



Inside AOTF

The American Occupational Therapy
Foundation

Fall 2010 Volume 15 Issue 1

From the Desk of Charles Christiansen, Executive Director

This latest edition of the AOTF newsletter comes at an appropriate time. The AOTF Board of Directors is currently engaged in a series of planning activities, mapping the strategies and directions for the years ahead. The board will soon increase in size to thirteen members, and President Diana Ramsay has inaugurated some changes in board committees and other aspects of governance.

This is fitting, because occupational therapy is once again in a growth mode in the United States and the global community is also experiencing a surge in the development of the profession. We ask ourselves important questions as we seek appropriate pathways to the future. These include questions about how best to focus program activities in directions that matter most? How best to increase public awareness and knowledge about occupational therapy? and how to inform people about the importance of engagement in everyday activities and what that means for living life to its fullest?

As we discuss these matters and contemplate strategies, we invite your input. What do you think the Foundation can do to educate people in meaningful ways about the importance of human occupation and the role of occupational therapy in the health care system? We welcome your thoughts; please send them to cchristiansen@aotf.org.



People Give to People--A Planned Giving Profile of Sharon Stoffel

The Foundation recently interviewed Sharon Stoffel, OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor Emeritus, St. Catherine University, regarding her bequest (a gift provided in a will) to AOTF.

How do you feel about the programs of AOTF?

My husband, Tom, and I believe in the important initiatives of the Foundation and the people who carry them out. We trust that the Foundation is using funds responsibly and wisely. [Read more](#)

AOTF Announces Gary Kielhofner Graduate Fellowship

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AOTF at the AOTA Conference in Philadelphia

Watch for these and other AOTF events at the [AOTA Conference](#) April 14-17, 2011. Registration begins January 2011.

Research Colloquium --

Sensory Processing Disorders in Occupational Therapy: Mapping Pathways of Understanding from Cages to Clinics.

Breakfast with a Scholar -- Ruth Purtilo.

AOTA/AOTF Pre-Conference

AOTF announces the creation of an endowment to support the Gary W. Kielhofner Graduate Fellowship in Occupational Therapy. AOTF will match each contribution up to a total of \$75,000. When fully endowed, the fund will provide for a yearly fellowship of at least \$5,000 for a deserving occupational therapist pursuing advanced graduate study. [Details.](#)

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AOTF/Patterson Award for Community Volunteerism

This award will honor an individual or group of occupational therapists and/or occupational therapy assistants who demonstrate commitment, excellence and/or innovation in providing community-based volunteer services using occupational therapy skills. The application deadline is November 1. [Details.](#)

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News from the Academy of Research

Kenneth J. Ottenbacher, PhD, OTR, Professor and Russell Shearn Moody Distinguished Chair in the School of Health Professions and member of the Academy of Research since 1984, was recently named the recipient of the 2010 UTMB Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Distinguished Faculty Research Award, and was awarded a resource infrastructure grant (R24) from the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Ottenbacher received the Distinguished Faculty Research Award in recognition of his contributions to research and education in rehabilitation sciences. His NIH grant titled, "Center for Rehabilitation Research Using Large Datasets," includes a consortium of investigators at UTMB, Cornell University, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and the Uniform Data Systems for Medical Rehabilitation. The project will provide \$4.2 million over five years to build research capacity by increasing the quantity and quality of rehabilitation research using large administrative and research datasets.



For more information on the Academy of Research see our [web site.](#)

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People Give to People--A Planned Giving Profile of Sharon Stoffel (continued)

We feel strongly about their initiatives that link experienced, creative researchers together with newer researchers or clinicians wishing to engage in research. The Foundation allocates funds for start-up research and gives positive feedback on submissions to applicants. We have trust and confidence in AOTF's leadership.

What do you wish more people knew about AOTF?

That REAL PEOPLE responsibly manage the Foundation by caring for the profession, looking to the future, assessing trends, tapping into resources and assisting professionals to achieve both personally and professionally through scholarship and research.

You are one of the founding members of the Carlotta Wells Giving Society (renamed the AOTF Legacy Circle). What inspired you and your husband, Tom, to be involved in this planned giving program?

In the 1980s, while serving on the Foundation's Board of Directors, I attended a workshop for board members. One thing I took from the presentation was the statement, *people give to people, not*

Institute -- *Blending Quantitative and Qualitative Research: An Overview of Mixed Methods Research.*

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institutions. I constantly remember that phrase as Tom and I discuss our plans for donations. We often make these decisions based on relationships we have with organizations. Honestly, I think we decided to donate to the Carlotta Wells Giving Society because I had a relationship with Carlotta. [Editor's note: Carlotta Welles was an Honorary Life Member of the AOTF board as well as a recipient of the Award of Merit and the Presidents's Commendation of AOTA and AOTF.] Carlotta and I often sat next to one another at Foundation board meetings and spent time together during breaks. Tom also had opportunities to meet with Carlotta and he really admired her and her willingness to state her opinions--often ones with which he agreed.

I clearly remember the first time Fred Sammons [Editor's note: Honorary Life Member of the AOTF board, Award of Merit winner and founder of Sammons, Inc.] and asked us to make a donation. We honestly did not think ourselves capable of making donations and when he named a level and we thought about it we were able to respond positively. Subsequent gifts were easier to make and also set the stage for our donations to other organizations.

We also have a strong desire to give back. The profession of occupational therapy has allowed me to do things I never dreamed possible. Many things became possible because of the generous support I received from others within the profession. The Foundation provides an excellent avenue to reciprocate and acknowledge what I have received. However, it is still PEOPLE that make giving possible or led us to retain the gift to AOTF when we recently revised our wills.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about making a planned gift to AOTF, and how would one go about this?

Many think one needs to be wealthy to make a planned gift and even the words *planned gift* can be intimidating. But, it is my hope that the many people who have benefited from the Foundation's support and resources will consider giving back by contributing both annual and planned gifts in honor of or in memory of the people who have helped shape and grow our wonderful profession.

The American Occupational Therapy Foundation's (AOTF) Legacy Circle recognizes a very special group of AOTF friends who want to invest in occupational therapy research, education and leadership through planned gifts. A planned gift does not involve the direct and immediate transfer of funds. Instead, donors use special gift strategies which delay the transfer of the gift and provide extra benefits not normally associated with traditional giving. Planned gifts include bequests, life income arrangements such as gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts, gifts of life insurance and other deferred giving options.

AOTF would be pleased to follow-up with any requests for information about planned giving and the AOTF Legacy Circle; please contact us at (301) 652-6611 x 2550. For more on the Foundation's programs see www.aotf.org

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About Us

The American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) is a 501(c)(3) charitable, scientific and educational organization founded in 1965. Its mission is to advance research, education, and leadership in the field of occupational therapy and raise public awareness of the importance of enabling individuals to participate fully in life regardless of their physical, social, mental, or developmental circumstances. For more information: www.aotf.org.

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