these signs.

“You’ve done all you could to recover, but until somebody takes a really hard shot at your knee or your ankle, and you can get up, you’re not confident,” he said.

In a second ABC News article, published on Oct. 11, Gould weighed the pros and cons of the Telford Junior League’s new scoring policy: eliminating soccer division scores completely for ages 11 and younger, and limiting scores to 1-0, 0-1 or draws for ages 12-16. Gould suggested that the policy could be effective with younger children, but as kids get older, it would be impossible to enforce.

“Rankings and publications of youth sports results can take on a life of their own and this could help put it in perspective,” he said. “[But] by 8 or 10 years old, they can distinguish effort from ability. We probably focus too much on competition at too early an age and not enough on long-term training and intrinsic reasons for playing sports. … When they get to be 11 on up, they know if they got killed or didn’t, so don’t go fooling yourself that people don’t know the score.”

In a New York Times opinion piece published on Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2011, writer David Bornstein raised several questions about the emphasized values of youth sports, and the coaching methods that go along with them. While Bornstein and several surveyed parents agree that sports should focus on teamwork, honesty, discipline and fair play, they also said that the sports instead promote competitiveness and the importance of winning.

Daniel Gould, kinesiology professor and director of the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports at Michigan State University, suggested that when coaches and parents focus on “outcomes or social comparisons” as opposed to self-improvement, youth sport players will participate less and decrease their skill development. He also added that evaluation of youth sport programs should be based on participation and retention rates — not wins and losses. The key questions, he said, should be: How many kids started the season, how many ended it and how many wanted to come back the next year? (Nicole Geary)

Lauer promotes a “winning attitude” in Parenting Magazine

In the November 2011 edition of Parenting magazine, Larry Lauer, MSU kinesiology research assistant and director of coaching education and development at the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports, shared the importance of good sportsmanship among young athletes.

“Kids this age are still in the ‘all about me’ phase,” Lauer wrote. “They won’t naturally say ‘Good game’ to the other team after they lose. That’s something you — and their coaches — need to teach them.” Lauer also highlighted five parenting techniques that he says will help children develop a winning attitude:

- Review the rules
- Identify what went well so the child focuses on the positive
- Watch your own (over) reactions
- Cool the postgame celebration
- Don’t let a sore winner slide by

(Nicole Geary)
Jim Pivarnik and doctoral student Erin Kuffel’s new research about resistance training for pregnant women has already captured the attention of several news sources, including CNBC and ABC12. In the September 6th Washington Post column the story pointed out that there are very few scientific studies about the subject, and credits Pivarnik as one of the first to compile a list of specific training recommendations for pregnant women.

“Forgive the pun, but we’re at baby steps” on this subject Pivarnik said.

Pivarnik and Kuffel studied a total of 214 pregnant women, 57 of whom performed 30-minute strength training workouts about three times a week. Although the study has not yet been completed, the researchers found that resistance training likely reduces the risk of gestational diabetes and hypertension.

(Nicole Geary)

Feltz named University Distinguished Professor

Deb, our department chairperson, was one of 10 professors to be named a University Distinguished Professor in 2011. This exclusive title is among the highest honors that can be bestowed on a faculty member by the university. Those selected for the title have been recognized nationally and internationally, for the importance of their teaching, research and outreach achievements.

As a sport exercise psychologist, Feltz has made numerous contributions to the field of kinesiology and is particularly interested in self-efficacy and the psychosocial implications of sport and physical activity participation. She also focuses on motivation within groups in exercise, as seen in her project “Buddy Up! Harnessing Group Dynamics to Boost Motivation to Exercise” which demonstrates the motivational benefits of exercising with a virtual partner while playing video games.

The University Distinguished Professors were recommended by President Lou Anna K. Simon and approved by the MSU Board of Trustees at its June 17th meeting.

Congratulations, Deb!
$3.6 Million Nursing Research Project Promotes Exercise for Girls

With the help of a $3.6 million federal grant, a Michigan State University nursing researcher and Karin Pfeiffer, Associate professor of Kinesiology, are expanding a pilot program state-wide to help middle school girls – particularly minority girls in urban, low socioeconomic settings – increase their physical activity.

The five-year Girls on the Move project, led by Lorraine Robbins and funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute – focuses on individual nursing and web-based counseling sessions with school nurses and an after-school physical activity club.

A very low percentage of middle school girls meet physical activity recommendations, Robbins said, and as they progress from sixth- to eighth-grade, moderate to vigorous physical activity usually declines, contributing to weight gain. The decline is particularly evident among urban, minority girls of low socioeconomic status.

School nurses are well positioned to drive school-based health programs such as those targeting physical activity. Robbins said, “Nurses can adequately counsel students on increasing physical activity by exploring their personal, and sometimes unique, perceptions and providing support for positive change.”

Robbins’ pilot program focused on two middle schools in the Lansing School District. Now, the 17-week intervention will expand to schools in Jackson, Flint, Ypsilanti, Detroit, Muskegon, and Kalamazoo, in addition to Lansing.

“Our long-term goal is to increase moderate to vigorous physical activity as a means to address the high overweight and obesity prevalence among adolescent girls, thus reducing the risk for cardiovascular health problems,” she said.

Co-investigators on the grant include Karin Pfeiffer, Kim Maier from the College of Education’s Measurement & Quantitative Methods program, and Ken Resnicow and Lawrence An from the University of Michigan.

The Girls on the Move intervention has three main components: (1) motivational, individually tailored counseling sessions with a school nurse; (2) an interactive web-based counseling session during which each girl receives motivational, individually tailored feedback messages; and (3) a group-level component made up of a 90-minute physical activity club offered after school four days a week.

During the counseling sessions, the feedback is individually tailored based on each girl’s responses to computerized questionnaires on physical activity, Robbins said.

The aim is to evaluate the ability of the program to increase middle school girls’ physical activity and improve cardiovascular fitness, body mass index and percent body fat.

Robbins said the success of the pilot program at the two Lansing schools led to the new federal funding. Compared to the control school, students at the intervention school showed trends toward greater improvement in all physical measures: minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per hour, cardiovascular fitness, body mass index, percent body fat and waist circumference.

In addition, she added, as rapport was established with the school nurse, the girls became more willing to share their thoughts and express concerns, including those related to their general health and well-being.

“Delivering an individually tailored intervention is a unique approach in the current practice of ‘one size fits all’ type of physical activity interventions. We believe our approach has a high probability of success, given the age gap. Using the school nurse is a powerful intervention tool, since many adolescent girls feel compelled to confide in and trust their school nurse”, Pfeiffer said.  (Nicole Geary)
James Pivarnik appointed to Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports

Gov. Rick Snyder today announced the appointment of James Pivarnik of East Lansing to the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports.

The council was established in 1992 to improve the health and increase physical activity of Michigan residents.

"James' expertise with health and wellness will play a vital role in promoting healthier lifestyles for our citizens," Snyder said.

Pivarnik is a professor of kinesiology and epidemiology at Michigan State University. He is a member of the Science Advisory Panel to the President's Council on Physical Fitness, Sports and Nutrition and is the past president of the American College of Sports Medicine. Pivarnik earned a bachelor's degree in recreation and park administration from Indiana University, a master's degree in physical and health education from James Madison University in Virginia, a master's degree in epidemiology from Michigan State University, and a doctorate of human performance from Indiana University. (Geary)

Student News

Dana Voelker is one of the two winners of the Ruth Abernathy Presidential Scholarship

Since 1995, the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance has awarded scholarships to outstanding undergraduate and graduate student members. The Ruth Abernathy Presidential Scholarship, developed by the past presidents of AAHPERD to honor deserving students, is awarded to three undergraduate students and two graduate students in January of each year. All scholarships are presented at the AAHPERD National Convention & Exposition held in the spring.

Undergraduate awards are $1,250 each and graduate awards are $1,750 each. Recipients also receive a complimentary three-year AAHPERD membership.

Please join us in congratulating Dana on this prestigious scholarship award. (AAHPERD website)

Son, Feltz find that wording choices affect motivation

In a recent study, MSU Kinesiology doctoral student Veronica Son and department chair Deborah Feltz have found that individuals are more motivated if they are working as part of a team, as opposed to focusing solely on themselves. Specifically, the researchers saw increased performance when the word “I” was replaced with “we” in self-talk motivational statements. “I believe in the power of ‘we.’” Son said. “The study revealed that group-oriented self-talk enhanced a team’s confidence. The findings provide fundamental information about how to effectively build positive team outcomes using self-talk focused not on ‘I’ but ‘we’.”

Feltz added that this principle can be applied beyond the realm of kinesiology and athletics. “Reinforcing the sense of team and focusing on a team goal can help someone change health behaviors or reach sales goals,” Feltz said. The study was published in the Journal of Sport Sciences.
Cousins Named to 2011 NFF Scholar-Athlete Class

Kirk Cousins Named to 2011 NFF Scholar Athlete Class

The Campbell Trophy finalist was presented an $18,000 post-graduate scholarship at the 54th annual NFF Awards Dinner, on Dec. 6, 2011, in New York City.

Michigan State Kinesiology fifth-year senior Kirk Cousins, the winningest quarterback in school history and a three-time Academic All-Big Ten selection, has been named to the 2011 National Football Foundation National Scholar-Athlete Class. Based upon his selection, Cousins also became one of 16 finalists for the William Campbell Trophy, which recognizes an individual as the absolute best scholar-athlete in the nation. Each Campbell Trophy finalist was presented an $18,000 post-graduate scholarship at the 54th annual NFF Awards Dinner, on Dec. 6 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City.

The NFF’s National Scholar-Athlete program, launched in 1959, is the first initiative in history to award scholar-athletes postgraduate scholarships for their combined athletic, academic and leadership abilities. Nominated by their respective schools, which are limited to one nominee each, candidates must be a senior or graduate student in their final year of eligibility, have a grade point average of at least 3.2 on a 4.0 scale, have outstanding football ability as a first-team player and have demonstrated strong leadership and citizenship. The class is selected each year by the NFF Awards Committee, which is comprised of a nationally recognized group of media, College Football Hall of Famers and athletics administrators.

Cousins becomes the fifth NFF National Scholar-Athlete in Michigan State history and the first since safety Steve Wasylk earned the honor in 1993.

More congratulations goes to Kirk for also receiving the National Football Foundation’s National Scholar-Athlete Award presented by Fidelity Investments for his work on the field, in the classroom and in the community.

Robert J. Braden, Kinesiology Major, was Commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant from the Department of Military Science, Army Reserve Officer’s Training Corps—Branch of Field Artillery—National Guard. He will be going to Fort Sill in Oklahoma.
Update on KIN senior Hanson who is now training for Ironman Triathlon, Paralympics

McKayla Hanson, a kinesiology senior at Michigan State University, has entered herself in the 2011 Ironman Triathlon — despite the fact that she only has one leg.

Born with a rare form of bone cancer, Hanson had her right leg amputated when she was only seven years old. A traumatizing event at such a young age, Hanson said she had difficulty accepting that her leg was permanently gone, and that it would never "grow back." However, Hanson’s hope was restored when her adopted parents gave her an ultimatum: "They said, ‘You can either lay in bed and feel sorry for yourself, or you can get up and do something,’" Hanson said.

Since then, Hanson has overcome her physical disability by competing — and excelling — in several sports, including swimming, handcycling (an arm-operated bicycle) and even rock climbing. Hanson’s athletic success caught the attention of the Challenged Athletes Foundation, who later presented Hanson with a prosthetic leg.

With her new leg, Hanson began training for the triathlon with Ray Bailey, a member of the Tri-County Bicycle Association. Bailey said that Hanson has improved her handcycling speed from 9 mph to 14 mph since the start of training.

While the 2011 Ironman Triathlon was canceled due to Californian wildfires, Hanson says she intends to enter again next year. After that, she plans to train for the 2014 Paralympics.

By Joe Lawlor | Flint Journal, Nov. 3, 2011

Alumni News

Rene’ Revis Shingles, Ph.D. (2001) was the recipient of Great Lakes Athletic Trainers’ Association outstanding Educator Award and the National Athletic Trainers’ Association distinguished Athletic Trainer Award/
**Former MSU Kinesiology Graduate, and University of Texas-San Antonio Professor Tiffanye Vargas, Named New President-Elect**

Following the completion of the National Coaching Educators Conference in late June, Tiffanye Vargas, PhD, started her term as President-Elect of the National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education (NCACE). Dr. Vargas holds a dual appointment as an Associate Professor in the Departments of Health and Kinesiology and Counseling at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) where she assists in directing the coaching and sport psychology curricula as well as assisting in the creation of a coaching certificate for all aspiring athletic coaches, regardless of college major.

“It is both an honor and a privilege to serve NCACE as President-Elect. I look forward to advancing coaching education by promoting accreditation and increasing public awareness of the importance of quality coaches. This is a pivotal time for coaching education, and I am excited to be a part of it through my new role in NCACE,” stated Dr. Vargas.

Dr. Vargas received her BA in Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin, and her MA in Counseling and PhD in Kinesiology from Michigan State University. An Association of Applied Sport Psychology Certified Consultant, she also serves on the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Sport Science and Coaching* and the Board of Directors for the Kids Sports Network. NCACE is an organization established by the coaching education community across the U.S. Representatives include members from the single sport, multi-sport, science/medical/educational fields, and colleges and universities concerned about the availability and quality of coaching education at all levels of sport. NCACE is a not-for-profit organization comprised of organizations and individuals involved in or supporting coaching and coaching education. NCACE supports, facilitates development of, and accredits coaching education programs and established program standards to conduct the program review for organizations seeking to provide effective coaching education programs at all levels. ([www.NCACEinfo.org](http://www.NCACEinfo.org))

**Kinesiology graduate, Sheila Kelly, receives dissertation award from NASPE**

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) has presented Michigan State University kinesiology graduate Sheila Kelly with a 2012 Sport and Exercise Psychology Dissertation Award. Kelly won the award for her doctoral dissertation titled: “The Relationship Among Motor Skill Development, Aerobic Capacity, Body Composition and Perceived Competence of Fourth Grade School Children.” The award is awarded annually on a national level to the applicant whose doctoral dissertation from the previous year is seen to have the greatest potential for contribution to the knowledge of sport psychology.

Shortly after receiving her doctorate from MSU in 2010, Kelly accepted a position at Humboldt State University in California, where she currently lectures in the Department of Kinesiology and Recreation Administration. Kelly says she’s “…always been interested in why some people are sedentary and others aren’t. The mental side of physical activity is huge.” *(Nicole Geary)*
Former KIN Scout’s Training saves choking MSU classmate

He was just going to wait for his girlfriend to get done with work and grab a bite to eat, but for Ryan Obarzanek what started out as a quick lunch soon turned into a life saving situation.

A student at Michigan State University, Obarzanek was sitting at the cafeteria at Brody Hall earlier this spring. At a table by himself he began to notice a woman sitting at another table facing him begin to signal as though she was having some trouble. “She was trying to signal for help and holding her throat,” he recalled. “At first I thought it might be an allergic reaction, but she stood up and made even more motions for help.” And that’s what Obarzanek did. Back in Northville he was a Boy Scout for ‘troop 777 and he became an Eagle Scout while attending Novi Catholic Central high School. As he looks back to that moment in the cafeteria, he remembers learning to do the Heimlich maneuver on a “test dummy” during scout summer camp. His training then helped him through the following moments as he stood up and went over to Shanna Savage, a fellow student at MSU, and asked her if she needed help. She did! Past lessons, which included a refresher course at MSU, let him know these were classic symptoms of choking.

Blind KIN alumnus

named Distinguished Young Alumni

Aaron Scheidies a 2004 graduate of Kinesiology from the Michigan State University College of Education, is one of two recipients of the 2011 Distinguished Young Alumni Award – and it’s no wonder why Scheidies is a physical therapist, model, public speaker and triathlete who has only 10% of the vision of a fully sighted person. Despite being born with Stargardt disease - a condition that slowly deteriorates vision - the 29-year-old has competed in more than 100 triathlons. Wildly successful in his pursuits, Scheidies is both a five-time National Champion and a four-time World Champion. He is also the world’s first and only disabled athlete to complete an international distance triathlon in less than two hours, and a 2011 ESPY Award finalist for Best Male Athlete with a Disability.

Michael Hudson, director of MSU’s Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, nominated Scheidies for the Distinguished Alumni Award. The two met when Scheidies first arrived at MSU, and Hudson says he has always admired Scheidies’ sense of drive and relentless pursuit of excellence.

“He exceeds expectations, excels in academics, athletics and community service, and is now leading in a challenging career. Combine all this with a promising future and an unsurpassed Spartan identity and we all have something to celebrate with Aaron,” Hudson said. “It was an honor to highlight his accomplishments and facilitate his receipt of this recognition.” During his time at MSU, Scheidies was the president of the Triathlon Club and volunteered more than 100 hours of his time to help other students with disabilities, all while maintaining a 4.0 grade point average. In 2004, he was inducted into the Athletes with Disabilities Hall of Fame.

Scheidies formally accepted his award on Oct. 20, 2011 during Homecoming Week’s Grand Awards Ceremony. (Nicole Geary)
**Kinesiology 2011 Publications**


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**Introducing Matthew Pontifex**

Matt is joining us from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, starting spring semester 2012. Matt’s research examines the influence of physical activity participation on developmental neurocognition, with a focus toward improving cognitive health, academic performance, and overall effective functioning during maturation.

Matt’s research is highly interdisciplinary, drawing heavily from the domains of kinesiology, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience to investigate how being physically active and fit can influence cognitive development. Findings from his research have suggested that greater cardiovascular fitness relates to the enhanced integrity and function of neural systems supporting attention, memory, and scholastic achievement.

Another area of Matt’s research relates to the extent to which participation in a single bout of physical activity influences cognition in the normal preadolescent population as well as within children suffering from cognitive and attentional disorders. Findings from these investigations have suggested that a single 20-30 minute bout of moderately intense aerobic exercise serves to improve attention and processing speed, enhance achievement in reading and mathematics, and may reduce ADHD related deficits in impulse control.

Matt's primary teaching interests focus on the domain of kinesiological psychology, particularly in regards to the psychological determinants and consequences of health-oriented behaviors (e.g. physical activity). He has a strong commitment to undergraduate teaching and is currently teaching our Foundations of Kinesiology course.

We welcome Matt to our faculty!
Kinesiology Departments hosts the First Annual College of Education Halloween Party
Call for News

*Please send updates, information, and comments to the address listed above.*

Name ____________________________ Maiden Name ____________________________
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Performance in Motion

A newsletter distributed to members of the Mentor Society, the generous contributors who are enriching and enhancing our success as a unit at Michigan State University, alumni and friends of Kinesiology

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