



## This Honorable Charge

Members of the U.S. Armed Forces valiantly push their bodies to the limits but may encounter a lifetime of physical challenges as a result. An FIU PT researcher, instructor and recent graduate are on a mission to improve health outcomes for the veteran patient population to live a better quality of life:

- **Assistant Professor Sheila Clemens, Ph.D.**, is on a research team working with amputees, including Vietnam veterans, to track the progress of their rehabilitation from the palm of her hands. As the team's physical therapist, Dr. Clemens provided input to computer engineers developing a proprietary tablet app to analyze real-time biometric signals from the limb and prosthetic during mobility, posture and gait assessments.
- **FIU PT adjunct faculty and U.S. Army veteran Max Riveros, DPT**, is bringing PT screening services from the Miami VA Healthcare System (Miami VA) to the university campus. Dr. Riveros and students evaluate veterans' movements that could have been altered from years of service to provide an understanding on the nuances of treatment and encourage veterans to seek help with chronic pain.
- **Doctor of Physical Therapy graduate Fernanda Civitella** is a research assistant at the Miami VA Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center studying fall prevention in the older veteran population. She credits marrying a U.S. Air Force airman for kick-starting her interest in veteran care, but fully embraced her passion while at the VA. "Working with VA patients showed me how selfless veterans are to sacrifice their own well-being for the protection of others."

[Read more about their stories.](#)

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Together we can inform and encourage one another to push the limits of our discipline and help new avenues of practice and progress emerge.