



Summer 2019

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy Summer! I hope everyone is finding time to practice some much needed leisure skills this summer. Being a healthcare practitioner can be stressful and draining at times. As OTs, we, of all people, know how important coping skills and leisure are for our overall health and well-being. Your Board also recognizes the value in collaboration and relaxation, and we are making a more concerted effort to provide more opportunities for networking and social engagement. Be sure to check Instagram and Facebook often for our Pop Up Socials!



As we look towards fall, it's important that we all stay connected as we navigate some new payment methods for certain settings. For skilled nursing providers, PDPM is fast approaching causing many providers to rethink delivery models. Home health providers are preparing for PDGM Jan. 1, 2020. These changes are a reminder of the need for us to consistently engage in occupation- and evidence-based practice. We also have a great opportunity to practice at the top of our license! Let's challenge each other to employ functional treatments in all we do. If you know of a colleague in Mississippi that exemplifies best practice, let us know so we can celebrate these leaders in our industry. We are looking to spotlight some practitioners and we need your help to identify these OT superstars.

The strength of OTs and OT assistants in Mississippi resides in our membership. I'm happy to report that we have a higher than average statewide membership percentage, but there is so much room to grow! When it's time to renew, take advantage of our multi year renewal options and save some money. Please encourage your colleagues to remain a faithful supporter of our professional organization. As OT professionals, we are ALL members of MSOTA whether you realize it or not...and it is our obligation to protect our profession through our membership organization. We have great plans for you and for MSOTA. Stay tuned for more great things to come.



MSOTA at Legislative Day

Warmest wishes,
Kelly Crawford, MSOTA President

2019 MSOTA Annual Conference!

The 2019 MSOTA Annual Conference was a big hit! We had over 125 attendees and 11 exhibitors/sponsors. Many thanks to all of the attendees as well as these sponsors for making this event such a success! As a non-profit organization, our funds are generated from membership dues and annual events such as our conference.



We feel that it is a “win, win” when the Association and our members benefit from this event. This is evident as our conference continues to evolve with your input. with your input. This year, we added a student conclave during the morning session that was very well received. The conference also included time for attendees to spend with the exhibitors, a Powerpoint display to promote our sponsors as well as recap the Association’s past events, and

more time during sessions for round-table discussions and networking.

Plans are in the works for next year’s conference. We are looking at a day of various workshops, another student conclave, more hands-on sessions, and a greater expanse of topics to keep us all in the know of our ever-changing environment.



Make sure you **SAVE THE DATE: FEBRUARY 29, 2020**, (yes, that is correct as next year is a Leap Year) at the Clyde Muse Center on the Hinds Community College Campus in Pearl, MS. We look forward to seeing you there!



A BIG Thank you to our sponsors and exhibitors!

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MSOTA 2019 OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Each year, MSOTA presents an Outstanding Leadership Award to a graduating student from each Occupational Therapy program in the state. This student is nominated by the faculty based on the individual's demonstration of leadership skills in the classroom, on the school campus, and in the community. This award is designed to recognize those outstanding student leaders who, we hope, will go on to be leaders in MSOTA, AOTA, and the profession. Each recipient receives a certificate of recognition, a one-year free membership to MSOTA, and a scholarship check in the amount of \$100.00.

The 2018 recipients of the MSOTA Leadership Award are as follows:

Rebekah Watson Adams of Philadelphia, MS
UMMC/MOT Program

Cheryl Ford of Tupelo, MS
ICC/OTA Program

Hannah Sykes of Mendenhall, MS
PRCC/OTA Program

Congratulations and much luck with your future careers!
We look forward to seeing and hearing from you in the future.



Dr. Dee Dee Lomenick, ICC graduate
Cheryl Ford, Mrs Shannon Frazier



Rebekah Watson & Dr. Kelly Crawford

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!!!



Legislative Day 2019!!

MSOTA Legislative Day was held on February 6th at the State Capitol. We were pleased to have students from Holmes Community College as well as the University of Mississippi Medical Center join us in advocating for our profession! We had an excellent representation of folks and many opportunities to meet and talk with our representatives about occupational

therapy, who we are, and what we do.



Each year at this event, we have more and more legislators seeking us out and asking us questions about our profession. It's a very positive experience to have the representation and show our numbers and knowledge. This is a great opportunity for you to get plugged in as a member. ! If you want to join us next year, or if you want to help with planning one of our most successful advocacy initiatives, please shoot me an email ghux25@gmail.com or send me a DM on Facebook.

Glenda Hux
Legislative Chair

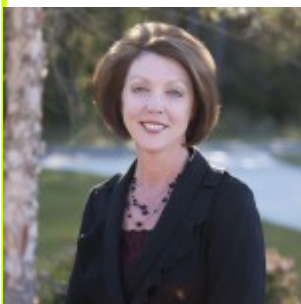
SAVE THE DATE FOR NEXT YEAR'S LEGISLATIVE DAY

MS STATE CAPITOL JANUARY 29, 2020 FROM 7:30 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.



News from the MSOTA Reimbursement Chair

Amanda Jordan, OTR/L



By now, you should have heard the term “Volume to Value” which is the current direction that healthcare is moving. Like always, change is inevitable and, as practitioners, we must keep up! I have summarized a few of the major, upcoming shifts in payment below with the most recent articles from AOTA and Gawenda Seminars. You can visit these websites for more details and, as always, maintain your

membership with MSOTA for all the current news!

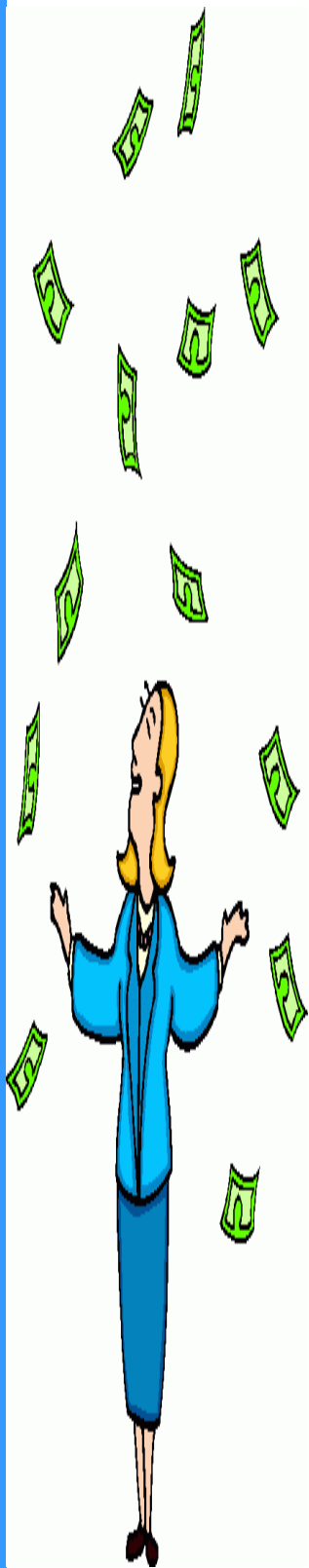
CMS 2019 PROPOSED RULE FOR THERAPY SERVICES (AOTA)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued its Fiscal Year 2020 proposed rules, including its proposal for the Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Prospective Payment System (PPS). CMS is moving forward with implementing the [Patient-Driven Payment Model](#) (PDPM) and proposing a new definition of group therapy, as well as a sub-regulatory process for updating ICD-10 code mapping and lists, clarifications to patient assessment language, and provisions regarding the SNF Quality Reporting Program (QRP) and the SNF Value-Based Purchasing Program (VBP). CMS is projecting that aggregate payments to SNFs will increase by \$887 million, or 2.5%, for FY 2020 compared with FY 2019.

Group Therapy: CMS currently defines “group therapy” in SNF PPS as therapy provided simultaneously to 4 patients (regardless of payer source) who are performing the same or similar activities and are supervised by a therapist (or assistant) who is not supervising any other individuals.

To allow more clinical flexibility, CMS is proposing to adopt a **new definition** of group therapy in the SNF Part A setting as “a qualified rehabilitation therapist or therapy assistant treating 2 to 6 patients at the same time who are performing the same or similar activities.” The new group therapy definition is consistent with the IRF PPS group therapy definition and would be implemented with PDPM.

In the proposed rule, CMS recognized that therapists have the clinical judgment to determine whether groups of different sizes would clinically benefit their patients, which they must demonstrate with adequate documentation in each patient’s plan of care to justify the use of group therapy to meet the patient’s needs and assist the patient in reaching the documented goals. CMS also stated its continued belief that individual therapy is the preferred mode of therapy and offers the most tailored service for patients. As set forth in the FY 2019 final rule, there is a combined 25% limit on group and concurrent therapy (per discipline). This means that at least 75% of a patient’s therapy must be individual therapy. Therapists must use their clinical judgment to determine the mode and amount of therapy that an individual patient needs to reach their goals.



Continued News from the MSOTA Reimbursement Chair Amanda Jordan, OTR/L

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ICD-10 Codes: In order to ensure that the ICD-10 mappings and lists under PDPM are up-to-date, CMS is proposing a sub-regulatory process for nonsubstantive changes to the ICD-10 codes. Any nonsubstantive changes to the ICD-10 codes included on the code mappings and lists under PDPM, as well as SNF GROUPER software and other products related to patient classification and billing, would be revised by posting updated code mappings and lists on the CMS PDPM website. CMS' intent is to keep the same conditions in the PDPM clinical categories and comorbidities lists, but ensure that the codes used to identify those conditions are synchronized with the most current ICD-10 medical code data set.

Patient Assessments: To reflect the elimination of all scheduled assessments after the initial 5-day assessment starting October 1, 2019, CMS is proposing revisions to clarify regulatory language for patient assessments under PDPM. The new regulatory language would state that the assessment schedule must include an initial patient assessment no later than the 8th day of post-hospital SNF care.

2020 PATIENT-DRIVEN GROUPINGS MODEL WILL CHANGE HH PPS PAYMENTS (AOTA)

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently published its final rule for the CY 2019 Home Health (HH) Prospective Payment System (PPS). The rule includes a revised case-mix methodology called the Patient-Driven Groupings Model (PDGM), set to take effect on January 1, 2020.

The PDGM is a revision of the previously proposed Home Health Groupings Model that CMS did not adopt in 2017. The PDGM is a significant change that relies on patient characteristics and removes therapy visits as a determinant of HHA payment.

For 30-day periods of care that start on or after January 1, 2020, a patient must be categorized into one of 432 case-mix groups for payment adjustment using the following subgroups:

- Admission source: community or institutional
- Timing of the 30-day period: early or late
- Clinical grouping: one of 12 clinical groups that capture the most common primary reasons for home health care
- Functional impairment level: low, medium, or high
- Comorbidity adjustment: none, low, or high based on secondary diagnoses

Continued: News from the MSOTA Reimbursement Chair Amanda Jordan, OTR/L

CMS RELEASES 2020 MEDICARE ADVANTAGE FINAL RULE (Gawenda)

On April 5, 2019, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the final rule for Medicare Advantage (MA) program (Part C) regulations and Prescription Drug Benefit program (Part D) regulations for calendar year 2020. In this final rule, CMS is implementing several sections of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. One of the sections CMS is implementing is Section 50323 that will allow MA plans to offer “additional telehealth benefits” as part of the government-funded “basic benefits”.

Unfortunately, it does not appear that the “additional telehealth benefits” will include PTs, OTs or SLPs. On page 15695 of the [final rule](#), CMS states “Section 1852(m)(2)(A)(i)(2) uses the term “physician” as defined in section 1861(r) of the Act and the term “practitioner” described in section 1842(b)(18)(C) of the Act. We have codified these statutory requirements in our final definition of “additional telehealth benefits” at § 422.135(a)(2), described previously. Both the statute and this final rule limit MA additional telehealth benefits to services furnished by physicians and practitioners as so defined.”

MEDICARE PART B PAYMENT RULE FINAL POLICIES (AOTA)

On November 1, 2018, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule and Quality Payment Program final rule display copy, which will govern Medicare Part B reimbursement rules beginning January 1, 2019. Although there were few surprises, a payment modifier was established in preparation for implementing a payment differential for occupational therapy assistant (OTA) services, beginning in 2022 as required in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA18). Listed below is an analysis of the OTA payment differential and other policies directly impacting therapy services under Part B. **OTA/PTA Payment Differential:** BBA18 requires services furnished “in whole or in part” by a therapy assistant to be paid at 85% of the applicable Part B payment amount for the service, effective January 1, 2022. For this reason, CMS has established two additional therapy modifiers for use as a payment modifier on the claim line—one for occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) and another for physical therapist assistants (PTAs). The new therapy payment modifiers for services furnished by OTAs and PTAs are required on claims beginning January 1, 2020. However, payment reductions will not be effective until 2022 under BBA18. **CO Modifier:** outpatient occupational therapy service furnished in whole or in part by an OTA. **CQ Modifier:** outpatient physical therapy service furnished in whole or in part by a PTA.

In the final rule, CMS creates a “de minimis” (minimal) standard to define a service furnished in whole or in part by a PTA or OTA, which must be reduced by 15% of the fee schedule. The “de minimis” standard CMS finalized means that the reduction to 85% of the fee schedule rate must be done only “when more than 10 percent of the service is furnished by the PTA or OTA.” This 10% standard is an improvement over the proposed rule that suggested “any minute” of a therapeutic service would constitute “in whole or in part.” AOTA and others had argued in comments that the “any minute” standard was difficult and unreasonable; the 10% threshold allows for more assistant care delivery, but still may present problems. This policy applies across all services, including evaluations, re-evaluations, treatment interventions, and group therapy; however, CMS acknowledged that future clarification may be needed in the CY 2020 Physician Fee Schedule rulemaking to appropriately consider a variety of clinical examples and scenarios.

Pediatric Practice Group News



Glenda Hux,OT

Our longstanding Pediatric Task Force was established as MSOTA's first practice group! YES! Our Pediatric Practice Group Steering Committee/Panel of Experts include: Stacey Yates Smith, Lorraine Street, Megan Ladner, Peter Giroux, Mendez Vaugh, Amanda Burke Fischer, Kelly Sterling Gregory, and myself (Glenda Hux) If you want to become more involved with the planning of our activities and be part of our steering committee please shoot me an email ghux25@gmail.com or send me a DM on Facebook.

I'm excited about planning a series of monthly "Where's the Evidence?" videos where we can share our expertise and add to our cumulative knowledge base. We are trouble-shooting logistics but progress is being made. If you're interested in recording a 15-minute video on a topic that you're knowledgeable and passionate about, please email me. You will need to have two highly credible (evidenced-based sources) supporting the treatment technique. Our Peds Summit this year will be part of our Annual Spring Conference. Do you have any ideas for topics?

Glenda Hux,OT

Pediatric Practice Group
Founder



**Please join
our MSOTA
Pediatric
Practice
Group Face-
book Page.**

**It is a closed
group and we
are looking
for MSOTA
members to
add.**



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(661)713-0513
val.brown@bioness.com

Did You Know?

Based on 2018 statistics, there are 1,734 licensed and active OT/OTA's in the state of Mississippi. Currently, there are 236 OT/OTA MSOTA members and 108 OT/OTA student members. Over the past couple of years, our numbers have represented about 13% of those OT/OTA's licensed in Mississippi.

Although that may not sound like a lot, the numbers that were presented at AOTA conference by other Associations across the United States were much lower (averaging 9%). This definitely puts the spotlight on Mississippi as a growing and active Association!

Of course, we want to continue this upward trend as we actively seek ways to increase our numbers as well as our representation throughout the state. Recent efforts have included:

- ◇ Discounted memberships for new graduates
- ◇ Multi-year memberships at discounted rates
- ◇ No increase in membership rates in over 5 years
- ◇ Interactive website
- ◇ Increased networking on our website, at conferences, and email blasts

In an effort to increase the Association's knowledge about our members and to better represent our membership, we are updating our membership application to reflect years of practice as well as practice areas. This information will help us better disseminate information to you as well as to target specific audiences with appropriate topics and material to better serve your needs. Any member can easily update their profile with this information by visiting our website at www.mississippiota.org. Help us to better serve you by updating your information.

Membership/Special Categories

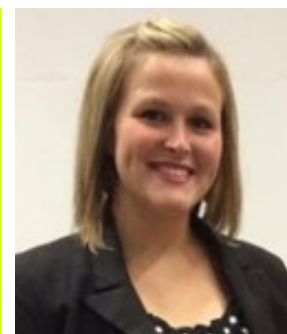
MSOTA offers special categories of membership in which members can choose to support a new, student member or donate additional funds to advocate for the Association.

These categories include:

Magnolia (\$50.00 donation),

Cotton (\$25.00 donation)

Student Sponsor (\$30.00 to an OT/OTA school of your choice).



Heather Calnan,
Membership Chair

2019

SPECIAL MSOTA MEMBERSHIPS

MAGNOLIA

LISA POE

COTTON

AMANDA JORDAN

STUDENT SPONSORS

KAYLA ABRAHAM

CHERI NIPP

ROBIN PARISH

CHRIS THISTLE

MSOTA THANKS
THESE MEMBERS FOR
THE EXTRA
INVESTMENT IN OUR
ASSOCIATION!

The MSOTA Spotlight is on...

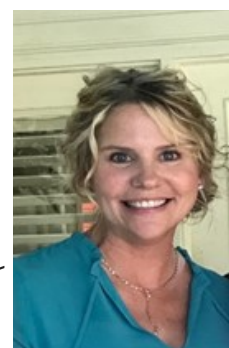
NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Erica Reeves, OTR/L, MS, CHT - Erica is the current Secretary/Treasurer for MSOTA and was recently elected to the **Vice President** position. Erica will serve MSOTA in these dual roles until her Secretary/Treasurer term is expired in January.



Erica is a native of South Africa who relocated to the United States in 1996. She graduated from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in 2011 and has been employed at St. Dominic - Jackson Memorial Hospital since June of 2011. She received her certification in hand therapy in November of 2016. She is a long-standing member of MSOTA as well as AOTA. Erica resides in Jackson, MS with her husband, Conner, and their one-year old daughter, Margot.

Connie Ferguson, OTR/L - Connie is a native of Quitman, MS. As an undergraduate, she attended Mississippi State University. She was accepted into the 1992 OT class at University of Mississippi Medical Center. Upon graduation, she was employed at Methodist Rehab Center, serving as staff OT in both inpatient and home health settings. Since departing MRC, Connie has been employed at St. Dominic - Jackson Memorial Hospital, working in acute care. At St. Dominic's, Connie serves as the Clinical Coordinator for Occupational Therapy and as Coordinator for Clinical Education. For the past 5 years, Connie has been part of a panel of clinical staff assisting with interviews for prospective OT students. She has been an active member of both AOTA and MSOTA and is excited for the opportunity to serve as **MSOTA Secretary/Treasurer Elect** and bring some new and exciting ideas to the Board!



"ONE IS NOT
BORN INTO THE
WORLD TO DO
EVERYTHING
BUT TO DO
SOMETHING."

-HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Kenley Smith, MOT/L – Kenley recently joined the MSOTA Board as our Central District Co-Chair. She will be working closely with Jennifer Donahue to represent members from one of our larger Districts in the state. Kenley graduated from Mississippi State University in 2009 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Kinesiology. She then graduated from UMMC with her Master's of Occupational Therapy in 2012. Kenley has been practicing in pediatrics since her graduation in various settings, including private schools, acute care, inpatient rehab, and outpatient clinics. She currently works at Beyond Therapy for Kids where she enjoys working with children of all ages. Kenley lives in Brandon with her husband, Tyler, and their twin girls, Allie and Callum.



Welcome to
our new
board
members,
thank you
for serving!

Cade Montague, MOT/L – Cade has been employed at Holmes Community College since January 2018 and is currently the academic fieldwork coordinator. He is the HCC MSOTA board liaison. Cade was raised in McAdams, MS by his parents Frank and Teresa Montague along with his three sisters, Julie, MacKenzie, and Casey. He attended Kosciusko High School in from 1998-2002 where he played the saxophone and keyboard.

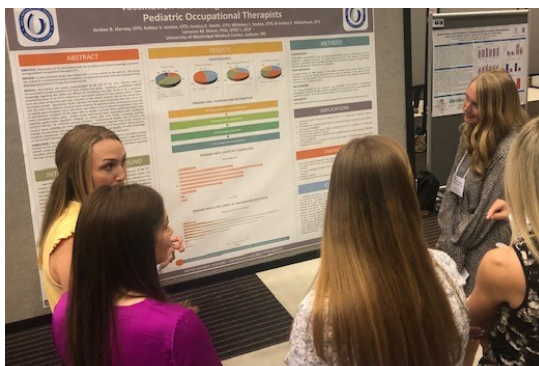


He began his college education at Holmes Community College in Goodman, MS where he studied vocal performance and music. Upon graduation from HCC, Cade then transferred to Mississippi College in Clinton, MS where he studied Kinesiology and Exercise Science. In 2008, he was accepted to the University of Mississippi Medical Center's Occupational Therapy program, and completed his Master's degree in occupational therapy in 2011. Cade has worked in a variety of settings and cities including Orlando and New Orleans; he has experience in the home health, outpatient, acute, inpatient, pediatric, and skilled nursing settings.

MSOTA DISTRICT NEWS

CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWS

The Central District hosted its annual, spring workshop and poster session on May 2, 2019, at the University of Mississippi Medical Center/School of Health Related Professions. This was the second year for MSOTA to join forces with MPTA for the poster session portion of the evening. MSOTA was represented by 29 attendees who were able to receive 1.5 CEU's for the poster session and another 1.5 CEU's for the workshop which was presented by the UMMC/OT staff. This event is a great opportunity for an after work, weeknight get together of networking, socializing, and learning more about our profession and our new colleagues. Feedback has been very positive about this event and we hope to continue it in the future. Feel free to reach out to Kenley or Jennifer with ideas or suggestions about more Central District events.



LET'S MEET UP!

mississippiota
Cultivation Food Hall



We hear you fellow members! Every year a large majority of you ask for more networking and social events during the annual conference. In our fast-paced world and ever changing work landscape, it is vital to keep in touch with our peers and get to know each other outside of work settings. As a profession that also covers many different settings and populations, it's in our best interest to expose ourselves to other areas of the OT profession and support one another as best we can.

A recent gathering in Jackson served as a great example of the fun to be had with OTs and OTAs, as well as our local students!

Be on the look out for social gathering/happy hour style events in your district! If you're noticing little to no activity in your particular district, get in touch with your district chair and take the reins on organizing a get together. Mark your calendars and we look forward to seeing you soon!



UPCOMING SOCIALS

CAET Ridgeland
Tues. July 9th
5:00 pm

Cultivation Food
Hall, Jackson
August TBA

MSOTA DISTRICT NEWS

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWS

This past year, the South Central District has offered 4 CEU modules for 8 hours on various sensory topics with great response and turnout. We hope to continue to expand topics and members in the upcoming months. If you are interested in helping or speaking for an hour- let South Central District Chair, Danielle Whittington OTR/L, CLVT know at jdwhitt4150@bellsouth.net or call 601-916-0450. Watch our MSOTA Facebook page for upcoming info!



COASTAL DISTRICT NEWS

We had a December 1, 2018, meeting with 12 people present at the Encompass Health (formerly Health South Rehabilitation Center) Inpatient Center housed inside of Memorial Hospital in Gulfport, MS. We discussed "Home Health Assistive Technology Options" hosted by the Coastal District and presented by Julie LeBlanc, MS, LOTR, SCLV. We are trying to plan a July meeting with a pediatric speaker and then planning to have a fabulous Fall Mini Conference either in September or October. I do not have any photos, but, I will be more diligent about getting those for the future events.

Julie LeBlanc

Coastal District Chair



SCHOOL NEWS

Holmes Community College

Greetings from the OTA program at Holmes Community College. We are excited to announce that we graduated 14 OTA students on May 10, 2019. A few have already found jobs, either full time or PRN, while others are exploring employment and licensure in other states; regardless, they are all preparing for national boards. From noon until 2PM during the month of June, the first year OTA students are leading activities and groups at Warren-Yazoo Behavioral Health in Yazoo City for school-aged children K-8th grade. The activities are based on the week's learning theme and focus on increasing communication skills, self-esteem, self-regulation, social skills, body image, and teamwork and leadership skills. In July, the first-year students will begin their Level 1A Fieldwork in the psychosocial setting, and the frequency will be twice a week for four weeks; during that time, myself and my cohort will be cleaning, organizing, and restocking the classrooms and offices to prepare for incoming-OTA student orientation July 19th and the new school year in August.

August will see the return of students campus-wide which greatly increases the excitement and electricity in our environment. The OTA program will welcome twenty new, first-year students and the return of fourteen second-year OTA students. During the fall, the new OTA students will be engrossed with information and assignments pertaining to, but not limited to, courses in anatomy, foundations of the profession, skills, pediatrics, and psychology. One day a week, the second-year students will be doing their Level IB Fieldwork, three days will be devoted to their last skills class and final skills check-off, and one day is dedicated for developing their self-sustaining group community project. They will formally present their project November 2019 to a panel consisting of HCC faculty/staff, community healthcare providers, and faculty from other institutions.

The students will also be participating in community events and fieldtrips across the state, in addition to the assignments and classroom activities, as they learn and hone their skills. Hopefully, this will prepare them for their clinical affiliations, expose them to various people and populations, depict an array of settings and setting-specific expectations, and increase the confidence of the OTA student.

In closing, attending AOTA's national conference in April was vital in demonstrating to the OTA students the importance of participation and involvement within the state organization and local district. As our school year continues, it will be filled with changes and excitement; it will be a time to strengthen, improve, and grow aspects within our program, and I am eager to be a leading part of that process and look forward to working with members of the board, fieldwork educators, other faculty, community members, and other healthcare providers as the new school year commences.

Best regards,

D. Cade Montague, MOTR/L
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator/Instructor

SCHOOL NEWS Continued Itawamba Community College

Greetings from Itawamba Community College,

We have just completed two very significant events on the ICC campus, graduation and freshman class selection. We had 13 students receive their AAS degree on May 10th. The next step for these graduates will be sitting for the NBCOT exam. These students worked hard at fund raising during their time at ICC. During their pinning ceremony, the night before graduation, they were able to give back to the community by awarding monetary gifts to four specific organizations including: St. Jude's Ronald McDonald House, Camp Tik-a-with-a, TK Martin and KidSense Therapy.



On May 23rd, from an applicant pool of more than 50 students, 14 were selected to begin the OTA program this fall. As always, we are grateful for all of those who have served as fieldwork educators for our current students, as well as those who took time out of their busy days to allow program applicants to complete their observation hours.



This past year, both freshman and sophomore students had opportunities to engage in several community service events. These included – preparing and serving meals at Ronald McDonald house, serving as escorts for individuals attending “A Night to Shine”, volunteering with Special Olympics and the MS Department of Rehabilitation Services and serving as counselors for children attending Camp Tik-a-With-a Special Needs Camp. The students are still talking about these amazing experiences and we hope to continue to partner with each of these organizations for many years to come.

Our current freshman class is finishing up their first Level I fieldwork this week. Following a little break, for all of us, we will be rested and ready to hit the ground running come August. We look forward to another great fall semester and are excited as we anticipate the many opportunities and experiences this new academic year holds for us and the students!

Dee Dee Lomenick
Itawamba Community College



SCHOOL NEWS

Pearl River Community College



Fourteen students received pins last week, signifying completion of the Pearl River Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant program at the Forrest County Center in Hattiesburg. The pinning ceremony was held at PRCC's Lowery A. Woodall Advanced Technology Center. They include from left: First row - Michelle Haynes, instructor; Hannah Sykes of Mendenhall, Karleigh Mahaffey of Mendenhall, Alayna Barnes of Gautier, and Tim Pulver, OTA department chair. Second row - Neeosha Ruffin of Meridian and Lauren Daniel of Lucedale. Third row - Carsen McIntyre of Raleigh, Britton Ross of Long Beach, and Ashley A. Smith of Poplarville. Fourth row - Queila Ramos of Purvis and Arica Haeusler of Hattiesburg. Fifth row - Kevin Spencer of Sumrall and Raegan Kearley of Brooklyn. Top row - Logan Pierce of Wiggins and Jesse Sykes of Mendenhall. Not pictured is Julia Malcom of Vancleave.

OTA special award winners included: OTA Scholastic Award - Julia Malcom; clinical award of excellence - Ashley A. Smith; MSOTA Leadership Award - Hannah Sykes; most outstanding student - Logan Pierce.

All the new graduates were successful in their fieldwork experiences and reported having excellent learning experiences. We cannot thank our fieldwork educators enough! The program interviewed for the new class in May and we are excited about our new class starting in August!

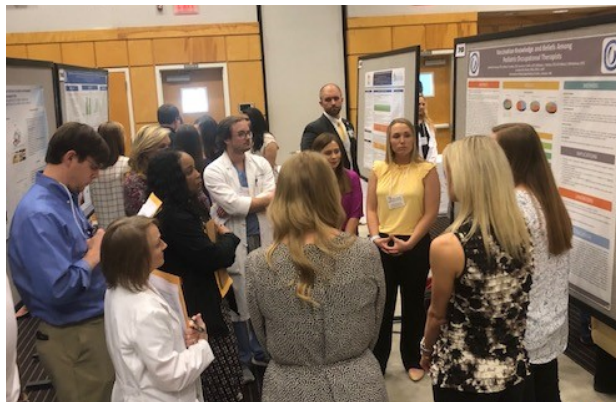


SCHOOL NEWS Continued

University of Mississippi Medical Center

Summer is always an exciting time of transition at UMMC. We have a new class entering, a class out on their first level II fieldworks, and a graduating class entering the workforce. The energy generated from all of these exciting transitions is always welcomed by the faculty.

Many of our OT students were able to attend the national conference in New Orleans. They enjoyed the sessions and the opportunity to be surrounded by so many OT professionals. We also had students who attended the MSOTA conference and enjoyed the new sessions just for students. This spring our students presented their master's research projects at two events which were the MSOTA Central District Meeting as well as the Annual SHRP Research Day.



SHRP RESEARCH DAY—POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Not only are our students busy in the classroom and labs, but they are also active doing good in the community. Our OT students are engaged with the Jackson Free Clinic on Saturdays to provide OT services to those in need. This occurs under the direction of a volunteer licensed practitioner. UMMC OT students are gearing up to begin another year of the UMMC NICU Rocking Babies initiative between our program and Children's Hospital. In addition, students are completing our program's service-learning requirements individually throughout the state.

We want to extend a special note of appreciation to those OTs who are supervising our Level II students this summer. Your commitment to our program is very important, and we appreciate your service to the future of our profession. Beginning in Spring 2021, our first OTD class will begin the new ACOTE required Capstone experience. This is an advanced experiential learning course that requires 14

weeks of full time work in a specialty area (e.g., vision, hands, driving, lymphedema, etc.). If you are interested in more information about the Capstone experience, please contact Dr. Penny Rogers at progers2@umc.edu or call 601-984-6350. Penny is serving as our Capstone Coordinator for the OTD program. Also if you have a specialty area that you would like to share with our students, we welcome guest presenters to keep our students up to date on unique OT practice areas as well. They enjoy hearing directly from OTs in the field who are implementing innovative treatment approaches.



First UMMC OTD Class

Thank you for your continued support!



AOTA Annual Conference HIGHLIGHTS New Orleans, LA





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