

Message from the President

I am honored to be a part of the Washington University Program in Occupational Therapy (WUOT), which leads the nation in educating tomorrow's leaders in rehabilitation and participation science. Our faculty and students challenge me daily and inspire me to be a better student and leader, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Program. The Washington University Student Occupational Therapy Association (WUSOTA) is dedicated to the professional development of our students, the promotion of occupational therapy and philanthropic service in our community.



KP Poulton

The 2016-2017 WUSOTA Executive Board was hard at work this summer planning numerous social, cultural, educational, fundraising and volunteer events for the fall semester. In August, we welcomed the first-year students, whose passion and drive have already strengthened our organization and student body.

WUOT students have participated in a variety of activities this fall, including professional development lunch talks, social events, documentary screenings and community advocacy events. Our students volunteered at the Crown Center for Senior Living, Hope Lodge, Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) sports and other local organizations. We were also proud to have several students attend the Missouri Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) annual conference in November.

As the semester comes to a close, we reflect upon our success. This year, WUSOTA has renewed its commitment to supporting research within the field of occupational therapy. We have raised more than \$1,000 for the St. Catherine's Challenge, a national student-led initiative to raise funds for occupational therapy research. I would like to thank all the students, faculty and staff who have made this fall a success, and I look forward to the spring semester ahead.

- KP Poulton, OTD/S '18
WUSOTA President

Advocacy

The Advocacy Committee kicked off the semester by giving a lecture about occupational therapy to new medical residency interns during their orientation to Barnes-Jewish Hospital. In September, the committee held a backpack weigh-in event to raise awareness about the pain and injury that can come from heavy backpacks and bags. Students weighed their backpacks to see if they met AOTA weight and usage guidelines. The committee wrapped up the semester by helping Girl Scouts earn their disability badge in November by testing out different pieces of adaptive equipment, learning about disabilities, and going around their school with a checklist to determine the environmental accessibility.

The Advocacy Committee looks forward to providing more opportunities to advocate for our profession next semester.

ASD

During the fall 2016 semester, AOTA Assembly of Student Delegates (ASD) representatives Sam Talisman, OTD/S '17, and Elizabeth Kasacenak, MSOT/S '17, launched an AOTA Student Membership Drive to encourage all occupational therapy students to become members of this important national organization. Students also worked hard to create a video to submit for AOTA's Student Centennial Video Challenge to promote OT. The ASD committee also gave presentations about backpack weight awareness at Walbridge Elementary School.



Students weigh backpacks and provide safety tips to avoid the pain and injury that can come from heavy backpacks and bags on Oct. 3.



Rachel Heeb, OTD/S '18, helps prepare a meal for Hope Lodge guests.

Community Service

The Community Service Committee has been quite busy this semester. To kick off the school year, volunteers headed to the Crown Center for Senior Living where they packed boxes with honey to give to donors in honor of the Jewish New Year. In November, students returned to the facility to stuff gift boxes for the Crown Center Anniversary Gala. These were great opportunities for students to help an agency that not only provides affordable housing for seniors, but also offers educational, recreational and social opportunities which are essential to increasing occupational performance.

Students also volunteered at the Hope Lodge Dinner in September, where they provided a potluck dinner for individuals undergoing cancer treatments. Hope Lodge is a free hospitality house for cancer patients and their caregivers. The guests truly appreciated the warm meals students provided, especially after a long day of treatment.

In October, the Community Service Committee volunteered at two Halloween community events for kids – St. Vincent's Haunted Shelter Extravaganza and the Team Activities for Special Kids (TASK) Fall Festival. Volunteers helped children with developmental disabilities at both events participate in the activities. This was a great opportunity for students to not only give back to the community, but also gain hands on experience interacting with this population. To wrap up the fall semester, volunteers assisted youth with developmental disabilities in playing basketball at the Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) Basketball Clinic.

Stay tuned for what the Community Service Committee has planned in 2017.

Cultural

This semester, the Cultural Committee organized a number of events to spread cultural awareness. The first was a case study night in collaboration with the Student National Medical Association on Sept. 29. The session explored different ways that health-care providers interact with various community populations, as inspired by recent events with police officers, people with disabilities and health-care providers in the news. Attendees developed skills to help them communicate and collaborate with different populations to provide optimal care.

The Cultural Committee also set up a screening and discussion of "Is Inequality Making Us Sick?" This episode from the "Unnatural Causes" docuseries focused on the high prevalence of diabetes on Native American reservations due to a lack of access to water, fresh and healthy food, and knowledge about diabetes prevention. After the screening, attendees discussed how to improve this situation as occupational therapists and citizens.

Next semester, the Cultural Committee has planned a screening and discussion of the documentary "Babies," as well as continued screenings of "Unnatural Causes" episodes.

Fundraising

The Fundraising Committee was busy this semester with several exciting events that helped raised money to support WUSOTA and their goal of making a \$2,500 Gold Level contribution to St. Catherine's Challenge. In preparation for the annual OT float trip, they held a "Koozie" fundraiser. To celebrate Halloween and raise funds for St. Catherine's Challenge, the committee hosted a successful inaugural "candy-gram" event in addition to the annual fall apparel fundraiser.

Next semester, there are several fundraising events in the works, including more OT apparel sales. The committee will continue working towards their goal of making a Gold Level contribution to St. Catherine's Challenge.

Job Fair

The Job Fair Committee spent the fall semester planning for the Annual OT/PT Job Fair which will be held on Thursday, Feb. 23 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Eric P. Newman Center. Vendors from around the country and students from the various occupational and physical therapy programs in the area attend this free event. Students can network with potential employers, meet future colleagues and win door prizes.

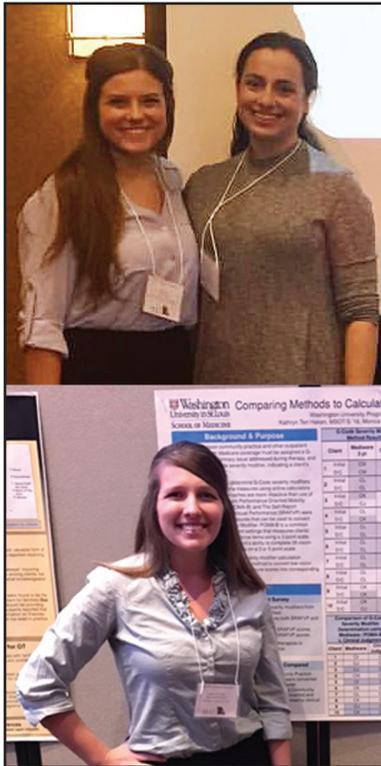
SAVE THE DATE
OT/PT Job Fair 2017
 Thursday, February 23, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.
 Eric P. Newman Education Center

MOTA

Missouri Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) student representatives, Anna Annecca, OTD/S '18, and Alexis Rayon, MSOT/S '17, were hard at work this semester. They invited faculty member Jeanenne Dallas, MA, OTR/L, FAOTA, to participate in a lunch talk with students to discuss the many advantages of joining state organizations, including how membership can benefit them in the future, continuing education opportunities available and advocating for the profession and clients.

Four students presented their work at the MOTA annual conference in November: Anna Annecca, OTD/S '18, Jaya Bhakta, OTD/S '17, Kathryn Ten Haken, OTD/S '17, and Lisa Shabosky, MSOT/S '17. Anna and Lisa gave an oral presentation titled, "The Role of the Occupational Therapist within the NICU." Jaya presented a poster titled, "Move2Learn Program: A pilot program promoting physical activity in early childhood centers." Kathryn presented a poster titled, "Comparing Methods of Calculating Medicare G-Code Severity Modifiers." The conference was held in Branson, Missouri.

Next semester, the MOTA reps are looking forward to hosting a St. Louis OT student happy hour, a letter writing campaign and a "How to Prepare for Conferences" talk.



Top photo (left to right): Lisa Shabosky and Anna Annecca. Bottom photo: Kathryn Ten Haken.

Professional Development

The Professional Development Committee held a series of educational lunch talks over the course of the fall semester featuring several guest speakers.

In September, the Disabled Sports Association (DASA), a program for children and adults with various disabilities such as spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy and visual impairments, spoke on the importance of volunteerism for OT students. DASA offers a wide range of adaptive sports such as basketball, track, swimming and archery.

In October, OTs spoke on the role of occupational therapy in a burn unit setting. The presentation covered the different types of burns and therapeutic activities such as splinting, stretching and sensation testing. A lively discussion followed where a classmate shared about experiences in a burn unit. Students also received tips from the OTs about what to expect if considering a career in the burn unit.

In November, two lunch talks focused on unique practice settings. The first addressed working with veterans through the Veteran's Administration (VA). OTs in this setting work with clients with a variety of conditions, including spinal cord injury and post-traumatic stress disorder, and are able to provide their clients with a range of durable medical equipment that they may need free of charge. The second lunch talk discussed having a career as a travel OT through Advanced Medical. The experience is very unique, as OTs are able to choose their location anywhere in the U.S., the setting they want to work in and length of stay (usually 13 weeks). The salary and benefits are very comparable, if not better, than non-travel OTs. Advanced Medical provides OTs with mentors to make the transition from graduation to the real world easier.

The Professional Development Committee is planning more exciting presentations for next semester. Some of our possible topics include mental health and suicide, pediatric oncology, and disability and sexual intimacy.



HPSLC

The Health Professional Student Leadership Council (HPSLC) is a student-run organization that promotes interprofessional interaction between students from different health-care areas. This year, WUOT is well represented with Lena Menkes, OTD/S '17 (pictured, second from left), serving as HPSLC president and Corey Martin, OTD/S '17, and Bailey Widener, MSOT/MPH/S '17, serving as student representatives. This semester, HPSLC organized several events to connect students from different health-care disciplines. Students also organized events to promote further understanding between the health-care professions, including lunch talks on deaf education, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy and occupational therapy. Students were also able to hone their interprofessional skills by participating in a multi-disciplinary case study night.

Next semester, HPSLC will be hosting another case study night, a community service day, trivia night and happy hour mixers.

Social Committee

The Social Committee kicked off the semester with an ice cream social and first-year meet-and-greet for the students to get to know each other. These events, along with the annual OT float trip, were filled with laughs and helped create a bond between new and returning students. Students also had a blast cheering on their favorite team at the Blues vs. Blackhawks pre-season hockey game. For Halloween, WUSOTA hosted a “spooktacular” party at the Olin penthouse. Finally, the semester ended with a combined fundraiser and social event, the St. Catherine’s Challenge Holiday Potluck. The potluck included the ever-popular ugly sweater contest.

Next semester, the committee is looking forward to hosting a back-to-school bash in January and everyone’s favorite semi-formal, Theraball, in spring.



The annual float trip was held in the Missouri Ozarks.



Students enjoyed “spooktacular” fun at the Halloween party.

Executive Board 2016-2017

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Design and Layout	Michele Berhorst

For any questions regarding the WUSOTA newsletter, please contact Danielle Wengraf, media relations committee chair, at edwengraf@wustl.edu.

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

Occupational Therapy