Welcome to the Ohio State Occupational Therapy Division Newsletter
Jane Case-Smith, Division Director

Greetings, we hope that this has been a healthy and productive year for you. I’d like to highlight some of the student and faculty activities from the past 6 months.

Our Students!

At present, the MOT program has 78 students who are enrolled in courses, 44 incoming and 43 who recently completed their Fieldwork II. We are fortunate to have great students! They are actively involved in research, clinical and service projects that go above and beyond their busy schedules of coursework. Fifteen of our second year students are earning a Research Specialization in addition to their Master’s degree. The Research Specialization is a three course series in which the students work with a faculty member on a research project. The project topics have included examining hand therapy outcomes, designing new rehabilitation engineering devices, preventing injury in occupational therapists, analyzing picky eating in children with autism, and measuring sensory processing in infants at risk for autism. Three students are complete a specialization in Global Health and will be spending 10 days in Merida Mexico in December 2010. Several students have also completed practica to learn about prosthetics, inpatient pediatrics, and neonatal intensive care unit practice. Students who invest in these additional learning opportunities are well prepared to enter a specialty area of practice or to continue their education to earn a PhD. We are recruiting students for the School’s PhD program, Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and welcome interest in that program.

The students have been extensively involved in service activities. Second year MOT students, Christina McKenna and Debora Scheidler, are the chairs of the OSU chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI). They provide additional weekend programming for patients at Harding Hospital and hold monthly meetings with students from across the campus. The MOT students also provide child care during the CP Parent meetings and have volunteered at many events for persons with special needs, including Wheelchair Rugby games and Creative Living and Cystic Fibrosis fundraisers. Although our students take on many work and service responsibilities beyond their coursework, they are terrific students who consistently perform well in their studies.
International Service Learning: 
Merida, Mexico

The Ohio State University MOT students joined in a 10 day multidisciplinary service learning experience in the Mexican Yucatan Peninsula. This was the first international service learning experience for the Occupational Therapy Division and it was an overwhelming success. Three MOT students were joined by an OT faculty and other students and faculty from SAMP, to work in approximately nine locations in the city of Merida, including a school for children with multiple disabilities, nursing homes, a rural rehabilitation clinic, a residential facility for people with disabilities and a homeless shelter for the disabled. They provided services including individualized consultations, screenings, evaluations, individual and group treatments and creative wheelchair repair.

Additionally, the students spent time with Alejandro Ojeda Manzana and Claudia Barrero Solis, two senior rehabilitation faculty members from the Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan (UADY) in Merida. While in Merida, Stephanie Smith, MOT student, also participated in a presentation at an international conference with the OSU PT faculty.

Division Chair (Continued)
Our Faculty!

The OT faculty research is thriving with a number of successes to report. Dr. Alison Lane with Dr. Maureen Gerahty (Medical Dietitian) has completed a study to analyze the factors related to picky eating in children with autism and has launched a study of sensory processing in toddlers at risk for autism. Her autism study uses several new measures and includes evoked potential measures for brain activity during sensory stimuli processing. Dr. Amy Darrah’s research on the musculoskeletal effects on informal caregivers will be completed this Spring and will lead to studies on interventions that can prevent injuries in informal caregivers. Dr. Flinn and Dr. Teaford recently received an OSU Cares grant, “Farming with Arthritis,” to educate farmers on arthritis and adaptations to prevent pain and disease progression. Dr. Carmen DiGiovine is working with the Veteran’s Administration to develop assistive technology centers at the major VA hospitals throughout the country. Dr. Rybski has completed studies of educational practices, including the innovative interdisciplinary teaching methods with physical therapy. My handwriting study with Dublin City Schools continues into a second year. The study is developing a co-taught handwriting program for first grade students at risk for poor handwriting. I have also continued to work with Nationwide Children’s Hospital to study the effects of constraint induced therapy for children with cerebral palsy. We are excited about our research progress and greatly appreciate our clinical partners and their contributions to the Division’s research programs.
Ohio State Students attend NBCOT / AOTA Student Conclave

This past November approximately 27 first and second year MOT students attended the third annual NBCOT / AOTA Student Conclave in Baltimore, Maryland. This was an exciting opportunity for our students to network with students from other schools and meet leaders in our field. The conclave provides students information on preparing for fieldwork, entry into the workforce, mock interviews and resume critiquing as well as exposure to various areas of practice. We are pleased so many of our students take advantage of this valuable experience.

OSU MOT Students Take a Lead in Advocacy

Our students recognize the importance of advocacy for the profession and for the clients we serve. This has been an active year for advocacy. The second year students all attended Ohio Lobby Day on April 13th. Each student joined an occupational therapy practitioner to meet with a legislator to discuss occupational therapy. The students reported this was an exciting experience.

Additionally, three students while at the NBCOT / AOTA Student Conclave participated on Student Hill Day at our nations capital. These students meet with Senators Brown and Voinoviches and their House Of Representative Congressperson’s offices.

We are proud to recognize Elise Dew, a second year student, was nominated to the AOTA Assembly of Student Delegates Steering Committee as the Communications and Advocacy Chairperson. Elise will be presented on April 28, at the ASD Delegates Meeting being held at the AOTA’s Annual Conference & Expo. Congratulations Elise!

OSU Participated in NIH Somatosensory Research

The Occupational Therapy Division participated in the validation testing of the NIH Toolbox for Neurological and Behavioral Health, specifically, how to examine the somatosensory system.

The Toolbox is being designed to provide efficient and accessible ways to document sensory, motor, cognitive, and emotional health in the general population. Ohio State University was one of eight sites (led by Winnie Dunn, PhD, OTR, FAOTA at the University of Kansas) conducting validation testing on the Somatosensation Test in individuals ages 3 – 85. The somatosensation test consists of five standardized subtests of stereognosis, pain, kinesthesia, proprioception, and touch.

Four MOT students, supervised by a member of the faculty, tested 52 community-dwelling adults between 45 and 75 years of age, gaining proficiency in the administration of standardized assessment.

Join us at the AOTA Annual Conference for the Ohio Reception on April 30 at 7pm at the Hilton Orlando, Lake Virginia Room. See you there!
**OT Student Receives Hite Family Scholarship**

Congratulations to Tierney Bumgardner, second year MOT Student is the recipient of the Hite Family Scholarship. The scholarship is given to the Master of Occupational Therapy student with high academic achievement, laudable professional goals and financial need. The Hite Family Scholarship extends from winter quarter, 2010 through Autumn quarter 2010. We congratulate Tierney for her accomplishments and receiving this scholarship.

**New Faculty**

**Professor Monica Robinson**

Monica Robinson, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA joined our faculty last summer as Clinical Faculty. Monica received her Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from Boston University and her Master of Science in Advanced Practice Occupational therapy from San Jose State. Currently, Monica is pursuing her PhD in Public Policy from the Ohio State University John Glenn Center for Public Affairs.

Monica is an active association member; she is the current president of the Ohio Occupational Therapy Association. She was recent member of the the Board of Directors for American Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee. Monica is involved in various committees at AOTA, including the Alternatives to the Cap Committee, the Coding Committee and the STATS Committee. She represents AOTA as a technical expert panelist advocating for OT on two CMS studies, the Short Term Alternatives for Therapy Services Project and the Staff Time and Resource Intensity Verification Project.

Since being at OSU Monica has participated in the international service learning in Merida, Mexico; advised students in the Global health Specialization and is the SOTA faculty advisor.

Previously, Monica was employed for 14 years for HCR ManorCare as the OT Corporate Rehabilitation Consultant which included responsibilities for clinical practice, programming and regulatory compliance for facilities in 32 states. Monica has presented and published on geriatric, documentation, reimbursement, ethics, advocacy and regulatory issues at numerous local, state and national conferences on these topics.

**Current areas of interest include public policy, management, leadership, advocacy, mentoring and gerontology.**

**Alumni Updates**

**Amanda (Platner) Tarlton Class of 1998**

Congratulations to Amanda, she recently received her certificate in low vision rehabilitation from University of Alabama at Birmingham, under Mary Warren's direction. Amanda is currently working in outpatient services for Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan.

We would like to hear from you! We would like to celebrate and acknowledge our alumni’s excellence scholarly research, leadership and clinical practice. Please forward information to Robinson.171@osu.edu