



COPA

Quarterly Newsletter
California O&P Association

CONNECTION

FALL 2026

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Letter from The President



Dear COPA Members,

As the long days of summer begin to give way to the cooler mornings and changing colors of fall, I find myself reflecting on the progress our association has made over the past several months. Much like the changing seasons, COPA continues to evolve, grow, and prepare for the opportunities ahead.

This summer was marked by meaningful collaboration and continued advocacy efforts on behalf of California's orthotic and prosthetic community. Our legislative team, Government Affairs Committee, Board of Directors, and dedicated volunteers have remained actively engaged in discussions surrounding future policy initiatives, including ongoing work to develop and refine 2027 legislative language that will help advance access to care for the patients we serve.

One of the most encouraging developments continues to be our state's momentum with our So Every BODY Can Move campaign. Through partnerships with advocates, clinicians, manufacturers, and patient organizations, California remains an important voice in shaping the future of access and mobility. COPA's ongoing engagement in these conversations ensures that the experiences of our providers and patients are represented as new opportunities emerge.

Beyond advocacy, our committees have been hard at work strengthening the association. The Education Committee continues exploring ways to deliver valuable learning opportunities. Our upcoming symposium in San Diego, Thursday, November 12th- Friday November 13th will host a variety of speakers that are transforming patients' lives through innovation and technology. Our Membership Committee is focused on increasing engagement and ensuring every member sees value in their involvement with COPA. These efforts may not always make headlines, but they are foundational to building a stronger association for years to come.

As we enter the fall season, COPA's focus remains clear: advocating for our profession, supporting our members, and improving access to quality orthotic and prosthetic care throughout California. While there is still much work ahead, I am energized by the momentum we have built and optimistic about what we can accomplish together.

Thank you for your continued support, engagement, and dedication to the patients and communities we serve every day. I encourage you to stay involved, participate in upcoming programs and discussions, and help us continue shaping the future of O&P in California.

With gratitude,

Luis Mora

Luis Mora, CP
Össur Americas
COPA President

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Designing Tomorrow's O&P: Innovation That Transforms Lives

2026 COPA SYMPOSIUM



THU - FRI • NOVEMBER 12 - 13

CHALLENGED ATHLETES FOUNDATION • SAN DIEGO

This year, COPA's two-day **Annual Symposium** centers on the theme, **Designing Tomorrow's O&P: Innovation that Transforms Lives**, featuring a jam-packed lineup of vital educational sessions on **Thursday & Friday, November 12 & 13** hosted by **Challenged Athletes Foundation** at 9591 Waples St, San Diego.

Exhibits are officially sold out, speakers are confirmed, and the schedule is set! It's not too early to plan and register for this event! COPA Symposium features:

- 9.75 ABC CEUs & 13.25 BOC CEUs
- 18 high level educational sessions with expert speakers from the O&P field
- Covering topics on innovation, pertinent to our O&P
- Keynote presentation from Dr. Stephen Wallace & Richard Enoch Jones, CPV
- And, more CEUs may be earned by visiting our exhibits
- 18 exhibitors are lined up to meet with you
- Includes lunch and happy hour on opening day, plus continental breakfast and coffee both days.

**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE
2026 COPA SYMPOSIUM**



REGISTER HERE

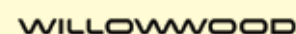
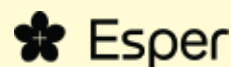
Register early to attend, earn your CEUs, and meet with our speakers and exhibitors! This is a major symposium on the west coast that you won't want to miss. **Register at californiaoandp.com**

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS EVENT SPONSORS



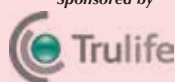
Sponsorship Opportunities are still available.
Apply at californiaoandp.com

COME MEET OUR EXHIBITORS



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026

8:55 - 9:00 am	Welcome Remark by COPA President Luis Mora, CP, Össur
9:00 - 9:10 am	COPA Annual Membership Meeting
9:15 - 10:15 am	Keynote Presentation: <i>More than an Implant: Innovation, Community, and the Human Side of Osseointegration</i> Dr. Stephen Wallace, Orthopaedic Surgeon, West Coast Lengthening/Summit Orthopaedics; Richard Enoch Jones, CPV, One Left Founder, Film Maker, Limb-Different-Person; and Katie Janiszewski, MSOP, CPO, Spectrum O&P <i>Printing Potential: Advancing Gross Motor Skills with the Surestep SMO3D</i> Rob Novak, CO, Director of Sales, Surestep
10:15 - 10:45 am	<i>Stability in Motion: Hydraulic Feet in Action</i> Amy Ginsburg, CPO, Senior Clinical Educator, Fillauer Companies
10:45 - 11:00 am	Break
11:00 - 11:30 am	<i>Partial Hand & Partial Finger Prosthetic Options, Candidacy, and Considerations</i> Kristy Powell, OTR/L, Occupational Therapist, Össur Americas and Kimberly Jones, MSOP, CPO, Redlands Prosthetic & Orthotic Group
11:30 am -12:00 pm	<i>Presentation on Programs and Grants Offered by CAF</i> CAF Team and Spencer Greene, MS, CPO, Zone Vice President - Clinical Excellence, Hanger Clinic & COPA Past President
12:00 - 1:30 pm	Lunch/Exhibit Break
1:30 - 2:00 pm	<i>The O&P Industry Benchmark Report: What Insights From 207 Practices Reveal</i> Josh Lau, CEO/Founder, Nymbi Systems and Katie Janiszewski, MSOP, CPO, Spectrum O&P
2:00 - 2:30 pm	<i>Gait Analysis, The Next Step</i> Noel Chladek, CO, LPO, Owner, Bio-Mechanical Composites, Inc.
2:30 - 3:00 pm	Break
3:00 - 3:15 pm	<i>Reducing Cognitive Load in Myoelectric Use: Early Findings with Adaptive Grip Technology</i> Jacqueline Valdez M.Ed., CO, BOCP, FAAOP, Clinical & Technical Support Manager, BionIT Labs
3:15 - 3:45 pm	<i>Understanding How AI Will Have a Transformational Impact on Your Clinic And Your Life</i> Ludvig Fraenkel, Engineer, CEO & Co-Founder, Everi Labs and Chad R. Marquis, CPO, Prosthetic & Orthotic Group of Orange County, LLC
3:45 - 4:15 pm	<i>Mechanisms of Post-Amputation Pain and Bioelectric Nerve Control</i> Nick Hargus, PhD, Vice President, Clinical and Medical Affairs, Neuros Medical and Kimberly Jones, MSOP, CPO, Redlands Prosthetic & Orthotic Group
4:15 - 4:45 pm	



4:45 - 5:15 pm

A Novel Patellofemoral Unloader Brace Significantly Improves Pain, Function, and Quality of Life in Patients with Patellofemoral Osteoarthritis
Zach Nagel, Territory Manager Northern California, Icarus Medical Innovation and
Katie Janiszewski, MSOP, CPO, Spectrum O&P
Happy Hour at CAF

5:30 - 7:30 pm

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2026

8:00 - 8:45 am

From Data to Decisions: Using Outcomes to Enhance Prosthetic and Orthotic Care
Eric Weber, CPO, LPO, FAAOP (D), Clinical Leader Lower Limb Care Excellence, Hanger Clinic Institute for Clinical Education and Research,
Wendy Remington Brewer, CPO, Clinical Leader of Lower Limb Care Excellence, Hanger Clinic Institute for Clinical Education and Research, and
Branden Petersen, CP, Clinical Leader Upper Limb Program, Hanger Clinic Institute for Clinical Education and Research

8:45 - 9:15 am

Energy Storing Partial Foot Prosthesis
Noel Chladek, CO, LPO, Owner Bio-Mechanical Composites, Inc.
From Muscles to the Brain: Rethinking Prosthetic Potential in Children with Congenital Limb Deficiency
Jonathon Schofield, MSc, PhD, Associate Professor, UC Davis and
Spencer Greene, MS, CPO, Zone Vice President - Clinical Excellence, Hanger Clinic

9:45 - 10:15 am

10:15 - 10:30 am

10:30 - 11:00 am

Break
AI-Powered Bionics for Humans and Robots
Aadeel Akhtar, PhD, CEO & Founder, PSYONIC and
Trevor Townsend, CPO, President, Valley Institute of Prosthetics & Orthotics

11:00 - 11:30 am

Optimizing Prosthetic Outcomes: The Role of Component Selection, Foot Technology, and Practice Standardization
Bryan Schloss, COF (Certified Orthotic Fitter), Director of Sales & Marketing, Trulife and
Kimberly Jones, MSOP, CPO, Redlands Prosthetic & Orthotic Group

11:30 am -12:00 pm

12:00 - 12:30 pm

Break/Brunch & Exhibit
Building the Case: Clinical Documentation for K2 MPK Users
Emily Lipski, CPO, Clinical Specialist, BrainRobotics
Agilik Smart Orthosis - Walk Taller, Walk Stronger
DeLana E. Finney, CPO, Clinical Marketing Consultant III, SPS
Closing Remark by COPA President **Luis Mora, CP, Össur**

12:30 - 1:00 pm

1:00 - 1:05 pm

RSVP: californiaoandp.com

*Schedule is subject to change.
See website for latest update.*

From Muscles to Brain: Understanding Movement in Children with Upper Limb Differences

Part 2: Does the Brain Retain a Representation of a Hand That Never Formed?

In the first article of this series, we highlighted our research with more than 50 participants that asked whether children born without a hand retain the muscular capacity to control one. We found that attempts to move the missing hand and wrist produced consistent and movement-specific patterns of activity in the residual-limb muscles allowing us to identify which movement a child was attempting. Thus, despite the hand and wrist never having formed, the muscles that would have actuated them remain capable of producing coordinated signals unique to the different movements. These findings challenged the assumption that children born without a hand lack the neuromuscular pathways needed to control one and raised a new question: If movement-specific patterns of muscle activity are retained, what is happening in the brain?

*Authors: Jonathon S Schofield, PhD;
Wilsaan M. Joiner, PhD*



Our team at UC Davis, in collaboration with Shriners Children's Northern California and participating Shriners sites across the United States, is now using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to investigate the brain activity associated with this ability. We want to understand where intended movements of the missing hand are represented in the brain and how this activity compares with movement of the intact hand.

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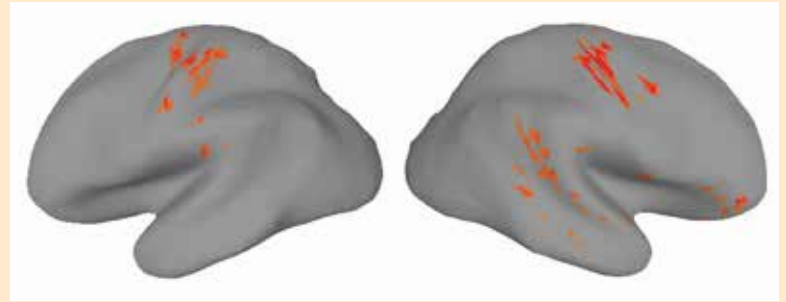
To date, we have scanned eight children born with a unilateral below-elbow limb difference. During scanning, each participant performs five hand and wrist movements separately with the intact and missing-hand sides. fMRI detects changes in blood flow associated with brain activity, allowing us to identify the regions of the brain that are engaged during each movement.

Our early findings are striking. When children attempt to move their missing hand, we observe activity in the expected hand-related regions of the sensorimotor cortex; the same general areas that would ordinarily contribute to moving and sensing a fully formed hand. This suggests that the brain retains a representation of the missing hand despite the hand never having physically developed.

However, activity associated with the missing hand is not identical to that of the intact hand. Compared with intact-hand movements, attempts to move the missing hand produced greater activity in regions outside the primary sensorimotor cortex, including the inferior frontal gyrus, supramarginal gyrus, and middle temporal gyrus. These regions have been associated with action selection and planning, integration of body and movement informa-



A view of the fMRI scanner.



Brain activation when the intact hand is moved (left) compared to when the missing hand is moved (right)

tion, and interpreting actions. We believe this broader recruitment of brain areas may reflect the limited opportunity children have had to practice these movements. Whereas intact-hand movements are highly practiced and largely automatic, missing-hand movements may require greater attention and deliberate planning. Thus, the missing hand appears to be represented in the brain, but accessing that representation may be less automatic and require broader cognitive and sensorimotor networks.

We are also examining whether the brain distinguishes among individual movements. Preliminary analyses indicate that different grasps and wrist movements produce distinct and repeatable patterns of brain activity. For example, power-grasp attempts are most like other power-grasp attempts, while pinch-grasp attempts are most similar to other pinch-grasp attempts. The brain therefore appears to encode more than a general intention to “move the hand”; its activity contains information about the specific movement being attempted.

Together with our earlier muscle recordings, these findings reveal continuity from brain to muscle. The brain preserves distinguishable representations of individual hand movements, while the residual muscles express patterns associated with those same intentions. Important components of the hand’s control system appear to remain present, although they have not received the experience needed to become as practiced and automatic as those controlling the intact hand.

This discovery has exciting clinical implications. Advanced upper-limb prostheses available to adults rely on activation of residual muscles to control multiple hand functions. Our findings suggest that children born with an upper-limb difference may also be capable of generating the distinct residual-muscle activity needed for this type of control, a capacity that has long been overlooked. Learning to use an advanced prosthetic hand may therefore require targeted training to help strengthen and connect the existing brain and muscle representations of the missing hand to a physical prosthesis.

Our next questions concern translation: What do these retained representations mean for real-time prosthetic control, and how should they influence the devices, training, and care offered to children with congenital limb differences?

Answering these questions requires partnership among researchers, clinicians, prosthetists, children, and families. If you are a clinician working with this community, or a family member of a patient that may be interested in participating, please scan the QR code below to contact our team.

Interested in our research? Contact us!



COPA Happy Hour Recap

COPA Happy Hour on August 27 co-sponsored by **Elevate Movement** and **Lindhe Xtend** was a fun night at Golden Road Brewing in Anaheim. Great turnout by area clinicians, students, and industry partners and friends. Grateful that the Angels took the night off, and thankful that the heat-advisory weather cooled as the evening progressed. Ginette Stephanian from Elevate was an incredible emcee for the inaugural Trivia Contest, and team “O&P Baddies” from the CSUDH MSOP program took home the 1st-place prizes, provided by MJ McNeece/Lindhe Xtend. All told, around 30 people attended and we all wondered why we don’t do this more often.