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GSU View, February 26, 2018

Office of Marketing and Communications
Governors State University

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GSU View, February 26, 2018: Vol. 50, Issue 4

GSUView

Sent: Monday, February 26, 2018 5:11 PM

If you have problems reading this in your email browser, go to www.govst.edu/gsuview for a web version.

 The logo for 'gsuview' features the letters 'gsu' in a large, orange, lowercase serif font, followed by 'view' in a smaller, white, lowercase sans-serif font. A thin orange horizontal line is positioned below the 'gsu' portion.

A newsletter for students, faculty & staff



February 26, 2018

Vol. 50, Issue 4

News**GSU Jaguars Play for CCAC Tournament Title Tonight**

On Friday evening, the Governors State University men's basketball team opened the CCAC championship with an 80-71 win against Holy Cross.

Tonight at 7 p.m., the Jaguars (24-8) will host Roosevelt (27-6) in the CCAC Championship Game—the last home game before they head to the NAIA National Tournament, commencing March 7 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

For live stats and video stream of tonight's game, click [here](#).

Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children (under 12). **GSU students, faculty, and staff gain free admittance with myONECARD.**

Final MAP Deadline is Tomorrow!



Tomorrow, **February 27**, is the deadline to complete your FAFSA to ensure consideration for the Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) Grant for the 2018 –19 academic year. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) will suspend the MAP grant award on February 28.

Submit your FAFSA [here](#) using GSU's school code: 009145. Contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#) with any questions.

All-Campus Symposium Looks at Strengths



Discovering students' strengths is the best way to engage—and retain—they, Lead Strategist Tom Matson told a group of nearly 160 GSU faculty, staff and students gathered on **Friday, February 23** for the Spring All-Campus Symposium. "If you get students to year three, they usually graduate." Matson works for part of Gallup Education, which administers the Clifton StrengthsFinder survey for leadership development. "We have to find their strengths in years one and two."

The focus was strength-based model of education used to identify students' natural gifts and talents to help them succeed. To prepare for the daylong event, participants took a Gallup Education Clifton StrengthsFinder survey to identify and rank their five dominant leadership themes. The themes were pulled from a pool of 34 that ranged from Strategic and Focus to Harmony and Relator.

"Research shows the strength-based model of education works," GSU President Elaine P. Maimon told the group.

Stay tuned for full coverage of this spring's symposium in next week's [GSU Newsroom](#).

Find Out About Covering Summer Tuition with Your Pell Grant

Were you awarded the Pell Grant this academic year? Great news! You are now eligible for money to [help you pay for your summer courses](#).

Registration for summer courses begins **March 19**, but you can get a jumpstart on preparing for a productive summer by viewing the summer schedule in your [MyGSU portal](#) now.

Contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#) to learn more about covering costs for the upcoming summer semester.

Student Rights and Responsibilities Week



Rights & Responsibilities Week promotes awareness of student rights and responsibilities on campus and in the community through events that explore values, community, integrity, and accountability.

Events begin today, **February 27**, with “Crafting our Campus Community” from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. in the Hall of Governors. Join us for crafts and snacks while sharing what values, integrity, & responsibility mean to you. Learn about Community Standards, enter to win prizes, and enjoy free snacks! Click [here](#) for the full schedule.

R&R Week is hosted by the [Office of the Dean of Students: Community Standards Program](#).

Immunization Records Moves to New Location

The Immunization Records Office has moved to the Office of the Registrar, in C-1300 (near the Hall of Governors).

Submit immunization records to the Registrar’s Office by:

- Email: immunizations@govst.edu (scanned and attached as a PDF)
- Fax: 708.534.1640 (NEW FAX Number)
- Drop Off: Office of the Registrar, Room C-1300
- Post Mail: Office of the Registrar, 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484
-

For more information about immunization and compliance, click [here](#).

Conversations with Leaders: Jun Zhao



[Jun Zhao](#), the great-granddaughter of a prominent philosopher, feels privileged to share one bit of cultural wisdom with Governors State University business students.

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand,” that’s one of my favorite quotes by Confucius,” said Zhao, Dean of the highly esteemed [College of Business](#) since 2017, and Division Chair of Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship before that.

Zhao’s great grandfather, Ping Liao, was a scholar at the turn of the 20th century who co-founded Sichuan School of Chinese Philosophy (which later became Sichuan University) in Southwest China. Her parents, and grandparents, before them were all educators, establishing a family legacy that led Zhao to GSU in 1999.

[Read more . . .](#)

Tornado Drill Day – Tuesday, March 20

GSU will host a campus-wide Tornado Drill Day, **Tuesday, March 20** at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. All persons on campus at the time are required to participate. If you are on campus, please proceed to the nearest tornado shelter and stay there until a member of the campus safety team directs you to leave the shelter. For faculty members who are in class at the time, please guide your students to the nearest shelter. We know this drill will be a brief disruption to class instruction and the workday, but it is imperative to participate in preparation of tornado season and assessment of campus readiness. You will find Tornado Drill resources on GSU’s [Emergency webpage](#) that includes:

- Listing of Tornado Shelters
- University’s Emergency Preparedness Checklists
- Campus Safety Booklet

There are separate checklists for faculty and staff. Please familiarize yourself with the processes and procedures contained within. This drill is a university-wide effort. We thank you for your cooperation in making GSU a safe environment for its entire community.

Announcements and Events

GSU Saves

GSU and members of its surrounding communities are invited to GSU Saves, a week of financial literacy events inspired by [America Saves](#). Between 11:30 a.m. and 5 p.m today through **March 1**, industry professionals will promote ways for you to save, budget, and invest. Prizes and giveaways will take place throughout the week.

GSU Saves is funded by a GSU Intellectual Life grant and hosted by the Interdisciplinary Studies (IDSS) program. Email [Leslie Grange](#) for more information.

Doing Business in Eastern Europe

On Friday, **March 9**, GSU's College of Business will host "Doing Business in Eastern Europe," a workshop for businesses in the region that aspire to expand their operations to this emerging market. Representatives from Bulgaria, Poland and Serbia, as well as U.S. government agents from SBA, DOC, and DCEO will share with audience opportunities in this market, as well as marketing and finance strategies. The keynote speaker for this event is Dr. Sheila Puffer, renowned scholar in the area of Eastern Europe and Russian business studies. An afternoon business panel will also be included to share best practices and lessons learned.

Give Back to GSU With Your Next Real Estate Purchase

Giving back just got easier. [Investing In Communities®](#) (IIC), a nonprofit real estate referral platform that supports charities and other nonprofit organizations through real estate transactions, lets you donate a portion of your real estate purchase to GSU for free. The way it works is IIC refers brokers to people buying or selling property—residential and commercial—then donors choose where their donations go.

This nonprofit social enterprise has made more than \$550,000 in donations to date. If you, a family member, or someone you know is planning to make a move involving real estate in the future, call IIC first and see how a minimum of effort can create impact at GSU.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

Student Organizations to Host Literacy Project

Throughout March, The Student Education Association (SEA) and Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society (KDP) will host a Literacy Project. The project will celebrate the nationwide Read Across America (NEA) and Literacy Alive! (KDP). Donations of children's books (new and used, in good condition) will be collected throughout the month of February for the following shelters and centers, where student leaders and other volunteers will also read and facilitate literacy activities:

- South Suburban PADS (4411 W. Gatling Blvd, Country Club Hills): **Thursday, March 1**, 4 – 6 p.m.
- The Garden of Prayer Youth Center (657 E. Court Street, Kankakee): **Friday, March 2**, 4 – 6 p.m.
- Together We Cope (17010 Oak Park, Tinley Park): **Thursday, March 8**, 4 – 6 p.m.
- Ronald McDonald House (211 E. Grand Ave, Chicago): **Friday, March 23** 7:30 – 9 p.m.

Literacy activities will vary by location but will include an assortment of read-alouds, book creations, and crafts. All materials will be provided for the activities and then donated to the location at the culmination of the event.

This project is an extension of the Education for Sustainability event launched in November. For more information or to RSVP, contact [Hannah Gruben](#).

S.H.E.R.O. Registration Open



The S.H.E.R.O. (Sharing Her story of Empowerment, Resilience, and Opportunity) Women's Leadership Symposium inspires women to seek their highest level of personal and professional development through a greater understanding of leadership and the acquisition of new ideas to optimize and sustain personal potential. .

This year's theme "Reclaiming My Time" encourages women to use their voices, celebrate how valuable they are, and take ownership of their destiny. It is a time of reclamation to celebrate the beauty of their multiple identities that makes them powerful leaders beyond measure.

Please [register](#) by **Friday, March 16**. For more information email diversity@govst.edu.

Panera Fundraiser Hosted by Students of Addictions Studies Club



GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS OF ADDICTIONS STUDIES
CLUB

Help support the Students of Addictions Studies Club by dining at Panera in Matteson on **Wednesday, March 28** from 4 – 8 p.m. [Bring this flyer](#) or show an electronic version to the cashier for a portion of proceeds to benefit the club.

Panera is located at 4864 211th St., Matteson, IL 60443.

Nursing Student Town Hall



Those interested in learning more about nursing can ask questions about the field, as well as meet or get to know professors and members of the department, at the Nursing Open House **Tuesday, April 10** from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. in Engbretson Hall.

This gathering will allow students from all Nursing programs (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) the opportunity to meet the director, clinical coordinators, and instructors.

GSU Faculty: Call for Submissions for the 2018 Faculty Authors Reception

The annual Faculty Authors and Sponsored Program Grant Recipients Reception will take place on **Wednesday, April 11** from 2:30 – 4 p.m. on the library balcony. All faculty are invited to submit their works by **Thursday, March 29**.

Each member of the faculty has been sent instructions for submitting works, along with the submission form. The Faculty Authors Reception is co-sponsored by the Governors State University Library, the Friends of the Governors State University Library, and the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research. Email [Alexis Sarkisian](mailto:Alexis.Sarkisian) with questions.

Two-Day Comprehensive Suture Training Workshop

A two-day Comprehensive Suture Training Workshop will be held **April 21 – 22**, starting at 8 a.m., in the G-Wing Nursing Simulation Lab.

This two-day (16-hour) course is directed to nurse practitioners and physician's assistants. This course provides broad exposure to various types of procedural suturing. Learners at any level of experience will gain knowledge using integrated lecture and hands-on training as follows under the expert guidance of experienced suture training instructors using surgical-grade instruments.

The program cost is \$300 and includes the two-day course tuition, 16 CE contact hours, and training materials for home practice.

For more info or to register, click [here](#).

Highlights

Marlon Cummings



Leadership lies at very center of Governors State University Assistant Professor [Marlon Cummings](#)' character. And he loves it.

He loves shaping and molding leaders in his *School Improvement Process* classes at Governors State University.

He loves inspiring his friends and family to go into education, a field that afforded his mother a 40-year career.

But Cummings, Interim Director of the [Interdisciplinary Leadership Doctorate Program](#), doubles over with laughter when he talks about young children in a Saturday tutoring program where he volunteers.

[Read more . . .](#)

A Grateful Graduate's Road to Success



Sometimes all it takes is a change of scenery to help you discover the right path for your journey. For Othman O'Malley, a 2017 GSU [Doctor of Physical Therapy](#) graduate, that transformative moment happened in South Korea.

O'Malley was teaching English after receiving his undergraduate degree in political science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. "I was a political science major dead set on going to law school, but being in Korea changed all of that," O'Malley said. "Teaching kids between the ages of six and 15, who didn't speak any English, forced me to come up with creative ways to not only engage them in the learning, but to also make it fun."

[Read more . . .](#)

Workshops & Trainings

A complete list of workshops for students, faculty, and staff can be found [here](#).

Faculty: If you have not already done so, it's time to have a new headshot photograph taken. Please refer to the [schedule](#) to find a convenient time.

Do you have a story or event you want to submit for the GSU View?

[Click here to learn about our submission guidelines.](#)



Governors State University

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Immunizations

*** Special Immunization Announcement ***

Effective July 21st, 2016 updates to the Illinois General Assembly Administrative Code (<ftp://www.ilga.gov/JCAR/AdminCode/077/07700694sections.html>) have increased the immunization requirements for incoming fall 2016 college students attending all Illinois State schools. These changes have increased the requirements for Tdap, Rubella, Mumps, Meningitis, and those students born before 1957.

All GSU students are encouraged to log in to their secure student portal to check their current Immunization status.

Where can I locate my immunization documentation?

1. Previous high school or four-year college/university
2. Military records or World Health Organization (WHO)
3. Family physician or childhood records
4. Illinois Comprehensive Automated Immunization Registry Exchange (I-CARE)
<http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/shots.htm>

Click here to download the Immunization Record Form
(/uploadedFiles/Campus_Life/Career_Services(1)/Career_Services_Fall 2018 Immunization form.docx)

If none of the above options have your records, request an immunity profile (Titers blood test) that confirms your immunity to measles, mumps and rubella. The lab report(s) must be attached. If you are unable to obtain proof of immunization, you will need to be re-vaccinated.

International students, born outside of the United States, must have had a Tuberculosis (TB) skin test in the U.S. within the last 12 months. If records are not in English, they must be accompanied by a certified translation.

Immunization Record Compliance Deadline:

Students admitted 2018 Spring: Friday, January 12, 2018

Students admitted 2017 Summer and Fall: Friday, September 8, 2017

Students who do not submit immunization records ([/uploadedFiles/Campus_Life/Career_Services\(1\)/Career_Services_Inside_Pages/Summer-Fall 2018 Immunization form.docx](/uploadedFiles/Campus_Life/Career_Services(1)/Career_Services_Inside_Pages/Summer-Fall 2018 Immunization form.docx)) by the above deadline will have a registration hold placed on their account that will prevent registration for classes in the second semester. **Students who remain non-compliant will have a \$25.00 late fee applied to their account.**

Check your GSU student email for regular communication regarding deadlines, late fees, and reminders.

If you are exempt because you exclusively attend classes at an off-site location or are exclusively enrolled in an online degree program, then download the Immunization Exemption Form (/uploadedFiles/Campus_Life/Career_Services(1)/Career_Services_Inside_Pages/New Immunization Exemption Form 7-2017.pdf) and submit. Note that a new Exemption Form, signed by your advisor, must be submitted every semester on or before the current Immunization Deadline.

Immunization Records can be submitted to the Student Health and Counseling Center by:

Email: immunizations@govst.edu (mailto:immunizations@govst.edu) (scanned and attached as pdf)
Fax: 708.235.3961
Drop off: Student Health and Counseling Center, Room A1120
Postal mail: 1 University Parkway, University Park, Illinois 60484-0975
Phone: 708.235.7154

For more information and to access the Immunization Form, please click here
(/uploadedFiles/Campus_Life/Career_Services(1)/Career_Services_Inside_Pages/Spring 2018 Mandatory Immunization Form.pdf).

Notice about the Meningococcal Conjugate Meningitis Vaccination

Governors State University, consistent with the American College Health Association (ACHA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices, recommends that students who live in the residence hall and those older than 21 years of age consider the meningococcal conjugate vaccination to reduce their risk for potentially fatal meningococcal disease. For additional information, please refer to the index of the ACHA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This statement is intended to promote public health awareness and practices, and is in compliance with the Illinois Meningitis Information Law (110 ILCS 690/35-120).

[Student Life \(/Studentlife/\)](#)

[Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management \(/studentaffairs/\)](#)

[Family Development Center \(/FamilyDevelopmentCenter/\)](#)

[Athletics and Recreation Center \(/Campus_Life/Athletics_and_Recreation_Center/\)](#)

[University Housing \(/Campus_Life/University_Housing-2147367972/\)](#)

[Health and Student Counseling Center \(/health-student-counseling-center/\)](#)

[Advocate Health Center \(/advocate-health-center/\)](#)

[Counseling Center \(/counselingcenter/\)](#)

[Access Services for Students with Disabilities \(/disability-services/\)](#)

[Immunizations \(/immunization/\)](#)

[Career Services \(/careerservices/\)](#)

[Campus Dining \(/Campus_Life/Campus_Dining/\)](#)



University Park, IL, February 26, 2018

Conversations with Leaders: Jun Zhao

Jun Zhao, (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/jzhao/) the great-granddaughter of a prominent philosopher, feels privileged to share one bit of cultural wisdom with Governors State University business students.

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand,’ that’s one of my favorite quotes by Confucius,” said Zhao, Dean of the highly esteemed College of Business (<http://www.govst.edu/cob/>) since 2017, and Division Chair of Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship before that.

Zhao’s great-grandfather, Ping Liao, was a scholar at the turn of the 20th century who co-founded Sichuan School of Chinese Philosophy (which later became Sichuan University) in Southwest China. Her parents, and grandparents, before them were all educators, establishing a family legacy that led Zhao to GSU in 1999.

In the last decade, she has served in roles across the campus, from professor to committee chair, and has been recognized by her peers and administration with the Faculty Excellence Award and the (former) College of Business and Public Administration Faculty Service Award.

She’s also won industry recognition with articles published in journals such as *Academy of Management Review*, *Management Research Review*, *Chinese Management Studies*, and *Journal of International Education in Business*.

At GSU, Zhao’s strategic thinking and organizational management skills help achieve the vision for the COB: a high-quality business school education, which she calls an economic equalizer.

The GSU COB is a standout by any measure, having earned the gold standard of business schools—the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (<https://www.govst.edu/COBAccreditation>) which stamps less than 5 percent of business schools world wide.



**AACSB
ACCREDITED**

The AACSB accreditation, coupled with expert scholars and partnerships with industry leaders, boosted the status of GSU's five undergraduate programs and three graduate programs, including the MBA degree.

Zhao said the program should be the go-to for business students in the South Suburbs.

"We want students to know we offer the best value in the highly competitive business school education. We should be viewed as the school of choice for top talent in business and economics in Chicago's Southland region and beyond," Zhao said.

And people are noticing.

In the last two years, the MBA student enrollment has grown by nine percent, primarily online where two new tracks — Supply Chain Management (<http://www.govst.edu/supplychain/>) and General Management (<http://www.govst.edu/MBAonline/>)—are designed to meet students' needs.

Zhao also reports more companies are seeking to partner with the program, joining the likes of accounting firm Legacy CPA; financial institution Wintrust; logistics and transportation leader JB Hunt; and major manufacturer Mi-Jack, which has experienced such great results with an GSU intern that company officials are seeking more talent.

Another student was hired by JB Hunt as an analyst after earning an MBA degree in the Supply Chain track.

The student had been a corporate chef before deciding to pursue an MBA. Today he is a transportation manager at Fuchs Lubricants and planning to share his knowledge and experience with students.

Bullseye, said Zhao.

"This is what really makes our jobs exciting — to know you have that type of impact on the community you are part of. That's what's inspiring."

Students' needs also inspire Zhao to continue tweaking the program to add a finishing touch —to students.

As part of a new two-course series on professional development, industry leaders share their beyond-the-classroom perspectives on topics such as professional networking, personal branding, career planning, and conflict resolution.

"These soft skills aren't easily taught in the classroom," Zhao said. "Students need to hear real-life examples from people living it every day. This is the nitty gritty knowledge that will be very valuable as students prepare for career advancement after completing their graduate degree at GSU."

This year, Zhao's team is planning to revise the Master of Science in Accounting (<http://www.govst.edu/MSA/>) and Master of Science in Management Information Systems (<http://www.govst.edu/msmis/>) programs to create more flexibility in course delivery and admissions pathways.



Pathways lead to access lead to jobs. That's the ultimate destination, Zhao said.

"We enjoy seeing our students utilize their knowledge and skills gained to impact their communities and contribute to the economic success of the society."



Chicago, IL, February 26, 2018

Marlon Cummings

Leadership lies at very center of Governors State University Assistant Professor Marlon Cummings' (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/mcummings/) character. And he loves it.

He loves shaping and molding leaders in his *School Improvement Process* classes at Governors State University.

He loves inspiring his friends and family to go into education, a field that afforded his mother a 40-year career.

But Cummings, Interim Director of the Interdisciplinary Leadership Doctorate Program, (<http://www.govst.edu/browse/ed.d-degree/interdisciplinary-leadership/>) doubles over with laughter when he talks about young children in a Saturday tutoring program where he volunteers.

“They run up to me and say, ‘Hey, Dr. C, what’s going on?’ I l-o-v-e that.”

A passion to help children succeed drove Cummings to work with members of his South Side church almost 10 years ago. What began as a Saturday morning activity with school-age children soon grew into a program that has exceeded its goal to help students improve reading and math skills.

They are drawn to his light, and he is inspired by theirs. “We have to develop young people into leaders so that they can develop the next generation. We need schools and leaders that can rise and shine.”

The son of an educator, Cummings is a graduate of a historically black college who looks to legends W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington (their black and white images hang in his office) as he forges his own legacy.

The ability to step up where needed is likely a quality that led the university to tap the junior faculty member for an Interim Director position, shortly after he assumed the role of the coordinator for the Superintendent Concentration. Among other committees, Cummings is a vital part of the much lauded Male Success Initiative

(<http://www.govst.edu/msi/>), a GSU enrichment program for male students, particularly men of color, that helps participants develop a game plan for success, from orientation to graduation.

Off campus, Cummings is a cog that powers the wheels of his extended community as part of the Bronzeville Community Action Council, a Local School Council Representative at Burke Elementary, and, of course, the tutoring program at his church where he sits on the leadership team.



His commitment is more of a mandate. “I come from the thinking, “Those who can, should, and if I don’t, who will?”

GSU Newsroom: You worked as a middle school teacher in Washington, D.C., and as a consultant in well-to-do suburban schools. How do issues in urban schools compare with suburban schools where income is often higher?

Cummings: There are similar issues for urban areas and suburban areas when it comes to how kids navigate adolescence. In more urban areas, it might be talking about gym shoes or, “What jersey are you wearing?” In more affluent areas, it might be what car you drive or what kind of bag you have or, “Do your parents have money or are you on scholarship?”



But our goals are consistent: We want all students to be developed as leaders. That calls for an understanding of their role in society. It starts right here in middle school. Are they victims, bullies, or standing by? How do we get those who are standing idly by when their classmates are being bullied to engage?

GSU Newsroom: Why do you say your role as a professor is the best way to influence educational policy?

Cummings: I’ve worked for the state and in education advocacy roles. In organizations like that, we would convene people to talk about policy and it would be educators—my professors from University of Illinois at Chicago—and people I had gone to grad school with speaking. They were asking us about policy, but I realized I wasn’t in a position to speak on policy. I figured out the way you influence policy is as a professor—doing research, getting grants, and getting your work out at a state and national level. This position is where I can have more influence on policy.

GSU Newsroom: How did you and a South Side gas station owner boost attendance at a neighborhood school by five points?

Cummings: I’m on a local school council in Chicago. We work with teachers and people from the community to improve the school. It’s like the local school board for each school. We were having a problem with tardies because kids were stopping at the gas station and be buying candy and chips before school and so they would be late,

making our attendance scores low.

We worked with the owner so he could still make money and the kids could be on time. Now, it was tough working with a business because he's like, 'I'm trying to make this money.' But we did it, in part, by allowing him to supply a student run store with candy.

We also empowered adults in the school to say, 'Hey, if a kid is not here, I'm calling.' You have to be diligent to make things convenient for parents if you want then to engage. Not all will but a few will. That's how you lead."



University Park, IL, February 26, 2018

A Grateful Graduate's Road to Success

Sometimes all it takes is a change of scenery to help you discover the right path for your journey. For Othman O'Malley, a 2017 GSU [Doctor of Physical Therapy](http://www.govst.edu/Academics/Colleges_and_Programs/College_of_Health_and_Human_Services/Department_of_Physical_Therapy/Doctor_of_Physical_Therapy_Program/) (http://www.govst.edu/Academics/Colleges_and_Programs/College_of_Health_and_Human_Services/Department_of_Physical_Therapy/Doctor_of_Physical_Therapy_Program/), graduate, that transformative moment happened in South Korea.

O'Malley was teaching English after receiving his undergraduate degree in political science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. "I was a political science major dead set on going to law school, but being in Korea changed all of that," O'Malley said. "Teaching kids between the ages of six and 15, who didn't speak any English, forced me to come up with creative ways to not only engage them in the learning, but to also make it fun."

"That was a real challenge for me," O'Malley continued. "But it also made me realize that what I really wanted was to work directly with people, to help them, and educate them in a way that could actually improve their lives long-term." On his travels, O'Malley met several people who were preparing to enter the occupational and physical therapy fields. Through speaking with them, he discovered that physical therapy was a great fit for his personality and professional aspirations. "I started researching physical therapy and loved how hands on it is," O'Malley said. "You interact with people every day. Your goal, oftentimes, is to restore not only patients' health, but also their spirit, and to really educate them so they can maintain that health and spirit after their time with you. I love that it merges teaching with health."

Once O'Malley was back in the U.S., he began exploring doctoral programs for physical therapy and quickly decided on Governors State University.

“After looking into several options, it became clear pretty fast that GSU was the right choice for me,” said O’Malley. “I could easily commute and afford it financially, but beyond all that I was attracted to the smaller class sizes and the clear dedication of all the faculty I met with.” The small class sizes – with an average of 30 students per cohort – are unique to GSU and tend to help students like O’Malley build a support system and create professional relationships that often last long after graduation.

Rebecca Wojcik, PT, EdD, GCS, department chair for Physical Therapy and O’Malley’s professor and academic advisor said small cohorts distinguish the program. “It helps the students develop close working relationships with each other and the faculty in the program, which fosters engagement in the curriculum and in the profession as a whole.”

Today, O’Malley is an outpatient physical therapist at Advocate South Suburban Hospital in Hazel crest.

He credits GSU’s solid broad range of classes and experienced professors with helping him succeed. “The clinical experiences the program arranged covered the breadth of the profession and I felt confident going into the clinic,” he said. “The skills I gained and the connections I made through the GSU DPT program will stay with me for a lifetime.”

