

O.T. Link



PP-OTD Excellence

High-quality and innovative online learning



Installation

On Feb. 15, Lisa Connor, PhD, MSOT, OTR/L (center), was formally installed as the Elias Michael Professor of Occupational Therapy at the Eric P. Newman Education Center.

The professorship was established in 1936 by Rachel Stix Michael in beloved memory of her late husband, Elias. Chancellor Andrew D. Martin (right) and Dean David H. Perlmutter (left) presented Connor with the professorship medallion.

O.T. Link Contents

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Official publication of the Program in Occupational Therapy at Washington University School of Medicine

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 **Washington University in St. Louis**
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Occupational Therapy

From the Director



We have many reasons to be excited about the upcoming American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) 2023 Annual Conference & Expo in April (page 13). This year, the conference will be held in nearby Kansas City, Mo., and we anticipate a great turnout from Program alumni, colleagues, students and friends. We will be at Booth #324 in the Expo Hall and invite you to stop by for a visit. We'll have lanyards available so you can spot fellow WashU OT people during the conference. Please RSVP for our annual alumni reception on Thursday, April 20—conference attendance is not required to spend the evening with us!

The AOTA Conference is also when we'll be launching our online post-professional occupational therapy doctoral degree (PP-OTD) program (page 4). Since starting with us in August, Amanda Mack, OTD, OTR/L, CLC, director of post-professional education, has spearheaded the effort to transition our existing PP-OTD program to a fully online format. The high-quality, innovative curriculum is designed for practitioners who want to further their learning and career opportunities while working full-time and attending to family and other obligations. In addition to the core courses and doctoral project sequence, students select either the lead or educate track. Core Program faculty serve as academic mentors, and primary doctoral project mentors guide students through the process. We are enrolling in our revitalized program in fall 2023 and encourage you to learn more about the PP-OTD degree program and how it could help you achieve your career goals.

Another new faculty member is Brian Johnson, PhD, OTR/L (page 8), who also joined us in August. In his new Neurorehabilitation and Applied Physiology Laboratory, Brian is exploring the mechanisms that lead to the relearning of motor functions after a brain injury or stroke and long-term retention of those skills. His clinical experiences working with stroke and spinal cord injury patients led him to switch career paths to become a rehabilitation scientist. Brian will be conducting sleep studies to evaluate neuromodulatory interventions and mentoring three occupational therapy doctoral students this summer, who will be conducting research in his lab.

It is always inspiring to hear patient testimonials from our clinical arm, OT Services. Angela Fariole (page 10) shares her family's experiences with pediatric occupational therapist Katie Bogan, OTD, OTR/L. Katie helped develop an autism intervention for infants, toddlers and parents (ITAP) that is offered through First Steps, Missouri's early intervention system for infants and toddlers 0-36 months. Angela's son, Jack, who was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at age 2, was referred to ITAP and to Katie in 2018. Because of the services Katie provided, Jack is now in kindergarten and thriving as he continues to make improvements in his social skills. I know you will find their story as inspiring as I did.

This issue also features an article on the new podcast (page 14) created by research faculty Kelly Harris, PhD, CCC-SLP, and Catherine Hoyt, PhD, OTD, OTR/L. The Demystifying Research podcast is a space where Kelly and Catherine facilitate discussions around the questions prospective scientists may have when considering a career in research and science. Each episode features a guest(s) from various health-care professions sharing their experiences and perspectives. The podcast is available on several platforms, so feel free to share it with anyone interested in becoming a researcher or scientist.

As always, there is so much happening at the Program in Occupational Therapy. You can keep up with the latest news on our social media channels or on our website at ot.wustl.edu. I am so grateful for your support of our mission to advance human health and well-being by maximizing people's participation in meaningful activity.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa T. Connor".

Lisa Tabor Connor, PhD, MSOT, OTR/L

Associate Dean and Director of Occupational Therapy

Elias Michael Professor of Occupational Therapy and Professor of Neurology

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Promotions

At the Washington University in St. Louis Executive Faculty meeting Oct. 6, 2022, the following faculty were promoted in the Program in Occupational Therapy, effective Jan. 1, 2023.

Peggy Barco, OTD, OTR/L, SCDCM, CDRS, FAOTA, was promoted to professor of occupational therapy and medicine. Barco's clinical research interests focus on driving performance in older adults with various medical impairments. Her research goals are to develop ways clinicians can better assess driving performance in their clients as well as to identify interventions to prolong driving and community mobility throughout the lifespan.



Peggy Barco

Jessica Dashner, OTD, OTR/L, was promoted to associate professor of occupational therapy and neurology. Dashner's research interests include developing and determining the effectiveness of interventions designed to enable participation of individuals with mobility and sensory impairments in the community.



Jessica Dashner

Duana Russell-Thomas, OTD, OTR/L, was promoted to assistant professor of occupational therapy and medicine. Russell-Thomas is the director of the Community Experiential Learning Center. Her clinical interests focus on chronic disease, health disparities and trauma-informed care.



Duana Russell-Thomas

Emily Somerville, OTD, OTR/L, was promoted to assistant professor of occupational therapy and neurology. Her research interests include promoting the participation of older adults with functional limitations through the provision of intensive, tailored home modification interventions designed to enhance the performance of daily activities in the home.



Emily Somerville

Steve Taff, OTR/L, FNAP, FAOTA, was promoted to professor of occupational therapy and medicine. Taff's research interests include developing and evaluating inclusive learning climates in higher education, the impact of sociopolitical environments and climate change on occupational engagement, the role of dis/misinformation on well-being, graduate student and faculty mental health and flourishing, and continuous improvement practices in higher education.



Steve Taff

Appointments

Ashley Housten, OTD, MSCI, OTR/L, was appointed a secondary appointment in occupational therapy. Dr. Housten's research focuses on supporting cancer screening and treatment decision-making to reduce health disparities and to address challenges associated with health literacy in diverse populations.



Ashley Housten

Awards and Honors

Jessie Bricker, OTD, OTR/L, will receive the 2023 Dean's Impact Award on May 16. The award recognizes faculty members whose superior efforts in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic have had a lasting impact, who demonstrated the highest level of professionalism, and who delivered exceptional results across the missions of the School of Medicine.



Jessie Bricker

Kelly Harris, PhD, CCC-SLP, was selected as a 2022-2023 Public Voices Fellow in the inaugural cohort of the AcademyHealth Public Voices Fellowship in partnership with the OpEd Project. The fellowship is a national initiative to change who writes history and create a more just world.



Kelly Harris

Kerri Morgan, PhD, OTR/L, ATP, will receive the American Occupational Therapy Foundation's (AOTF's) 2023 Meritorious Service Award on April 22. The award recognizes retiring and incumbent members of the AOTF Board of Trustees who have made sustained and exemplary contributions in support of the Foundation's mission. Morgan has served on the AOTF board since 2020.



Kerri Morgan

Duana Russell-Thomas, OTD, OTR/L, will receive Washington University's 2023 Gerry and Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award on April 26. The award is given annually to a select group of Washington University community members who exemplify a character of service and engagement with the St. Louis region.



Duana Russell-Thomas

Want more Program news?

Stay up to date on the latest Program news by visiting our website at ot.wustl.edu or connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.



PP-OTD Excellence

Online Post-Professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate

By Michele Berhorst



Mack records curricular content in the Instructional Design (ID) Studio, where faculty can create high-quality video and audio resources to enhance student engagement with course materials.

Amanda Mack, OTD, OTR/L, CLC, understands the challenges of being an adult learner. In 2017, she decided to pursue her post-professional occupational therapy doctorate (PP-OTD) while managing a full-time job, several professional obligations and a growing family.

Mack's professional and personal experiences made her the right choice to transition the Program in Occupational Therapy's existing PP-OTD to a fully online degree program, the first at Washington University School of Medicine. It's the next step on a career dedicated to occupational therapy (OT) education excellence and advancement.

Path to OT

Mack grew up in rural Minnesota, and in the third grade, a classmate suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI) in a farming accident. "He was riding on a tractor wheel cover and slipped off. He was swept under, and the tractor ran over his skull. He was airlifted to the Mayo Medical Center in Rochester, where he made an incredible recovery from his TBI," Mack recalls. "He was out of school for a long time, but when he came back, I saw the gains he made through OT. I remember an OT assistant on the playground coaching him while we were playing games to help him control his emotions and words. I was hooked. I decided then to be an occupational therapist and never changed my mind."

Mack earned her bachelor's degree in therapeutic studies in 2011 and her master's degree in OT from Boston University. Her first fieldwork experience put Mack in a brain injury rehabilitation center at Unity Hospital in Rochester,

N.Y., working with adults. Since she was drawn to pediatric brain injury based on her classmate's experience, she chose an outpatient pediatric clinic associated with Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago for her second fieldwork experience. "I really did not enjoy it. It was not my thing," Mack admits. "I quickly learned that I love children, but my passion in OT lies elsewhere."

Those experiences led Mack to work as a staff occupational therapist in the Rehabilitation Department of Spaulding Hospital for Continuing Medical Care in Cambridge, Mass. "It was an interesting place to work because it was end-stage oncology, so most of my patients did not live much past the time I worked with them. As a new therapist, they taught me the joy of doing the things that you care about, even when you have limited time, and what that meaning can bring to your life and to your family's life. OT became real to me."

Changing Plans

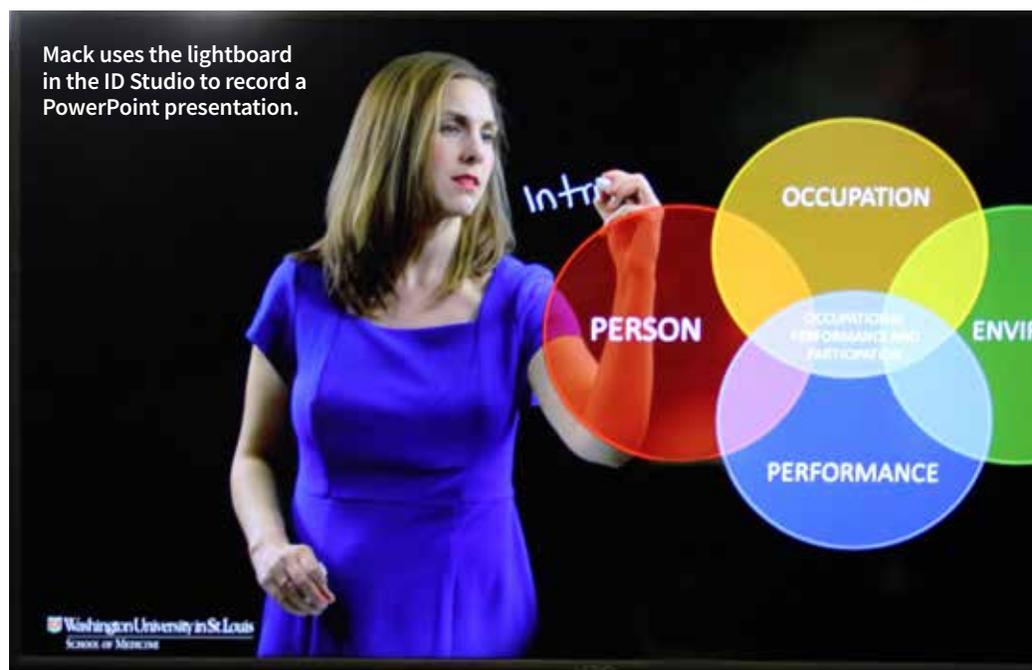
Mack was two years into her 10-year plan of working as a clinician and earning her PP-OTD so she could eventually transition to academia. She developed an interest in higher education while working as a work-study student in Boston University's OT fieldwork office for four years. "I loved it, and I was good at it. I knew the system and how it works, was able to make improvements, implement new software,

and really learned the ins and outs of fieldwork."

She had worked for Mary Evenson, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA, who was now a professor and the director of clinical education at MGH Institute of Health Professions (IHP) in Boston. Evenson needed help in the fieldwork office for a new OTD degree program, and she reached out to Mack. "When you are asked to do something that aligns with your dreams and your goals, you say yes," Mack says. "We worked out a way for me to be part-time there and continue in my role at Spaulding part time."

Following the birth of her daughter in 2016, Mack transitioned to a full-time fieldwork coordinator staff position at MGH IHP. As part of her career development, Mack participated in AOTA's Emerging Leaders program (2017-2018). Lisa Connor, PhD, MSOT, OTR/L, then chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy at MGH IHP, encouraged Mack to earn her doctoral degree online. "My husband and I talked, and I decided to take one course in January 2017 just to see if it was doable. It was. The flexibility of the program made it 100% manageable. I was able to take breaks as needed, and I finished the program in 2 1/2 years."

It was a standard curriculum and did not have specific courses on how to teach in academia. Since Mack was in an academic



setting already and teaching in course assistant and lab instructor roles, she was also learning from her colleagues and instructional designers. However, she was aware that other students did not have the same support. “I had a good experience in the program, but I also had some pretty strong ideas about what I think could have optimized my experience,” Mack admits. “I shared those ideas with Lisa.”

Mack earned her PP-OTD in 2019 from Boston University and was on track to be instructor and fieldwork faculty when Connor made the announcement that she was leaving MGH IHP and returning to Washington University to be the director of the Program. Ironically, they both started their new positions on the same day—July 1, 2019. Less than a year later, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted all levels of OT education and learning, especially fieldwork as sites were shut down.

For the next two years, Mack taught several entry-level OTD and online PP-OTD courses, mentored students, and helped run the fieldwork program. Wanting to give back to the profession, she became an on-site evaluator for the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). Now a mother of three, Mack’s clinical interests shifted to the maternal aspects of infant feeding, and she founded the interprofessional Breastfeeding Support Group at Massachusetts General Hospital. In 2022, she became the director of the Occupational Therapy Center for Learning, Participation and Rehabilitation, an experiential learning center that provides pro bono services to youth and adult client community volunteers.

Periodically, Connor would check in with Mack. “At first, Lisa would ask how I liked teaching and being on faculty,” Mack recalls. “Eventually, the conversations shifted to Lisa’s goal of having an online PP-OTD degree program and hiring a director to develop and design the curriculum. Eventually, she said, ‘I’d love for you to apply.’”

For the second time, Mack had an opportunity to propel her academic career forward.

“My husband and I had to make a decision. We loved Boston and the community, and I loved my position at MGH IHP. We were also expecting our fourth child,” Mack says. “Lisa wanted me

to come to St. Louis and see the Program for myself before deciding. I interviewed twice in person, met the faculty and staff, and presented my vision for the online PP-OTD. They made the offer, and I accepted.”

Curriculum Design

Mack started on Aug. 1, 2022, and began designing a high-quality, innovative PP-OTD program for practitioners to further their learning and career opportunities while working full-time and attending to family and other obligations as she did. She wanted to have specific tracks for those who want to take on leadership roles or teach in higher education.

“Every occupational therapist is going to lead and/or teach in some way where they are. However, there are lots of faculty out there who never received any formal training in teaching. There might have been a course in general teaching principles, but that’s a huge disparity in the effectiveness of the curriculum. I want our graduates to feel prepared to teach,” Mack explains. “Same for leadership — practical leadership that’s applicable to a variety of settings such as health-care administration or running your own business.”

Mentorship is another key component of the PP-OTD design. “All students are assigned a faculty academic mentor to provide advising throughout the program. This advising is facilitated by core Program faculty,” Mack says. There is additional support for each student’s individual doctoral project as well: “Each student also has a primary doctoral project mentor with relevant expertise to the student’s project to guide them through the process. Two times a semester, students participate in group mentorship with a group of content mentors and peers.”

Mack has embedded in the coursework the application of evidence and theory, participation in scholarly work, and the incorporation of principles of anti-racism; diversity, equity and inclusion; and occupational justice. “The goal is to cultivate excellence within a diverse and talented workforce in all practice areas,” Mack says. “Success means our alumni will be working toward innovation, change and growth within our profession.”

The WashU OT Value

There is a distinct value in WashU’s name recognition and reputation. The PP-OTD is part of an innovative and interdisciplinary university and medical center environment. A WashU OT graduate is highly regarded because of the Program’s academic rigor and excellence. The entry-level degree programs have been ranked in the top three in U.S. News & World Report for decades. Being connected to the WashU OT community has advantages as graduates seek to move their careers and practices forward.

“The profession itself is relatively small, and occupational therapists are relational people. Building relationships and a professional network is extremely valuable. You never know when someone is going to come back into your professional life through work, serving on a committee or attending a conference,” Mack explains. “You can be reading an article, recognize one of the authors and say, ‘I know them — I’m going to shoot them an email.’”

“The Program has a long history of providing the finest in OT education and client care, all built on a strong foundation of innovative research,” Mack says. “We are well-positioned to deliver a PP-OTD degree program with a modern, relevant and meaningful curriculum to shape future leaders and educators in the OT profession.”



We are currently accepting applicants for the Fall 2023 cohort.

Learn more at
ot.wustl.edu/ppotd

Visit with Dr. Mack at
Booth #324 at the 2023 AOTA
Conference & Expo in Kansas City
on April 20-23, 2023.

PP-OTD Curriculum

The curriculum focuses on leadership, research, program development and evaluation, teaching, and advocacy skills. Students can matriculate to the program in either the fall or the spring, with completion after five full semesters (including summers). The curriculum consists of five semesters (6-7 credits per semester), for a total of 34 credits to complete the degree.

Six core courses (3 credits each) focus on evidence-based practice, theory, outcome measurement, dissemination, funding, and communication and leadership skills. There are four doctoral project sequence courses (1 credit each) that work toward the completion of a culminating portfolio.

In addition to the core courses and doctoral project sequence, students must select one of two specialization tracks, lead or educate, which consist of four 3-credit courses.



Core Courses

- Literature and Evidence- Based Practice for the OT Practitioner
- Advanced Theory Implementation
- Outcomes and Evaluation
- Advanced Practice through Experiential Learning
- Communicating Ideas
- Leading Change and Advancing Practice



Doctoral Project

- Ideate
- Design
- Implement and Evaluate
- Disseminate



Lead Track

- Leadership: Theory and Practice
- Outcomes Focused Leadership
- Identifying Value and Improving Performance
- Effective Leadership for Change and Transition



Educate Track

- Healthcare Education: Theory and Foundations
- Curriculum Design for Healthcare Education
- Implementing Best Practices in Teaching
- Assessment in Healthcare Education

PP-OTD Lead Track Sequence Example

FALL MATRICULANT				
FALL Float Semester 1	Spring Semester 2	Summer Semester 3	Fall Semester 4	Spring Semester 5
Leading Change and Advancing Practice	Literature and Evidence Based Practice for the OT Practitioner	Outcomes and Evaluation	Advanced Practice through Experiential Learning	Communicating Ideas
Leadership: Theory and Practice	Advanced Theory Implementation	Outcomes Focused Leadership	Identifying Value and Improving Performance	Effective Leadership for Change and Transition
	Ideate	Design	Implement and Evaluate	Disseminate

Stimulating the Mind for Neurorehabilitation

by Stephanie Stemmler

MICHELLE BERHORST



Johnson uses a mobile arm support to aid in the completion of the Action Research Arm Test (ARAT).

Brian Johnson, OTR/L, PhD, assistant professor in the Program in Occupational Therapy and in the Department of Neurology at Washington University School of Medicine, wants to see if neuromodulatory interventions such as electrical stimulation can “ramp up” the brain’s ability to retain and then use certain motor functions.

In his new Neurorehabilitation and Applied Physiology Laboratory, Johnson is exploring the mechanisms that lead not only to the relearning of motor functions after a brain injury or stroke, but also to long-term retention of those skills.

“When you ask some patients during rehabilitation whether they’ve done their daily exercises after leaving therapy, a lot of times, the answer is ‘no,’” says Johnson. “Seeing a person one to three times a week, then, only has so much benefit. I’m interested in how we can tap into the more significant time periods that are away from a therapist to improve rehabilitation outcomes.”

Johnson has been working with stroke and spinal cord injury patients since he started as an occupational therapist in Madison, Wis. But as he provided intense rehabilitation and watched his patient improve, he wanted to know more about basic mechanisms that guide learning and neurodevelopment in motor skill rehabilitation. He switched career paths to work as a rehabilitation scientist, first in the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and then in the Human Cortical Physiology and Neurorehabilitation Section at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He was

there in 2019 while groups of researchers were exploring what the brain does during periods of rest after learning a motor skill. The NIH research, which is still underway, led to a published study in *Cell Reports* in 2021 that showed that the brain replays a new skill memory over and over during short, frequent breaks as a person learns and then practices a new skill. In other words, rest, coupled with frequent practice, strengthened skill development.

Johnson wanted to take his research in a new direction. What if you could selectively target certain memories and enhance rehabilitation by using electrical or magnetic stimulation or even auditory triggers while someone is sleeping to reinforce relearned motor skills after a brain injury?

“For my doctoral dissertation, I paired a novel auditory tone with a specific activity,” says Johnson. “After hundreds of repetitions, participants associated the sound with doing a particular exercise. Then, I would silently replay those sounds while participants slept and monitored their brain activity.”

As Johnson reviewed brain activity, he could see that the auditory cue had an effect similar to that seen in the classic response studies achieved by Ivan Pavlov, who found that dogs salivated when they associated a specific activity or person with food. In Johnson’s studies, he saw that auditory cues could make participants better at learning and retaining a motor skill even while sleeping.

He was drawn to Washington University’s Program in Occupational Therapy because of the invigorating environment for both clinical and translational research. In his lab, he will study electrical stimulation to see if targeting certain circuits of the brain can further influence how it consolidates motor skill memory. Transcranial magnetic stimulation, which also can be directed at specific areas of the brain, also will be studied. “We can pair sounds during therapy and then have a patient go home with a sound machine

to use at night,” Johnson says. “With electrical stimulation, we can use a very light electrical current to influence specific brain areas during therapy and then send patients home with a device similar to a portable TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) device.”

Along with transcranial magnetic stimulation, which delivers repetitive magnetic pulses, the therapy already is being used to treat depression. Johnson wants to see if it can be used to influence relearning of motor skills.

Yin and Yang

In addition to his background as a practicing occupational therapist and researcher, Johnson has been a member of the U.S. Army Reserve since 2020. In the Army, he says, occupational therapists have a unique role in the delivery of mental health services and rehabilitation for military personnel experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or struggling with coping mechanisms.

“The clinical work I do in the Army lets me think of things that are clinically relevant, and I can bring that back to my research in the lab,” he says. “And vice versa, through the research that I’m conducting, I can ultimately bring that to the clinical realm. So my roles here in the Program and in the Army are like yin and yang to me.”

In the Army Reserve, Johnson serves in the Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC) program, based in Wisconsin. COSC’s mission is to prevent, proactively identify, and mitigate stressors to enhance long-term health and well-being among servicemembers.

“We want individuals to be independent in what they want or have to do,” Johnson explains. “Same as in occupational therapy, where our focus is on improving function and aspects of daily living, we focus on coping mechanisms and the learning and retention of specific skills.”

In addition to his time in the Army Reserve, Johnson maintains a connection to the NIH through his affiliation with the Special Volunteer Scientist program. At Washington University, Johnson will be conducting sleep studies to evaluate neuromodulatory interventions. He is in the process of looking for a research coordinator and will be mentoring three occupational therapy doctoral students this summer, who will be conducting research in his lab.

“I have an ambitious goal to change how rehabilitation is designed and scheduled,” says Johnson. “Active and passive learning is key to that, and I want to help patients fully capitalize on their time during a therapy session and in between the sessions when we know that learning is still occurring.”



Capt. Johnson (back row, right) with a group of Army occupational therapists at Fort Sill, Okla., in December 2022.

ITAP: Autism Intervention for Infants, Toddlers and Parents

by Michele Berhorst

At 9 months old, Angela Fariole's son, Jack, began having prolonged infantile seizures. The cause was a lesion on his right temporal lobe, and an MRI scan revealed that the area of his brain wasn't functioning.

The Farioles enrolled Jack in First Steps, Missouri's early intervention system for infants and toddlers 0-36 months who have delayed development or diagnosed conditions that are associated with developmental disabilities. Doctors made four attempts at seizure medication before surgically removing the lobe completely. Immediately after surgery, Fariole noticed a stark contrast in Jack's behavior.

"Prior to anti-seizure medications, Jack was meeting the typical milestones of speech, social interaction and smiling, with only a slight delay in gross motor skills," Fariole explains. "The right temporal lobe is responsible for emotional regulation, social interaction and engagement, auditory and visual processing, and impulse control. There was a loss in function from the seizures, medications and trauma from brain surgery. He did not engage with anyone after that, including me. I couldn't sit and play with him, and no therapist could engage with him."

Through First Steps, Jack received physical, occupational, speech-language, and behavioral therapy for more than a year with little to no progress. Eventually, the Farioles were referred to John Constantino, MD, then director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Washington University. He and his team evaluated Jack, who exhibited the symptoms of autism

Jack, 18 months old, and Angie Fariole moments before his right temporal lobectomy.



spectrum disorder (ASD) and qualified for a diagnosis. He then referred the Farioles to Katie Bogan, OTD, OTR/L, who had assisted colleague Michael Gaffrey, PhD, in developing Motivation, Connection, Communication (MC²). MC² is a high-quality, parent-mediated, early intensive behavioral intervention that addresses early indicators of ASD and related social and communicative delays.

Bogan, a pediatric occupational therapist, worked primarily as an early interventionist for Washington University Occupational Therapy's Community Practice until 2015, when she had the opportunity to work with Gaffrey. They piloted the MC² program with his patients from 2016-2017. She then initiated the process for the intervention to be offered through First Steps. After Gaffrey left for Duke University in 2018, Bogan continued to offer MC² through the Infant Toddler Autism Program (ITAP) in Child Psychiatry.

Jack, now 2, qualified for ITAP. It was a game changer for the Farioles.

"The first thing Katie did was imitate Jack's actions. He was swishing his legs on the floor back and forth, and she did the same. Then, she noticed he liked patting the table. She did it with him, then said, 'Okay, now Mommy, you do it.' When I sat down in front of him, his little eyes lit up. For the first time since the surgery, Jack actually saw me because I was doing something he loved," Fariole shares.

Over the next 12 weeks, Bogan worked with Fariole both in person and virtually through ITAP to teach her the strategies and supports Jack needed to increase his social skills. Fariole, a certified reading specialist with a master's degree in education, had to shift her thinking because this approach was focused on her, not Jack.

"Before, I was using language, narrating and labeling everything. I was talking to Jack all the time, but I wasn't imitating his actions and following his cues. This was not what typical therapy or education looked like, but it worked for Jack," Fariole admits. "In the end, [ITAP] was very beneficial because it was what was best for me and Jack."

In 2021, ITAP transitioned from Child Psychiatry to Washington University Occupational Therapy services. Since then, Bogan has been evaluating the program outcomes through First Steps. This process revealed that ITAP's original program design was no longer meeting the needs of families.

"Originally, the program consisted of [24] coaching sessions to teach parents effective strategies to improve their child's social and communication skills. I made two home visits each week, one hour each, for 12 weeks," Bogan explains. "However, that schedule wasn't feasible for parents, especially post-COVID. The program had to be continually modified to meet the needs of each family."

Bogan has redesigned ITAP, which now stands for Infants, Toddlers and Parents. It still contains the core MC² modules and allows for needed customization. The program schedule has been shortened to two times a week for eight weeks (instead of 12), and now includes a hybrid approach of virtual and in-person visits. Teaching visits occur virtually at times when the parent(s) can fully focus on what Bogan is teaching. In-person visits are reserved solely for practice. Additionally, all core teaching is completed within the first month. "At that point, we decide what the second month looks like, and it is customized to each family. Some may feel like they need practice in the community. The strategies may be working at home, but going to the store is a challenge, so we go to the store and practice there," Bogan says.

This direct, one-on-one work with parents has led Bogan to think of herself as an adult therapist as opposed to a pediatric therapist.

"The child receives an ASD diagnosis, but the parents may not know what it is or what to expect. Oftentimes, no one has sat down with them and talked about autism. They can feel overwhelmed, burnt out and unable to take on anything else. They spend so much time taking care of others that they neglect their own health and well-being," Bogan says. "And we talk through that to identify strategies to help them better manage the situation. That's the beautiful thing about occupational therapy; all of this falls under the scope of care we offer."

Above all, Bogan's goal with ITAP is for parents to know what is possible. "Through intervention, there are so

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANGELA FARIOLE



Katie Bogan, OTD, OTR/L (left), with the Fariole family after completing ITAP in 2018.

many amazing things that are possible," she says. She notes that the service she provides through ITAP is not a substitute for other interventions or therapies, but a complement to therapies to enhance the everyday interactions and learning opportunities between parent and child. That was the successful outcome of her work with the Farioles.

"Because Jack was able to develop social engagement skills, it opened the door for him to participate in the other therapies he couldn't before," Fariole says. "Jack is now 6, in kindergarten and thriving. He continues to make improvements in his social skills. Katie's mission to teach families these strategies has a ripple effect. ITAP impacted not only Jack, but our whole family and even my career. It truly changed everything."

Fariole is the owner of Uniquely Wired Consultants, an educational consulting and tutoring firm seeking to provide families in Rolla, Mo., and the surrounding community with reading support services to help every child succeed academically. She is also a First Steps instructor and Early Intervention Examiner who works to promote early language development in children ages 0-3. Additionally, she specializes in assisting families of children with early symptoms of autism and children with refractory epilepsy.

Dodson, Mahoney to receive FAOTA award

Alumni Matthew Dodson, OTD, OTR/L, CBIST, and Wanda Mahoney, PhD, OTR/L, will receive the American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA's) Roster of Fellows Award at AOTA's Inspire 2023 Annual Conference & Expo in Kansas City, Mo. The Roster of Fellows recognizes occupational therapists who, through their knowledge, expertise, leadership, advocacy and/or guidance, have made a significant contribution over time to the profession with a measured impact on consumers of occupational therapy (OT) services and/or members of the Association.

Dodson, Class of 2006, is considered a master clinician and subject matter expert in head injury evaluation, treatment and program design for both civilian and military populations. He designed and administered outpatient traumatic brain injury (TBI) OT programming at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and worked internationally as a Department of Defense consultant for TBI and behavioral health. His application of occupational performance principles in novel contexts such as concussion



Matthew Dodson

care, vocational rehabilitation, program development, and legal expert witness testimony has established new professional pathways for occupational therapists. He operates Braintrust Services, a specialty occupational performance clinic for nuanced brain and mental health conditions in Fort Collins, Colo. Dodson is being recognized for his contributions as an "OT Innovator, Mentor and Leader."

"Above all, this tremendous honor is a reflection of the wonderful mentorship I've been fortunate to receive in my career, most of which started at WashU OT," says Dodson. "I have the privilege of providing eclectic, nuanced services in clinics, classrooms and courtrooms (sometimes all in the same week) and greatly enjoy collaborating across organizations and disciplines for the benefit of whatever target population I'm serving."

Mahoney, Class of 1999, is an associate professor of occupational therapy and medicine in the Program in Occupational Therapy at Washington University. Prior to joining the Program in 2018, Mahoney had 10 years of previous academic experience at Midwestern University and Chicago State University. She has taught in the areas of occupational therapy theory, pediatric evaluation and intervention, health conditions, assistive technology, and the mentorship of student research, among

others. She also studies the historical context of people and events in occupational therapy, including LGBTQIA+ issues. Mahoney is being recognized for her contributions to "Promoting Learning Through History and Clients' Perspectives."



Wanda Mahoney

"I'm incredibly excited and honored by this recognition. I love learning and hope that I foster that enthusiasm among students, colleagues and others. I appreciate that I've been able to collaborate with others to contribute to occupational therapy history, education and inclusive practices with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and I look forward to continuing this work," Mahoney says.

The Roster of Fellows Award will be conferred during the Awards Ceremony on Saturday, April 22, from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. CDT at the Kansas City Convention Center. The ceremony is open to the public, and conference attendance is not required. For more information, please visit AOTA's conference website at inspire.aota.org.



We're hiring!

Our faculty, clinicians and staff maintain a focus on advancing human health by enhancing people's participation in everyday life activities and work together to bridge biomedical and sociocultural health at the person, community and population levels. The Program shares the University's commitment to equal access, consistent with its academic mission and standards, and strives to achieve excellence through the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion. We value a structure and culture that supports all members of our community. Please visit

ot.wustl.edu/jobs

to explore opportunities to join us in our mission to *advance human health and well-being by maximizing people's participation in meaningful activity.*

SEE YOU IN KANSAS CITY, MO



The Program in Occupational Therapy invites you to connect with us at the 2023 AOTA Annual Conference & Expo!

Stop by Booth #324 to:

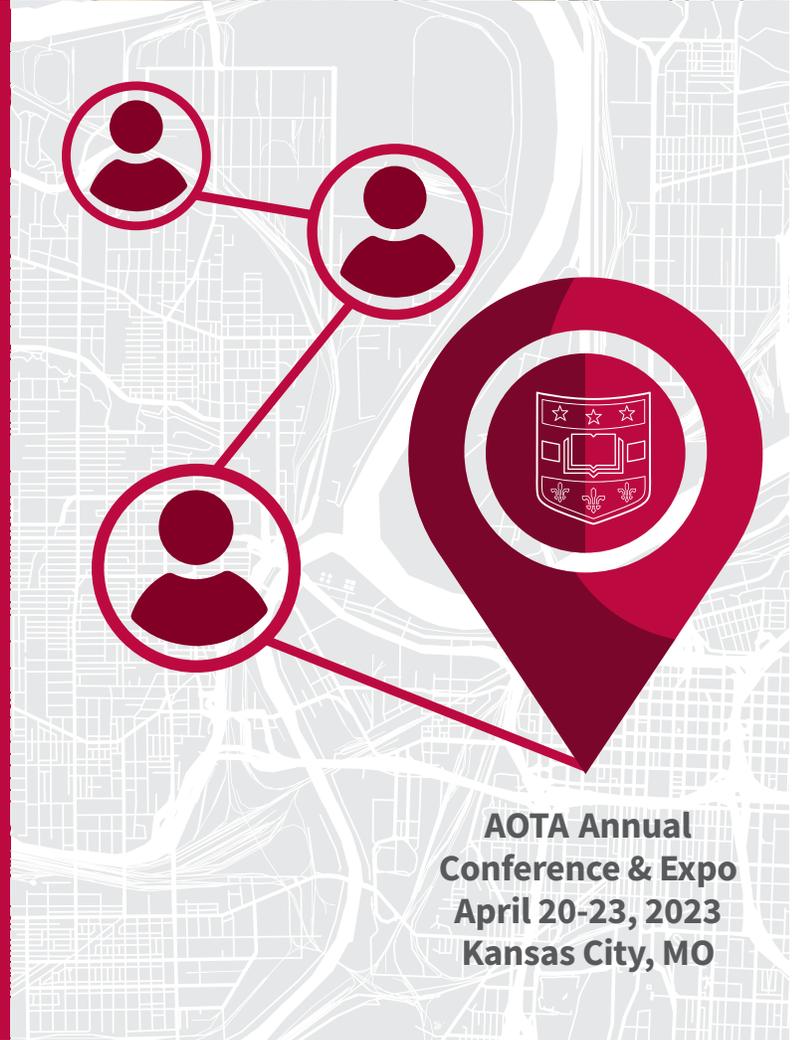
- **Visit** with friends and colleagues
- **Pick up** a WashU lanyard
- **Participate** in our scavenger hunt
- **Learn** about our online PP-OTD degree
- **Update** your contact information

And join us for food and drinks at our Annual Alumni Reception!

Thursday, April 20
Loews Kansas City Hotel
City Beautiful Ballroom A
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
RSVP required

Please **RSVP** for the reception by scanning the QR code or visiting bit.ly/WUOT-Alumni-2023

ot.wustl.edu/AOTA23



**AOTA Annual
Conference & Expo**
April 20-23, 2023
Kansas City, MO

Demystifying Research

It began with an informal conversation.

Kelly Harris, PhD, CCC-SLP, and Catherine Hoyt, PhD, OTD, OTR/L, faculty members in the Program's Research Division, were discussing the lack of diversity in occupational therapy (OT) research and realized they shared something in common.

"Following our clinical training, I didn't really know what research careers could look like. Kelly and I realized that – if we had known sooner, it might have changed the trajectories of our careers," explains Hoyt, who worked as a pediatric occupational therapist for several years before entering a PhD program. "There weren't really spaces for discussions about what a career in research could look like, how to understand if a research degree aligned with my career goals and how to get started with applying."

"Before I started my PhD program, I didn't really know much about how academia works, the structures and processes, things like how to obtain funding or access other resources and opportunities. It's not covered in the doctoral curriculum, and how much access you have to this informal knowledge can be dependent on the department, program or your mentor," Harris says. "It was important to us to share this information with people who may be interested in research careers,

especially to increase the visibility of this career path to those who are underrepresented or first-generation."

This is what led Harris and Hoyt to launch the First Fridays in OT Research webinar series in July 2021. The monthly Zoom event was livestreamed on YouTube, and

people interested in research could listen or participate in the conversation. Initially, First Fridays was meant to be a limited series to cover the topics they felt were most relevant to prospective researchers. While the majority of guests were part of the OT field, several were from related health-care professions such as medicine, neurology and physical therapy.

"There is a lack of diversity across the board in many professions and sciences," Hoyt says. "PhD mentors may not be aware of where information gaps exist, and we hope that many can learn from our guests to understand and address issues that may impact their mentees," Harris added. Harris and Hoyt both emphasized the importance of creating an open space for conversations about research careers. A primary goal of the podcast is to answer questions so that prospective scientists can find the path to answer their unique questions and improve the health of our communities.

The live YouTube format also came with challenges. "It was held during the Friday workday, and our guests needed to fit it into their busy schedules. Additionally, it wasn't able to be widely disseminated to multiple platforms," Harris says. "As the first season came to an end, we felt it was time to transition to a podcast platform."

Harris and Hoyt knew they couldn't do the transition alone. They recruited two students – Kaitlyn Thornton, OTD/S '24, and Têa Soberano, OTD/S '25, to be part of the podcast team. The series was renamed Demystifying Research to reflect the expansion of topics and wider



Catherine Hoyt, PhD, OTD, OTR/L (left), and Kelly Harris, PhD, CCC-SLP (right)

audience, and the first podcast episode on occupational science and OT with Khalilah Johnson, PhD, MS, OTR/L, was released on Dec. 15, 2022, on Podbean.

"There was a technical learning curve for all of us on how to produce and publish a podcast," Hoyt shares. Harris and Hoyt felt that the team effort strengthened the podcast, ensuring that they were addressing questions on the minds of trainees. "Throughout the process, the students are developing valuable communication skills required to connect with guests and managing a website, which can be significant for early-career professionals," Harris added.

The second episode featured Lingzi Luo, MSW, MPH, and Natasha Smet, OTD, OTR/L, sharing their graduate study experience as international learners in the U.S. Response to the podcast on Twitter made Harris and Hoyt realize the potential impact of the podcast on a wider scale. "People are making life-changing decisions to leave their home countries to pursue a PhD degree. I didn't realize how important the topic was until after we released the episode," Hoyt admits.

As far as long-term podcast plans go, Harris and Hoyt are leaving it open.

"We don't currently have an end date planned. As long as the podcast is having an impact and adding to the broader conversation, we'll keep doing it. We welcome any and all feedback so we can plan future topics and guests to make the show a valuable resource for future researchers everywhere," Harris says.



You can learn more about the Demystifying Research podcast or catch up on past episodes at

sites.wustl.edu/demystifyingresearch

Listen on Podbean, Apple, Google Podcast, Amazon Music, iHeart Radio, PodChaser and Boomplay.

Future leader

Grace Hurley, OTD/S '24

Hometown: Holland, MI

Degrees: BS in Biology from Belmont University

Leadership: WUSOTA Assembly of Student Delegates Committee Chair, WU-COTAD Big Siblings Program Lesson Planning Chair, Doctoral lab student

What are your meaningful occupations?

My most meaningful occupations have a creative element. Whether this is crocheting, painting or cross-stitching, I enjoy harnessing my creativity in new and challenging ways. Additionally, I find it rewarding to contribute to the community by volunteering at Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital and implementing a mentorship program at a local high school. I also love exploring St. Louis with my friends and playing board games.

What is your definition of occupational therapy?

Occupational therapy provides clients across the lifespan the necessary tools and support to participate in the everyday activities they need and want to do through a collaborative, client-centered lens. Effective occupational therapists use their expertise and compassion to empower their clients, advocating with them rather than for them. The unique skills occupational therapy brings allow clients to reach their personal goals to achieve higher quality of life and well-being.

Why did you choose the OTD degree?

I chose to pursue an OTD degree because of my desire to create innovative and evidence-based interventions and programs for underserved populations. I have always felt drawn to the research process. The doctoral lab opportunity excited me, as it provided the perfect avenue to gain research skills and dive deeper into specific populations. Overall, the skills I've gained during the OTD program have prepared me to pursue a nontraditional career path post-graduation.

What are your career goals?

Once I finish my OTD degree, I hope to work with medically complex pediatric and young adult populations. Additionally, I hope to pursue a PhD in rehabilitation and participation science to pursue research projects related to chronic illness management to increase well-being, occupational performance and participation in adolescent and young adult populations.

What WashU experience so far stands out to you?

My most memorable experience at WashU has been my involvement in Dr. Allison King's Child Health and Education Laboratory. The lab's research team has made me feel valued and created a space where I can share my ideas, receive feedback and learn from their expertise. As a team, we aim to research the feasibility and acceptability of a cognitive intervention, the ADAPT-SCD Metacognitive Strategy Training Program, with teenagers and young adults with sickle cell disease. I have gained experience implementing client-centered interventions and fostering therapeutic relationships. Additionally, under Dr. King's mentorship, I worked to submit a research proposal of our findings to the AOTA conference.

Anything else you'd like us to know?

I want to thank my parents, grandparents, professors, mentors and friends for supporting me and challenging me to pursue my interests and passions. Throughout my time in the Program, I have grown both professionally and personally, and I look forward to pursuing a career in occupational therapy with the skills I have gained.

CLAIRE MIZRAJI



Student happenings



WUSOTA celebrated World OT Day and OT Global Day of Service by holding a park clean-up in collaboration with Great Rivers Greenway on Oct. 27.



On Oct. 26, students brought their furry friends to the inaugural Regina Abel Costumed Dog Parade.



On Nov. 10, WashU OT faculty, staff, alumni and students attended a public hearing on early intervention in Jefferson City, Mo., to advocate for occupational therapy.



Students practiced competencies related to cardiopulmonary conditions in the hospital simulation lab on Feb. 21.



Eunyoung Kang, PhD (second from left), successfully defended her dissertation and became our twelfth Rehabilitation and Participation Science PhD program graduate on Dec. 21.



Treatment plans

In the Evaluation and Intervention: Adults and Older Adults I course, students learn how to evaluate and treat individuals with cognitive impairment. Students developed and implemented individualized treatment plans focused on different cognitive interventions by working with volunteer participants. The course is taught by Peggy Barco, OTD, OTR/L, SCDM, CDRS, FAOTA.

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Program in Occupational Therapy
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Tweets we love
@WUSTLOT

Catherine Hoyt (@DrCatHoyt), along with other colleagues, are working to develop model for the field of occupational therapy that explores how our individual experiences and biases influence the provider/client interaction and health outcomes.
– @CRE2_WashU • Oct. 2, 2022

Upcoming events



April 20-23, 2023

AOTA Inspire 2023
Kansas City, Missouri

Come see us at Booth #324!
Visit ot.wustl.edu for the
latest updates.



April 28, 2023

OT Scholarship Day

Graduating students share their
work through both oral and poster
presentations.



May 15, 2023

Commencement

Our 2023 Commencement
Ceremony will be held in
Graham Chapel at 1:00 p.m.
CDT on May 15, 2023.

The Program in Occupational Therapy is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 6116 Executive Boulevard, Suite 200, North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is www.acoteonline.org.