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The Scroll & Pen

Newsletter of Pi Theta Epsilon, The National Honor Society of Occupational Therapy

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President's Message

Happy New Year! The executive committee hopes that you and your families had a wonderful holiday season.

With the new year, each of us traditionally examines the past year and makes resolutions for the one ahead. The executive committee followed this tradition. Over the past year, we honored our mission to support the development of occupational sciences and the practice of authentic occupational therapy by promoting research and other scholarly activities among members. We brought vital research to the forefront through the PTE-sponsored workshop, "Health Disparities and Social Justice: Empowering Clients to Facilitate Participation," at the AOTA Annual Conference & Exposition in Charlotte, North Carolina. Also, we created the PTE Certificate of Distinction to recognize one or more chapters for their efforts to promote occupational therapy within their profession and community. Further, we strove for better communication with chapters through PTE Friendly Reminders and the PTE website, www.pithetaepsilon.org.

The executive committee is excited about its plans for the upcoming year. We challenge each chapter to participate in the following events and programs:

- President's Award to honor and recognize PTE chapters that organize and implement outstanding scholarly activities. *Application deadline:* February 1, 2007. Go to www.pithetaepsilon.org for details and an application form.
- 17th Annual PTE Business Meeting, April 20, 2007, in St. Louis.
- 87th Annual AOTA Conference & Exposition, April 20-23, 2007, in St. Louis.
- "Yesterday to Today: Occupational Therapy and the U.S. Army," another PTE-sponsored workshop, April 21, 2007, in St. Louis. *Moderator:* Lieutenant Colonel Melissa Wilde Jones, PhD, OTR/L, Walter Reed Army Medical Center. *Speakers:* Major Teresa L. Brininger, PhD, OTR/L, CHT, U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine; Captain Kathleen E. Yancosek, MS, OTR/L, CHT, Walter Reed Army Medical Center; and Colonel Kenneth Lee, MD, Milwaukee Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Wisconsin Army National Guard.

I look forward to seeing and working with each of you in St. Louis!

Sincerely,



Melissa Oliver, MS OTR/L

Chapter News

Nu Chapter

Members of the Nu Chapter, at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB, Galveston), are actively participating in a research study entitled Hurricane Preparedness. This study received \$25,000 funding through UTMB's President's Cabinet Award to support its large-scale expansion. The mixed-method research project will aid socially, physically, and economically disadvantaged people in the Galveston community in preparing for the inevitability of a hurricane and the subsequent mandatory evacuation. Nu chapter members will administer an in-depth survey with previously identified members of the community to pinpoint areas that have the greatest priority for intervention. In addition, the survey will act as a vehicle for city emergency-preparedness officials to identify the citizens with the greatest amount of need and the least amount of resources in the likely event of a hurricane.—*Amber Armstead*

Chi Chapter

This year the Chi Chapter, at Quinnipiac University (Hamden, Connecticut), is increasing its involvement on campus and working on improving communication between graduates and under-

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graduate students, for graduates can be an excellent resource to undergraduate students. The chapter also is designing a research study to investigate occupational therapists' knowledge of spirituality and their incorporation of it into their everyday practice.—*Sue Schneider*

Alpha Epsilon Chapter

In the fall semester of 2006, the Alpha Epsilon chapter, at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (Lubbock), participated in two events. The first was an occupational therapy awareness booth at our local mall. We set the booth up with balloons, candy, and a poster board that gave a broad perspective on occupational therapy and also reported several personal stories from clients about the influences occupational therapy has had on their lives. We passed out bags stuffed with flyers and sensory gadgets for children. One flyer explained occupational therapy interventions involved in early childhood services, schools, and hospital-based services. Another flyer contained fun games for children to play. The last flyer included a brief description of occupational therapy. Also, we provided several pamphlets from local facilities.

The second event was a yard-sale fund-raiser. Flyers were sent out asking for donations. Between the donations and the items the members of the chapter collected, we had a plethora of merchandise. The sale took place on a Saturday morning, and it was a hit. We were able to make a

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Outstanding Scholar

Sonia Zimmerman: Demonstrating Excellence in Practice, Advocating for the Profession

Kirsten Brandt, MOT

This issue's Outstanding Scholar is Sonia Zimmerman, assistant professor in the Occupational Therapy Program at the University of North Dakota, in Grand Forks. In addition to teaching courses related to psychosocial practice, Zimmerman has served as a research adviser and mentor to students who are completing articles, presentations, and scholarly works. She has served in the AOTA Representative Assembly to stay abreast of the latest information. Further, she received recognition on the AOTA Roster of Fellows, 2005, for excellence in professional education and mental health practice.

Zimmerman became interested in occupational therapy as a high school student and has a long history of professional occupational therapy service in publicly funded, community-based settings in mental health. She believes that occupational therapists are "the most likely professionals to follow the patient back into his or her community and provide the services needed to re-engage in chosen occupations and become an active participant in society." Zimmerman's interest in teaching came as a result of her positive experiences working with fieldwork students.

Zimmerman not only lectures on the importance of lifelong learning but also incorporates it into her own life. She is currently completing her doctoral studies, with a focus on adult education. She is especially interested in teaching strategies that can be used to assist therapists in integrating evidence-based practice into their everyday work.

Zimmerman supports the transformative education movement—in other words, "changing how one teaches and teaching for change." She is in favor of teachers changing their roles in the classroom, allowing students to take stronger roles in and responsibility for their own learning. She would like to see students dedicated to lifelong learning and professionally committed to providing high-quality services to clients.

Of particular interest to PTE members is that Zimmerman, a PTE alumni member, serves as faculty adviser to the Kappa Chapter. Her ability to guide the organization and support its mission of "promoting research and other scholarly activities by its members"

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President—Melissa Oliver
Vice-President—Kate Flowers
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is apparent in her approach to educating future therapists. "At a minimum," she says, "I want future therapists to develop personal habits and routines fostering continued competency: self-directed reading of journals and books, involvement in study groups or journal clubs, participation in research activities, active involvement in professional organizations, etc."

In addition to demonstrating excellence in practice, Zimmerman thinks that advocating for the profession is important: "Unfortunately, not everyone recognizes what seems obvious to us: as a profession, we need to continue to advocate for our services to funding agents, other providers, and consumers." Zimmerman demonstrates dedication to promoting the mission of PTE and the profession of occupational therapy.

PTE's Purposes in Action: A Highlight of Three Chapters

Kelly Fleming, MSOT, OTR/L

PTE's purposes are (1) to contribute to the advancement of the field of occupational therapy through scholarly activities such as research development, continuing education, and information exchange between students and alumni members and (2) to provide a vehicle for students enrolled in accredited occupational therapy programs to exchange information and collaborate regarding scholarly activities. Three PTE chapters have exemplified these purposes perfectly.

Each year the Omicron Chapter, at Boston University's Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, hosts the Lead the Way Symposium, a one-day professional development experience that promotes research and scholarship among occupational therapists in the greater Boston area. Speakers include students from the university's online postprofessional Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program. Each speaker presents an evidence summary on a topic of interest, such as early intervention, sensory integration, hand therapy, adult mental health, or adult physical rehabilitation. PTE members, under the direction of Karen Jacobs, EdD, OTR/L, CPE, FAOTA, are responsible for developing the symposium program and for helping symposium speakers edit and revise their biographical sketches and abstracts.

This year's symposium, scheduled for Monday, May 21, 2007, will include a keynote address titled "Culture and Construction of Habits in Daily Life: Challenges for Occupational Therapy," by Sarah Harkness, PhD, professor of family studies and director of the Study of Culture, Health, and Human Development at the University of Connecticut. Harkness will provide "examples from cross-cultural research with parents and children in several countries and address possibilities for expanding parents' and therapists' available repertoire of ethotheories as they define goals for the child's development and participation in meaningful activities of daily life." To learn more about this event, visit www.otdegree.com/symposium2006/. Currently the website contains highlights from last year's event, but it soon will be updated with the 2007 information.

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good sum of money while having fun.—*Leanna Harrist*

Beta Sigma Chapter

The Beta Sigma Chapter, at Shenandoah University (Winchester, Virginia), had an exciting start to its fall semester. The Virginia Occupational Therapy Association (VOTA) Annual Conference was held at the university's Health Professions Building on September 23–24, 2006. Beta Sigma members played several roles in helping the conference run smoothly, bustling around the hallways of the building and assisting VOTA board members with conference registration, lectures, and expos. We set up all the necessary tables for the conference vendors and organized each classroom, making sure that all the computers were working properly to run the PowerPoint presentations of each presenter. Also, we introduced speakers before their presentations. Twenty-eight speakers presented at this year's conference.

Among the presenters was Dr. Marjorie Scaffa, whose lecture and travel were sponsored by fund-raising efforts of Beta Sigma members. Those efforts included sudsing down Winchester residents' cars for approximately five hours on a beautiful Saturday and conducting a 50/50 raffle during the conference's silent auction and wine and cheese reception. Dr. Scaffa's conference lecture, entitled "The Role of Occupational Therapy During Disasters," was based on an *AJOT* article she coauthored, "The Role of Occupational Therapy

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in Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery,” as part of her involvement with AOTF’s Task Force on Occupation in Societal Crises.

This scholarly activity helped promote continuing education, information exchange between students and professionals, and an awareness of how occupational therapists can incorporate their professional skills into disaster relief of any magnitude.

In addition to attending Dr. Scaffa’s lecture, Beta Sigma members attended the “Everybody Hurts,” “Hemiplegic Shoulder,” and “Passing Your Boards” lectures, the latter by a graduate of the university’s Occupational Therapy Program.

On the Saturday evening of the conference, a silent auction was held in the local Old Town Events Center. All proceeds benefited VOTA and will be used for scholarships and advancement of occupational therapy. Beta Sigma members’ roles in this event were to acquire donations for the auction and to help coordinate it. The auction was enjoyed by many attendees as they listened to “Chimers” and socialized over wine and cheese. Overall, \$2,300 was raised.

The 2006 VOTA Annual Conference was a huge success, not only for practicing therapists but also for current and future occupational therapy students. Beta Sigma members in attendance were Amy Broxterman, Jenny Ehlers, Suzanne Martin, Jamie Mehlretter, Melissa Peters, and Courtney Whitaker.—*Suzanne Martin*

Yesterday to Today: Occupational Therapy and the U.S. Army

Kate Flowers, OTS

At the 2007 AOTA Annual Conference & Exposition, in St. Louis, PTE will sponsor a workshop titled “Yesterday to Today: Occupational Therapy and the U.S. Army.” During these critical times in Iraq and Afghanistan, occupational therapists have played major roles in helping implement the policy that injured soldiers should be helped to think of themselves as having the option to return to active duty. This requires a holistic approach to rehabilitation and the integration of psychosocial principles throughout the practice of occupational therapy.

The workshop will feature moderator Lieutenant Colonel Melissa Wilde Jones, PhD, OTR/L, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and speakers Major Teresa L. Brininger, PhD, OTR/L, CHT, U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine; Captain Kathleen E. Yancosek, MS, OTR/L, CHT, Walter Reed Army Medical Center; and Colonel Kenneth Lee, MD, Milwaukee Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Wisconsin Army National Guard. All the speakers have served on active duty during current conflicts and will bring us their firsthand experiences.

Jones entered the Army in 1977, specifically to do an Army Occupational Therapy Internship. She served on active duty in various clinical and administrative positions and retired after 20 years. Six months ago, because of the war, she volunteered to return to active duty to serve two years at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

As an Army occupational therapist, Brininger has worked in a variety of clinical settings, such as inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, hand therapy, and mental health. She also has worked in nonclinical jobs, as a health care recruiter and an occupational therapy researcher.

Yancosek was commissioned as an Army second lieutenant in 1997. She completed the Army Occupational Therapy Internship program at Walter Reed Medical Center. Her first assignment was to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, in upper-extremity orthopedic therapy. There she became an upper-extremity neuromusculoskeletal screener. This allowed her to work as a physician extender and to do evaluations and diagnose upper-extremity injuries. In 2001 she attended a graduate school program at Eastern Kentucky University fully funded by the Army, where she received a Master of Science in occupational therapy. Since 2003 she has worked in mental health at Walter Reed Medical Center and now is the section chief of amputee care in occupational therapy.

Lee has been a consumer of occupational therapy services as the result of his active-duty assignments. His experience in the Army was as a patient at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He was injured on September 12, 2004, when a suicide car bomber attacked his three-vehicle convoy. After five surgeries he underwent four months of rehabilitation, including occupational therapy.

Occupational therapy is one of four medical specialties in the Army Medical Specialist Corps (the others being physical therapy,

dietetics, and the physician assistant profession). Occupational therapists work in a variety of practice arenas, most notably in areas of adult rehabilitation. They play a critical role in combat in the evaluation and treatment of people who are casualties of combat stress (and in the prevention of post-traumatic stress disorder). Army occupational therapists are assigned to combat control units (mental health), rehabilitation, and hand therapy. They also perform other jobs, such as recruiter, commander, researcher, and educator.

Occupational therapists in the Army can earn special credentialing as physician extenders for evaluation and treatment of injuries and conditions of the upper extremity. Most recently, in the Iraq war, Army occupational therapists have been advancing and setting standards of practice for the treatment of upper-extremity amputees and complex orthopedic trauma.

As in previous wars, and moreso in the current war, in which survivability with greater disability is evident, occupational therapy has collaborated with other services to meet the demand. Wounded warriors come home disfigured, disabled, frustrated, handicapped, and lonely. Army occupational therapists bridge the resulting barriers by understanding that the clients are not only patients but also servicemen and -women.

According to Lee, "Occupational therapy's role in the Army is multifactorial." Most important is the relationship-building role between the occupational therapist and the injured soldier, which promotes personal achievement after a life-altering event. Most soldiers' greatest fear is not being able to do the simple things that they had taken for granted in the past. For many people, self-confidence hits bottom when they realize that they cannot even button a shirt, pull up a pair of pants, or tie a shoelace.

Jones says, "I don't think of how occupational therapy has influenced the Army as much as I think of how the Army has influenced occupational therapy." Some of occupational therapy's roots are in the use of reconstruction aides in World War I. Many of the field's pioneers (e.g., Mary Reilly and Wilma West) were occupational therapists in the Army.

The influence of the Army and of Army occupational therapists on the profession of occupational therapy has been and continues to be profound. During war there often are unprecedented advances in medicine. For example, in World War II, development and widespread use of antibiotics and advances in microsurgery techniques produced significant advances in the treatment of soldiers with severely injured arms and hands. Many rehabilitation strategies for treating these kinds of injuries came from Army occupational therapy practice.

The use of occupational therapists to treat survivors of mass casualties started with Army occupational therapists treating casualties of combat stress.

The importance of understanding the "polytraumas" so frequently experienced during the present conflicts, confirms basic occupational therapy philosophy, which integrates psychosocial, biological, and sociocultural principles.

States Jones, "In my opinion, the profession of occupational therapy can look to the Army to see where important practice trends are being established."

Candidate for National President

Elections for PTE national president are under way. The candidate is Melissa Oliver. Her personal statement follows. Each chapter is entitled to one vote. All ballots are due no later than February 1, 2007. Mail them to Jessica Halterman, P.O. Box 31220, 4720 Montgomery Lane, Fifth Floor, Bethesda, MD 20824-1220.

Melissa Oliver

I have served as national PTE president for the past two years. It has been a great honor to work with the executive committee, chapters, students, faculty advisers, and alumni. I am proud of the hard work that the executive committee has put forth to bring you extraordinary workshops at the AOTA Annual Conference, highlighting scholarly work and cutting-edge research. I have been dedicated to revamping and establishing our new website. I work continuously with the executive committee to meet the needs of our chapters and students. Occupational therapy is ever-changing. Therefore, we need better means of technology and communication to move forward with our profession. I am devoted to pursuing such means.

Before becoming president, I served as national treasurer for two years. I worked closely with the executive committee on balancing the PTE budget and increasing PTE's revenue to meet its needs.

I am an occupational therapist working at the McGuire Veterans Affairs

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Medical Center. I have assisted with program development and educational needs for staff, family, and patients. Earlier, I worked at Tree of Life, where I developed rehabilitation department policies and procedures as well as a budget. Before that, I worked at Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute, where I expanded the role of occupational therapy through program development and discharge planning.

It would be a privilege to continue to serve as national PTE president in order to assist the executive committee and chapters in the evolution of PTE.

PTE Certificate of Distinction

The PTE Certificate of Distinction has been established to recognize chapters for their commitment and dedication to the mission and the vision of PTE. The certificate may be given to one or more chapters for their efforts to promote occupational therapy within the profession or their community. Examples include but are not limited to sponsoring workshops at state or regional conferences, adapting the national PTE-sponsored workshop for a local event, and promoting and sponsoring research symposia. The certificate may be awarded anytime during the year. Chapters that submit their event or activity to the *Scroll & Pen* for Chapter News will be considered for the certificate. The write-up should include the purpose of the event or activity, the way in which it promoted the advancement of occupational therapy, and the outcome.

Congratulations, Graduates!

To celebrate your graduation, Pi Theta Epsilon offers you a one-year membership in the PTE National Alumni chapter for **ONLY \$10.00!**

This is a one-time-only offer. Please join now to receive your membership card and a year's subscription to the *Scroll & Pen*. Members also are invited to attend the PTE Annual Business Meeting and extra activities at the AOTA Annual Conference & Exposition, free of charge. We encourage you to continue to contribute your knowledge to the profession of occupational therapy!

National Alumni Chapter Membership Acceptance Form

Please check one:

I wish to join the PTE National Alumni Chapter as a

- Sustaining member (one-year membership): ~~\$50.00~~ \$10.00*
- Lifetime member (one-time fee): \$250.00*
- I do not wish to join at this time. Please remove my name from the mailing list.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Specialty area of practice: _____

Research interests: _____

Comments/ideas for the PTE Alumni Chapter: _____

Please include me in a PTE Alumni Directory: Yes No

*Make checks payable to PTE and return to PTE National Office, P.O. Box 31220, 4720 Montgomery Lane, Fifth Floor, Bethesda, MD 20824-1220.

—PTE's Purposes in Action, from page 3

Two of Virginia's PTE chapters took advantage of their proximity to each other by collaborating to provide valuable information to occupational therapists and occupational therapy students. The Beta Sigma Chapter, at Shenandoah University (Winchester), and the Phi Chapter, at Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond), cosponsored Marjorie Scaffa, PhD, OTR/L, as a presenter at the Virginia Occupational Therapy Association's annual conference, held September 23–24, 2006. Scaffa served as both the keynote speaker at the state conference and an individual presenter on "The Role of Occupational Therapy During Disasters." Scaffa is familiar to the PTE community, for she initially presented on this topic at AOTA's 2005 conference, in a PTE-sponsored workshop titled "Taking It to the Streets: The Role of Occupational Therapy in Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery."

PTE commends these three chapters for their hard work and dedication to the purposes of the organization. We would like to know what other chapters are doing. Send any information regarding upcoming events to jhalterm@aol.com.