

## A Message from the President

I never cease to be amazed with the remarkable breadth of knowledge and experience that the students in the WUOT program bring to the table. The work everyone is currently doing with regards to their research, jobs, and volunteer experience is truly inspiring. I find myself constantly learning from my peers and their unique and diverse experiences. WUSOTA has been an imperative tool for the WUOT student body to continually learn and share. The Fall 2011 semester has come and gone in a flash, and the WUOT students have had a multitude of wonderful opportunities to further their academic, professional, social, and cultural experiences. The 2011-2012 WUSOTA Executive Board hit the ground running beginning during the summer semester, and their great ideas and hard work see no end in sight. The student body has had the opportunity to learn about food and eating customs in different cultures, prepare a Thanksgiving dinner for patients receiving cancer treatment and their families, and attend presentations by OTs who are having tremendous impact on our field. I hope you will find the work and initiative that the WUOT students have taken this semester as inspiring as I have. I look forward to what our Exec Board and student body have in store for the spring!

-Sarah Cheatham

## Advocacy Committee

The advocacy committee has been hard at work promoting occupational therapy! In September, OT students created a Backpack Awareness Day event at the medical school campus. Students educated students/faculty on proper ergonomics, positioning and had scales for individuals to weigh their backpacks.

Members of WUSOTA are also being advocates by presenting lectures for nursing student and Internal Medicine Residents on the scope of practice of OT, OT theories, case studies and demonstration of assistive technology. In addition, the advocacy co-chairs presented a lecture for HPSLC open to the entire medical school about curriculum in OT, OT's scope of practice and case studies. The advocacy committee is looking forward to next semester for OT month, letter writing parties and a lecture on how to advocate for OT!

The WashU Student Representative for MOTA, along with the Student Representative from SLU helped to plan a student networking night. OT/OTA students attended from WashU, SLU, and OTC. The students ate pizza, played board games and talked about OT. In addition, MOTA recruitment was very successful, out of 90 students memberships, 45 are WashU students!

## Committee Reports

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## Upcoming Events - Spring 2012

- JOB FAIR
- RELAY FOR LIFE
- NORC WORK DAY
- FLOAT TRIP RESCHEDULE
- SUPER BOWL PARTY
- THERABALL

## Cultural Committee

The culture committee has hosted several successful events this semester including the Thai lunch, where our students cooked Thai food and hosted an educational lunch that talked about Occupational Therapy in Thailand. The food was delicious and the turnout was a great success!

The Culture Committee also hosted a Lighthouse Publications Tour. The St. Louis Lighthouse is a place where low-vision populations can develop new, productive skills while simultaneously earning an income. Touring this facility will enable OT students to see how the public can play a role in assisting the blind to live independent lives.

Next semester the Culture committee is planning two major events including Beepball game, and a disability dinner potluck. More information on these events coming soon!



*Hali Hutchinson  
and  
Sarah Cheatham  
practice their Beep  
Ball skills.*



Allison Hammer  
and Brittany Minor  
promote proper  
backpack safety for  
Advocacy.

## Community Service Committee

The Community Service Committee has been busy so far this semester! They kicked off the beginning of the semester with one of their infamous Hope Lodge dinners. Hope Lodge is a lodging facility run by the American Cancer Society for cancer patients and their families. Wash U's OT students volunteered to help cook, prepare, set up and socialize with the families and patients. These dinners are always a great success, especially the amazing Thanksgiving dinner they served this November!

The Community Service Committee has been involved in several walk for the cure events, including Alzheimer's Walk for the Cure, Walk Now for Autism Speaks, and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk.

The Community Service Committee has also offered opportunities for OT students to volunteer at RE[FRESH], a clothing store run by the St. Louis Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition, and with the St. Louis Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC).

More recently, the committee held a Winter Clothing Drive to collect clothes for the homeless people of St. Louis.

This semester has been a busy one for the Community Service Committee. They plan to keep it up next semester with the following events:

- University Wide Food Drive (April 5-16)
- Relay for Life (April 14-15)
- Manicures for the Cure
- Autism Forum (April 14)
- More Hope Lodge dinners/events
- Spring NORC work day



Keland Scher poses for a picture with a Hope Lodge residents after providing the entertainment before the Thanksgiving Feast.

## Fundraising Committee

The “FUN”draising committee started the year off with the annual Wash U OT sweatshirt sale, always great way to keep cozy while showing support for the program.

Mid-semester, a piñata breaking event was held for the first years OT students after their first anatomy test. While profits were no bueno, the fun and stress relief were priceless!

On October 11, OT students exercised their occupation of acting in the murder mystery dinner titled “Murder in the Cadaver Lab”. The evening was a huge success raising over \$300 from students and faculty. The talented actors were Diane Cerulli, Joe Brey, Keland Scher, Stephanie Hauessler, Joyce Dadekian, Cresencia (CJ) Burhans, Annie Kramlinger, and Brittney Minor. Way to go!

Lastly, the semester was wrapped up with the “Great Gingerbread House Contest”. Students and faculty put their building skills to the test by seeing which teams could construct the best gingerbread house in under an hour. Congrats to Amanda Jones, Lily Downs, Jessica Koster and Miriam Brinley.



Cast members posed for a picture after a great performance at the Murder Mystery dinner.

## Job Fair Committee

This fall the Job Fair Committee has been working hard on the upcoming annual Job Fair to be held February 23, 2012 in Farrell from 4-8pm. Over 475 invitations have been mailed out to prospective employers already! Way to go! There will be door prizes for students, tons of helpful information and important networking opportunities.

This year’s goal is to include other local OT, OTA, PT, and PTA programs in the area in attending the fair. So spread the word, it’s shaping up to be a fantastic event!

## Professional Development Committee



Cathy Crawley and Captain Erik Johnson

The Professional Development committee brought in some great speakers this semester. On October 27, Captain Erik Johnson and WashU grad Matt Dodson came in to talk about the involvement of occupational therapy in the military community. The talk was especially useful for those interested in learning more about working with patients with TBI, the Army OTD program, and working with Wounded Warriors. Since the talk was given during first year’s fieldwork week, a videorecording of the presentation was shown on November 28. On that day, CPT Johnson called in for the last 15 minutes to field a live Q&A session for the first years.

On November 4, Jamie Olson, a 2011 OTD graduate of WashU, spoke about her 16-week apprenticeship experience working in Casa Sperantei, a Romanian Orphanage. In Romania, Jamie collaborated with the caregivers at the orphanage to provide strategies to address behavioral and psychological problems displayed by the children.

Finally, Becky Russell, now an occupational therapist at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, shared her previous experiences as a travel occupational therapist. The talk was aided by a 2005 MSOT graduate from SLU who currently works as a travel OT, and a representative from a recruiting company via Skype. Thank you to the Professional Development committee for continuing to help OT students expand their horizons.

## Social Committee

The Social Committee has also been very busy so far this semester, and they are still going strong! They started off orientation for the first years with a scavenger hunt, happy hour, trip to the city museum and a picnic in forest park. The Float Trip this year was unfortunately postponed due to inclement weather, but has been rescheduled for the Spring semester! The Social Committee also hosted a trip to go Apple Picking at Eckhart's, various Happy Hours throughout the semester, a Halloween Costume contest, a Thanksgiving potluck and Ice Skating in Forest Park.

Next semester, we can expect the fun events to be continued, as the agenda for Spring 2012 is as follows:

- Grad School Mixer
- Winery Trip
- Float Trip
- SuperBowl Party
- Brewery Tour
- Movie Night
- Theraball



The crew at Eckerts Farm.

### WUSOTA OFFICERS

**President: Sarah Cheatham**

**Vice President: Lexi Florian**

**Secretary: Joyce Dadekian**

**Treasurer: Marisa Sevick**

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Advocacy:

Brittany Minor

Lizz Rizki

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Katherine Hutson

Keisha Foster

Cultural:

Hali Hutchinson

Frances Montanya

Fundraising:

Joe Brey

Diane Cerulli

Job Fair:

Lauren Stone

Lisa Tilges

Professional Development:

Ashley Hermes

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## Media Relations Committee

A big thank you to committee members  
Cathy Crawley, Sarah Lauterbach  
Susan Lee, and Kara Mitchell  
for their contributions to the newsletter!

Stop by for a visit!

[www.wusota.org](http://www.wusota.org)

## International Assistance Committee

The International Assistance Committee (IAC) is dedicated to promoting participation and independence of individuals in need in developing countries worldwide. The committee has been restructured to allow for more focus on out reach projects in the Saint Louis area separate from the service learning trip.

The current focus of fundraising is to raise money to purchase a Soccer Ball. This ball will be sent to developing nations where the kids can play soccer during the day, and the movement of the ball generates energy that can be used in the evening to power a light source in order to do homework.

The Guatemala service learning trip has been hard at work to get ready for the trip. Many fundraisers have been completed, from the third annual Guatabala to speed dating and cookbook/calendar sales. The team is getting excited as the trip draws near and focus from fundraising to trip details.



The Tacky Sweater Party Goers



Team New Kicks on the Block at Guatabala