One of the most amazing things about the Department of Exercise Science is how much it has grown in the past few years, both in numbers of students and faculty and in the breadth of its programs. Recently I looked at some numbers that show the extent of that growth, and the findings were amazing. In the fall of 2000, 240 students were enrolled in our undergraduate program. In the fall of 2007, that enrollment had grown to 531 – an increase of 220% in eight years! In 2000, approximately 60 students were enrolled in our graduate programs. In 2007, more than 100 were enrolled. Since 2000 we have added the Doctor of Physical Therapy program while at the same time the faculty decided to strengthen the research component of our doctoral programs. And as many of you know, in the spring of 2006 the department research faculty moved into a new building with new state-of-the-art laboratories that carry on our research programming in exercise biochemistry, integrative muscle biology, neurobiology, physical activity and behavior, exercise rehabilitation, motor development, and chronobiology.

Eight years ago the Department had 12 faculty members. Today we have 26, and are actively recruiting three more as part of the University’s Faculty Excellence Initiative “cluster hire” program. The Faculty Excellence Initiative is seeking faculty members who will advance USC as leaders in education and research by building on areas of strength. To achieve this goal, “clusters” of three or four faculty with specific research interests are hired to build programs of interdisciplinary research. The Department of Exercise Science is currently participating in three “cluster hire” programs: Neuroimaging; Nutrition, Exercise, and Cancer; and Child Obesity, Physical Activity, and Related Health Conditions.

We also are moving forward in our goal of recruiting top students and providing them with the financial support they need to pursue research careers in exercise science. Last fall we established the Department of Exercise Science Alumni Fellowship program. This fellowship program will be funded by donations from alumni and will support highly qualified students who are committed to conducting cutting-edge research in our field. What I am saying is that the Department needs YOU to support this initiative. I am asking you to make a contribution to these Fellowships, and your support would be greatly appreciated. You may contribute online by going to the University’s website site www.sc.edu and clicking on Making a Gift which will take you to the University list of accounts. Look in particular for the Arnold School and the Department of Exercise Science listing. Make your contribution directly to the Exercise Science Department. For more information, please call our development office at (803) 777-3471, or e-mail shaney@gwm.sc.edu.

In closing, I look forward to seeing many of you at the ACSM annual meeting in Indianapolis May 28-31. If in the future you have an opportunity to come to Columbia, please let me know, and I will show you around our new building.

-J. Larry Durstine-
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Alumni Profile of David Myers, Class of 1985

There is a sense of gratitude to be asked to give a personal update in the Activist. When I came to USC in 1983, I was married and we made our home in the infamous Carolina Gardens. I was in the MS Exercise Physiology program and soon became engaged in the Cardiac Rehab program under the mentorship and leadership of Dr. Durstine. My wife, Kathy, worked at the USC Law School and those two years went by fast. My research was in the field of cardiovascular risk factors and the role of Lipoprotein Lipase.

My first employment was with HCA hospital in Rome, GA as the Director of an outpatient Back Rehab Program. I started a phase III cardiac program in my second year there and worked on my Athletic Training Licensure in 1988. Kathy worked as office manager for Humanities at Floyd Jr College and I taught part-time there as well. Our first child, Amanda was born in October 1988. In December 1990, I accepted a position with a Physical Therapy company back in Johnstown, PA, near my hometown. We moved back to Rome within 6 months. I started my own business doing Functional Capacity Testing for worker’s comp and worked with industry on back injury prevention programs. During the next 5 years I would be challenged to learn more regarding back injury, sports medicine and approaches to rehabilitation. In 1991, I was asked to set up and be the director of a physical therapy clinic. I attribute this ability directly to my education from USC and Dr. Durstine’s direction and engaging me in the development and organization of the cardiac program. The clinic was successful in that we grew from a staff of 4 to a staff of 16 within 18 months. The problem was that I was sensing a desire to further my education. My career was evolving from an undergraduate degree in teaching health and physical education to cardiac rehab and exercise training to sports medicine to the field of Physical Therapy encompasses some of all these areas. In 1993, we had our second child, Zachary in Rome. Several months later we moved to Montgomery AL where I worked with Rehab Associates as a consultant for the physical therapists in development of clinics and physician relations. During this period I also started assisting an Orthopedic Spine surgeon in clinic, assisted an Occupation Med physician in clinic, worked in athletic training at the college and high school levels.

In 1994, I decided that I was either going on for a PhD or apply to Physical Therapy school. We were accepted to PT school at Slippery Rock University (SRU) in 1995. I say we because it affected our whole family and I had their support. I graduated in 1998 with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy. I started my college journey at the Rock in 1974 out of HS for a short 2 years and then to be able to return there and complete my DPT was very rewarding for me personally. My first position from PT was in Etowah, TN at the local hospital. I was recruited to set up an outpatient program for spine and sports medicine along with an Orthopedist who was coming from Stanford. I endeavored to open my own private practice in 1999. Within the next year I merged with another Physical Therapy company with a vision of being able to take on a development role as well as patient care. I became the first regional directors of which there are now 4. My region currently has 9 clinics. In 2000, I became board certified in Orthopedic Physical Therapy. Also that year, there was an invitation to the USA Olympic training center in Colorado as an ATC for 2-3 weeks where I covered the Boxing team which included Jermain Taylor prior to their leaving for Sydney. In 2002, I had the USA wrestling team for the Titan Games in CA and then invited to Athens, Greece in 2004 to work with the Paralympic Games. What a great experience. In 2005, SRU invited me back as their Convocation speaker to the DPT class of 2005. Since 2000, I have been teaching continuing education for PTs through Great Lakes Seminars for manual therapy and completed my manual certification through them.

Where are we now? I treat patients on a limited basis now, chair our company’s committee of clinical excellence which is setting up a residency program for PTs and mentor new graduates. Kathy is busy being a mom and taking computer classes to stay atop the world of technology. Amanda is a freshman at East TN State University studying journalism and Zach is a freshman in high school playing basketball and soccer. He just found out yesterday that he made the varsity soccer team. Maybe those years of traveling with him for club soccer really has made a difference! We currently reside in Athens, TN. We wish all of you the best. We would love to hear from anyone at dmyers@benchmarkpt.com.

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REMINDER
At the ACSM Annual Meeting
May 28-31, 2008
EXSC Department Drop-In
Thursday, May 29
At 6:00 pm
The Westin at Indianapolis
The Governor’s Suite

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!