

## **OARSI Travel Exchange Scholarship Program**

-Chelsea Martin, PT, DPT, SCS

I was fortunate to be one of the recipients of the Osteoarthritis Research Society Internal (OARSI) Travel Exchange Scholarship program in 2024. I had the privilege to spend eight weeks abroad at the University of Calgary Sport Injury Prevention Research Centre (SIPRC) under the supervision of Dr. Carolyn Emery.

Currently, I am a practicing physical therapist and finishing up my PhD in Epidemiology at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a focus on musculoskeletal and sport injury prevention. I primarily treat patients who have experienced shoulder injuries across the lifespan, a portion of which are those who develop glenohumeral joint osteoarthritis. In my clinical and research experience, I discovered the lack of exposure to quality injury prevention programs that target the shoulder joint. Dr. Carolyn Emery and the entire SIPRC group at the University of Calgary provided me an incredible opportunity to begin some collaborative work in this area.

The research that was funded via the OARSI scholarship focused on two aims to address the gap in literature related to glenohumeral joint OA: 1) To investigate the relationship between sustaining a severe time-loss shoulder injury during youth with long term glenohumeral joint health, musculoskeletal characteristics, and quality of life outcomes; 2) to understand individual lived experiences and perceptions of shoulder joint health following a severe time-loss shoulder injury experienced during youth sport participation. During my time at the SIPRC at the University of Calgary, I gained experience in designing a multi-method study that recruited from existing cohort studies, developing standard operating procedures for clinical measures, collected clinical measures with the SIPRC research team, and designed and conducted one to one interviews. I was also fortunate to take part in multiple community engagement events, weekly research meetings, and presented during the monthly Musculoskeletal Injury Research Seminar on shoulder joint health topics.

During this experience I received a warm welcome from everyone I encountered. I made lifelong friends and fostered collaborations that I am hopeful will continue into the future with the aim to improve shoulder joint health. As an early career investigator, these relationships and international collaborations at the University of Calgary are invaluable to my career in glenohumeral PTOA prevention research. I am so grateful to the opportunities that the OARSI Traveling Scholarship afforded me, and I would strongly encourage others to seek out this opportunity.