

WUSOTA

Washington University Student Occupational Therapy Association

Message from the President

The Washington University Program in Occupational Therapy (WUOT) is having an incredible year celebrating the centennial year our profession. At the American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA's) 97th Annual Conference, WUOT received the Award of Merit from the American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) for placing third in the St. Catherine's Challenge. With the support of students, faculty, alumni, friends and family, we raised \$4,000 to support research in the field of OT. WUSOTA's Executive Board was successful in planning numerous events throughout the spring semester.



KP Poulton

The Social Committee kicked off the spring semester with a welcome back event and organized yet another fun Theraball in March. The OT/PT Job Fair had another successful year, with numerous students and vendors in attendance. The Professional Development Committee had a busy semester planning lunch talks on topics ranging from

pediatric oncology to OT's role in criminal reintegration. Our students were busy volunteering with organizations like Hope Lodge and Night to Shine and attending advocacy events such as letter writing campaigns and OT Olympics. The Cultural Committee advocated for diversity in our profession by holding documentary events on health equity during Black History Month, and both Missouri Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) and AOTA student delegates held events promoting involvement in professional organizations.

Thank you to everyone who supported and participated in WUSOTA events this year. Our success is a direct reflection of the commitment WUOT has towards supporting students in their pursuit of knowledge. In April, WUSOTA leadership officially transitioned to a new group of dedicated and enthusiastic students. I look forward to being part of the exciting future of this organization. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you throughout this past year.

- KP Poulton, OTD/S '18
WUSOTA President

Advocacy

The Advocacy Committee held two events this spring to advocate for our profession.

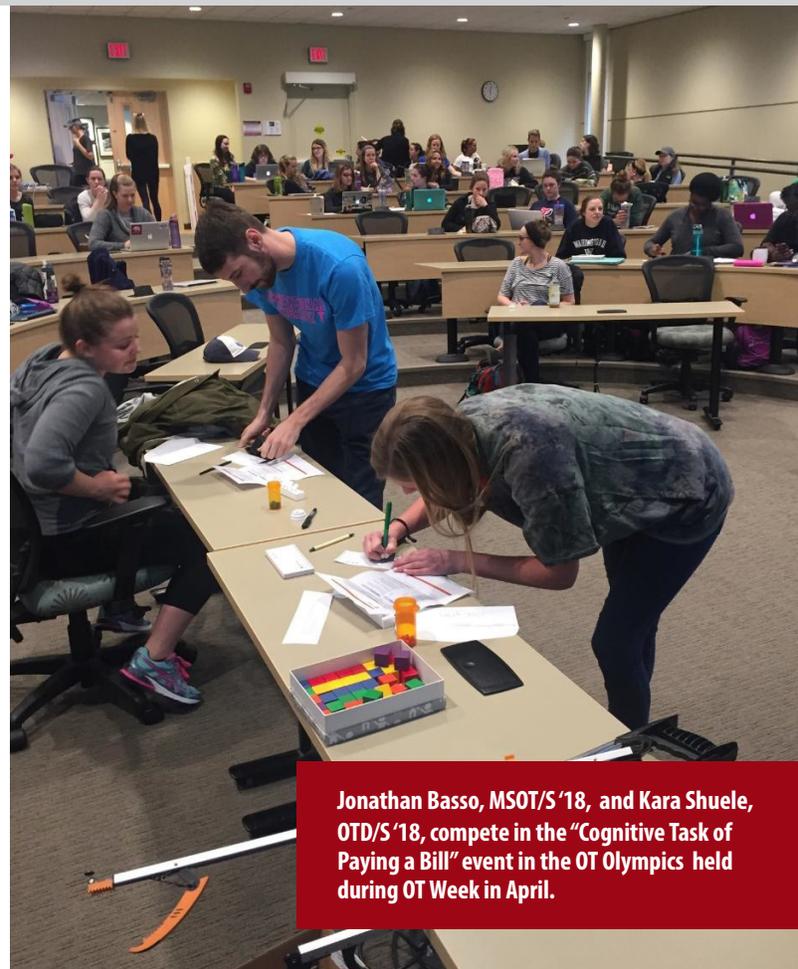
Letter writing campaign to support the preservation of essential Medicaid benefits and strongly consider maintaining the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

There was great turnout for this event hosted in the OT Tech Lab, and a large majority of our participants were first-year OT students, eager to participate in advocacy for our profession at the highest legislative level. Participants wrote letters to their voting district's Congressional representatives advocating for the preservation of essential Medicaid benefits and consideration of maintaining the ACA's current structure in upcoming health care legislation negotiations to continue to support uninsured and underinsured populations who receive essential health care benefits, namely therapy services. Over 100 letters were sent to members of Congress across the country, but especially to our local political leaders here in the surrounding St. Louis and greater Missouri area, to be a strong advocacy voice for our profession amidst the changing tide that is health care legislation.

OT Week during OT Month

In April, we celebrated OT Month by dedicating an entire week of activities to our favorite profession. We kicked off the week with WashU OT Pride Day, where students donned their WUOT swag and apparel and celebrated being proud members of the Program.

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Jonathan Basso, MSOT/S '18, and Kara Shuele, OTD/S '18, compete in the "Cognitive Task of Paying a Bill" event in the OT Olympics held during OT Week in April.

Advocacy continued

We kept the OT spirit going with OT Olympics on Tuesday, which consisted of OT-inspired relay races. Activities included one-handed dressing techniques, showing off wheelchair skills, a task using a reacher and some play blocks, and a cognitive task of paying a bill. The second-year students came out on top. Michelle Egan, MSOT/S '17, Kara Schuele, OTD/S '18, and Jill Evans, MSOT/S '17, won a root beer float party for their entire class. The participating first-year team was also invited to join the party for their valiant efforts. Loud cheers and motivational music echoed in the background during the race. Michelle said, "I didn't know how hard it really was to put a shirt on one-handed." We wrapped up the week with two professional development talks. The first was a talk about sex and disabilities with Katie Rodriguez Bannister, an advocate for re-exploring sexuality following her spinal cord injury. This was a well-attended event, as was the "Finding an OT Job" lunch talk the following day.

ASD

During the spring semester, the AOTA Assembly of Student Delegates (ASD) provided scholarships to OT students to encourage attendance at AOTA's Conference & Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia. Funds raised by the annual OT/PT Job Fair, chaired this year by Gabrielle Blenden, MSOT/S '17, and Chevie Wiseman, MSOT/S '17, made these scholarships possible. Following the conference, ASD representatives Sam Talisman, OTD/S '17, and Elizabeth Kasacenk, MSOT/S '17, organized an AOTA conference debrief and presentation for students and faculty who did not have the opportunity to attend the conference.



#AOTA17

Several students received scholarships from ASD to attend AOTA's Annual Conference & Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia.

Left: Chelsea Wallaert, OTD/S '18, and Elizabeth Kasacenk, MSOT/S '17.

Below: Sam Talisman, OTD/S '17, Elizabeth Kasacenk, MSOT/S '17, KP Poulton, OTD/S '18, and Lauren Milton, OTD, OTR/L.



Community Service

The Community Service Committee kicked off the spring semester with Hope Lodge Dinners, where students helped prepare potluck style meals for individuals and families staying at Hope Lodge while undergoing cancer treatments. In February, students attended Night to Shine, a prom event for individuals with disabilities where volunteers were paired with participants during the event. Students had the opportunity to participate in the annual Smart Health Cancer Prevention Community Education Day in April, where they manned a booth to discuss the role of OT in oncology. To finish out the semester, the committee provided an opportunity for students to do yard work for St. Louis NORC, a neighborhood aging-in-place program. A huge thank-you to all of the students who volunteered their time to serve our community this semester.

Cultural

This semester, the Cultural Committee organized two events to spark thought and discussion. The first was a screening of the documentary "Babies" on January 25. This film examines the daily lives of babies from various cultures, giving students a look into the effects of context on occupation and development. On February 28, the Cultural Committee showed the documentary, "Unnatural Causes: When the Bough Breaks" to celebrate Black History Month. This chapter of the "Unnatural Causes" series looked specifically at American health disparities based on race. The Cultural Committee is excited to offer students more opportunities to learn about different cultures next semester as the new committee heads take over.

Fundraising

This semester, the Fundraising Committee was busy with several fun events. The committee worked hard to raise funds for St. Catherine's Challenge. A total of \$4,000 was raised, placing WashU in third place overall. An Award of Merit was presented to the Program. The committee also provided an opportunity for students to purchase WUOT polos in preparation for fieldwork and other professional events. Additionally, WashU car decals, tumblers and travel coffee mugs were made available for purchase. Finally, the Fundraising Committee held a spring apparel sale, and graduating students purchased various alumni clothing including hats and baseball t-shirts. The committee wants to thank everyone for their contributions towards making this a very successful school year.

HPSLC

The Health Professional Student Leadership Council (HPSLC) is a student-run organization that strives to promote further understanding and interprofessionalism between health care students. This semester, HPSLC organized several events to connect students from different health care areas, including a community service day and happy hour mixers. Students also organized a multi-disciplinary case study night to promote further understanding between the health-care professions and to hone their interprofessional skills.



Job Fair

The annual OT/PT Job Fair held on February 23 was a huge success thanks to the tremendous efforts of the Job Fair Committee. More than 200 OT, PT and OTA students and new graduates from Washington University and surrounding area schools attended the event at the Eric P. Newman Education Center (EPNEC). The committee thanks the more than 20 employers that graciously gave their time to attend and support the event. It was a great experience for students to work on their resumes and their job interviewing and networking skills. We look forward to hosting this event again on March 29, 2018.

Back row: Lauren Milton, OTD, OTR/L, Chevie Wiseman, MSOT/S '17, and Gabrielle Blenden, MSOT/S '17. **Front row:** Richard Whalley, OTD/S '18, Logan Berlet, OTD/S '18, and AJ Neff, OTD/S '18.

MOTA

Our MOTA student representatives, Anna Annecca, OTD/S '18, and Alexis Raybon, MSOT/S '17, were hard at work this semester as liaisons between MOTA and students. This semester, MOTA representatives hosted an abstract talk that went over various formats of abstracts, multiple faculty perspectives on how to write an abstract and gave examples of conference abstract submissions. The talk also included upcoming abstract due dates for MOTA, AOTA and OT Scholarship Day.

MOTA also hosted a student seminar about the continuum of care for individuals with a spinal cord injury. The event took place at Washington University, and Stephanie Stegman, MOT, OTR/L, was the keynote speaker.

Professional Development

This semester, the Professional Development Committee brought in several speakers from our very own students speaking about their passions to guest speakers from other OT programs. We kicked off the semester with a talk from Sarah Wolf, OTD/S '18, titled, "Suicide and Health Care Professionals' Role." This event included both a movie and a discussion of how to address suicidal cues in our clients.

We also welcomed back Katie Rodriguez Banister, who discussed her very personal experience of navigating sexual intimacy after a spinal cord injury. Her presentation covered topics like pressure, expectations, pregnancy and healthy sex. WashU alumna Amy Westfall, OTD, OTR/L, presented, "Our Pediatric Oncology and OT," which gave students insight into the role of OT when working with the pediatric oncology population. Stephanie Stegman, MOT, OTR/L, helped calm the nerves of students worried about finding their first OT job by sharing interview do's and don'ts and answering student questions.

We wrapped up the semester with a talk from Saint Louis University's Lisa Jaegers, PhD, OTR/L, about OT and incarcerated populations. She has developed a local prison program that provides incarcerated

individuals with the training, support and resources needed to successfully reintegrate into their communities. This was a unique lecture that gave students the opportunity to become both informed and involved with this population. Students were very interested in Dr. Jaegers' work, and we look forward to connecting with her in the future.

Social Committee

This semester was filled with several fun events put together by the Social Committee. At the very beginning of the semester, the committee hosted a "Welcome Back to School" event where students were able to celebrate being back all while laughing and making memories. The Social Committee also put on Theraball, a formal event for OT students to attend at a banquet hall for dinner and dancing. Theraball was an absolute blast and was a night everyone cherished as they danced the night away with classmates. In addition, the committee wrapped up the semester with a Hawaiian-themed event for the OT and PT students to get to know each other and have some fun. The Social Committee truly outdid themselves this year.



Theraball 2017



Congratulations to the 2017-2018 WUSOTA Executive Board!
We look forward to seeing what you have in store for the organization.

Executive Board 2017-2018

- President Shoshana Falk
- Vice President TBD
- Treasurer Laura Pilney
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- Advocacy Emily Sherman, Alana Hansen
and Samantha Eagle
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- Community Service Blair Holck, Connor Daws
and Karmen Swanson
- Cultural Molly Grabill, Kathy Yang
and Melissa Thomas
- Fundraising AJ Neff, Nic Huang and Ashley Chuck
- HPSLC Lena Menkes
- Job Fair Shannon Cochrane, Lindsay Smith
and Madison Rolling
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and Maggie Kindra
- MOTA Representatives Audra Hendrix
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and Jamie Brill
- St. Catherine's
Challenge Representatives Jonathan Basso and Kaitlin LaPlant

Executive Board 2016-2017

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- Community Service Jill Evans and Mary Holowatuk
- Cultural Karli Green, Deborah Haynes
and Alexis Raybon
- Fundraising Brooke Fosaaen, Katie Nellesen,
Rachel Nation and Suzi Skaggs
- HPSLC Lena Menkes
- Job Fair Gabrielle Blenden and
Chevie Wiseman
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- MOTA Representatives Anna Annecca and Alexis Raybon
- Professional Development Kelly Baker, Michelle Egan
and Kathryn Kadela
- Social Katie Kaufmann, Kegan Murphy
and Sonya Randall

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- Design and Layout Michele Berhorst

*For any questions regarding
the WUSOTA newsletter,
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