NCOPE

National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education

Annual Report 2023

Improving Lives and Strengthening the Profession Through Education

Chair's Message

Dear O&P Colleagues,

Over the past year, NCOPE has continued to uphold its commitment to maintaining and enhancing the quality of accreditation services for academic and residency programs. This report provides an overview of our accomplishments, academic and residency program data, and our priorities for the future.

Key Highlights

- Managed accreditation of academic programs and residency programs.
- Held a 2-day Education Summit on Aug 3-4, 2023, which focused on identifying the challenges of sustaining and enhancing O&P education and training programs. Fifty people from a variety of roles across the O&P profession defined and prioritized the challenges (Table 1).
- Awarded the 2023 Larry Lange Fellowship to **Erin Casey, CPO**.
- Awarded the 2023 NCOPE Diversity Travel Award to **Leslie Martinez**.
- Awarded the Core Principles project grant to **Nerrolyn Ramstrand, PhD, PO(Hons)** and her research team. This one-year grant primary research question is: What core concepts and principles are used by O&P professionals in the clinical setting? NCOPE plans to use the findings from this project in the updates to future academic program standards.
- Published in coordination with the American Academy of Orthotist and Prosthetist (the Academy) a JPO Supplement titled "Challenges of and Opportunities for O&P Education and Training: Envisioning Future Needs
- Announced and received nominations for the NCOPE Inaugural Volunteer. Awardee selected and presented with the award in 2024.

Future work

- The Workforce Study request for proposals (RFP) will be published in Jan 2025. The goal of this project is to provide information about the current O&P workforce and projected workforce needs. It will support education programs, employers, and policy decision makers with information about the need for O&P professionals to make data-informed decisions for long-term growth, workforce development, and to support the health within the United States.
- NCOPE regularly updates its requirements for accreditation. As part of that process, we seek input from the O&P community. Please help us improve education by reading and commenting on proposed requirements when asked.

» Technician Standards – open for public comment in early 2025
» Orthotist/Prosthetist – committee work to start in 2025
» Assistant Standards – committee work to start in 2025

- NCOPE started work in 2023 to completely restructured the Residency Standards using the evidence base and input the O&P community. The public comment period will occur in 2024 with the goal to implement in 2025.

As we look ahead, NCOPE stays dedicated to fostering academic and clinical training excellence and integrity, ensuring that the programs continue to thrive and evolve in an ever-changing healthcare environment. To meet your needs, we need you to be part of the conversation (Box 1). Together, we will continue to uphold the high standards that define our work, advancing the quality and impact of academic and residency programs nationwide.

Thank you to the NCOPE staff, board members, committee members, academic program faculty, and to all the residency programs, mentors, staff and volunteers for your efforts and hard work. Especially, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Mike Madden and the current board for their exceptional efforts. They are amazing people with a focus on what is best for the students and employers we serve, the patients, and the O&P profession.

Sue Spaulding, MS, FAAOP, CPO
Chair

Table 1. Priority Challenges Identified and Defined at the 2024 Education Summit

Priority Challenge A: **Value of Education/Certification for Technicians AND Credentialing Model - Certificate/Degree Not Required by Technicians.**	To attract and generate competent, valued Technicians who are committed to the profession, we must overcome the lack of return on investment for education or certification and generate new collaborations that support the expansion and growth of the Technician workforce. Technological advances and innovation will define future Technician practice, roles, critical competencies and certifications, as well as the optimal educational model and appropriate credentialing process.
Priority Challenge B: **Communication Between Education and Practice**	Inconsistent communication between O&P education programs and clinical practices inhibits collaboration needed to align curriculum content with practical needs, facilitate residency opportunities, and maintain evidence-based techniques. There are limited partnerships, ill-defined expectations, a potential misunderstanding of graduate abilities, and inconsistent dialogue to promote transparency between schools and clinics in the O&P profession.
Priority Challenge C: **Clinical practice model - Consensus for Assistants**	The OP profession does not have enough data to form a consensus on the necessity, the role and the scope of the assistant. In addition, there is lack of understanding on the delineation of the assistant from the other credentialing levels.
Priority Challenge D: **Curriculum Content for Practitioners**	Educational institutions need strategies to evolve curriculum to ensure efficient integration of appropriate technologies as well as to establish a balance between foundational skills and stakeholder expectations to ensure relevance to real-world clinical practice.
Priority Challenge E: **Limited Entry skills of Practitioner Graduates**	Employers expect new graduates to have a consistent/predictable baseline skill level to enter a real-world clinical setting. There is little consensus between the O&P residency sites and the O&P school faculty defining a baseline level of psychomotor, cognitive, and affective skills to allow residency sites to implement a consistent residency curriculum.

Priority Challenge F: **Value of Education/Certification for Assistants**	The challenges associated with the value perceived for assistants having a degree/certification include exploring career prospects, salary expectations, program requirements, job responsibilities, job outlook, and the impact of certification on job opportunities and career advancement. Given these challenges there remains a lack of consensus on the role of the Assistant and the value of education and certification.
Priority Challenge G: **Residency - Quality and Oversight**	Quality of a residency is not clearly defined, and mentorship is often inconsistent across sites, leading to undesirable variability in the residency experience.
Priority Challenge H: **Curriculum Content for Technicians**	There is a consensus that the technician curriculum is not aligned to the most current industry fabrication practices; the skills needed to fabricate devices with current practice are maligned with ABC certification standards. There is a lack of understanding of the current technician curriculum in general, and specifically regarding its relevance for teaching future technicians.

Full report located on **NCOPE website**

Photo Courtesy University of Pittsburgh

Box 1.
We invite you to be part of the conversation.

1. Find articles written by O&P professionals from a variety of perspectives on the Challenges of and Opportunities for O&P Education and Training: Envisioning Future Needs. NCOPE presented the findings at the 2023 AAOP National Academy Meeting and published the pre-summit survey and final meeting report here.
2. Complete the call for feedback surveys on the residency standards, technician standards, and assistant standards. See your emails!

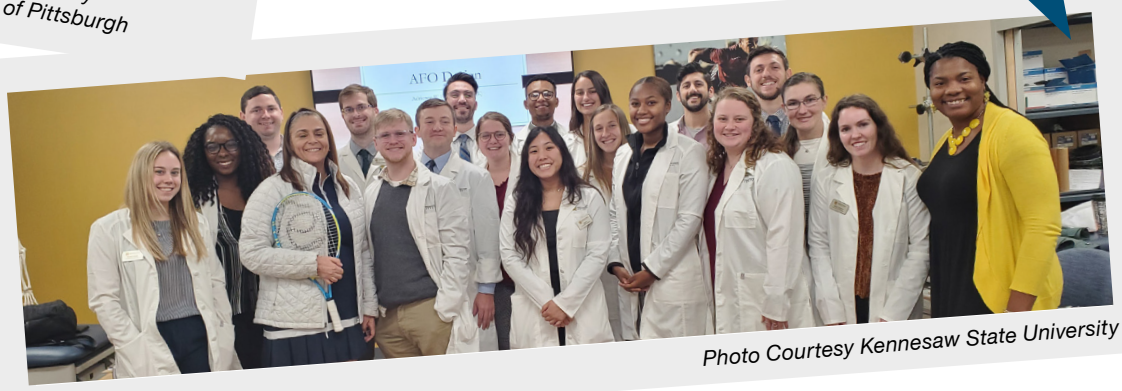


Photo Courtesy Kennesaw State University

Accredited Program Listing for 2023

O&P Programs in US					
Orthotist-Prosthetist Programs					
Institution	**Degree**	**Cohort size**	**Format**	**Length**	**Residency Model**
Alabama State Montgomery, AL	MSPO	10	FT in-person	19 mo (5 sem)	post-graduation residency
California State University - Dominguez Hills Los Alamitos, CA	MSOP	27	FT in-person	24 mo (8 qtrs)	post-graduation residency
Loma Linda University Mentone, CA	MSOP	Closing in 2025		24 mo (8 qtrs)	post-graduation residency
University of Hartford Hartford, CT	MSPO	24	FT in-person	24 mo (2 yrs)	post-graduation residency
International Institute of Orthotics & Prosthetics Tampa, FL	MPO	24-48	FT in-person	16 mo(4 sem; 16 wks/sem)	post-graduation residency
Kennesaw State University Kennesaw, GA	MSPO	24	FT in-person	24 mo (4 sem)	post-graduation residency
Northwestern University Chicago, IL	MPO	48	blended (3 qtrs online, 4 qtrs on site)	21 mo (7 qtrs)	post-graduation residency
Eastern Michigan University Ypsilanti, MI	MSOP	12	FT in-person	24 mo (2 yrs)	post-graduation residency
Concordia University St Paul/Century College St Paul, MN	MSOP	24	Online, and 3 1-wk on-site	22 mo	post-graduation residency
Salus University Elkins Park, PA	MSOP	8-24	FT in-person	36 mo (4 sem didactic + 5 Sem residency)	integrated residency
University of Pittsburgh Pittsburgh, PA	MSPO	24+	FT in-person	24 mo (2 yrs)	post-graduation residency

O&P Programs in US					
Orthotist-Prosthetist Programs					
Institution	**Degree**	**Cohort size**	**Format**	**Length**	**Residency Model**
Eastern Tennessee State University Johnson City, TN	MSOP	24	FT in-person	24 mo (2 yrs)	post-graduation residency
Baylor College of Medicine Houston, TX	MSOP	24	FT in-person	36 mo (12 mo didactic + 18 mo residency)	integrated residency
University of Texas - Southwestern Medical Center Dallas, TX	MPO	16	FT in-person	19 mo	post-graduation residency
University of Washington Seattle, WA	MPO	12	FT in-person	21 mo (7 qtrs)	post-graduation residency
Assistant Programs					
Oakland University Rochester, MI	Exercise Science BS with O&P Assistant Specialization		FT in-person	4 yrs (8 sem)	
Technician Programs					
Joliet Junior College Joliet, IL	AAS Orthotic Technology Certificate Prosthetics Technology Certificate	Variable	FT in-person		
Bluegrass Community and Technical College Lexington, KY	AAS	Variable	FT in-person		
Century College White Brea Lake, MN	AAS Orthotic Technology Prosthetic Technology	Variable, hybrid			
Spokane Falls Community College Spokane, WA	Orthotic and Prosthetic Technician Certificate	Variable	FT in-person	4 qtrs	

Academic Accreditation Services at a Glance 2023

During 2023, NCOPE performed accreditation services for the following programs and CAAHEP activities.

Orthotist/ Prosthetist Level Program	Self-Study Submission & Review	Site Visit Conducted	CAAHEP Accreditation Awarded 2023	Status Applied and or Awarded
Concordia University St. Paul in Consortium with Century College	Fall 2022	June 2023	Delayed till 2024	Continued
Eastern Michigan University	Winter 2022	September 2023	Sent to CAAHEP December 2023 for action in 2024	Continued
Kennesaw State University	Winter 2022	October 2022	January 2023	Continued
Loma Linda University	Summer 2022	March 2023	July 2023	Continued
Salus University	Summer 2023	November 2023	Sent to CAAHEP January 2024 for action	Initial

Assistant Level Program	Self-Study Submission & Review	Site Visit Conducted	CAAHEP Accreditation Awarded 2023	Status Applied and or Awarded
Oakland University	Fall 2022	March 2023	July 2023	Initial

Photo Courtesy International Institute of Orthotics & Prosthetics

Photo Courtesy Baylor College of Medicine

Photo Courtesy University of Pittsburgh

Academic Accreditation Services at a Glance 2023

Technician Level Program	Self-Study Submission & Review	Site Visit Conducted	CAAHEP Accreditation Awarded 2023	Status Applied and or Awarded
Century College	Spring 2023	October 2023	Sent to CAAHEP for action in 2024	Continued
Francis Tuttle				Withdraw Accreditation June 2023
St. Petersburg College				Inactive Status Awarded for 2 years. Set to expire in January 2025 unless reactive program

Photo Courtesy University of Washington

Photo Courtesy University of Washington

Photo Courtesy University of Washington

Clinical/Residency Accreditation Services at a Glance 2023

During 2023, NCOPE performed the following accreditation services:

Residency Sites Information:

Applications reviewed and accredited: 94

Total Number of accredited programs in 2023: 427

Organizational Type

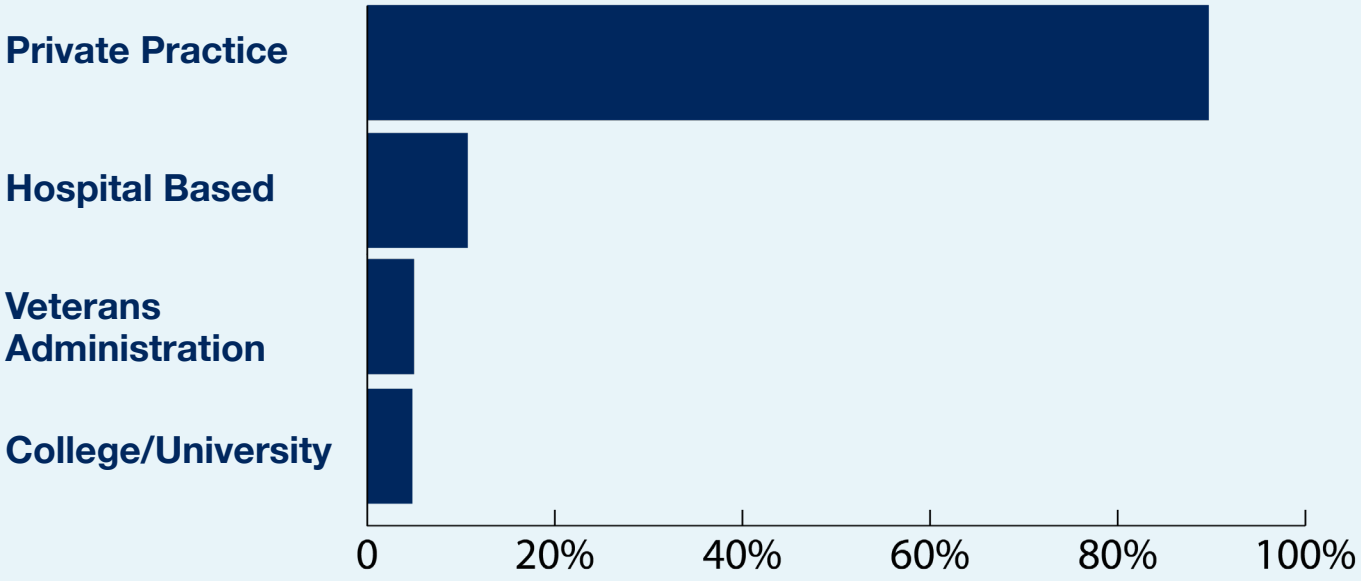
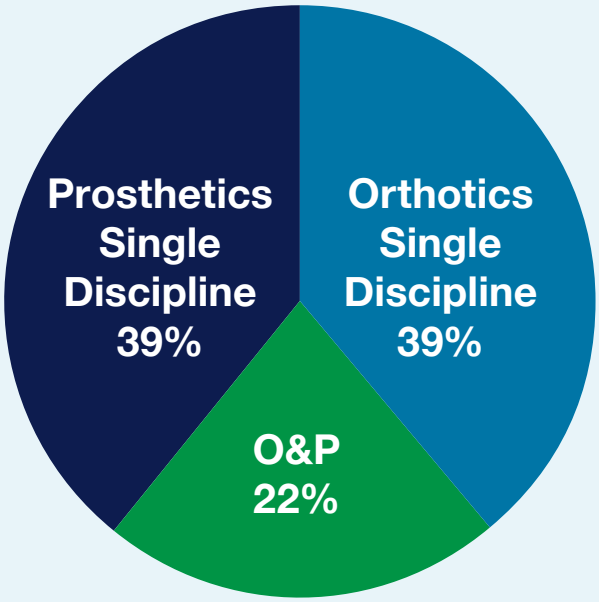


Photo Courtesy Century College

Photo Courtesy International Institute of Orthotics & Prosthetics

Photo Courtesy Century College

Resident Information Data



Program Type for 2023 Residents

Residents completed program in 2023: 328

Program Track:

287 Clinical Track

41 Research Development Track

Photo Courtesy Baylor College of Medicine

Photo Courtesy Baylor College of Medicine

NCOPE's Outreach/Impact to the Community

	Prospective Students	Current Students	Faculty	Residents	Directors/ Mentors
Online Courses[a,b]			✓		✓
Supervision Credits[b]			✓		✓
NCOPE Tracker				✓	✓
Exhibiting at Academy/ AOPA		✓	✓	✓	✓
Workshops at Academy/ AOPA[c]			✓	✓	✓
Networking Sessions at Academy/AOPA[d]				✓	✓
Employer Meet & Greet - Technician level		✓	✓		
Resident Fair		✓		✓	
Health Professions Week	✓				
Noteworthy Newsletter				✓	✓
Technician Newsletter		✓	✓		
OPRESCAS[e]		✓		✓	
Policy Forum[f]		✓			
Travel Awards[g]				✓	

[a] Site-visitor training, Approved Clinical Mentor (ACM)
[b] ABC Category 2 credits submission by NCOPE monthly
[c] TOPER or Specific subject, i.e., DEI
[d] Breakfast, lunch, or social event
[e] Pays for the first 4 applications
[f] NCOPE funds 50% of student travel/housing, remainder is funded by sister organization contributions
[g] DEI and Larry Lange

National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education

Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2023 and 2022

ASSETS	2023	2022
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$1,000,638	$1,163,884
Investments	2,429,509	1,899,057
Accounts Receivable	3,688	5,968
Promises Receivable	–	2,000
Prepaid Expenses	10,574	10,490
Total Current Assets	$3,044,409	$3,081,399
Fixed Assets:		
Fixed Assets - Net	47,021	53,237
Other Assets:		
Deposits	2,500	2,005
Total Assets	$3,493.930	$3,136,641
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	$47,968	$11,961
Grant Payable	$60,000	–
Accrued Leave & Salary	33,084	33,760
Due to Affiliate	102,014	109,187
Deferred Revenues (including long-term)	547,100	458,400
Total Liabilities	$790,166	$613,308
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	$2,673,564	$2,512,133
Restrictions	–	–
Total Net Assets	$2,673,564	$2,512,133
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	$3,493,930	$3,136,641

National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education

Statement of Activities
Years Ended December 31, 2023 and 2022

Revenues and Other Support	2023	2022
Contributions	$20,039	$18,010
Program Fees:		
Residency Fees	936,900	910,750
Site Application Fees	118,145	118,285
School Accreditation Fees	35,820	37,225
Other Program Fees	17,844	19,784
Interest and Dividends - Net of Invest Fees	82,968	37,921
Realized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	32,235	47,720
Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	119,614	(324,325)
Net Assets Released from Restrictions		
Satisfaction of Program Restrictions	20,000	22,000
Temporarily Restricted	(20,000)	(22,000)
Total Revenues and Other Support	$1,363,565	$869,370

Expenses		
Academic Services	$406,997	$303,168
Clinical Services	694,543	524,063
Governance - Administration	95,367	85,043
Fund Raising	5,227	4,950
Total Expenses	$1,202,134	$917,224
Changes in Net Assets	$161,431	$(51,854)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	$2,512,133	$2,563,987
Net Assets, End of Year	$2,673,564	$2,512,133

2023 Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

Susan Ewers Spaulding, MS, CPO, FAAOP
Chair

Mark D. Clary, CPO, FAAOP
Vice-Chair

Michael P. Madden, CPO, FAAOP
Treasurer

Sheryl Sachs, MSPO, CPO
Secretary

Directors

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Erin Ruxton, CPO, LPO
Edward Strachan, CPO
Rebecca Spragg, CPO
Heidi Truman, CPO
June McKoy, MD, MPH, JD, MBA, *Public*
J. Megan Sions, PhD, DPT, PT, *Public Member*
Robin C. Seabrook, Executive Director – *ex-officio*

NCOPE Staff

Robin C. Seabrook, *Executive Director*
Chris Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D), *Clinical Resource Director*
Eric Watters, *Residency Program Coordinator & Accreditation Assistant*
Claire Doyle, *Residency Program Assistant*

Active Committee Roster for 2023

Governance

Executive Committee

Susan E. Spaulding, MS, CPO, FAAOP – *Chair*
Mark Clary, CPO, FAAOP
Michael P. Madden, CPO, LPO, FAAOP
Robin C. Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Finance Committee

Michael P. Madden, CPO, FAAOP - *Chair*
Mark D. Clary, CPO, FAAOP
Erin Ruxton, CPO
Sue Spaulding, MS, CPO(L), FAAOP
Robin C. Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Nominations Committee

Thomas Karolewski, CP(L), FAAOP(D) – *Chair*
Walter Afable, CP(RET)
Charles Kuffel, CPO, FAAOP
Arlene Gillis, CP(L)
Jennifer Richards, CPO

2023 Education Conference Planning Committee

Susan E. Spaulding, MS, CPO(L), FAAOP – *Chair*
Michael P. Madden, CPO, LPO, FAAOP
Jonas Ljung, MSPO, CPO
Sheryl Sachs, MSPO, CPO
Scott G. Bretl, MPO, CPO
Joshua B. Utay, EdD, CPO
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Data Management and Analytics Committee

Erin Ruxton, CPO – *Chair*
Wendy Beattie, CPO, FAAOP
Kevin Hagemeier, CPO
Ashley Harris Mullen, CPO
J. Chad Duncan, PhD, CPO
J. Megan Sions, PhD, DPT, PT
Suesan Ewers Spaulding, MS, CPO, FAAOP
Gerald E. Stark, Jr., PhD., CPO, FAAOP(D
Chris Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D) – *Staff Liaison*

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee & NCOPE Diversity Award Committee

Jonas Ljung, MSPO, CPO, *Chair*
Stacey Brown, Former Resident
Sydney Ezell, CPO
Lauren Levey, CPO
June McKoy, MD, MPH, JD, MBA
Edward Strachan, CPO, *Board Liaison*
Chris Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D) - *Staff Liaison*
Robin Seabrook - *Staff Liaison*

Academic Education

Accreditation Committee

Wendy Beattie, CPO, FAAOP – *Chair*
Jennifer L. Block, CPO
Michael Cavanaugh, CPO
Michael P. Madden, CPO, FAAOP
Matthew A. Parente, CPO, FAAOP(D)
LaCheeta McPherson, PhD
Rebecca Spragg, CPO
Tamara Treanore, CO
Chris Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D) – *Staff Liaison*
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Clinical Education

Larry Lange Travel Fellowship Award Selection Committee

William Barringer, CO – *Chair*
Tyler Klenow, CPO, FAAOP
James Campbell, CO, FAAOP
Alyssa N. Perry, CPO
Catherine Carter, ABC Executive Director
Edward Strachan, CPO – *Board Liaison*
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*
Eric Watters – *Staff Liaison*

Residency Review Committee (RRC)

Charles W. Kuffel, MSM, CPO, FAAOP
Stephanie D. Langdon, CPO, FAAOP(D)
Thomas Karolewski, CP(L), FAAOP(D)
Jennifer Richards, CPO
Claire Doyle – *Staff Liaison*
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Regional Residency Liaison (RRL)

Michael Carroll, CPO (Region 1) – *Chair*
Alex Shimkus, CPO (Region 2)
Sarah Caragian, CPO (Region 3)
Morgan Brace, CPO (Region 4)
Colleen Clark, CPO (Region 5)
Sydney Ezell, CPO (Region 6)
Alexis Heikkila, CPO (Region 7)
Rochelle Groves, CPO (Region 8)
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Clinical/Residency Standards Committee

Daniel Abrahamson, CPO
Wendy Beattie, CPO, FAAOP
Megan Christ, CPO
Mark Clary, CPO, FAAOP
Thomas Karolewski, CP/L, FAAOP
Yuke Kee Ishikawa, CPO
Erin O'Brien, CPO, FAAOP
Edward Strachan, CPO
Heidi Truman, CPO
Chris Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D) – *Staff Liaison*
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*

Resident/Student Activities Committee

Jonas Ljung, CPO, *Chair*
Ciera Price, CPO
Sheryl Sachs, MSPO, CPO
Erin Ruxton, CPO, LPO
Timothy Bump, CPO – Project Manager
Ruthie Dearing – Communications Specialist
Shree Thaker – Communications Specialist
Robin Seabrook – *Staff Liaison*
Chris Robinson, MS, MBA, CPO, ATC, FAAOP(D) – *Staff Liaison*

Photo Courtesy University of Pittsburgh

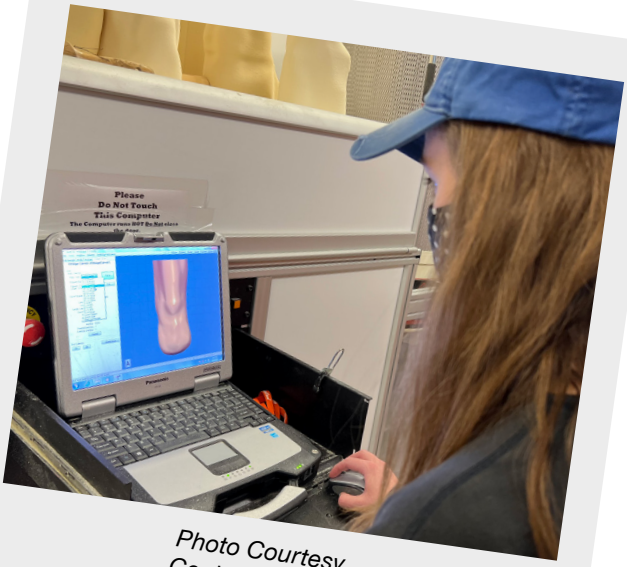


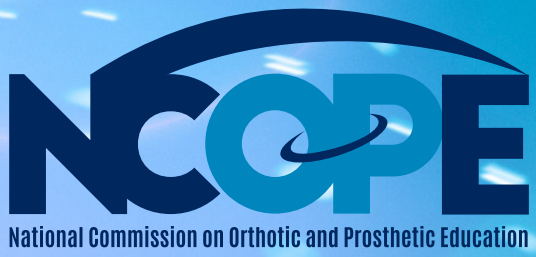
Photo Courtesy Century College

Photo Courtesy Baylor College of Medicine

Photo Courtesy Kennesaw State University

National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education Mission

Improving Lives and Strengthening the Profession Through Education



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NCOPE is a nonprofit national organization that works in cooperation with the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Accreditation Programs (CAAHEP) in accreditation activities for educational programs for the orthotics and prosthetics profession. NCOPE also accredits residency programs.