

WELLNESS WITHIN:

HEALTH AND STRENGTH FROM THE INSIDE OUT



 **ACSM** New England
Chapter

ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 16-17, 2025
MASSMUTUAL CENTER
SPRINGFIELD, MA

WELCOME



On behalf of the NEACSM (New England Regional Chapter of ACSM) Executive Committee, welcome back to Springfield, MA and the MassMutual Center for the NEACSM 2025 Fall Conference! Last year we focused on building bridges between individuals, professional backgrounds,

and disciplines. This year, at “Wellness Within: Health and Strength from the Inside Out,” our invited speakers and general session presenters will focus their presentations on improving health and wellbeing from the level of the gut to the muscle to the brain. These three areas are all interconnected, and by highlighting the importance of the gut microbiome and the interactions between it and the skeletal muscle and the thinking brain, we can help attendees grow a greater appreciation and understanding of all the factors that play into a healthy, well-functioning body and mind for life.

We have a wide range of professionally diverse perspectives joining us for this event and we know that we will be able to educate and inform attendees from all disciplines including nutrition and dietetics, muscle physiology, public health, sports medicine, athletic training, biomechanics, psychology, and more!

Attendees will benefit from the wide variety of topics that our invited speakers bring to this conference, with opportunities to hear from and interact with researchers, clinicians, and educators who apply nutrition, biomechanics, medicine, and exercise science in traditional and nontraditional settings. On Thursday, **Dr. Sara C. Campbell**, associate professor of kinesiology and health at Rutgers University, will deliver the **Knuttgen Keynote Lecture**, “Exercise, Eating, and Estrogen: What in the Gut is Going On?” which focuses on the impact of exercise and

diet alone and in combination on the gut microbiome and health. The presentation will also include the role of gut microbiota in mediating exercise capacity and how gut microbiota depletion impacts tissues outside the gut, critical for exercise, including skeletal muscle. On Friday, **Dr. Nancy Rodriguez** will deliver the **Clarkson Keynote Lecture**, “Protein Intake and Renal Function in Healthy Active Adults: Understanding the Cause for Concern.” This session will present the role of kidney in protein utilization, the impact of protein intake on renal function, and the translation of this evidence to healthy eating patterns that support human performance, health, and well-being. Dr. Rodriguez is a professor emerita of nutritional sciences at the University of Connecticut. Her research initiatives in protein, exercise, and health have earned her international recognition and her work has contributed to current protein recommendations for athletes, health, performance, and recovery.

Dr. Jason Melnyk, previously an exercise science professor at Central Connecticut State University and currently leader of education and enablement strategies for Enterprise Healthcare Clients, will deliver this year’s **Past President’s Lecture**, entitled “How Storytelling Helps Us Become Better Teachers.” Dr Melnyk has spent the past 15+ years at the intersection of healthcare, education, and technology—building programs that help people learn, adapt, and thrive in fast-changing environments. We will also learn from an incredible lineup of **Invited Speakers**, including **Dr. Loneke Blackman Carr**, associate professor of community and public health nutrition at the University of Connecticut, who will discuss “Rooted in Relevance: Shifting the Approach to Culturally Appropriate Diets.” As a registered dietitian, her work is expanding to focus on nutrition-centered research questions with a particular interest in addressing hypertension disparities, diet quality,

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and participation in clinical nutrition intervention trials in minority populations. **Dr. G. Monique Mokha**, professor and sports scientist in the Health and Human Performance Department at Nova Southeastern University in Florida, will discuss, *"Do Better Runners Run Better? What Biomechanics Tells Us About Speed, Skill, and Staying Healthy."* **Dr. Jonathan Mike** will provide an exciting, interactive hands-on session on Friday titled, *"Rotational Power Development."* As a seasoned sports performance coach, Dr. Mike has built a significant online presence across multiple social networks, and contributes to numerous fitness, strength, and consumer platforms nationwide. We also have **Aqua Drakes**, an anti-racist facilitator whose work focuses on helping organizations integrate the core values of DEAI into their daily operations. She will be presenting her work with NEACSM to improve our practices, with a talk titled, *"Nonnegotiable: Modern DEI Practices in a Changing Landscape."* Finally on Friday, **Christina Badaracco, Olivia Thomas, and Eliza Leone** will deliver a unique clinical two-hour nutrition workshop titled, *"From Kitchen to Competition: Implementing Culinary Nutrition in Sports Medicine for Optimal Performance and Health."* Through clinical nutrition, workshop participants will be equipped to translate nutrition science into dishes that fuel the body and satisfy the taste buds and will also walk away with a certificate of completion. **Dr. Ian S. Patten** is our **Physician's Track** Invited Speaker. Dr. Patten is a fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon and sports medicine physician at MaineGeneral Orthopedics who specializes in comprehensive orthopedic surgery and sports medicine and also serves as team physician for Lawrence High School.

In addition to our invited speakers and diverse array of general session topics, I invite you to join us Thursday evening for the **President's Reception, Student Scholarships, Research Awards, President's Cup Student Research Competition** and the **Ronai Academic College Bowl**. These activities are excellent opportunities for students, faculty, professionals, sponsors and guests to come together for fun, excitement and community building - plus light refreshments! As President-Elect, I am excited to bring this conference program to you, and I look forward to hearing which sessions you loved the most and what your take-home messages were.



Cassandra Forsythe, PhD, RD
Associate Professor, Physical Education and Human Performance
Central Connecticut State University
#NEACSM25

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Exercise Science Professionals and Students: research, clinical, and academic.
- Applied Professionals and Students: strength and conditioning coaches, health fitness professionals, personal trainers and nutrition specialists.
- Sports Medicine Professionals and Students: physicians, physical therapists, athletic trainers, and allied health professionals.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants should be able to:

- Expand their knowledge base about cutting-edge research and developments in their field.
- Acquire practical skills and techniques that can be applied in exercise prescription and designing training programs.
- Review evidence-based strategies to prevent and manage sports-related injuries.
- Analyze complex scenarios and develop effective solutions by engaging in case studies, discussions, and workshops that challenge critical thinking skills.
- Engage with experts, share experiences and establish valuable professional relationships, fostering a collaborative approach to promoting health, performance and injury prevention.
- Develop enhanced communication skills and learn techniques to facilitate patient education, promote adherence to exercise programs, and effectively collaborate within interdisciplinary teams.

ACCREDITATION

Continuing Education Credits
 NEACSM is an approved provider for the American College of Sports Medicine. 13.5 hours of CEUs/CECs will be awarded.

SPEAKER BIOS



Knuttgen Keynote Lecture

Thursday, October 16

Exercise, Eating, and Estrogen: What in the Gut is Going On?

Sara Campbell, PhD, FACSM

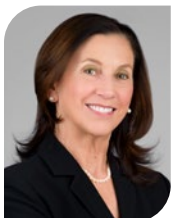


Invited Lecture

Thursday, October 16

Rooted in Relevance: Shifting the Approach to Culturally Appropriate Diets

Loneke Blackman Carr, PhD, RDN

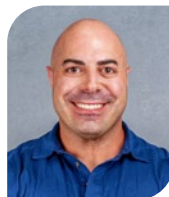


Clarkson Keynote Lecture

Friday, October 17

Protein Research Updates - What Does the Future Hold?

Nancy Rodriguez, PhD, RD, FACSM



Invited Lecture

Friday, October 17

Rotational Power Development

Jonathan Mike, PhD

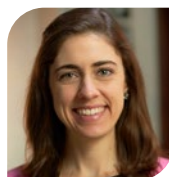


Past-President's Lecture

Friday, October 16

How Storytelling Helps Us Become Better Teachers

Jason Melnyk, PhD, FACSM



Invited Lecture

Friday, October 17

From Kitchen to Competition: Implementing Culinary Nutrition in Sports Medicine for Optimal Performance and Health

Christina Badaracco, MPH, RDN, LDN;

Olivia Thomas, MS, RDN, LDN;

Eliza Leone, MPH, RDN, LDN



Invited Lecture

Thursday, October 16

Do Better Runners Run Better? What Biomechanics Tells Us About Speed, Skill, and Staying Healthy

G. Monique Mokha, PhD, ATC

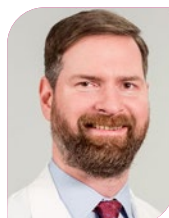


Invited Lecture

Thursday, October 16

Nonnegotiable: Modern DEI Practices in a Changing Landscape

Aqua Drakes, BA



Physician-Track Invited Lecture

Thursday, October 16

TBA

Ian Patten, MD

PROGRAM SCHEDULE - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16TH

All times shown are ET

Time	Meeting Room 1	Meeting Room 2	Meeting Room 3	Meeting Room 4	Meeting Room 5	Ballroom C	Student Lounge
8 - 8:30 a.m.	NEACSM Registration Booth Opens						
8:30 - 9:30 a.m.	Building a Walking Program from the Inside Out: Bridging Academia to Community Health via Community-Based Participatory Research <i>Emily Stevens, PhD</i>	From BS to MS: Setting Standards for Accreditation, Certification, and Licensure of Emerging Clinical & Performance Roles <i>Luke Pelton, PhD & Jamie Pelton, PhD</i>	Do Better Runners Run Better? What Biomechanics Tells Us About Speed, Skill, and Staying Healthy <i>G. Monique Mokha, PhD, ATC</i>	Mini-Symposium Mom Was Right, Eat Your Berries! Exploring the Influence of Blackcurrant Berry Supplementation on Heat Stress Resilience from the Whole Body to Blood and Microbiome <i>Gabrielle Brewer, PhD; Michael Szymanski, PhD; Staci Thorton, PhD</i>	FreeComm Committee Presentations (Student)	Fellow Cases, Session 1	
9:40 - 10:40 a.m.	Tutorial Lecture The Evolution of Physical Fitness <i>Deborah Riebe, PhD, FACSM & Carol Ewing Garber, PhD, FACSM</i>	Hands On Workshop Can We Predict Elite Athleticism at an Early Age? <i>Kevin Gendron, MS</i>	Nonnegotiable: Modern DEI Practices in a Changing Landscape <i>Aqua Drakes, BA</i>	Exploring the Physiological Responses to Musical Theater <i>Vincenzo G. Nocera, PhD</i>	Presidents Cup & Student Investigator Competition (Doctoral)	Balancing Performance and Tradition: Evolution of Collegiate Athlete Care <i>Anne Beethe, PhD</i>	
10:50 - 12 p.m.	(Grand Ballroom A/B) Knuttgen Keynote Exercise, Eating, and Estrogen: What in the Gut is Going On? - Sara Campbell PhD FACSM						
12 - 1:05 p.m.	(30 min) NEACSM Business Meeting - Open to All Conference Attendees	Lunch / Exhibitors / Free Communication Posters					
1:10 - 2:10 p.m.	The Power of Why: Health Coaching Strategies for Sustainable Behavior Change <i>Nicole Batista, MS, Allison Condo, MS</i>	Hands-On Lecture The Exercise Regression: Progression Toolbox <i>Alex Rothstein, EdD</i>	Rooted in Relevance: Shifting the Approach to Culturally-Appropriate Diets <i>Loneke Blackman Carr, PhD, RDN</i>	Brains & Gains: Initial Evidence Linking Physical Activity Intensity to Brain Health and Cognition in Veterans with PTSD <i>Madeleine Nowak, PhD</i>	Student Investigator Competition (Undergrad)	Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment and Sports Medicine: A Review of the Literature and Best Practices <i>John Diefenderfer, DO</i>	
2:20 - 3:20 p.m.	Hands-On Lecture The Inclined Push-up: A New Test for Muscular Endurance <i>Mel Adams, PhD; Kevin Melnick, BS; Caroline Chase</i>	Hands-On Workshop "Ouch! I Can't Do That Anymore! Give Me Some Safe Alternatives" <i>Peter Ronai, MS, FACSM & Paul Gallo, PhD, FACSM</i>	From Boomers to Zoomers. The Multifaceted Impacts of an Intergenerational Dance Program <i>Allison Seifert Gonzales, PhD</i>	Mini-Symposium Power Within: Mitochondria as the Engine of Wellness and Health <i>Kai Zou PhD; Oh Sung Kwon, PhD; Nicolas Berger, MS</i>	President's Cup & Student Investigator Competitions (Masters)	Physician Track Invited Speaker <i>Ian Patten, MD</i>	Student Lounge Presentation/ Discussion From Passion to Profession: Exploring Careers in Exercise Science <i>Elizabeth O'Neill, DPE</i>
3:30 - 4:30 p.m.	A Call for Weight Inclusivity in Exercise Science <i>Gretchen Paulson, PhD & Kristie Rupp, PhD</i>		Past President's Lecture How Storytelling Helps Us Become Better Teachers <i>Jason Melnyk, PhD</i>	Making Exercise Prescription More Precise with Digital Health Technologies <i>Linda S Pescatello, PhD, FACSM</i>	FreeComm Committee Presentations (Doctoral)	Fellow Cases, Session 2	Student Lounge Presentation/ Discussion How to Choose and Excel at Your Internship Experience: Best Practices <i>David Harackiewicz, DPE</i>
4:35 - 5:05 p.m.	Special Interest Group Meeting: Nutrition / Biomechanics (same room)	Effects of Vocalization on Force Output. Does Yelling Actually Make You Stronger? <i>Zane Pfefferle, PhD</i>	Special Interest Group Meeting: Psychobiology of Human Performance	Special Interest Group Meeting: Strength & Conditioning		Special Interest Group Meeting: Military & Tactical	
5:05 p.m.	President's Reception, Awards & Ronai Academic College Bowl - Grand Ballroom A/B						

● KEYNOTE
 ● INVITED
 ● FEATURED
 ● PHYSICIAN TRACK
 ● STUDENT EVENT
 ● SPECIAL INTREST GROUP
 ● NO EVENT

PROGRAM SCHEDULE - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17TH

All times shown are ET

Time	Meeting Room 1	Meeting Room 2	Meeting Room 3	Meeting Room 4	Meeting Room 5	Ballroom C	Student Lounge
8- 8:30 a.m.	NEACSM Registration Booth Opens						
8:30 - 9:30 a.m.	A Newly Proposed Obesity Definition: Is BMI Out? <i>Laurie Milliken, PhD, FACSM</i>	Invited Lecture/ Hands-On Session Rotational Power Development <i>Jonathan Mike, PhD</i>	Mini Symposium Too Hot To Handle... Keeping Our Industrial Athletes Safe <i>Robert Huggins, PhD</i> Heat Safety Best Practice for Occupational Workers <i>Maggie Morrissey-Basler, PhD</i> Impact of Cooling Technologies and Strategies for Occupational Workers <i>Cecilia Kaufman, MS</i>	Invited Lecture/ Clinical Workshop From Kitchen to Competition: Implementing Culinary Nutrition in Sports Medicine for Optimal Performance and Health <i>Christina Badaracco, MPH, RDN, LDN; Olivia Thomas, MS, RDN, LDN; Eliza Leone, MPH, RDN, LDN</i>	Gasping for Air: Impact of Hypoxia on Carbohydrate Oxidation <i>Lee Margolis PhD, USARIEM</i>	Fellow Cases, Session 3 (8:00 AM start time)	
9:40 - 10:40 a.m.	Mini Symposium Exercise is Medicine for Addiction <i>Eduardo Fontes PhD</i> The Psychobiological Model of Exercise for Addiction Recovery <i>Kell Grandjean Costa, PhD</i> What Do We Currently Know? Evidence Supporting Exercise as Treatment for Addiction <i>Daniel Aranha Cabral, PhD</i>	Beyond Injury: Integrating Data, Psychology, and Recovery to Build the Whole Athlete <i>Stefanie Bourassa, DPT</i>	Mini-Symposium Injuries and Sport Anxiety in DIII Athletes <i>Hannah Nelson PhD</i> Overuse Injuries and Performance Measures in Electrical Line Workers <i>Brooklyn Erlick, BA</i> Barriers to Exercise and Injury Care in Rural New England <i>Jessica Dutkus, BA</i>	(TWO SESSIONS) Health and Strength from Inside (the Lab) to Out (in the World): Translating Research to Drive Change for Female Athletes <i>Melissa Lodge, PhD</i> Mindfulness and Movement: Exploring the Physiological and Psychological Benefits in Women <i>Barbara Sanchez, PhD</i>	Therapeutic Needling: Beyond Dry Needling and Trigger Point Injections <i>Navid Mahooti, MD</i>	Student Lounge Presentation/ Discussion Internships and Future Employment: Meet Professionals to Learn about Internships and Maximize Job Opportunities <i>Alicja Stannard, PhD</i>	
10:50 - 11:50 p.m.	(Grand Ballroom A/B) Clarkson Keynote - Protein Research Updates: What Does the Future Hold? - <i>Nancy Rodriguez, PhD, RD, FACSM</i>						
11:55 - 12:35 p.m.	Lunch						
12:40 - 1:40 p.m.	Still Running! Practical Perspectives of Applying Biomechanics to Support Runners into their Senior Years <i>Gordon MacFarland, MPA; Boyi Dai, PhD; Karen Westervelt, PhD</i>	Mechanisms and Considerations for Anabolic Resistance: From Stress Exposure to Injury Recovery <i>Emily Howard, PhD & Jess Gwin, PhD, USARIEM</i>	(TWO SESSIONS) Sarcopenia Prevention in Relation to Malnutrition <i>Suzanne Young, PhD</i> Recent Changes in the Definition of Sarcopenia and Why It Matters <i>Jacob Earp, PhD</i>	Mini-Symposium Exercise Interventions in Type 1 Diabetes: Insights from Animal Models to Human Studies <i>Gengyun Le-Chan, PhD & Barbara Sanchez, PhD</i>	Mini-Symposium Tracking Digital Influences and Other Transient Aspects of Daily Living that May Confound Human Research Studies <i>Jordan Masys BS; Lisa Fucito PhD; Nathan Freitas BA; Matthew Stults-Kolehmainen, PhD</i>	There and Back Again: A Contemplation of Hobbitts and Bill Walton's Feet <i>James Dunlap, MD</i>	Student Lounge Presentation/ Discussion Beyond The Clinic: The Many Faces And Specialities Of Physical Therapy <i>David Ornstein, BS</i>
1:50 - 2:50 p.m.	High Sodium, Higher Empathy: A Patient to Provider Perspective on POTS <i>Caroline Aspinwall, BS</i>	Changemakers: The Role of the Community Health Worker and Health and Well-Being Coach in Empowering Chronic Disease Management through Lifestyle Change in Under-Resourced Populations <i>Laura Christoph, PhD</i>	Older and Bolder: Training and Nutrition Approaches to Support the Masters Athlete <i>Kate Edwards, PhD</i>	Compositional Approaches for the 24-Hour Activity Cycle <i>Nicole Logan PhD & Christine St. Laurent</i>	More than the Tumor: Physical Activity as Supportive Cancer Care <i>Richard Viskochil, PhD</i>		
2:55 - 3:35 p.m.	NEACSM Executive Committee Onboarding Meeting						

● KEYNOTE ● INVITED ● FEATURED ● PHYSICIAN TRACK ● STUDENT EVENT ● SPECIAL INTREST GROUP ● NO EVENT

FALL 2025 SPONSORS

PRESIDENT'S PARTNER

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STUDENT ENDOWMENT

KEYNOTE & INVITED SPEAKER PARTNERS



CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS



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REGISTRATION

To register online use the NEACSM website: www.neacsm.org

Pre-registration will be accepted through October 10th. No registrations by phone or mail.

Group registrations: To register a group, contact meeting@acsm.org. Group registration information and payments must be submitted no later than September 19th.

Early bird cutoff date: September 15th

	Register by Sept. 15	Register Sept. 16-Oct. 10	Register Onsite
Professional Member (One day)	\$140	\$150	\$160
Professional Member (Two days)	\$175	\$185	\$195
Student Member (One day)	\$45	\$50	\$60
Student Member (Two days)	\$60	\$65	\$75
NEACSM Student Membership (one year)	\$15	\$15	\$15
NEACSM Professional Membership (one year)	\$35	\$35	\$35

Full payment must accompany the registration. Registration refund policy: all conference registration cancellations must be requested in writing. A 50% refund may be obtained up to ten business days prior to the event. No refunds will be granted after October 6, 2025. Substitutions are allowed. For additional information, please contact meeting@acsm.org

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Blocks of guest rooms are available for conference attendees at the Marriott Springfield Downtown. Be sure to identify your affiliation with NEACSM in order to receive the special conference rate. Please reserve your room no later than September 15, 2025 in order to receive the special rates listed:

Marriott Springfield Downtown
2 Boland Way
Springfield, MA 01115
413-781-7111
[CLICK HERE TO BOOK YOUR ROOM](#)

\$181.00/night, plus tax

DIRECTIONS TO THE CONFERENCE

MassMutual Center is located in Springfield’s downtown section, minutes from hotels, bus, and train stations. Patrons should enter MassMutual Center at the entrance on the corner of Dwight Street and Bruce Landon Way.

[Directions from I-91 and I-90.](#)