

## Faculty and staff accomplishments (Sept. 1-Dec. 31)

### *Accomplishment kudos*

**Renu Agnihotri, MD**, associate professor, biochemistry, ATSU-KCOM, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Abdal Aziz Alfarra, BDS, DDS, MSc**, assistant professor, clinical education, ATSU-MOSDOH, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Kyle Allsup**, specialist, academic technologies, ATSU, received the Employee Excellence Award for the Arizona and California campuses for the third quarter of 2024.

**Don Altman, DDS, DHSc, EdD**, vice chancellor, academic support, ATSU, was accepted as a peer reviewer by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Peer reviewer training will begin in 2025 with new HLC standards taking effect in September 2025.

**Barton Anderson, DHSc, MS, ATC**, professor, athletic training, ATSU-ASHS, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**George Blue Spruce Jr., DDS, MPH**, assistant dean, American Indian affairs, ATSU-ASDOH, was inducted as a fellow in the American College of Dentists. Formally nominated in 2023, Dr. Blue Spruce received an in-absentia induction during an informal ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 14, 2024, at the Heard Museum in Phoenix. In addition, Dr. Blue Spruce was recognized by ATSU with a proclamation declaring Nov. 19 as Dr. George Blue Spruce Jr. Day, honoring his lifelong dedication to advancing healthcare, education, and opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

**Ann Lee Burch, PT, EdD, MPH**, dean, ATSU-ASHS, was accepted as a distinguished fellow of the Physical Therapy Academy in the class of 2025 by the National Academies of Practice. This prestigious honor recognizes Dr. Burch's outstanding achievements and leadership in the profession and interprofessional care.

**Maria Centeno-Vazquez, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S**, associate professor and director, speech-language pathology, ATSU-ASHS, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Christopher Crismon**, director, assessment & accreditation, ATSU, was accepted as a peer reviewer by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Peer reviewer training will begin in 2025 with new HLC standards taking effect in September 2025.

**Philip DaVisio, DMSc, MS, PA-C, CAQ-EM**, assistant professor, physician assistant studies, ATSU-CHC, was appointed to the Physician Assistant Board by California Gov. Gavin Newsom. He has been a supervisory physician assistant and hospital lead physician assistant at Kaiser Permanente since 2016 and assistant professor at ATSU-CHC since 2021. Dr. DaVisio is a member of the Society of Emergency Medicine Physician Assistants, California Academy of Physician Assistants, and American Academy of Physician Associates.

**Lihua Dishman, DBA, FACHE**, associate professor, health administration, ATSU-CGHS, was presented with the ACHE Service Award by the Midwest Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). The award recognizes Dr. Dishman's commitment to the healthcare management profession through her activities and services furthering professional excellence.

**Gustavo Fernandes, DDS, DMD, PhD, MSc, MSD**, associate professor and specialty care unit assistant director, clinical education, ATSU-MOSDOH, received the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 second runner-up Innovation in Teaching for Learning Award for the project "Innovating for an Accurate Diagnosis in Periodontics."

**Alan Freeman, DM**, senior director, patient care centers, ATSU, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Sara Funk, DPT**, assistant professor, anatomy, ATSU-KCOM, received the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Innovation in Teaching for Learning Award for implementing the "First Patient Project" for first-year students in her gross anatomy course. The voluntary assignment led to nearly 100 creative projects that were then displayed at an art exhibition on the Missouri campus and at ATSU-KCOM's Gift of Body Ceremony reception.

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**Jodi Gamm, MBA**, enrollment manager, ATSU-CGHS, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Rachel Geoghegan, DAT, MSHRD, ATC**, assistant professor, athletic training, ATSU-ASHS, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Jaana Gold, DDS, PhD, MPH, CPH**, professor, public health, ATSU-CGHS, received a scholarship to attend the Florida Policy Summit in Sarasota.

**Benjamin Gross, OTR/L**, instructor, occupational therapy, ATSU-ASHS, earned his doctor of clinical science (CScD) degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

**Marisa Hastie, EdD, MS, ACSM EP-C, PN-1, FACSM**, dean, ATSU-CGHS, was appointed chair of the American College of Sports Medicine's Ethics Committee for a three-year term. Additionally, Dr. Hastie was accepted as a peer reviewer by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Peer reviewer training will begin in 2025 with new HLC standards taking effect in September 2025.

**Alfredo Hernandez, DDS, MS**, associate professor, predoctoral education, ATSU-ASDOH, graduated from the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 Course Design Institute.

**Satish Kumar, DMD, MDSc, MS**, professor and director, periodontics, ATSU-ASDOH, was elected vice president of the Arizona section of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research.

**Lawrence LeBeau, DO**, chair, graduate medical education, ATSU-SOMA, was selected for the inaugural American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Graduate Medical Education Development Fellowship.

**Ivonne Maldonado de La Rosa, PhD, MS, CCC-SLP**, assistant professor, speech-language pathology, ATSU-ASHS, was named one of the 2024 recipients of the Distinguished Early Career Professional Certificate from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

**Sumitra Miriyala, PhD, MBA, MPH, FAHA**, associate professor, anatomy, ATSU-KCOM, was selected by the Society for Science's 2024-25 Advocate

Program. The program offers training, stipends, and year-round support to STEM educators and mentors helping students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds enter research fairs and competitions. In addition, Dr. Miriyala was invited to serve on a National Institutes of Health review panel for the R15 AREA/REAP opportunity and reviewed applications in cardio/pulmonary disciplines.

**Dana Nelson, MA**, executive director, advancement of osteopathic education, ATSU-KCOM, was selected for the inaugural American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Graduate Medical Education Development Fellowship.

**Bobby Rogers**, HVAC lead mechanic, maintenance, ATSU, received the Missouri campus Employee Excellence Award for the third quarter of 2024.

**Jason Salas, MAEd**, instructional designer and career services coordinator, ATSU-CGHS, obtained a new certification in project management for instructional designers from Canvas Credentials.

**Ann Spolarich, PhD, RDH**, professor and assistant dean, research, ATSU-ASDOH, was elected as councilor of the International Association for Dental Research Oral Health Research Group.

**Aesha Turner, DHed, MS, MCHES**, business operations manager, ATSU-CGHS, earned her certified in public health (CPH) credential.

**Malathy Venkatesh, PhD, CCC-SLP**, assistant professor, speech-language pathology, ATSU-ASHS, completed the Teaching & Learning Center's Level Up! certificate program to become an ATSU-certified health sciences educator.

**Mitzi Wasden, DDS, MS**, adjunct faculty, predoctoral education, ATSU-ASDOH, and **Joseph Creech, DDS**, adjunct faculty, predoctoral education, ATSU-ASDOH, received the Teaching & Learning Center's 2024 first runner-up Innovation in Teaching for Learning Award for their project, "Acting It Out: A Classroom Activity to Improve Knowledge and Visualization of Space Management Principles."