

## Workshop on bringing together physical therapy and social rehabilitation of disabled

By John White

On Friday May 30<sup>th</sup> Anglo-American University will host a workshop that brings together physical therapy techniques and social rehabilitation within an ecological framework. The workshop will take place between 9am and 1pm and is open to anyone interested in examining the challenges encountered by individuals with mobility impairments, such as children with cerebral palsy, adults with degenerative neurological conditions or those who have suffered strokes or traumatic brain injuries.

Strategies will be explored to assist persons with such disabilities to better integrate them into society, i.e. meet their individual social roles and goals. Although the workshop is a stand alone event, it is part of an ongoing series from Anglo American University's new Masters' program in Public Policy.

The workshop is being offered by lecturers and experts in the field, associated with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). The workshop, "Enhancing Societal Integration of Persons with Disabilities: An Ecological Perspective," features guest instructors, all of whom have a wealth of experience in their fields.

The workshop aims to provide practical considerations with the intention to enhance more positive attitudes and actions of individuals with disabilities, and with a particular focus on the individual's families and social support networks to maximize the potential for full social engagement.

Specific objectives include, maximizing the potential of individuals to meet societal integration challenges; empowering families and social service providers to better identify the needs and help overcome barriers to social integration for individuals with neuron-motor dysfunction; and identifying resources to optimize support for individuals with mobility restrictions as they seek to meet their personal and social goals.

Presenters include Cathie Smith, PT, DPT, Ph.D., PCS, Pediatric Clinical Specialist in Physical Therapy and Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy, at UTC; Jeanette Beach, PT, DPT, NCS, Adult Neurological Specialist in Physical Therapy and Instructor in the Dept. of Physical Therapy at UTC; Dan Earl, Physical Therapist; Rhonda Jacks, MSW, instructor in the Dept. of Social Work at UTC, and Clinical Specialist in management of victims of sexual abuse, Partnership of Families and Children Services, Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Zoe Walls, graduate of the Department of Physical Therapy, UTC.

Prior to coming to Prague and Anglo-American University, the team of experts will have conducted similar workshops and conferences in Oradea, Romania and Brno.

According to chief coordinator Ray Smith, Ph.D., who is Professor of Business, and Director of the MBA program at Bryan College: “We believe that Anglo-American University is forward, innovative and visionary in bringing this workshop to Prague, and we come in a spirit of sharing experiences, and learning from the experiences of people in Eastern and Central Europe.”

And this is one of the goals of the Masters program in Public Policy at AAU--to offer tools to work in areas of public and social policy (across regions), and nurture an academic environment which is ahead of the others, both innovative and visionary in its curriculum. This workshop is intended to offer real world examples in which professionals, students and practitioners can also consider applying social and public policy (in theory) into practice. And most importantly, it is open to the public at large.

For more information on the workshop themes, please contact Ray Smith, Ph.D. at [ray.smith@bryan.edu](mailto:ray.smith@bryan.edu)

For more information about the MA program in Public Policy at Anglo American University, visit [www.aac.edu](http://www.aac.edu) or contact Tony Ozuna, Associate Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences at [tony.ozuna@aac.edu](mailto:tony.ozuna@aac.edu)

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