

THE MOTIVATOR

Online edition of the
**Occupational Therapy Alumni
Newsletter**
December 2007

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GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Seasons Greetings!

Our academic year is in full swing, and we have exciting news to share. Inside this edition of *The Motivator* are updates on our students, faculty and staff, and programs.



Our program continues to draw great interest. Our incoming class was selected from the largest applicant pool ever, making this our most competitive application season. Applicants applied from every region in the country, and from many countries overseas. Admitted students hail from all over the United States and hold citizenship from as far away as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Korea and Taiwan. Our newly admitted students represent 46 different undergraduate schools—several already hold graduate degrees. All have academic majors ranging from linguistics to neuroscience to economics.

Our doctoral program has also started, with students combining studies between our program and Teachers College Movement Science division. We look forward to the research they will be conducting in our EdD program.

Adding to our faculty roster is Dr. Christine Chen. Having been on faculty at Northwestern University, SUNY at Buffalo, and most recently at New York University, Dr. Chen brings her extensive research expertise to Columbia. With funding from NIH, as well as from the National Science Council (Taiwan), she has developed and tested the Manual Ability Measure—an outcome measure of hand function.

Grants and contracts have been awarded to other members of our faculty as well. Emily Raphael and I are launching a program for homeless men. Pat Miller was awarded a grant to initiate an interdisciplinary project. The Jarvie contract to provide services to homebound elderly also continues. These grants and contracts are described within this edition.

Our faculty also boasts some recent accomplishments. Debra Tupé was recognized by AOTA this past spring, receiving the Achievement Award for Outstanding Contribution to Pediatric Global Health. Glen Gillen's new book, *Cognitive and Perceptual Rehabilitation: Optimizing Function*, is due out this spring. Sharon Gutman's new book, *Quick Reference Neuroscience for Rehabilitation Professionals: The Essential Neurologic Principles Underlying Rehabilitation Practice*, second edition, has just been published.

Our website has been recently redesigned, with a special section for Alumni. You will have the opportunity, simply by accessing the alumni section of www.columbiaot.org, to connect with classmates.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *The Motivator*. And as always, let us know what you are up to!

Janet Falk-Kessler, Ed.D., OTR, FAOTA
Director, Programs in Occupational Therapy

MEET DR. CHRISTINE CHEN



Join us in welcoming our newest faculty member, Dr. Christine Chen. Dr. Chen has a wide range of clinical experience as an occupational therapist, including neurological and traumatic brain injury rehabilitation, and assessment and intervention in infants and school age children. She received her MS degree in Occupational Therapy from Tufts University, and her doctorate in Therapeutic Science from Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Boston University. She completed a NIH post-doctoral fellowship in Rehabilitation Medicine with Dr. Carl Granger at the Center for Functional Assessment Research, SUNY-Buffalo. She was a Clinical Research Scientist at the Center for Rehabilitation Outcome Research, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, and Research Assistant Professor of the Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University. Most recently she has served on the faculty of the Occupational Therapy Department at New York University. Dr. Chen is in her last year of her 5-year NIH/NICHD/NCMRR career award. This award has allowed her to refine and validate a patient-reported outcome measure of hand function—known as the Manual Ability Measure (MAM). In addition to this current grant, she is also collaborating with several Taiwanese colleagues in order to develop a Chinese/Taiwanese version of the MAM so that it can be used to assess rehabilitation outcomes in Taiwan.

Dr. Chen's research career has focused on methodological and theoretical issues regarding patient outcomes, description and explanation of health service utilization patterns, and practice implications informed by or based on research evidence. Her research interests include (1) outcome measurement and outcome instrument development, (2) application of psychometric theories (e.g., Rasch measurement model) to outcome assessments, and (3) assessing the effectiveness of rehabilitation services. These interests are reflected in her involvement in current and past research projects and publications.

Dr. Chen has served as a grant reviewer for the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and National Institute of Disability Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). She was a member of the Editorial Board of the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* from 2000-2006, and has been a reviewer for journals such as: *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, *American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, *Developmental Medicine and Childhood Neurology*, *Journal of Health Services Research, Evaluation and the Health Professions*, *Journal of Rehabilitation Research & Development*, and *Occupational Therapy International*.

Dr. Chen is active in professional associations such as the AOTA/AOTF and the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM). She was a Research Fellow of the Center for Research and Education (CORE) funded by AOTF from 1999-2002, was the recipient of the 2005 Cordelia Myers Writer's Award, and was inducted into the AOTA Roster of Fellows in 2006. She was a member of the ACRM Annual Conference Program Committee in 2005 and 2006, and a member of the International Committee in 2007. At Columbia, she will oversee the geriatric course series and guide student research.

DR. PATRICIA A. MILLER



For the past 25 years, so many of you have worked with and learned from Dr. Patricia Miller. We are proud of all that she has accomplished here at Columbia, but appreciate her decision to shift her attention away from course plans, and towards her family. Pat has decided to retire from teaching, but will continue on our faculty in the role of Research Scientist.

Since developing her first course on occupational therapy and gerontology more than 25 years ago, over 900 students have benefited from Dr. Miller's insight and commitment. Many of you know first hand about her passion for working with the elderly—a passion that has inspired today's therapists to make notable achievements in the field of elder care. What began as a niche in our curriculum has since evolved into a major practice area for our profession.

Particularly notable is Pat's tireless efforts to build relationships across disciplines. She has collaborated with departments in other university programs and schools, helping to define the characteristics that now make our program one of the best in the country. By infusing occupational therapy in facilities throughout this city—and bettering the lives of patients—Pat has left an indelible mark on the practitioners and community of New York.

From her excitement in developing the Open-iT tool, to testifying before government committees, we have witnessed Pat's relentless commitment to our practice. Thankfully, her passion is not only recognized by therapists, but by individuals nationally. Appearing on the front page in the New York Times was but one testament to her success—not to mention, an incredibly well timed article published during our onsite accreditation visit.

Though departing from teaching courses within our department, we all know that Pat really isn't retiring. She is focusing her same passion into the next phase of her life... as she calls it, "refiring." The day after we celebrated her career, she was awarded funding from the Garvey Teaching Academy to implement and develop an interdisciplinary education program. It also comes as no surprise that the Achievement Award in Gerontology, given to a student who shows excellence in this practice area, is now being named in her honor.

Setting yet another example of what *retirement* can be, Pat is continuing her scholarship while spending time with her family (especially her grandchildren). Lucky for us, we get to continue to work with her as she develops her new role.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM COMMENCEMENT

John Hockenberry Gives Keynote Address

A special presence graced our 2007 Commencement Ceremonies: Mr. John Hockenberry, the well-known journalist, author, correspondent, lecturer, and playwright, was our keynote speaker. His mere presence reinforced for the students the importance of their chosen profession. For the last 31 years Mr. Hockenberry has also been wheel-chair bound as the result of a spinal cord injury. His abilities, which far outweigh his disability, enabled him to offer the graduates, their families, and friends a perspective on Occupational Therapy that is rarely so clearly articulated. His presentation was heartfelt, humorous, self-deprecating, and inspiring.



Mr. Hockenberry noted that OTs know **more** about a patient than anyone else - emphasis on the more. "They know the details of your life, about how you are doing, what you are doing, and what you should be doing better!" He observed that the success of our acute care system has raised the level of importance of occupational therapy: Rehabilitation and long term care are rapidly becoming the most important components of the health

care system. People now survive all kinds of illness and trauma; OTs make it possible for them to continue to live.

He went on to note that occupational therapists approach each patient anew, not resorting to the comfort of canned treatment plans. They understand that, "...you can't generalize because everybody's' bodies, needs, and capacity to work with you are different...OT is an ephemeral, collaborative quality that defies the kind of clinical results that medicine is built on....it's you working one person at a time, defining how **we** are going to make quality of life over time...."

Mr. Hockenberry's true understanding of the role of occupational therapy was evinced by his observation that OTs "...always have all the cool stuff- all the fun toys!" that permit "... the kind of adaptive, radical collaboration between human beings and technology that long term care is all about." He went on regretfully to admit that while OTs will be able to convey to the general public important information about what it is like to be disabled he will not. "Sadly, I won't be able to convince people that I'm a brave hero. They'll know me as the clown that you now know me as...."

Marking the transition of our graduates from students to novice professionals, with all of the challenges to be met and clinical expertise to be acquired through practice, Mr. Hockenberry sent the members of the class of 2007 on their way. "Congratulations for choosing this profession. Congratulations for believing that long term issues are at least as important as acute care issues in health care, and Good Luck...because it's a crazy world out there for a bunch of people who know nothing!"

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Each year at our commencement ceremonies we honor students whose outstanding performance warrant recognition. The 2007 Achievement Award winners are (left to right):



Mia Peredez, the *Joan Bozuwa Memorial Award**

Eva Hatenoer, the *Patricia A. Miller Achievement Award for Excellence in Gerontology*

Jasmine Gore, the *Achievement Award for Excellence in Mental Health*

Tova Suslovich, the *G. Gordon Williamson Achievement Award for Excellence in Pediatrics*

Asha Mampilly, the *Steven A. Katz Memorial Award for Clinical Excellence**

Grace Lee, *Marguerite Abbott Memorial Award for Excellence in Physical Disabilities*

*The *Joan Bozuwa Memorial Award* is granted in recognition of outstanding Scholarship, Leadership, Integrity, and Creativity.

*The *Steven A. Katz Memorial Award for Clinical Excellence* is awarded to the student who exemplifies Empathy, Respect, Creativity, and Courage.



Graduates thanking their families and friends!

BRENDA SPIVEY-NIEVES

Going strong after 25 years!

Brenda Spivey-Nieves celebrated her 25th year in our Programs. As a most valued member of our administrative team, Brenda's tireless efforts behind the scenes are integral in insuring our programs' excellence. While President Lee Bollinger recognized her for loyalty and service to our university, we are indebted to her for all the "little" and "big" things she does that keep our program running. Congratulations to Brenda Spivey-Nieves.

President Lee Bollinger congratulates Brenda Spivey Nieves



HIGHLIGHTS FROM AOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A Showcase for Columbia

Once again, our faculty and students were active at the 2007 AOTA Annual Conference in St. Louis.

As part of the Physical Disability Special Interest Section (SIS), Dr. Marianne Mortera presented with colleagues: *Developing Relationships with Mentors in Physical Disabilities Practice*.

Dr. Sharon Gutman and colleagues presented a workshop for the (SIS) Mental Health Annual Program: *Supported Education---Programs and Outcomes for Individuals Diagnosed With Mental Illness*.

Faculty members Dr. Patricia A. Miller and Danielle Butin, MPH, OTR presented their work on: *Innovative Models for Building Self-Management and Health Promotion Programs for Older Adults*.

Dr. Patricia A. Miller also presented with Kurt Hubbard, MS, OTD, '00: *The Relationship Between Anxiety and Falls Efficacy in a Well-Elderly Population*.

Teams of faculty and recent graduates were also active in sharing their research. These presentations were each based on projects begun at Columbia. Faculty member Emily Raphael, MS, OTR '87, along with our graduates Jamie Bleich '06, Edith Harari '06, and Clarissa Hitchon '06 presented: *Asperger Siblings: A Survey of Parental Perceptions of Relationships, Disability, and Adjustment*. Dr. Sabrina Salvant '93, and our graduates Kimberly Schaffer '06 and Hong Ngo, '06 presented: *Quality of Life Issues in Women Diagnosed With Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: A Role For Occupational Therapy*.

Dr. Patricia A. Miller presented with graduates and colleagues Audra Majocho, '06, Jennifer Del Corro, '06, Amy Cook, MS, OTR, '91, and Mathew Maurer, MD: *The Process of Change in Older Adults: An Exploratory Study of a Health Promotion Program*.

Dr. Marianne Mortera and graduates Malka Berkowitz, '06 and Jennifer Byler, '06 presented: *Cultural Strategies Used by Western Trained Occupational Therapists Practicing in Asia*.

AOTA ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER

Professor Debra Tupé

Winning AOTA's **2007 Achievement Award for Outstanding Contribution to Pediatric Global Health**, Professor Debra Tupé, '84 was recognized for her leadership in facilitating rehabilitation efforts around the Caribbean basin. The focus of her work has included:

- Direct service to children in need of rehabilitation
- Inservice training of health care personnel
- Ongoing consultation with health care personnel
- Infusion of occupational therapy principles in day to day rehabilitation practices
- Training occupational therapists and occupational therapy students in indirect service
- Promoting multiculturalism in occupational therapists and occupational therapy students



FACULTY AND STUDENTS IN NICARAGUA

In May 2007, two occupational therapy students, Mia Paradez '07 and Demetrice Catacutan '08, joined Professor Debra Tupé and Global Health Partners in a service learning trip to Nicaragua. The Columbia University team provided workshops, demonstrations of occupational therapy techniques and resources to the staff and families at Los Pipitos Children's Rehabilitation Center in Managua. The team also visited community based satellite early intervention centers in the outlying areas of Nicaragua. The satellite visits gave the students the opportunity to apply academic coursework to the needs of children with disabilities and their families in a novel socio-cultural context. Visit our International Programs page of our website for stories and video of our international experiences.



Demetrice Catacutan, '08 and Mia Paradez, '07 are joined by a hearing specialist from Los Pipitos.



Debra Tupé conducting workshops



ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Every year the Annual Fund helps students meet their financial obligations through various scholarships. The alumni scholarships are awarded to over 20 students each year. One of our Alumni Tuition Scholarship recipients was Jasmine Gore. Jasmine is in the OT/MPH dual degree program. Jasmine, co-president of the OT Class of 2007, expressed that this scholarship really made a difference in reducing the amount of loans she had to take out.



Jasmine's involvement in our program was exemplary, as noted by her receipt of the 2007 Achievement Award for Excellence in Mental Health. When she completes the public health component of her dual degree this spring, she will be well prepared to start her health career. Jasmine wants to go into private practice where she can use knowledge and skills to work in health promotion and disease prevention in underserved communities.

RUDIN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons has been a long time recipient of the Rudin Family's philanthropy. Our program has also been included in their generosity, as selected students are part of The Rudin Scholars Program. In a tribute to Dr. John Downey (past Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine) and to Ms. Georgia Riedel, PT, Mr. Jack Rudin, Chairman of The Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation, Inc., has provided scholarships to Occupational Therapy students in their honor. We continue to be grateful to The Rudin family legacy for their commitment to education in the health care professions. The 2007 recipient of this honor went to Ms. Mia Paredes.



Mia Paredes '07 with Dr. Janet Falk-Kessler

REUNIONS!



Kurt Hubbard, '00 & Stephanie Lubalin, '98 at our Alumni Reception, 2007 AOTA Conference in St. Louis

Members of the Class of '86 reunite



Standing Left to Right:

Julie Kern, Laurie Dubin, Carol McCale, Carla Ferrari, Cathy Accashian

Seated Left to Right:

Diane Schreibman, Jana Hoffman, Emily Raphael

NEW FEATURES ON OUR ALUMNI WEBSITE

Two new features are being added to our alumni website. Our “class finder” will allow you to reconnect with classmates and colleagues. Our discussion board will also allow you to exchange ideas on issues important to you. Questions about interventions? Pose them here! Want to discuss OT’s future? Discuss it here!

Registration for both is easy. First, you will need a Columbia “uni.” A uni is traditionally part of the Columbia email account. Getting a uni is free and takes only minutes. Go to the university’s website (www.columbia.edu), click on “Alumni,” then click “Access” located on the top bar, and then click “Uni Information.” Once you have your uni, visit the Alumni page of our OT Website to register and access our Class Finder and our message boards.

www.columbiaot.org

ALUMNI COUNCIL ROSTER

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If you live in the New York metropolitan area, and would like to join the steering committee, please contact Julie Lowy.