

From the Director



► It is my pleasure to share with you our program updates and accomplishments over the past year. In the fall 2018, our entry level OT program welcomed 40 new students, and our post professional OTD program welcomed 28 new students to Chatham University. Our OTD Bridge program enrolled its largest cohort to date this past fall. The students in our OT

programs come to us from all over the country and bring a great deal of energy, enthusiasm and commitment!

The MOT program is currently in the process of transitioning to the entry level doctorate with a target date of fall 2019, and faculty have been busy this past year preparing for this exciting change. As part of the transition, Dr. Kasey Stepansky was hired to assume the role of academic fieldwork coordinator, as Theresa Delbert transitions to the position of doctoral capstone coordinator. We also welcome our new program assistant, Bridget Burns to our program, and bid farewell and congratulations to Tyson Schrader, who has been promoted to recruiter for the PA program at Chatham.

In this newsletter, we share with you the many accomplishments of our students, faculty, and alumni. Read on to learn about their scholarly achievements and community engagement activities, as well as programmatic enhancements, and the launching of the new Student Scholarship Award.

If you have news to share, please share with them us either by e-mail or by posting on our Facebook page. We love to hear from you!

Best Wishes,

Joyce Salls, OTD, OTR/L

From the Dean



► The School of Health Sciences has had a very productive and rewarding year. We are in the process of completing a 3-year SBIRT grant (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral for Treatment). This program has truly been a collaborative effort among all of the SHS programs. To date, we have trained over 700 students to effectively use patient centered,

evidence-based techniques for assisting patients/clients with substance abuse disorders. The OT students have been active participants in this effort under the leadership of Dr's Jan Bucey and Ingrid Provident.

Other highlights from the School include: the counseling psychology program was awarded a multi-year HRSA Grant (WELL Project) that focuses on training psychologists in integrated care models; the occupational therapy program co-sponsored the "Out of the Darkness Campus Walk" for the second straight year in collaboration with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; the movement science department has begun the process of applying for initial accreditation for the athletic training program and the physical therapy program successfully launched the Sawhney-Gough Scholarship program; and the healthcare informatics program has developed two fully online 12-credit certificates, one in informatics and the other in analytics.

Finally, thank you so much to those of you that were able to support the Occupational Therapy Scholarship Fund that was started this past spring. A very special thank you to the class of 2018 for starting this Fund in honor of Dr. Joyce Salls. It is truly my honor to be associated with such wonderful colleagues.

My best to you,

Dr. Patricia Downey

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Publications

Novalis, S. D. (2017). Continuing Education Article: Suicide awareness and occupational therapy for suicide survivors. *OT Practice*, 22(21), CE 1-8.

Novalis, S. D. (2018). Chapter 30: HIV, AIDS, & Other Immune Diseases. In *Adult Physical Conditions: Intervention Strategies for Occupational Therapy Assistants*. Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis.

Suman, M. & **Provident, I.** (2018). Online Professional Development and Self-Efficacy in Potential Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Educators *Journal of Occupational Therapy Education* 2(1), <https://doi.org/10.26681/jote.2018.020106>

Rodriguez, A. L., & **Provident, I.** (2018). The Effects of a Structured Coping Strategy Program for Graduate Occupational Therapy Students. *Journal of Occupational Therapy Education* 2(1), <https://doi.org/10.26681/jote.2018.020109>

Bucey, J. & Provident, I. (2018). Strengthening school-based occupational therapy through peer mentoring. *Journal of Occupational Therapy Schools and Early Intervention* 11(1), 87-105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19411243.2017.1408444>

Renda, M. & **Lape, J.E.** (2018). Feasibility and effectiveness of telehealth occupational therapy home modifications interventions. *The International Journal of Telerehabilitation*, 10(1), 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.5195/ijt.2018.6244>

Leverenz, M.D. & **Lape, J.** (2018). Education of fall prevention to improve self-efficacy of nursing staff in long term care: A pilot study. *The Internet Journal*

of Allied Health Sciences and Practice, 16(3), Article 6, 1-10.

Mollo, K.S., Merizalde, B.A., & **Lape, J.E.** (2018). Increasing competency for parents of adolescents with executive functioning deficits: Enhancing occupational performance with mindfulness. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 6(3), Article 9.

Hovick S. & **Provident I.** (2018). Increasing Rehabilitation Therapists' Confidence Utilizing Evidence-Based Interventions: Pilot Study. *The Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice*. Oct 17;16(4), Article 13.

Presentations

Salls, J., Provident, I., & Dolhi, C. *Globally Connected: Impact of International Service Learning on Cultural Perspectives of Occupational Therapy Practitioners*. World Federation of Occupational Therapy Congress, Cape Town, South Africa, May 22, 2018

Salls, J. & Breen-Franklin, A. *Voices of mothers of children with disabilities in two distinct communities*. World Federation of Occupational Therapy Congress, Cape Town, South Africa, May 22, 2018

Schreiber, J. *Pennsylvania AOTA Representative Assembly update: Writing a motion*. October 12, 2018. Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.

Bucey, J., Keane, E. & Barchacky, C. (April, 2018). *Occupational Comparison of Children with*

Disabilities in Ecuador, Germany, and the United States. Poster presented at the Annual American Occupational Therapy Association Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Bucey, J., Keane, E. & Barchacky, C. (May, 2018). *Occupational Comparison of Children with Disabilities in Ecuador, Germany, and the United States*. Poster presented at the World Federation of Occupational Therapy, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Bucey, J., Keane, E. & Barchacky, C. (October, 2018). *Occupational Comparison of Children with Disabilities in Ecuador, Germany, and the United States*. Poster presented at Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Delbert, T., & Schrader, T. *Utilizing Process Drama During Conflict Management Training*. 2018 Pittsburgh Regional Faculty Symposium, Pittsburgh, PA, March 2018.

Lape, J., & Scaife, B. (2018, April 19). *An Exploratory Study Using the Kawa Model for Team Building Among Rehabilitative Professionals*. Professional Presentation, American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference, Salt Lake City, UT.

Lape, J. (2018, March 16). *Brain color: Preparing & accepting feedback*. Professional Presentation, Pittsburgh Regional Faculty Symposium: Small Changes Advancing Learning, Pittsburgh, PA.

Lape, J. (2018, October 24). *Sensory-based treatments beyond pediatrics: Their role in dementia care*, Guest Lecture, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

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Welcome...



► We are pleased to welcome **Kasey Stepansky, CscD, OTR/L, C/NDT, CBI** to our Chatham University OT team! Dr. Stepansky joined our faculty in August 2018, and is fulfilling the role of academic fieldwork

coordinator as Theresa Delbert transitions to the role of doctoral capstone coordinator for our entry-level doctorate. Dr. Stepansky received her Bachelor of Science in Health Science and Master of Science in Occupational Therapy degrees from Duquesne University. In 2018, she completed her Clinical Science Doctorate in Occupational Therapy from the University of Pittsburgh. Her primary interests are in community reintegration of adult clients with neurological injuries and quality improvement of health systems based on evidence-based practice. Dr. Stepansky is certified in Neuro-Developmental Treatment. She has presented locally, statewide, and nationally on topics including home modifications, practice scholarship, and caregiver training. Dr. Stepansky is married, with a lovable pit bull puppy. In her spare time, she loves to sing show

tunes, travel internationally, and go to concerts with her husband and friends.



► We extend our congratulations to Tyson Schrader who has moved on to the position of graduate admissions recruiter with the PA program. We simultaneously welcome **Bridget Burns** to

the position of program assistant, occupational therapy programs. Bridget came to Chatham just over a year ago as the grants management assistant with the School of Health Sciences, and then briefly as the administrative assistant with our physician assistant program. Bridget was the quality assurance director, grant writer, and school administrator for a residential school for at-risk youth for many years and her professional background is in quality assurance, compliance, and accreditations. Bridget is an officer with the Gaelic League of Pittsburgh and is a longtime student and promotor of the Irish Gaelic language. She serves several committees and teaches with

the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, and maintains involvement with numerous social justice organizations in Southwest Pennsylvania. Bridget enjoys spending time with her son, Benjamin, at his home in Los Angeles, and with family and friends. Her interests include traveling, kayaking, ice skating, and a lot of reading.



► We welcome **Christine Pacifico, Med, CPA**, to our program as part-time fieldwork program assistant/clinical program assistant to the occupational and physical therapy programs. Christine received a master's

degree in higher education from Penn State University and has worked in higher education administration, academic advising, programming and career counseling. She has also taught first-year seminar courses. Prior to changing careers, Christine received a bachelor's degree in accounting from Penn State University and worked as a licensed CPA with public accounting, healthcare and not-for-profit entities.

Faculty Accomplishments *continued from page 2*

Hissong, A., & **Lape, J.** (2018, October 16). *Deconstructing the myths about research & evidence-based practice: Being real about the process*, Webinar, FA Davis, Philadelphia, PA.

Hissong, A., & **Lape, J.** (2018, February 26). *Research for the Health Professional: Exploring*

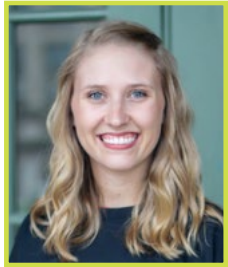
the text & instructor's guide, Webinar, FA Davis, Philadelphia, PA.

Lape, J. (2018, February 26). *Impact of personality type of conflict management & resolution*, Guest Lecture, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

Stepansky, K., Sethi, A., Toto, P., James, E., Leighton, C., & Bendixen, R. (2018, October 1). *Caregiver preparedness training within inpatient brain injury rehabilitation: A scoping review*. Poster session presented at the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine Annual Conference, Dallas, TX.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Emily Skaletski, MOT '17, OTR/L



► Emily Skaletski, MOT '17, has certainly found her niche in life working at CI Pediatric Therapy Centers of Wisconsin, her home state. She has worked there for almost a year and is passionate about family-centered care. “Watching kids grow is very satisfying,” she says, adding that she enjoys giving families the “opportunity to feel safe.” Emily interacts with parents and their children every day, and it’s this family interaction that

makes her area of practice so valuable.

Emily is grateful for how well Chatham’s MOT program prepared her for the field, especially as it relates to evidence-based practice. Since graduation, Emily has been actively engaged in scholarly activities, presenting at three peer reviewed conferences on topics related to pediatric practice. Her presentations at the Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Annual Conference included “Executive Functioning in Pediatric Practice: Occupation-Based Application” and “Supporting Families in Community-Based Pediatrics Through Parent/Sibling-Based Programming.” She was also accepted and presented at the America Occupational Therapy Association Children and Youth Specialty Conference in September 2018 on the topic of “Occupation-Based Assessment in Pediatric Practice.”

Emily further credits Chatham’s MOT program with teaching her a valuable lesson about clinical competency. She recalls the “super scary” stress of competencies, and even failed her last competency on the first attempt. She was certainly distraught in the moment, but she re-did the session, implemented her changes, and passed on the second try. It was “one of the best experiences,” she recalls, because it prepared her for real-world challenges of OT practice. The MOT program challenged Emily, but there were lighter memories as well — such as anatomy class with Dr. Ali.

When asked about life outside of the therapy center, Emily laughs and says she “can’t take the OT hat off.” She keeps herself busy with volunteer work at her church, and enjoys reading and cooking at home. Her advice to the Class of 2019 is to “stay positive,” take care of themselves, get involved in state and national associations that advocate for the profession, and find a mentor!

Launching of the Dr. Joyce Salls Occupational Therapy Student Award

Madison Ihrke, MOT 2018

► This past spring, the Class of 2018 committed our support to launching the Dr. Joyce Salls Occupational Therapy Student Award to show our appreciation for all that Dr. Salls has done for the students and alumni of the OT program. Thanks to the generous support of both alumni and current students, \$5,000 will be awarded this spring to a deserving OT student starting their second year at Chatham!

Dr. Salls has been more than just a professor. She is a mentor, confidant, and cheerleader for her students, and she teaches them what it means to truly give back. As a recent graduate looking back on my time at Chatham University, I am so glad to have completed my education in occupational therapy at Chatham University. Dr. Joyce Salls and her colleagues lead the OT department with grace and compassion, while preparing students to become outstanding additions to the profession. It is fitting that we are honoring an exceptional OT student with an award in recognition of Dr. Salls.

This academic year, we are asking for your help to continue this exciting new tradition. With the support of the OT alumni community, we hope to fund another \$5,000 award in honor of Dr. Salls, once again benefitting a second-year OT student. Your support at any level—whether it’s a one-time donation or an annual commitment—helps to empower the next generation of Chatham occupational therapists. Thank you in advance for your consideration!

To make your gift, please visit our secure online giving page at chatham.edu/otstudentaward. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Amanda Kile at 412-365-1349 or a.kile@chatham.edu.



MOT STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Cruising Through Development: 2018 Baby Lab

Kelly Burak, OTS; Taylor Harrison, OTS; Patrick Kender, OTS; and Carrie Rager, OTS

► Chatham University's Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) students applied their learning from their pediatrics course in a real-life situation, as parents volunteered to bring their children to the students' class to observe and better understand how children ages 0-4 years participate in the occupation of play and engage in social interaction. This took place during the students' lab portion of their Occupational Performance in Children and Adolescents course, which provided the students with opportunities for a hands-on experience with children. The students were able to learn about developmental milestones in children during the lecture part of the course, and subsequently apply the information into a hands-on experience by actively engaging with the children and their environment during their lab.

Developmental milestones are abilities that children should achieve by a certain age, involving physical, social, emotional, and communication skills. Meeting the typical developmental milestones is important because they represent what a child can do at a particular age, which may vary from child to child. By looking at the progression of developmental milestones in children, occupational therapists (OT) are able to understand how children typically develop and to recognize potential problems. OTs play a key role in implementing interventions that address developmental milestones to enhance the child's ability to complete self-care, play, academic, and interactive skills at an age-appropriate level.



On January 16, 2018, Chatham MOT students divided into two lab groups and interacted with both the children and their parents. The children were between the ages of eight months and four years of age. Although each child was exhibiting typical development, they were all at a different stage of development. Therefore, each child exhibited different behaviors and skills, such as rolling, cruising, grasp and release, and participating in parallel play. The students had the opportunity to play with and hold the children in order to actively participate with them. While engaging with the children, Chatham MOT students conversed with parents to obtain information related to the child's engagement at home, school, daycare, or other social settings. Throughout this

experience, Chatham MOT students were given the chance to recognize and participate in a discussion about the gross motor, fine motor, self-help, and social/self-regulation skills that were apparent and how they related to the child's current age. Although this was a learning experience, the students were able to laugh and have fun with the children during this opportunity.

The Chatham MOT program director, Dr. Joyce Salls, provided visual learning opportunities throughout this educational and informative interaction by setting out toys for the children to interact with, and giving the children the opportunity to explore their play environment. The specific toys that were present were items such as blocks, cups, rattles, balls, and markers. By observing the children during play, the students were able to determine what developmental milestones they had achieved. Dr. Salls demonstrated primitive reflexes in the children by placing them in a variety of positions. The students were able to compare and observe how each child responded to the positions and determined which reflexes were present or integrated at various stages of development.

This opportunity was very valuable, providing students with a hands-on learning experience that allowed them to observe different developmental milestones among children of different ages. With this knowledge, students are better able to recognize potential developmental delays and understand how OTs can implement successful interventions to address these needs.

MOT STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Lending a Hand at Eden Hall

Hayley Frye, OTS; Alyssa Horan, OTS; Abbi Ohman, OTS; and Alex Hines, OTS



► During the summer term of 2018, as a part of an Environmental Interventions course, the Chatham University Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Class of 2019 completed a consultation project at Chatham's Eden Hall Campus. This course introduced the students to how to properly analyze and adapt the environment to the needs of a population. On May 31, 2018, the class began the project by visiting Eden Hall to conduct an "evaluation" of various areas around the campus, including the campground and hiking trails, low ropes course, K-12 program, winterized high tunnels, the orchard, storage barn,

and Elsama Field. This visit provided opportunities for students to meet with Eden Hall stakeholders regarding their assigned areas, tour the campus, and included an introduction from Dr. Lou Anne Caligiuri, dean of Eden Hall Campus.

The purpose of the assignment was to facilitate both inclusion and participation through environmental interventions at the campus for individuals of all ages and functional abilities. Using an OT lens, students identified areas of need throughout the campus and presented their findings to the stakeholders on June 28, 2018. The changes and modifications that were recommended by the OT students aimed to maintain accessibility and sustainability throughout the campus. Some of those suggestions included: adding more detailed signage to the trails, altering the gardening set-up in the winterized high tunnel to be accessible for all, and introducing multiple adaptive equipment tools to reduce the risk of work-related injuries. Each group also developed a handout with information that included suggestions such as ergonomic training for farming, ADA accessibility recommendations for outdoor programs and the school campus, staff education on various common diagnoses for children, and environmental modifications that would promote safety with the staff and volunteers.

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Safety for Seniors

Sarah Irwin, OTS; Paige Russo, OTS; & Lauren Zurowski, OTS

► Chatham's 40 occupational therapy (OT) students partnered with Safety for Seniors to complete home safety visits around the Pittsburgh area as part of an assignment for our Environmental Interventions class. Safety for Seniors is a non-profit organization that provides safety inspections for residents and may provide suggestions as a charitable service free of charge for seniors. Along with specific home safety recommendations, the volunteers are able to recommend two of the following devices to be installed after visiting: a grab bar and/or an indoor staircase handrail.

As volunteers we went in groups of two or three to a senior's residence. Upon arrival, the resident(s) were provided with a verbal password that ensured we were from Safety for Seniors. First, we provided the resident(s) with a bag full of home safety essentials such as a fire alarm, slip resistant mat and a list of services and resources to contact in case of an emergency. The resident(s) then signed a consent form to have their home inspected. The following areas of the home were reviewed: bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, basement, outside, stairs, carpet/rugs, lighting, and electrical. Some examples include checking to see if entrances were clear of debris, if the stairs were well lit, if throw rugs had slip resistance backings, if kitchen items were stored where they are easy to reach, etc. After the inspection, we reviewed our recommendations with the resident(s) and checked for their understanding. Some resident(s) loved the company so much that they talked with us even after the inspection was complete.

According to the World Health Organization (2018), "Falls are the second leading cause of accidental or unintentional injury deaths worldwide and each year an estimated 646,000 individuals die from falls globally." This volunteer opportunity was essential for us as students because it gave us hands on experience to check for safety hazards to decrease fall risks in the home. As OTs, we have a role in helping seniors age in place through education and environmental modifications. Safety for seniors has given us the opportunity to build rapport with clients, gain confidence in working in the community, and enhance our observational skills. As future OT practitioners, we will refer back to this experience at Chatham when serving our clients in the community to prevent falls.

MOT STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Patient Safety Fellowship

Carla Ledva, OTS & Katie Pollack, OTS

► In summer 2018, two students from Chatham's Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program participated in a Patient Safety Fellowship through the Jewish Healthcare Foundation. This opportunity was presented to the current MOT class by the professors as an opportunity to expand our professional skills and learn more about developing patient safety skills. Being selected to participate allowed both MOT students, Carla Ledva and Katie Pollack, to make connections with other professionals in the greater Pittsburgh area, as well as build on skills developed in the MOT program related to understanding patient safety and the need to consistently improve the level of care we provide.

Since 2008, the Fine Foundation and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation have partnered to award sites who have shown commitment to patient safety and quality improvement at their organizations. The Fine Award focuses on the way healthcare organizations utilize quality improvement strategies, sustain excellence over time, and spread their projects internally and externally.

This year, the 10th annual Fine Award winners were determined by the fellows in the Patient Safety Fellowship, which was a new strategy for the foundations. The group of fellows were made up of 34 multidisciplinary healthcare graduate students and professionals, including occupational therapy students, a physical therapist, doctorate students from local universities, employees from UPMC and Allegheny hospitals, lawyers, and more. This year, the Chatham MOT students added to the perspective during discussions amongst the fellows by providing knowledge about occupational therapy, and how we as practitioners play a role in patient care.

Over the course of seven weeks, the fellows learned about implementation science and interviewing skills. The concept of implementation science includes improving healthcare interventions and policies by integrating evidence-based practices, which is a concept that connects well to the tenants of the MOT program. The two students participating entered the fellowship with a foundational knowledge of evidence-based practice and were able to connect their knowledge from the occupational therapy program to how evidence-based practice can be applied on the organizational level.

After reviewing the concept of implementation science, the fellows were paired up and connected with a wide variety of previous Fine Award winner organizations within the Pittsburgh area. The fellows interviewed members from these organizations to learn about key factors that have led to sustained quality control and culture change. The interviews focused on policies, incentives, culture, individual values and beliefs, frontline and leadership staff, and the planning, execution, and implementation of projects.

After completing the interviews, all fellows interpreted their interviews and presented their findings to the other fellows. The previous award winners were separated into categories based on their type of organization. Within those groups, it was up to the fellows, including the Chatham students, to determine which organization was most "wired for excellence", and thus deserving of the 2018 Fine Award. The fellows determined that being "wired for excellence" meant offering a high level of health care services and maintaining their quality improvement projects. The winners were: UPMC Palliative and Supportive Institute, St. Clair Hospital, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, The Open Door, Inc., and Prevention Point Pittsburgh.

Overall, this experience was a positive one for both students as it fostered their skills of professional interviewing, as well as helped further develop their leadership skills and competence in using evidence-based practice in their future careers.

photo courtesy of Jewish Healthcare Foundation



MOT STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Milestone Centers, Inc. Proves to be Perfect Fit for Community Fieldwork

Ken Baurle, OTS; Holly Blank, OTS; Madeline Holtsford, OTS; & Megan King, OTS

► Community Fieldwork locations vary in clientele and mission; however, they all have one thing in common: they do not have an occupational therapist on site. This presents an opportunity for Chatham MOT students to apply what they have learned during their first year of graduate school while also giving back to the community. By recommending strategies from an OT perspective, students can help their site's clientele participate in their roles more fully and independently.

Milestone Centers, Inc. is a large organization with multiple locations around the Pittsburgh area. This was the first year that Chatham students were placed at this organization. Milestone's mission is, "to provide quality, life-enhancing services that promote wellness and the development of human potential to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and/or behavioral health challenges" (Milestone Centers, Inc., 2018). They uphold their mission through a variety of services including residential buildings and day programs. Three pairs of MOT students were assigned to three different Milestone locations, all of which serve the intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) population. The Yough Adventure Program is a day program for younger adults (21+) who are active and enjoy nature, while the two adult day programs, New Horizon and Garden City, serve older adults (65+). In September, students spent a full week at their fieldwork sites to get to know clients and staff to determine their site's

areas of need. Students then began planning and implementing weekly programs at their sites.

After determining the needs of the Yough Adventure Program, the OT students chose to implement the "Zones of Regulation," a self-regulation program that allows clients to identify their current emotional state and use strategies to get back into the optimal or "green" zone. This zone is defined as being focused, calm, and ready to participate. Clients assisted the OT students with painting the Zones board, plates, and clothespins. From there, the OT students held a group session called "Go for the Green," where they educated clients and staff on the importance of recognizing their emotions and the benefits of being in the green zone. First, all clients used a clothespin to indicate what zone they currently fell into. Next, clients and staff were educated on different strategies to "go for the green" zone. Finally, the clients had the chance to explore and practice the different strategies with the OT students and see what strategies each client could incorporate throughout their daily routine. Within a week, the staff reported that many of the clients implemented the Zones board with great success.

Following the observation of the facility and staff interviews, students assigned to New Horizon Senior Center chose to focus their first group on sensory education. The group was called, "Is it Behavior, or is it Sensory?" and educated the staff on sensory systems, associated behaviors,



The "Zones of Regulation Board" used at the Yough Adventure Program

and calming/alerting strategies. The students then worked with clients to make homemade sensory interventions including weighted scarfs and rice bins. The clients loved the activities and the staff was very interested in learning this new information. The OT students noted carry-over with these homemade interventions in the following weeks.

Through the community based fieldwork, OT students have learned how to advocate for occupational therapy and practiced implementing group interventions. Occupational therapy appropriately aligns with Milestone Centers, Inc. mission statement of providing quality, life-enhancing services. The projects the OT students implemented addressing emotional regulation and sensory education will have a lasting impact on the clients at this organization. Community based fieldwork has been mutually beneficial for both Chatham students and the organizations they have been paired with, and it is evident that the OT students have enjoyed giving back to the community in this way.

Reference

Milestone Centers, Inc. (2018). *Milestone mission*. Retrieved from <https://milestonepa.org/who-we-are/mission>

MOT STUDENT EXPERIENCE

STAR Simulation and Learning Opportunity

Emily Gallaher, OTS; Lacey Massari, OTS; Corrin Walker, OTS; & Valerie Wood, OTS

► Each year, Chatham University's Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program provides students with unique simulated learning opportunities. This year, students participated in simulated clinical scenarios at the Simulation Teaching, Academic Research (STAR) Center at Allegheny Health Network West Penn Hospital School of Nursing. Through STAR, students practiced the clinical skills needed to meet the needs of patients, families, and the communities they serve. This hands-on experience promoted problem solving and team collaboration between students. Through the standardized simulation patient program, individual actors portrayed the roles of the patient and family members, promoting interpersonal interactions and development of communication skills. The "patient" was a mannequin who exhibited real life behaviors, such as breathing and chest rising, changes in vitals, talking, coughing, and had realistic body weight. Each session simulated a patient chart review, occupational therapy assessments, and interventions through which the students adjusted to the feedback from the client and family. This opportunity occurred later in the curriculum which allowed students to build on their course material and apply their knowledge in a realistic, controlled learning environment.

As part of this experience, students were divided into two groups. One group participated as occupational therapists working directly with the simulator and actors while the other peers observed the students in the simulation. Nerves ran a little high at the beginning of each simulation for those working directly with the patient as OTs. The role of the OT began with a medical chart review, which painted a picture of the client's situation and medical history. The students then entered the room with the patient mannequin and began the intervention session. The students had roughly 20 minutes to work with the patient and needed to adjust their plan based on the environment, materials available, patient responses, family presence in the room, and potential medical alerts

regarding the patient's vitals. This simulation provided students with a safe learning environment, where mistakes could be made without causing harm to a person. Student feedback indicated that the simulation increased confidence, improved their skills, and allowed them to directly apply principles from the classroom. Students in the OT role appreciated feedback from their peer observer, because their peers are on the same level of education and understand the implications of being a student.

The peer observation provided a unique opportunity for students to observe and learn from one another. In the role as observer, students were able to identify strengths and weaknesses shown by peers, which provided a great learning opportunity. This perspective allowed students to gain a better understanding of how to work with patients. Students were able to see things they may have not thought of, and they had the opportunity to teach peers what could have been done to improve the situation. Most adults learn best from interactions with one another. The STAR simulation gave students the opportunity to sit back, observe, and learn side-by-side with their peers.

Overall, the STAR simulation experience allowed students to practice their clinical skills under the supervision of professors and peers, and it gave an opportunity for students to observe each other and provide feedback on performance. This experience has not only made students more comfortable providing critiques to peers, but also made them more confident in their ability to be hands-on with a patient. With level II fieldwork right around the corner, it is important for the students to begin trusting their knowledge and abilities with patients. STAR was the perfect simulation of a typical OT session from chart review, to speaking with family, to handling unforeseen circumstances, to working collaboratively. Each student may now go off to fieldwork with confidence in their capabilities and clinical skills as an occupational therapist.

SBIRT

Amelia Ence, OTS; Emma Fiorita, OTS; Seth Pratt, OTS; Peter Thistle, OTS

► The opioid epidemic has attracted the attention of the United States from the halls of power to homes. Tragically, over 115 people die each day in the United States from opioid-related overdoses (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2018). In 2017, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency and released a 5-point strategy to combat the epidemic (HHS, 2018).

The cycle of pain and decreased activity can limit one's occupational performance, and we are now learning that medication to combat this cycle may create a new problem: substance abuse. However, new problems may have old solutions. For years, OT practitioners have helped clients manage pain through evidence-based and client-centered approaches that empower them to engage in meaningful activities. The AOTA position is "OT is a necessary and core component of any comprehensive, non-pharmacological pain program" ("OT and Pain Management," 2018). Recently, the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) Act (HR 6) was signed into law. An important highlight of the bill is the improvement of health professional training in pain management alternatives ("OT and Pain Management," 2018). Another aspect of substance use-disorder prevention is the use of the Screening, Brief Interventions, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) model.

The SBIRT model is a comprehensive, integrated, public health approach used to identify, reduce, and prevent problematic use, abuse, and dependence

on alcohol and illicit drugs in at risk populations (Harrington, 2014; SBIRT, n.d.). It is used in a variety of healthcare and community settings (Harrington, 2014). SBIRT consists of three major components: screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment. First a patient is screened by a healthcare professional for risky substance use behaviors using standardized screening tools (SBIRT, n.d.). Brief intervention conversationally increases awareness of substance use and gauges motivation for behavioral change (Harrington, 2014). Finally, referral to treatment provides access to therapy or additional treatment for patients identified as needing more extensive treatment (SBIRT, n.d.).

The Chatham University MOT program provided the class of 2019 with SBIRT training in the Mental Health and Occupational Performance Course with Dr. Janet Bucey OTD, OTR/L. We completed both an online course through the University

of Pittsburgh and an in-person workshop. The SBIRT model provided us the skills and tools to therapeutically address substance abuse with at risk patients through screening, motivational interviewing techniques, and reference to necessary treatment.

Occupational performance problems that stem from substance use disorders include loss of family roles, work roles and general health management (Opp, n.d.). OTs have a role in preventing substance use disorders through non-pharmacological pain management and SBIRT. It is vital for occupational therapists to be aware of the toll such a disorder can take and how to identify early signs. We may educate supervisors, mentors, and colleagues about SBIRT and non-pharmacological pain management under new legislation. Chatham University's occupational therapy students are tomorrow's leaders and advocates.

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SHS Annual Lecture: Stigma & Substance Misuse



► Ashley Potts, LSW spoke before an audience of over 300 students, faculty, staff, and alumni at the Campbell Memorial Chapel on Thursday, September 27, 2018. Her presentation, “Stigma and Substance Misuse” implored health professionals to be increasingly self-aware in the language they use, the assumptions they make, and

the actions they take when encountering individuals struggling with substance misuse and substance use disorder. As she spoke and gave examples, Ms. Potts pulled upon her vast professional experiences, which include work at Allegheny Health Network’s Center of Excellence for Opioid Use Disorders; and memberships within (1) the United States Attorney’s working group on addiction, intervention, treatment, and recovery, (2) the regional FBI HOPE (heroin, outreach, prevention education) group; and (3) the Joint State Government Commission’s Advisory committee on Addiction Treatment Services. The deeply personal story of her own struggles with substance use and stigma she faced in fighting this battle were front and center as she used her story to highlight the many obstacles faced by those touched by substance use disorder.

After the talk, students spoke of the power of the presentation, and of how impressed they were with Ms. Potts. Others spoke of feeling hope for patients and clients; discussing ideas that the talk broached, particularly around stigma more broadly, and creating environments where individuals seeking any health care can be met where they are without judgment. Continuing education credits were offered for occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychology, and social work. Many classes required or encouraged attendance, working the theme into classroom assignments to highlight its importance within the School of Health Sciences. Many thanks to Dean Pat Downey for bringing Ms. Potts to Chatham!

Fieldwork Educator Appreciation Event: Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Theresa Delbert, MS, OTR/L, Kasey Stepansky, CScD, OTR/L, C/NDT, CBIS



► The Chatham University MOT program hosted its 8th annual Fieldwork Educator Appreciation Event, which is held as a way to thank our fieldwork educators who give their time, energy and expertise supervising and mentoring Chatham University level I and level II fieldwork students. The event this year was hosted in collaboration with Chatham University’s School of Health Sciences as part of the WELL Project grant funded by Health Resources and Services Administration. Jennifer Sikora from American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and Dr.

Sharon Novalis, PhD., OTR/L from the occupational therapy program, presented on the topic “Suicide Awareness and Prevention.”

This was an interdisciplinary event open to professionals in all healthcare careers. Occupational therapy fieldwork educators joined other professionals, as well as students and faculty from graduate programs in counseling psychology, healthcare informatics, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant studies, and social work for an evening of poster presentations, networking, and a presentation on the evening’s topic.

The MOT Class of 2019 presented their Evidence Based Practice Posters to the group of fieldwork educators, Chatham partners, students, and faculty. Attendees viewed the posters while asking students questions about their evidence and connections to practice. The posters were followed by the presentation on Suicide Awareness and Prevention. The presentation included a discussion of recent statistics for suicidality, signs of potential suicidality, indicators of suicide risk, and an overview of the decision making process for deciding when to refer a person to behavioral health professionals. The occupational therapy program hosted 52 attendees throughout the evening’s events. We look forward to providing future programming as a thank you to our fieldwork educators for their continued commitment to our students’ learning and to the profession at large.



CONFERENCES

POTA 2018 Annual Conference: Making OT a Part of the Future of Healthcare

Hollie Compton, OTS; Lisa Prenni, OTS; Jade Williams, OTS; Jonathan Winter, OTS

► On October 12 and 13, 2018, Chatham's Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Class of 2019 attended the annual Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association (POTA) conference as student presenters in Monroeville, PA. In groups of four, students presented their posters that showcased each of the ten evidence-based capstone topics. Over the course of ten months and three didactic semesters, students worked in groups to carry out comprehensive literature reviews and research methods, including a practitioner survey, the development of a training program, and an experiential intervention. In March, each group submitted proposals to POTA and all ten of the evidence-based practice groups were accepted to present their posters at the 2018 POTA Conference.

At the conference, students shared their findings with POTA attendees at various poster presentation sessions throughout the weekend. In addition to the poster presentations, students had opportunities to attend educational lectures, network with various employers, and obtain resources related to occupational therapy practice. After months

of preparation, Chatham's MOT students were well-versed in their topics and ready to convey their knowledge to the individuals attending the conference. The following outlines the poster titles, presenters, and faculty mentors involved in the poster presentations:

1. **Caution: Conflict Ahead**
Hayley Frye, Megan King, Carrie Rager, Jade Williams, Prof. Theresa Delbert
2. **Childhood Obesity: Getting Kids Moving**
Kelly Burak, Alexandra Hines, Katherine Pollack, Lauren Zurowski, Dr. Joyce Salls
3. **Communities of Practice: Exploring the Methods of Engagement**
Ken Baurle, Holly Blank, Amelia Ence, Abbi Ohman, Dr. Janet Bucey
4. **Hakunta Matata: School-Based Interventions to Reduce Anxiety**
Hollie Compton, Madeline Holtsford, Sarah Irwin, Paige Russo, Dr. Janet Bucey
5. **Integrative Health: Complementing Your Practice**
Carla Ledva, Caroline Reid, Peter Thistle, Corrin Walker, Dr. Sharon Novalis

6. **Mindfully Mending Anxiety in Children: A Literature Review**
Emma Fiorita, Katelyn Kowalczyk, Baylee Satyshur, Jody Toth, Dr. Joyce Salls
7. **Stick It: Kinesiotaping to Improve Functionality Post-Stroke**
Allie Desko, Alyssa Horan, Lacey Massari, Jonathan Winter, Dr. Jodi Schreiber
8. **Victory Over Injury: Prevention Education in the Workplace**
Emily Gallaher, Allison Harrison, Miranda Holdaway, Seth Pratt, Prof. Theresa Delbert
9. **Virtual Dementia Tour: A Window Into Their World**
Kylie Godwin, Carla Monzo, Lisa Prenni, Jenna Sciulli, Dr. Jodi Schreiber
10. **Work Shouldn't Hurt: The Effectiveness of Ergonomic Strategies**
Patrick Kender, Ann Kostyak, Bianca Morrone, Valerie Wood, Dr. Sharon Novalis

Since presenting at the conference, students have provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experiences as speakers at the conference. From a class perspective, it has been reported that the students generally feel more prepared to independently carry out research in the future as practitioners in the field. Allie Desko, MOT '19, reflected on the experience by stating that POTA provided her with "an opportunity for a

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Dr. Provident Leads Mindfulness Training for OT Students

► Mindfulness meditation is a technique that can improve an individual's physical health, mental health, and cognitive functioning when practiced regularly. It has become quite popular in healthcare and university settings. *Koru Mindfulness* is an evidence-based program for teaching mindfulness & meditation to college students and other young adults. In June 2018, Dr. Ingrid Provident participated in the initial phase of a three-part teacher certification training in Durham, North Carolina. The certification program is designed to teach new teachers how to effectively teach mindfulness to emerging adults using the Koru Mindfulness curriculum.

As part of the certification process, each teacher in training is required to run three 4-week mindfulness sessions with students to showcase the techniques and provide practice opportunities for students. The Master of Occupational Therapy students participated in the 4-week program in October

2018. Several OTD students are now in the process of receiving this instruction online through the OTD 760 Leadership course. The mindfulness practices shared in the program include several techniques to increase awareness of how breathing effects a person's sense of the present moment and taking time before reacting to a situation. Walking and eating meditations are also practiced. When the OTD students come to campus for their onsite, time will be dedicated to

discuss their thoughts related to mindfulness and how the skills and techniques can be used in leadership positions as well as in patient care.

As mindfulness becomes more prevalent in the literature and is being found to be helpful in symptom reduction of various diseases, it is proposed that training students in this practice would not only help in managing their student stress, but would also hopefully be a tool they can use with patients and clients on fieldwork and beyond.

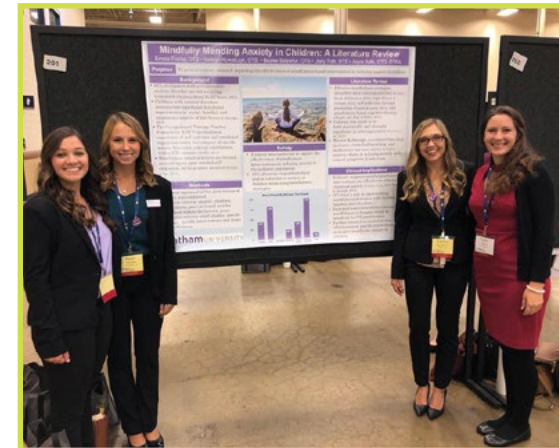


Conferences *continued from page 12*

powerful exchange of research findings with current OT practitioners and educators." She went on to say, "Our superiors were receptive to our input and very encouraging throughout the process." Many students expressed the satisfying feeling that the conference provided in helping them to see their hard work pay off and the impact made on the field. Megan King, from the "Caution: Conflict Ahead" group, stated, "Both fieldwork educators and fieldwork students thanked us for bringing our difficult topic of 'conflict on fieldwork' to light, which was really rewarding to see how our research could impact our profession." Baylee Satyshur, MOT '19 said, "It was really empowering to see that people were interested in the project that we worked so hard on for so long." Another student, Bianca Morrone, MOT '19 shared that her group "was able to share an actual product of the evidence-based ergonomics manual with practitioners."

Attending POTA offered the MOT students an opportunity to convey information they have learned over the past year as graduate students and build on their professional development. The conference further reinforced the importance of advocating and supporting the OT profession that the Chatham MOT students will soon be entering as entry-level practitioners. This experience proved to be both rewarding

and educational for not only the students that presented, but for other professors and clinicians that attended the poster presentations. Whether you are a new graduate of the OT profession or have been practicing for 30+ years, POTA is a great learning experience from which all can benefit. Future Chatham students and professors plan to continue to support POTA by attending the conference as presenters and future leaders in the field.



Chatham University Out of the Darkness Walk 2018

Sharon Novalis, PhD, OTR/L

► The second annual Out of the Darkness Campus Walk occurred on April 7, 2018. This walk was held in cooperation with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Chatham's MOT class of 2018 initiated this walk in 2017 and class of 2019 continued their efforts through their active engagement in much of the planning for the 2018 walk. Faculty, staff and students from various schools within the University contributed time, ideas, projects, counseling resources, poetry and music! Some created teams of walkers to increase the participation and donations, all of which were very much appreciated! This year, in addition to the Hope Tree and prayer flags, a second ceremonial tree planting occurred, a multi-faith prayer space was added, therapy dogs and their handlers were present, and Chatham University administration, faculty, staff and students from across the campus were actively involved. A number of community members joined us this year and were quickly welcomed in as part of the Chatham community as well!!! Again, thanks to the presence and varied contributions of the Chatham University community, a very soulful, life-filled event occurred on the beautiful Chatham University campus.

This year, (even though we had to chip ice off of the tables for this true April Pitts-burrrrh Campus Walk!!!), there were 227 people present for the walk and

over \$20,000 was raised on behalf of AFSP. These donations help to support research, advocacy, and education efforts related to suicide awareness/suicide prevention and to address various aspects of mental health.

Chatham University has also benefited from the educational materials available through AFSP. To that end, through the support of Chatham University administration and the efforts of the Chatham University Mental Health Task Force, an educational initiative is well underway campus-wide related to suicide awareness/prevention and is specifically designed for the college-age, young adult, student population. The educational program has been shared with the majority of Chatham University schools/faculty and is intended for roll out to the student body as well in the near future. Chatham University was recognized by the Western PA Chapter of AFSP for their educational efforts and was awarded the 2018 Educator Award at the annual Pittsburgh Community Out of the Darkness Walk.

We look forward to year three of our Chatham University Out of the Darkness Walk, scheduled for April 13, 2019. Registration and/or donations are encouraged early by accessing www.afsp.org/chatham.

We look forward to seeing you there!!!



◀ Ceremonial tree planting

▼ Chatham receiving the 2018 Educator Award at Highmark Stadium



Fostering Cultural Competence: Ecuadorian Style

Miranda Holdaway, OTS; Allie Desko, OTS; Caroline Reid, OTS

► Chatham University's occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) graduate students are offered an opportunity to take an elective Global Health Perspectives course in the summer, followed by a mission trip to Ecuador. The course is taught by faculty members from both departments who accompany students on the trip to provide guidance and support. OT students spent time studying the culture of Ecuador alongside their PT counterparts in an effort to understand current health care issues, the function of OT and PT in Ecuador, and their unique role in service provision internationally. This course helps students develop therapeutic skills and engage in team-oriented interprofessional practice to prepare them for treating individuals across the lifespan. While in Ecuador, students implemented interventions for a wide range of patients and delivered in-service presentations to Ecuadorians about important treatments for common diagnoses including hip replacements, rheumatoid arthritis, rotator cuff repair, and stroke.



Students also explored the following cities: Quito, La Ciudad Mitad del Mundo, Mindo, and Ibarra, to enhance their understanding of Ecuadorian culture. Some excursions included zip-lining, Lake Cuicocha, Mirador Yahuarcocha lake overlook, local salsa dancing lessons, tubing, a butterfly house tour, a visit to the Equator, a chocolate factory tour, and so much more! These thrilling experiences offered a unique perspective on the values and identity of Ecuadorian people and additional opportunities to interact with the local community. However, the greater part of their travels involved developing and implementing interventions to meet the needs of individuals across the lifespan at four different clinics.

CRECER and Distintos Somos Todos had a primarily pediatric/young adult population. CRECER, a free pediatric outpatient OT clinic located in Ibarra, Ecuador, was the original organization started in Ecuador by Dr. Elaine Keane. Common diagnoses seen in this clinic include: Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, and brain injury. Students collaborated to provide client-centered interventions to address the specific needs of the population. Some of these interventions included obstacle courses, positioning to prepare for function, handwriting activities, and using games to challenge emotional regulation. At Distintos Somos Todos (DST), a day program serving young adults with disabilities, students provided fun, engaging interventions, such as balloon volleyball and varieties of the well-loved parachute game, to challenge cognition, balance, ROM, and strength. The individuals who attend DST's day program share the responsibility in caring for each other by assisting with wheelchair mobility and helping feed

members who are unable to feed themselves.

Furthermore, students spent time volunteering in two geriatric facilities: La Esperanza, an adult day center for people ages 65+ of low socioeconomic status, and a nursing home. They developed creative and meaningful group activities to challenge fine and gross motor skills, cognition, and socialization. Students incorporated dancing and singing to promote gross motor movement. Members of this facility were notorious for being enthusiastic and full of energy. Lastly, OT students volunteered at a nursing home. Unlike facilities in the U.S, this nursing home only had one wheelchair for the entire facility, so many more residents were seen walking around than typically seen in an American nursing home. Every session began with dancing and basic stretches followed by an activity to challenge cognition and fine motor skills. Some of the activities included balloon volleyball, Bingo, beading necklaces, creating fabric wreaths, and a variety of games using a parachute to promote inclusion and socialization.

Overall, OT and PT students used their clinical knowledge and skills to provide therapeutic interventions, which allowed all people to participate. Interdisciplinary efforts both inside and outside of the clinic helped OT and PT students provide enriching activities for individuals across the lifespan to promote function and independence.



Pittsburgh Kids Play Their Own Way at Pop-Up Playground

Ann Kostyak, OTS; Carla Monzo, OTS; Bianca Morrone, OTS; Jody Toth, OTS

► More than 75 children and parents from our community stopped by the Chatham OT-led pop-up playground at Schenley Plaza on the afternoon of October 14, 2018. Equipped with refrigerator boxes and craft supplies, parents and kids built a small city of cardboard under the plaza tent, adding their own unique touches along the way.

Some environments for play, such as a traditional playground, can pose barriers to children with varying abilities and lead to exclusion or assumptions on how to appropriately play with the equipment due to societal norms. The main idea of the pop-up playground is to provide an environment with items that do not have pre-conceived notions about play attached to them. It gives children an open environment to play as they are comfortable, to be creative, and to direct

how they want to play. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) (2011) states that, “Play teaches children about their bodies and about the effects of their actions on the world around them” (p. 1). By giving kids an opportunity to explore the physical and social environment in their own way, we give them a chance to

learn about cause and effect without fear of “doing it wrong.”

Play is an important occupation of a child. According to AOTA (2012), “It is a child’s ‘job’ or ‘occupation’ to play to develop physical coordination, emotional maturity, social skills to interact with other children, and self-confidence to try new experiences and explore new environments” (p. 1). During our pop-up playground, we witnessed kids practicing these play skills by sharing scissors, navigating the cardboard city, playing independently, regulating their emotions and communicating effectively with their peers and adults. A pop-up playground is a great way for children to explore new ideas and engage in the occupation of play while promoting development and supporting socialization between parents and children.

The overall goal of the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) Volunteer Committee this year was to do community outreach into suburban areas neighboring Pittsburgh. The idea of having a pop-up playground was raised during one of our monthly meetings, and the planning process was initiated by contacting the Pittsburgh Parks Conservatory to explore the potential for the involvement of the OT students. Ultimately, they were extremely interested and invited us to come to their Kids’ Day event at Schenley Plaza to do a pop-up playground. Now that there was a space for the event, the next step was to get the materials for the kids to play with. We began by holding a



collection at school for clean and safe recyclable materials and other crafting supplies. We asked for glue, tape, cardboard boxes, plastic containers, etc. Additionally, Don’s Appliances in Bridgeville donated large boxes from refrigerators and stoves for the kids to play with. They agreed to give us boxes and were excited to see their boxes being used. Lastly, all first and second year MOT students were invited to volunteer for the event to be available to the children to help as needed and to supervise for safety.

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POST PROFESSIONAL OTD STUDENT EXPERIENCE

OTD Capstone to OT Community: The Learning Process of Writing a Peer Reviewed Article

Emily Drnach OTD, OTR/L

► Prior to my experience with Chatham's OTD program, I would have never imagined that I would be submitting an article to a peer reviewed journal on an evidence-based project that I completed for my capstone. When reflecting on the process and seeing the end result, I realize that the journey of preparing an article for publication began with many small steps and foundational details that were outlined methodically in the OTD program design.

When I began the program in the fall of 2016, I had many topics in mind to pursue for my capstone project. I decided on researching multifactorial fall prevention programs because of the number of falls and re-hospitalizations that were occurring in the skilled nursing centers where I practiced. This led to a PICO question to see if fall prevention education decreased fall risk in the skilled nursing setting. The capstone implementation taught me many critical things including how to organize a study for IRB review in a way that the IRB committee would understand the objectives of the program. Along with the communication with the academic environment at Chatham, I learned how to communicate with clinicians and my company's clinical leadership team to educate them on the fall prevention program. Along the way, I always had guidance from Dr. Provident, Dr. Lape as my IRB advisor, and my cohort to peer review my writing. The feedback of all of these members was instrumental in shaping how I completed the capstone project.

One of our assignments for OTD 761 Proposal Development and OTD 772 Capstone Implementation and Evaluation was to consider a journal to publish the results of our capstones. This was out of my comfort zone, as scientific writing was intimidating to me. However, I felt that since I had completed an evidence-based project, it was my responsibility to the profession to try and share the results with the OT community. My motivation that guided me was that other patients could potentially benefit from the fall prevention program that I developed. I wanted other clinicians to have access to this information to be used in day to day practice in the skilled nursing setting.

The preparation of the peer reviewed article started in the OTD courses, and then my article was initially submitted in December 2017, right before OTD graduation, after revisions by my fellow OTD students, a PT, and Dr. Provident. I received a decision in September 2018 to revise portions of the article based on the journal reviewers' feedback. Primarily being a practicing clinician in skilled nursing, it was helpful to have the book *Writing a Journal Article in 12 Weeks* guide this academic endeavor. I was also grateful for my prior organization of resources and coursework from the OTD program. It was also helpful to have all my articles printed and in a folder to reference from my literature review during the revision process. At first I was overwhelmed by the number of comments and that some comments conflicted between the

two independent reviewers. (I recommend reading through the comments and then setting the article aside for a week before diving in to another round of revising). Luckily, the journal gave me two months to complete the revisions. It is important to remember that the feedback is meant to improve the article and is not critically directed at you as the author. Most of the comments made the resulting article stronger, including adding a new journal article that was published on fall prevention, and clarifying points of my intervention. After some encouragement, I was assisted with another round of revisions/feedback from Dr. Provident, a PT, and an OT. I just re-submitted my article in November 2018 and will hopefully receive a decision soon. Hopefully, the decision will be favorable, but if not, I acknowledge that there are many avenues for publication, presentation, or communication of my evidence-based project.

When reflecting on this whole process, I am so humbled by and grateful for the skills obtained from the OTD program that helped me persevere with peer reviewed writing. Also, I am grateful for the community of support from my personal reviewers who encouraged me and challenged me along the way. There is always something new to learn, being a rookie in the publication process! Overall, writing this article was a compilation of many small steps from the past two years. I hope that other clinicians and students are motivated to share their results of their capstones with the OT

POST PROFESSIONAL OTD STUDENT EXPERIENCE

OTD Program Epilogues

As part of post-professional OTD program at Chatham University, students at the end of the program are asked to write a personal epilogue related to their doctoral journey. Writing these epilogues typically prompts deep reflection on the process, consideration of personal and professional growth, and introspection on the supports and barriers encountered. We have assembled a collection of recent epilogues from graduates of the program in an effort to provide you with a deeper view into the transformations that students encounter as part of our program. Thanks to these alumni for allowing us to share their deeply personal pieces.

Beth Randall

► My journey to the OTD started out by chance. While I had often casually mused about returning to school to pursue a master's degree, I had never really considered a doctoral program until I happened across materials from an OTD program at a conference in the fall of 2014. That booklet planted an idea in my head and by January 2015, I had applied to Chatham University.

That chance encounter turned into the most transformative experience of my education and career.

This journey over five semesters has taken me from feeling complacent and stagnant in my job to feeling ready to create change in my setting and beyond. I began the program not really understanding or applying evidence-based practice but now I have led a journal club in my workplace, revamped my evaluation process to a more occupation centered model based on the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework, and sought out published research to answer dilemmas in treatment. Most significantly, I have found my professional voice as an advocate for creating fine motor and handwriting development opportunities for young elementary school students.

Among all of these amazing changes though, the one I treasure most is the one I least expected. I embarked upon this journey knowing I would need support from my husband and sons. I also received so much support from my extended family in the form of editing, entertaining my kids, folding laundry, and so many other tasks. What I never anticipated was how much I would come to rely on my classmates along this journey. Rarely did a day go by that I wasn't in contact with one or more members of the group to ask or answer a question, share good or discouraging news, or swap cheerleading. I have learned so much from every single person who has traveled this journey with me and I am really

looking forward to seeing what lies in our futures. I deeply believe this group has the knowledge and the will to make changes in our individual settings and in the larger world of occupational therapy.

Just a few years ago, I never would have included myself in such a group but now I feel honored to be a part of this cohort of innovative therapists. I am still a work in progress as an occupational therapist and I now always hope to be improving and changing the way I practice. Just as the famous Apple "Think Different" campaign stated decades ago, "the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." I look forward to seeing how I and my classmates will use our OTD journey as a springboard to change the world.

Heather Ferro

► Before I began this online doctoral program, I was concerned about it being online and not being as engaging and rigorous as face-to-face classes. I was also nervous because I had not been a college student for more than 20 years, so I wondered how I would juggle the additional roles that I would have this time around as a student. Over the past four semesters, I have definitely experienced a transformation, and no longer have these concerns. I feel like I am looking at the world through a new lens. Each course, discussion, and assignment has shaped me into the person I am today. I feel confident in my abilities and excited for many possibilities and opportunities that I will experience because of this transformation. I am prepared to be a leader both within my profession and within IPE, and I am looking forward to sharing my new knowledge with other educators and clinicians.

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OTD Epilogues, *continued from previous page*

The best part of being on this journey has been the special people that have travelled it with me. The most memorable and heartwarming part of the program has been being a part of a cohort of amazing and passionate occupational therapists. We have shared many joys and challenges, celebrated many milestones along this journey, and we have always challenged and encouraged one another to grow and keep moving closer to our goals. It has been fun climbing to the summit with you. I look forward to seeing you on other adventures as we go out into the world and utilize the knowledge with which we have been entrusted.

Rebecca Newbury

► I began this journey in August 2016 with a three-month-old baby and will end this chapter in April 2018 with another newborn. Along the way, my husband and I navigated a cross-country move, job changes, and enormous role adjustments. During this process I have taken the roles of mother, student, entrepreneur, networker. I have felt my personal and professional identity shift, realign, and shift again. There have been moments of great joy, inspiration, encouragement, and empowerment—as well as moments of utter despondence. My social support structures have been disassembled and reassembled in new forms, and there are those who have formed the foundations of that support by simply remaining constant and meeting me where I needed to be met, despite my inability to give much in return.

As part of my intervention with each project participant, I demonstrated the use of the Kawa model by drawing my own river model to represent current life challenges and circumstances. I drew and identified the “rocks” (difficulties and obstacles) I was navigating as well as the “driftwood” (personal assets, characteristics, and supports) in my life. I had no idea the impact that simply sharing this simple activity with strangers would have. In doing so, I was able to continually be inspired and mindful of not only the huge challenges I was facing, but the incredible support and opportunities that I have been given.

As of the end of April 2018, my life (my “river”) will look very different than it has over the past two years. The elements, however, will remain the same—they will of course be replaced with other challenges, and the journey will continue. For now I am optimistic and grateful for both the rocks and the driftwood that have moved with me along this part of the journey, and for the environment of support, encouragement and grace that have sustained me along the way.

Jennifer Calabrese

► The OTD journey and capstone process have restored my passion for being an occupational therapist, increased my aspiration to help students and occupational therapists to become evidence-based practitioners, and strengthened my desire to become a researcher to advance the field of occupational therapy further. Through collaboration, I hope our profession improves our practice to maximize the quality of life and well-being of the clients that we serve while continuing to be recognized as a primary contributor to global health care. The following is a lighthearted reflection of this process:

Imagine

Imagine there's only evidence-based practice
it's easy if you try
CATs containing practice concerns amongst us
clinical application of research—is the reason why

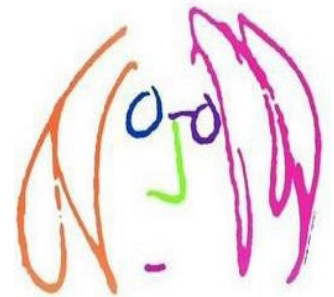
Imagine all the people
treating righteously each day (ah-ha-ha-ha-ha)

Imagine there's only best practice
it isn't hard to do
Creatively addressing client-centered goals
while considering personal experience and relevant literature too

Imagine all the people
growing professionally along the way

You may say that I'm a dreamer
but I'm not the only one
Chatham's spring 2018 cohort
includes advanced-practitioners—focused yet amazingly fun

Imagine no occupational deprivation
I wonder if you can
No need for maleficence, bias, or injustice
a health care system beautifully ran



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OTD Epilogues, *continued from previous page*

Jodi Hanrahan

► To state that the capstone journey has been a time of immense personal and professional growth is an understatement. When considering pursuance of a doctoral degree, I knew there would be challenges juggling my occupational roles, but felt I not only wanted the challenge, but needed it. Personally, I was struggling with the notion that my boys were in high school, with college on the horizon. As a newly single parent, the imminent void honestly scared me. I had always loved being an OT and was ready to move to the next level professionally, so a doctorate degree seemed an appropriate step. Personally, it was time to put some focus on myself in preparation for the next phase of life.

Entering the OTD program with almost 20 years of clinical experience, I was oblivious to just how much there was still to learn. I have always loved to learn, so where some would be overwhelmed at the prospect of acquiring new knowledge at this point in their life, it was exciting to me. I'm sure my family and co-workers were sick of hearing me talk about the courses and what we were discussing. In addition, my interest in becoming not just a member of but involved in professional organizations was stimulated, and the emerging thoughts of pursuing a role in academia were strengthened. Not only was my passion for the field of occupational therapy renewed, but the desire to share my knowledge and promote future generations of OT's to be the best yet was heightened.

In reflection, the OTD process has transformed me on many levels, and I am proud of myself for persevering during the most challenging aspects. I am historically a yellow-brained, type A personality, but there were many times I had to be just let a messy desk lie, rely on grocery delivery, forgo exercise and social functions for forum posting or chapter writing, and accept that it is ok to sometimes take a mental health break to recharge. I became grateful for a cohort full of amazing women, and a professor who prompted us to 'trust the process' and provided encouragement and humor at just the right times. As cliché as it may sound, I am genuinely excited for what my professional future holds following the journey of the OTD.



(Top left) My type A personality had to learn to accept a messy desk!

(Top right) "A person's a person, no matter how small..." — Dr. Seuss

(Bottom) An amazing group of women!

Post Professional OTD Capstone Projects

December 2017 and April 2018

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Post Professional OTD Program Capstone Projects relationship to the Quadruple Aim

► Dr. Ingrid Provident and Dr. Jennifer Lape had the opportunity to engage in a writing retreat sponsored by Chatham University. The writing project they engaged in was a program evaluation to look at how the capstone projects created by students in the program since the start fit into the Quadruple Aim designated by the National Institute on Healthcare Improvement. The original “Triple Aim” was created to enhance performance of the healthcare system in the US, and a fourth component has since been added to the original three. The four focus areas include: 1. improving the individual experience of care; 2. improving the health of populations; 3. reducing the per capita costs of care for populations and 4. experience of care providers (Sikka, Morath, & Leape, 2015).



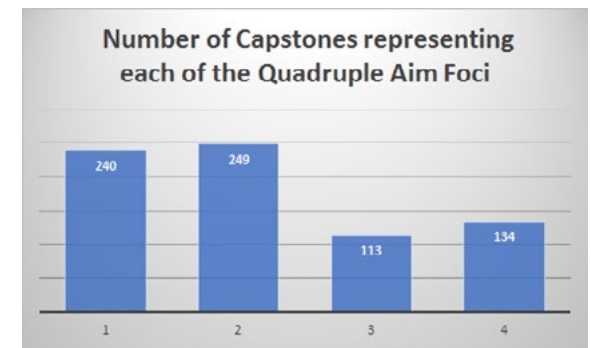
Figure 1: Four Interdependent Foci of the Quadruple Aim

As Drs. Lape and Provident performed the retrospective review of the capstones created by our graduates, it was interesting to see how the practice change projects were in alignment with each foci of the Quadruple Aim.

The capstone projects completed by over 250 graduates during the 12-year period occurred in a variety of practice settings including neo-natal intensive care units, elementary and secondary schools, acute care hospitals, long term care settings, outpatient facilities, nursing homes, home health care agencies, community settings, higher education institutions, assisted living centers, and in virtual contexts. The types of practice change projects were extremely varied and were designed to solve institutional problems related to one or more of the four areas of the Quadruple Aim. Projects geared toward individual client concerns addressed issues like dementia, self-feeding, low vision, ergonomics, or home modifications. Some projects focused on larger group needs including solutions related to fieldwork training, fall prevention programs, self-regulation, attention, handwriting, or stress reduction for specific populations. Furthermore, projects likely resulting in cost savings for the institution or healthcare system often included services provided under consultative models rather than direct intervention, staff training programs, or interventions delivered in a group format vs. individual. Finally, projects identified which focused on reducing health caregiving burden included those related to mindfulness or stress reduction trainings, online support groups, or educational programs facilitating goal

attainment for clinicians working together. Some projects successfully addressed all four foci of the Quadruple Aim, while others only addressed only one or two.

The analysis revealed that 91% of all capstone projects effectively addressed individual patient/client concerns and positively impacted the experience of care for these individuals (Aim 1). Similarly, 94% of all projects addressed the healthcare needs of a larger population (Aim 2). These figures are not surprising given the foundational principles of the occupational therapy profession as well the primary objectives of the post-professional occupational therapy curriculum. The percentage of projects that successfully addressed Aim 3 (cost-effectiveness) and Aim 4 (improving the experience of clinicians) came in significantly lower at 43% and 51%, respectively. The number of capstone projects which focused on each of the specific foci of the Quadruple Aim is shown in Figure below.



Number of Capstone Projects representing each of the Quadruple Aim Foci

continued on next page

Chatham MOT Freezin' for a Reason at the Pittsburgh Polar Plunge

Baylee Satyshur, OTS; Kylie Godwin, OTS; Katelyn Kowalczyk, OTS; & Jenna Sciulli, OTS

► The annual Pittsburgh Polar Plunge is an extraordinary event offered to groups or individuals to raise money to support Special Olympic athletes by plunging into icy cold waters. Each year, the event takes place at Heinz Field and plungers jump into the Ohio River. The Special Olympics of Pennsylvania is an organization which is dedicated to sports training and competition for both children and adults with intellectual disabilities (Special Olympics Pennsylvania, n.d.).

At the beginning of the spring 2018 term, the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) Class of 2019 participated in the Pittsburgh Polar Plunge

and created a team named the "Chatham University gOaTs." The class registered under the 'Cool Schools' division to participate and raise money for the event occurring on February 24, 2018.

As a class, students rallied together, signed up for the Polar Plunge and ultimately raised \$1,371 to support local Special Olympics athletes. Class participants spread awareness about the Polar Plunge by posting the Chatham University gOaTs team donation link on social media to sponsor individual plungers or donate to the team. A total of nine Chatham University gOaTs participated in the event by taking the plunge into the freezing pool! This year, a pool was utilized because

weather conditions and flooding of the Ohio River created safety hazards for plungers.

On the day of the Pittsburgh Polar Plunge, Chatham MOT gOaTs were pleasantly surprised by the number of plungers that participated to support Special Olympic athletes and how much the event brought the community together. There was a great amount of encouragement and appreciation expressed toward the nine Chatham MOT plungers and the occupational therapy profession. Chatham gOaTs joined in the total number of 1,200 plungers at the event and as a team, jumped in together to show our support toward an amazing cause.

By participating in the Polar Plunge event, Chatham students brought awareness to the Chatham MOT program and engaged with community members about the role of occupational therapy. In occupational therapy, it is important to advocate for individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities. Therefore, this organization and its purpose is meaningful and important to the Chatham University MOT Program. Overall, the Pittsburgh Polar Plunge raised nearly \$460,000 for the Special Olympic Athletes of Pennsylvania! We hope that the Chatham MOT program and community continue to contribute and participate in this impactful event in the future. Together as a class and a community, we were 'Freezin' for a Reason!'

Reference

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OTD Capstones,

continued from previous page

While the percentage of projects that addressed Aim 1 (91%) is not surprising, the strength of Aim 2 (94%) may be related to the capstone instructors' facilitation of discussions of designing the capstone to address a real population problem in the setting or community. This is an area that doctoral students initially struggle with as they are often more focused on the immediate patient-specific concerns at their sites.

In regard to cost (Aim 3), most projects were designed with very little cost necessary to implement but did not necessarily result in or measure a cost-savings over the 6-week implementation to the facility or healthcare system. Despite the fact that a cost-savings may not have been realized, these projects were still deemed as valuable since they resulted in improvements to one or more of the other aims. A few examples of projects expected to result in cost reductions were those related to fall prevention, behavior management in dementia care, and Response to Intervention in school systems. All three of these areas are well researched, with strong data to support interventions and resulting long-term cost savings. Due to the curricular structure of a 6-week implementation plan and subsequent graduation from the OTD Program, long-term cost benefit is beyond the scope of the capstone project but could be considered if projects are continued post-graduation. Graduates are encouraged to design sustainable projects so cost savings may in fact be realized by the institutions in which these programs remain.



Pop-Up Playground, *continued from page 16*

Overall, the pop-up playground was a success and promoted optimal occupational performance in the area of play for the children that attended. It was especially rewarding to see parents joining in the fun too! After the event, our partner at the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy said, "I stopped by today and the kids had so much fun playing. They loved making forts and decorating them. Thank you for bringing play to the park." Providing opportunities like this in the community can be beneficial to promote occupational justice, as well as family and community engagement and development.

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OTD STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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community, and are not intimidated by the scientific process. The evidence-based projects completed through the OT program are the "best practice" needed in the clinical environment. By contributing to evidence-based knowledge, we are helping the OT community including our fellow practitioners, OT students, and the interdisciplinary team thus showing the value of OT and advocating for best patient care. In the end, these series of small steps will hopefully benefit the lives of patients that we serve. This is the ultimate goal and when this occurs, the hard work and perseverance will be worth it!

Stay connected

Please keep the OT program updated with your achievements! E-mail Bridget Burns, program assistant, at burns.b@Chatham.edu with any updates including e-mail address, address, news, publications, accomplishments etc. You can also keep in touch through Facebook.

 Chatham University Occupational Therapy Program

Stay connected and get involved with the Office of Alumni Relations! We offer numerous volunteer and networking opportunities as well as alumni receptions at professional conferences and exclusive events at local Pittsburgh attractions. Interested? Please send us an e-mail at alumni@chatham.edu or visit us at chatham.edu/alumni. Stay connected with the Alumni Association via Facebook.

Eden Hall, *continued from page 6*

Through this experience, the class of 2019 expanded their consultation abilities while also enhancing the Chatham community.

As a follow-up to this project, a group of MOT students returned to Eden Hall to participate in a community-based fieldwork in the fall term of 2018. This fieldwork is also designed to be a consultation

experience. Students Valerie Wood and Peter Thistle have taken their experience from the past project at Eden Hall over the summer into their community-based fieldwork. Their fieldwork consisted of working alongside Eden Hall staff to provide education regarding ergonomics and also beginning the planning of a sensory garden. Upon reflection of

their work this term, Peter said, "This could be MOT's signature project at Eden Hall. The hope for our project is to open up Eden Hall to as many people as possible and engage the community with the campus and vice versa."