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## **Salus University Names First Director of New Orthotics and Prosthetics Program**



*J. Chad Duncan, PhD, CRC, CPO, was recently named the first director of Salus University's newly established Orthotics and Prosthetics (O&P) program, which will be the 15<sup>th</sup> O&P program in the U.S.*

**Elkins Park, Pa.** — Salus University recently appointed J. Chad Duncan, PhD, CRC, CPO, as the first director of the University's newly established Orthotics and Prosthetics (O&P) program, slated to accept its inaugural cohort of students in the Fall of 2022.

Until recently, Dr. Duncan was the director of the Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) program at Northwestern University in Chicago. The Northwestern P&O program is the oldest and known as one of the most distinguished programs in the U.S.

The new Salus O&P program will be the 15th in the country by the end of 2022 and the opportunity to build an O&P program from the ground up as well as the University's interprofessional education approach are what attracted Dr. Duncan to Salus.

“Salus’ interdisciplinary structure with Occupational Therapy and the relationships with the local Physical Therapy programs is going to be really ideal for this O&P program. Even the Physician Assistant Studies program is pulling from those educators and the collaboration between faculty and students is really important,” Dr. Duncan said. “That will allow our students to be better clinicians when they go out into the field, to have more confidence and interact with people in other allied health professions.”

The goal for the fall semester of 2022 is a maximum of 24 students with a faculty of four, which will include Dr. Duncan. The O&P program will be part of the College of Health Sciences, Education and Rehabilitation (CHER), which recently received a \$750,000 Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant to be used primarily toward creating O&P labs at the Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, campus.

Dr. Duncan is confident the program will be able to recruit top students and faculty because the Philadelphia region includes top universities that provide rich ground from which to recruit both. According to Dr. Duncan, exercise science, biomedical and mechanical engineering students will be attracted to O&P programs.

“Part of the uniqueness of the Salus program is our residency structured within our education and developing that to maximize students’ learning and being prepared to go out into the field,” Dr. Duncan said. “I really need to make sure our clinical pathways are sound, and the students are getting the best guidance and development during an important period of their growth as clinicians.”

A native of Alabama, Dr. Duncan attended Auburn University where he graduated in 1995 with a degree in Rehabilitation Services. He completed a practicum in O&P and started working as a technician in the field during his undergraduate years. After graduating, he went to Northwestern’s certificate program for his P&O training. After practicing for seven years, he enrolled at Auburn, where he earned a Master of Science in 2006 and a Doctor of Philosophy in 2008. After completing his doctorate in rehabilitation, he took a teaching job at the University of Maine at Farmington (UMF). After UMF, he started a graduate P&O program at Alabama State University before arriving at Northwestern in 2016.

Dr. Duncan has been a licensed prosthetist and orthotist in Alabama and is a certified prosthetist and orthotist, by the American Board Certification since 1998.

James Konopack, PhD, dean of CHER, said the University had been looking at establishing an O&P program and now that has become a reality with the addition of Dr. Duncan.

“Dr. Duncan has experience as a program director and experience with the accrediting body, National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education (NCOPE). That’s part of the reason why he was the choice candidate to lead this program,” Dr. Konopack said. “We really needed someone who was a standout leader in the field and that’s what Dr. Duncan brings.”

### **About Salus University**

Salus University, founded as the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1919, today is a diversified, globally recognized professional academic center of learning that offers a wide range of degree programs in the professions of Optometry, Audiology, Physician Assistant, Blindness and Low Vision Studies, Biomedicine, Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology. Salus operates four clinical facilities in Philadelphia and Montgomery counties that

provide highly specialized vision, hearing and balance, speech-language pathology and occupational therapy services. The University has more than 1,200 students, and more than 14,000 alumni worldwide. For more information, please visit [www.salus.edu](http://www.salus.edu).