

Fellowships in Leadership Development For Occupational Therapy Educational Program Directors

**Jointly Sponsored by the American Occupational Therapy Foundation
and
the American Occupational Therapy Association**

A Special Invitation from Presidents Ruth Ann Watkins and Penny Moyers Cleveland

AOTF and AOTA are once again jointly supporting a Fellowship Program specifically designed for leadership development. Program directors from both professional and assistant level academic programs are invited to apply. This fellowship program will foster the emergence of strong occupational therapy leaders within the academic community, while at the same time building the profession's capacity to influence and lead. The Fellowship Program in Leader Development is especially designed for occupational therapy program directors who are enthusiastic about advancing their academic careers, who want to more effectively address their challenging administrative and programmatic responsibilities, and who wish to assume increased leadership roles within their professional, academic and civic communities.

AOTF and AOTA will select 16 Leadership Fellows for participation in this unique program and guide them as they prepare for increasing levels of influence within their academic settings, the profession, and the communities in which they live.

Leadership Through Mentoring

The current AOTF/AOTA Leadership Fellows Program is based on Mentoring Circles®, an innovative group mentoring method developed by the Mentoring Company. This process introduces participants to contemporary leadership theory and practice, and engages them in a standardized leadership assessment process. Participants will use *The Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI)* as a reliable tool for identifying personal leadership practices from five general categories: *Challenging the Process*, *Inspiring a Shared Vision*, *Enabling Others to Act*, *Modeling the Way*, and *Encouraging the Heart*.

An important feature of this Leadership Development Fellowship is the opportunity to participate in a series of 16 mentoring sessions. The group mentoring process is grounded in the needs of the participants who will identify specific leadership challenges. The catalyst mentor, Dr. Wendy Coster (see below), will use stories from her personal experience to efficiently transfer best practices that promote leadership. From time-to-time, guest mentors will join the mentoring circle to address specific topics identified by the group.

Program Outcomes and Lasting Contributions

Participants will create a personal leadership development plan based on the results of their leadership inventory, past leadership experiences, current needs, and experiences that most effectively support their learning. The 16 Mentoring Circles will serve as catalysts through which the participants will share their authentic and personal experiences and refine their unique leadership practices through this mentoring process. Two opportunities for face-to-face sessions, plus guided personal study and group interaction as the program evolves, create rich opportunities for personal and professional growth. Upon completion, Leadership Fellows have transformed their identities and skills as competent professional with respect and influence. More importantly, they have developed lasting friendships and collegial networks that will serve them well long after the completion of this formal experience.

This Leadership Fellows Program addresses a critical need in the profession by:

- Reinforcing best leadership practices and applying them to academic leadership;
- Enhancing open communication that strengthens internal and external program relationships;
- Infusing the profession's academic community with confident, influential leaders;
- Serving as a platform for developing the next generation of academic leaders; and
- Creating cross-functional collaboration and building networks of academic leaders.

Comments from Program Directors' who received fellowships for the 2008 Leadership Fellows Program:

"The experiences have given me a sense of self, and potential as a leader. Rather than comparing my 'limited' skill to past leadership experiences of others, the process has enabled me to contextualize my strengths and talents and envision unknown possibilities.

"Focusing on my strengths has helped me see the ways that I can impact my department and OT students. I know that I have good ideas about roles and tasks for my program. I am also "good at" developing ways to show progress. The topic of authentic leadership helped tremendously to develop strategies to work on those areas in which I need growth— that of storytelling and vision."

"The support and encouragement has been invaluable, especially since I had very little in my own position. The resources that were shared over the last 9 months (articles, books, exercise, assignments, etc.) have greatly added to my knowledge and skill base."

Launching the Leadership Fellowship Program

AOTF and AOTA will launch the program with a face-to-face meeting to be held on January 21 through 23, 2010 in Denver, Colorado. Fellowships will cover the program expenses for the initial meeting, 16 mentoring sessions to be held by teleconference between January and August 2010, and a closing meeting in September. Selected Leadership Fellows are responsible for the cost of their travel and hotel expenses (estimated at \$2,000) to attend both face-to-face meetings in Denver.

Nomination Process and Selection Criteria

Interested applicant should submit a **Letter of Nomination** describing prior leadership experience and potential for future leadership roles. The letter should describe specifically what you hope to accomplish in your future academic career relative to leadership. In addition, please discuss how/why you think your selection as a leadership fellow will help you grow in your current role, as well as achieve your goals. Please also discuss how these goals support the mission of your college or university. Finally, provide us with information on how you currently receive mentoring and/or information on how you are currently involved in being a mentor. The review panel invites applicants to include one letter of support from a member of your institution's administration. Please also include a curriculum vita and email address. *Applicants must currently occupy a position involving program leadership responsibilities in an ACOTE accredited program.* To qualify for selection, fellowship applicants must be members of AOTA.

Nomination Deadline December 1, 2009

Send nominations to LMPApplication@aota.org or to The American Occupational Therapy Foundation, 4720 Montgomery Lane, PO Box 31220, Bethesda, MD 20824 -1220 - Attn: Mindy A. Hecker

New leadership fellows will be announced on, or before, December 15, 2009.

About the Catalyst Mentor, Wendy Coster, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Dr. Wendy Coster comes to this project with many years of academic leadership and mentoring experience. She has been a faculty member at Boston University College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences: Sargent College since 1986 and has served as Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy since 1997. For the past year and a half she has also been serving as Interim Chair of the Department of Physical and Athletic Training. Her experience has given her a deep appreciation of the many challenges faced by program directors trying to sustain effective educational programs while also working toward their personal leadership and scholarship goals and responding to institutional demands. When not doing administrative work, Dr. Coster continues her research with several projects to develop improved measures of activity, participation, and environment for children and youth with disabilities. Among her many honors and awards are the 2007 Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lectureship Award, AOTF A. Jean Ayres Research Award, membership in the AOTF Academy of Research and the Sargent College Award of Merit. Dr. Coster has authored and co-authored numerous articles and grant proposals and is the consummate leader, teacher, mentor, and friend to many in the profession. She served as catalyst mentor for the first Leadership Circle and is looking forward to participating in the Fellowship program again.