Dear Colleagues,

Greetings from the AOTF Institute for the Study of Occupation and Health, the programmatic arm of the American Occupational Therapy Foundation, where we continue 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. The AOTF Institute contributes to this mission through its own research, education, and leadership programs, through strategic cooperation with the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), and through substantial connections to like-minded organizations within and beyond the fields of occupational therapy and occupational science.

This issue of Research Resources offers a spotlight on the AOTF Institute's Dissertation Research Grant program and two grant recipients who recently completed their dissertations and have been awarded their doctorates. Our earlier spotlights on this program appeared in the September 2008 and October 2008 issues of Research Resources. Profiles of all who have benefited from this program and have received their doctorates are now available on the AOTF web site.

The application deadline for the next funding cycle of the Dissertation Research Grant program - November 1 -- is fast approaching, so please share this newsletter with interested colleagues.

When you visit our site to learn more about the beneficiaries of the AOTF web site, I hope that you will consider making a donation to AOTF in support of this initiative and our other programs for occupational therapy research, education, and leadership. You can make your contribution directly and securely through our online donation gateway.

Thank you again for subscribing to Research Resources and for encouraging your colleagues to connect to AOTF through this monthly publication, its associated news alerts, and through our web site and our blog. Please know that we appreciate your support now and always.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey S. Reznick, PhD
Director, AOTF Institute for the Study of Occupation and Health

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AOTF Institute Spotlight: Dissertation Research Grant Program

This month, AOTF is pleased to spotlight Drs. Shirley Wells, and Pai-chuan Huang, who recently completed their doctorates with support from the AOTF Institute's Dissertation Research Grant Program.

In 2008, the AOTF Institute awarded a Dissertation Research Grant to Pai-Chuan Huang of Boston University to support his dissertation entitled "Social Behavior, Gender, and Quality of Life in Parkinson's
This study included a database of 104 participants with Parkinson's disease and found that both men and women with Parkinson's disease who showed less facial expressiveness were less likely to show rapport during an interview. Furthermore, results showed gender differences such as women reported more problems in stigmatization, but men reported more problems in activities of daily life. These results demonstrate the need to broaden our knowledge on how compromised social skills might be associated with people's quality of life, and how gender may affect how social skills relate to quality of life.

The AOTF Dissertation Research Grant enabled Huang to acquire books for guiding data analysis, provide compensation to raters who viewed participants' social behavior during videotaped interviews, hire a research assistant to assist him with his work, and attain the supplies required throughout the study. This support allowed Huang to test a theoretical model linking facial expressiveness and quality of life in people with Parkinson's disease while also examining the moderating role of gender. Huang hopes his research will help occupational therapists tailor interventions to address the role of social behavior in quality of life. Pai-Chuan Huang, ScD, OTR is now a member of Health Quality of Life Lab at Tufts University. He plans to continue exploring themes related to social behavior, gender, and quality of life in the older population.


In 2007, the AOTF Institute awarded a Dissertation Research Grant to Shirley A. Wells of the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Houston, School of Public Health, to support the completion of dissertation entitled, "Occupational Performance of Mexican Americans with End Stage Renal Disease Living on Dialysis in the Lower Rio Grande Valley." This qualitative study found that Mexican Americans with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) and their family members engage in activities that contribute positively to their perception of quality of life as well as mourn the loss of the activities that are restricted by dialysis. Over time the dialysis treatment sessions are viewed as just another task of their everyday life. The findings support the concept of occupational deprivation by demonstrating that the combination of the ESRD condition and dialysis process is a barrier to occupational performance. The conclusion suggests a family-centered approach with a focus on the lifestyle domains of reciprocal interpersonal relatedness, intrinsic gratification and societal contribution would enhance the well-being, improve survival, and increase occupational opportunities for Mexican Americans and their family members.

The AOTF Dissertation Research Grant was instrumental in the development and production of a documentary video of three individuals living with dialysis. It provided the incentives for 15 Mexican Americans with ESRD, 15 family members, and six healthcare providers to participant in in-depth interviews and the numerous printing requirements.

Shirley A. Wells, DrPH, OTR, FAOTA, is now chair and associate professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Texas-Pan American. She hopes to secure funds to translate the documentary video into Spanish as well as pilot an intervention program. She plans to continue her research on decreasing occupational deprivation and improving quality of life for individuals with ESRD living on dialysis and their families.

Dr. Wells’ dissertation can be found in the Wilma L. West Library: Wells, S.A. (2009). *Occupational Performance of Mexican Americans with End-Stage-Renal-Disease Living on Dialysis in the Rio Grande Valley*, Houston, TX: University of Texas Health Science at Houston School of Public Health.
**NIH's Student Loan Repayment Program (LRP): New Application Cycle Opens September 1**

The LRP's two-year award repays up to $35,000 per year of educational loan debt for individuals who commit to conducting two years of qualified biomedical or behavioral research at a nonprofit or government institution. The five extramural LRPs are Clinical Research, Pediatric Research, Health Disparities Research, Contraception and Infertility Research, and Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds. The 2010 application cycle opens September 1 and closes December 1.

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Awards Community Health Leaders**

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation established the Community Health Leaders program to recognize individuals who overcome daunting obstacles to improve health and health care in their communities, especially to underserved populations in communities across the United States. The program aims to elevate the work of these unsung heroes through enhanced recognition, technical assistance, and new leadership opportunities. Ten people will be selected to receive awards of $125,000 (a personal award of $20,000 and $105,000 to support the work for which the leader is recognized). Brief nominations are due October 15, 2009.

**Blue Cross and Blue Shield Funds Louisiana Nonprofits**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Corporate Charitable Giving Program provides support to nonprofit organizations in Louisiana that focus on the health, education, and wellness needs of their communities. Grants are provided in the following two specific areas: The Health category focuses on improving public health, reducing barriers to care for the uninsured, and conducting research to prevent or cure disease. The Education category focuses on increasing health literacy, the training of medical professionals, and the education of youth (pre-K-16, including after-school programs). Requests are reviewed quarterly. The last application deadline for 2009 is November 1.

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**The 2009 National Environmental Public Health Conference (Atlanta, Georgia, October 26-28, 2009)**

This conference, organized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) in conjunction with the Environmental Health Association, aims to improve the nation's traditional and nontraditional environmental health capacity. It also aims to extend the reach of innovative environmental public health practices by highlighting model and exemplary efforts addressing current and emerging environmental health challenges and to provide a forum for NCEH, ATSDR, and its many partners to share research, scientific, and program information about environmental public health priorities. Early registration extended to October 9.

**Implementing Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) at Every Phase of a Disaster**

This new e-learning program is designed to equip disaster and crisis volunteers and personnel with the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to diverse communities during all phases of disaster. Throughout the curriculum, a broad range of skills are introduced, such as: working with an interpreter, locating translated materials, negotiating cultural differences, and implementing the CLAS Standards into organizational policy.

**New NIH Tool Makes Funding Data, Research Results and Products Searchable**

Comprehensive funding information for NIH grants and contracts is now available on the NIH Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tool (RePORT) Expenditures and Results, or RePORTER. RePORTER combines NIH project databases and funding records, PubMed abstracts, full-text articles from PubMed Central, and information from the US Patent and Trademark Office with a robust search engine, allowing users to locate descriptions and funding details on NIH-funded projects along with research results that cite the NIH support.

**Rehabilitation Services Review**

New approaches to rehabilitation are being trialed throughout the world. This document, (produced by the University of Birmingham) identifies more than 500 studies of good practice in community rehabilitation services, staff, and systems that have the potential to transform the National Health Service in the United Kingdom and elsewhere and is available on free online.

**Reducing MSD hazards in the workplace: A guide to successful participatory ergonomics programs**
In participatory ergonomics (PE) programs, workers, supervisors and other workplace parties jointly identify and address work-related hazards. PE can help reduce low-back injuries and other musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), resulting in fewer workers’ compensation claims and lost days from work. This booklet, which can be accessed free online, is based on a systematic review by Institute for Work and Health researchers and outlines six key steps that have been shown to contribute to the success of a PE program. Institute for Work & Health, (2009) Reducing MSD Hazards in the Workplace: A Guide to Successful Participatory Ergonomics Programs. Toronto: Institute for Work & Health.

British Medical Journal Now Available Online
Every article published in The British Medical Journal since the journal’s first issue in October 1840 is now available online. This project, to create a free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature, was masterminded by the US National Center for Biotechnology Information under the aegis of the US National Library of Medicine (NLM).

PubMed Central repository will open new pathway to Canadian health research
The National Research Council’s Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (NRC CISTI), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and the US National Library of Medicine (NLM) have announced a three-way partnership to establish PubMed Central Canada (PMC Canada). PMC Canada will be a national digital repository of peer-reviewed health and life sciences literature, including research resulting from CIHR funding. This searchable web-based repository will be permanent, stable and freely accessible. The initial release of PMC Canada, to be available in fall 2009, will include a basic bilingual interface, a manuscript submission system for CIHR researchers, and a bilingual help desk.

Recommended Readings and Selected Presentations available from NIH Summer Institute on Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Targeting the Medically Underserved
In August 2009, the National Institutes of Health sponsored a summer institute on CBPR. Recommended readings and many of the institute presentations are now available online. The institute site also includes links to a number of CBPR oriented NIH funding announcements, pasted below:

Community Participation Research Targeting the Medically Underserved

Behavioral and Social Science Research on Understanding and Reducing Health Disparities

Understanding and Promoting Health Literacy

Publication Announcements

**Ensuring the Integrity, Accessibility, and Stewardship of Research Data in the Digital Age**
This book examines the consequences of the changes affecting research data with respect to three issues - integrity, accessibility, and stewardship - and finds a need for a new approach to the design and the management of research projects. The report recommends that all researchers receive appropriate training in the management of research data, and calls on researchers to make all research data, methods, and other information underlying results publicly accessible in a timely manner. This report can be read online for free. Committee on Ensuring the Utility and Integrity of Research Data in a Digital Age (2009) *Ensuring the Integrity, Accessibility, and Stewardship of Research Data in the Digital Age*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.

**Guide to Writing Science Proposal Updated**

**New Report on Comparative Effectiveness Research**
*Initial National Priorities for Comparative Effectiveness Research* (CER) is designed to assist patients and healthcare providers in making more informed decisions on diagnosis and treatment options. In this 2009 report, the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Comparative Effectiveness Research Prioritization establishes a working definition of CER, develops a priority list of research topics, and identifies the necessary requirements to support a robust and sustainable CER enterprise. This report can be read free online. Committee on Comparative Effectiveness Research Prioritization (2009) *Initial National Priorities for Comparative Effectiveness Research*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

**AOTF Institute Image of the Month**
From the [Archives of the AOTA](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-239.html), housed in the AOTF Wilma L. West Library.
The occupational therapy staff of Brooke Army Hospital, ca. 1945, who were among the nearly 900 therapists serving in uniform by the end of World War II.

The AOTF Institute makes this image, as well as the Guide to the Archives of the AOTA, available publicly as part of its mission to honor the past and be the best possible steward of the unique body of knowledge that is occupational therapy. To this end, the AOTF Institute warmly welcomes individuals from within and beyond occupational therapy to explore the guide and use the archives for purposes of research, education, and leadership.

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For more information about the American Occupational Therapy Foundation and its Institute for the Study of Occupation and Health see our web site: aotf.org.