Department of OS/OT Is Awarded Two Multi-Year Government-Funded Research Grants

Underlining the position of the USC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy as a leader in research to advance our profession and foster interdisciplinary innovations in health care, two new grants have been awarded to USC OS/OT professors to study the lived experiences of children and families living with disability. In both of these government-funded grants, the multi-year, multi-site study will be led by USC OS/OT researchers.

Boundary Crossing

In a recently concluded study, Boundary Crossing: A Longitudinal and Ethnographic Study, USC OS/OT Professors Mary Lawlor and Cheryl Mattingly and their colleagues examined over a 4-year period dimensions of the daily lives of African American families managing illness or disability trajectories, healthcare practices and practitioner perspectives. The researchers followed a cohort of the families of African American children who were then ages 0-8 and who had ongoing OT and/or PT needs at that time, representing a heterogeneity of diagnostic categories. The children and their families were recruited and followed at multiple sites.

The new 4-year, $2.5 million grant that has been awarded by the NCMRR, a component of the NICHD within the NIH, is for a longitudinal, urban, multimethod ethnographic study titled Boundary Crossing: Promoting Cultural Competence. Led by Dr. Lawlor as Principal Investigator with both Dr. Mattingly and Dr. Lanita Jacobs-Huey, Asst. Professor of Anthropology at USC, as co-PIs, the new study continues the earlier Boundary Crossing, following the same participants. The new research will focus on cross-cultural healthcare encounters, with a goal of identifying, describing and situating how families contribute to the production of culturally responsive care, and strategies families and practitioners employ to establish commonality, bridge difference and effectively “partner up.”

Through engaging in effective partnerships with healthcare providers, families actively acquire “cultural competency” in the form of a range of subtle, highly structured expertise necessary for understanding and navigating clinic cultures. This competence goes beyond learning about a clinical condition, or even the complexities of communication across race/ethnicity divides in the healthcare encounter. Families attempt to partner up with professionals around the question of what kind of life story or stories are possible for their child to live out, the role of the clinical story within those narrative frames, and how a child’s potential futures intersect with an unfolding family story.

In addition to traditional ethnographic methods such as participant observation, interviewing and videotaping, the new study will seek to further develop a unique method that originated in the earlier study, termed “collective narrative interviews.” In these meetings, one or two representatives of a participating family meet in a group with other family representatives and researchers. The collective narrative interviews started as venues for family members to share stories about their child and his/her health care. “As the family representatives got to know each other over time, the interviews became opportunities to talk about updates in their lives and tell stories about themselves and their children, ranging from profound experiences to exploring the ‘everydayness’ of things,” explained Dr. Lawlor. “Family members are encouraged to bring in things to share, like photos, crafts their children made, and events in their children’s lives like summer camp or trying out for basketball.” The families’ healthcare providers will also be interviewed in separate meetings in the new study.

(Continued on page 10)
Message from the Chair

I was extremely gratified to be honored recently as the 2005 Ruth Zemke Lecturer in Occupational Science at the 4th Annual Research Conference of SSO:USA. Not only is it a pleasure to have an opportunity to address my colleagues from around the nation, but it is especially satisfying to be able to continue a tradition named for our own Dr. Zemke, who serves as a board member and chair elect of the organization.

This lectureship gave me the impetus to take time to reflect on the future of occupational science and its relationship to occupational therapy. In its 16 years of existence, occupational science has achieved noteworthy success. Its intellectual vitality is strong, yet, in order to thrive, the discipline must continue to solidify its interdisciplinary commitment, increase its number of publications, and expand its research scope to remain a viable member of the scientific community and a vibrant academic discipline.

As I considered how occupational science might remain responsive to the new challenges and environments of the 21st century, I recognized two key concepts: one, that we need to affirm that occupational science and occupational therapy exist in a dynamic and symbiotic relationship, and two, that occupational science programs throughout our nation and world need to customize plans for survival in a rapidly changing world.

In taking a broader view of occupational science and occupational therapy, it’s helpful to think of strategies based on the principles of evolutionary biology. Picture, if you will, a “life cycle” in which occupational science and occupational therapy are symbiotic living organisms. We might enter this cycle at the point of growing demand for highly skilled occupational therapists. This leads to an increased enrollment in all academic programs, from the foundational learning of the BS program, to the clinical entry-level of the MA degree, to the acquisition of tools for professional and administrative development of the OTD degree, to the specific and interdisciplinary research and innovation of the Ph.D. degree. Some of the revenues accrued through robust enrollment can then seed research in occupational science, and this research component then attracts funding from government and other grants, which in turn grows university departments and leads to the publication of peer-reviewed articles in prestigious journals establishing new discoveries in our field. Next in this circle, larger and better-funded departments can provide more OT students with a first-rate education, and more compelling evidence of the impact of occupational therapy and sophisticated knowledge of occupation and its role in the daily lived experiences of consumers and societies creates a larger scope of evidence-based practice. Top-quality practitioners equipped with evidence-based intervention techniques result in a higher demand for occupational therapy, and the cycle then repeats. In this symbiotic relationship, occupational science and occupational therapy interdependently support and sustain one another.

I’d like to take a moment to show you how I’ve used a new strategic model I have conceptualized for my SSO:USA paper to maximize the vitality of our programs at USC. It is a model for developing customized plans for survival for occupational science programs nationwide and worldwide as well as for the discipline in general, one that addresses national and global priorities; university/institutional culture, mission and values; university colleagues, networks and programs; and departmental research and education programs.

Among our broad-ranging activities at USC, this model has led me to realize that we must aggressively pursue interdisciplinary linkages and collaborative projects with our colleagues at USC and with the international occupational science community. We must invest in department-based NIH research proposals on topics that matter to policymakers, consumers and the public at large. We will view communication as central to survival of our department’s research and educational programs. Our department research programs will be organized into clusters to maximize teamwork, sharpen focus, create resource efficiencies and assemble research communities. Our faculty division of labor will ensure that tenureline faculty have time to do the research that makes them competitive in the interdisciplinary scientific community, and that our clinical faculty have the resources to promote excellence in state-of-the-art education. We will provide our students with learning opportunities connected to both disciplinary and interdisciplinary research. We will refuse to think of occupational science as decoupled from occupational therapy, and vice versa.

These are the strategies we have created for USC. Certainly one blueprint will not be right for every department in our nation and overseas, but if we all develop and implement customized survival plans for our programs that are responsive to the opportunities and challenges present in our respective settings, I believe occupational science will thrive well into its third decade and beyond.

[Signature]

Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy
USC OS/OT Participates in Hurricane Relief

Joining the international effort to provide aid to the evacuees who survived the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, USC OS/OT faculty, staff and students participated in a clothing drive spearheaded by first-year MA student Sara Cassone. The successful campaign culminated on September 8th.

Ms. Cassone, a graduate of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst who had never been to Los Angeles before enrolling in USC’s MA-II program “because it was the best school ever,” was moved by the images of suffering experienced by storm survivors in the Gulf Coast region. She talked to fellow MA students who shared her desire to help, then “tried to think of what to do that didn’t need money or flying there.” Thus, the idea of a clothing drive was born.

Within a week, news about the drive had spread through announcements in class, listservs and word-of-mouth. On the day of the collection, Ms. Cassone was delighted to see not only the generous donations from OS/OT students, but also a large response from occupational therapists, physical therapists and other personnel from USC University Hospital. All told, the drive had yielded 40 garbage bags filled with baby and children’s clothes, men’s and women’s clothes and much needed shoes. “I was surprised that it ended up being everything, not just a bunch of stuff from 20-year-old girls,” Ms. Cassone commented.

The clothes and shoes were taken to a shelter in Los Angeles where dozens of evacuees from New Orleans are being housed. Thanks for showing true OT spirit, Sara!

For information on USC’s university-wide Katrina relief efforts, or to make a donation to support displaced students and their families, visit http://www.usc.edu/programs/katrina/. To learn about AOTA’s resources for Gulf Coast area occupational therapy practitioners and others affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, click on the link on AOTA’s home page at http://www.aota.org.

Film, TV Workers Redesign Lifestyles with USC OT

When Katie Salles, OTD, OTR/L, was completing her doctoral residency at the USC OT Faculty Practice, it was a natural transition to become a clinical instructor with USC OS/OT, continuing to see patients at the Practice. What she might not have expected at the time was that she would soon be leading grips and teamsters through a Lifestyle Redesign™ weight loss program that has won the highest praise of all: clients telling Dr. Salles that the intervention has changed their lives.

The Motion Picture and Television Fund (MPTF), an organization that meets the health and human services needs of people in the Southern California entertainment community, was seeking a healthy and reliable weight loss program to offer the members insured through its health insurance plan. Their search for a sensible, evidence-based program led them to the USC OT Faculty Practice, which contracted to create a program for MPTF.

On behalf of the Faculty Practice, Dr. Salles conducts four groups at the MPTF’s Toluca Lake Health Center, each of which meets for one hour weekly in a 16-week program. Using the Lifestyle Redesign™ model, Dr. Salles combines an educational component with discussion and development of individual goals and strategies for group members, reached through facilitation of the therapist and through group interactions. Her clients at MPTF range from writers to camera operators to on-set caterers. The program is also open to spouses of plan members, so composition of the groups truly encompasses people from all walks of life, and diverse ethnic and socioeconomic populations.

As in all Lifestyle Redesign™ interventions, Dr. Salles states that she assesses how her clients’ occupations are health-promoting or deterring, and takes into account environmental barriers and supports. Some of the unique factors for these show business workers include “crafts services” tables laden with snacks, both high-calorie and healthy; “the trick is encouraging them to choose to reach for the carrot sticks instead of the candy bars,” Dr. Salles explained. Another challenge is creating realistic and sustainable goals that fit a workday that stretches long beyond the traditional 9-to-5.

The results have been positive. Some clients have opted to repeat the program, some bring friends or family members into the program, and others have returned 90 days after completing the intervention to verify that they have sustained their weight loss. MPTF physicians commonly refer clients to the USC program, and MPTF recently renewed its affiliation with the USC OT Faculty Practice.

“My OTD gave me the background in program development and clinical application of new and innovative OT practices,” Dr. Salles noted of the MPTF program. “What we do is a lifestyle change, not a diet. It’s a bigger challenge, but with a bigger reward.”
Awards and Recognition

Congratulations to the following faculty and staff on their outstanding achievements!

Several faculty members took part in programs around the world (below).

Florence A. Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, was the 2005 Ruth Zemke Lecturer in OS at the 4th Annual FAOTA, authored the article “The Problem with Prevention: The Case of Spina Bifida,” published in the Sept./Oct. 2005 issue of The American Journal of Occupational Therapy, and is co-PI of the recently funded study, Effectiveness of Bowel and Bladder Techniques in Children with Spina Bifida (see related story, page 1).

Ruth Zemke, Ph.D., OTR, FAOTA, received an Alumni Achievement Award from her alma mater, the Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison’s School of Education; was 8th Annual Mary Ann Epstein Memorial Lecturer at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, presenting “From Origins to Outcomes: Occupation in Our Daily Life;” and found time to attend a Sumo tournament in Las Vegas featuring some of Japan’s top wrestlers.

OS/OT Faculty Members Participate in International Conferences

by Camille Dieterle

USC continues to garner international recognition as interest in our profession grows worldwide. A measure of our success is the many OS/OT faculty members presenting and participating in conferences around the globe.

Dr. Ruth Zemke was the annual Visiting Scholar at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. She presented on “Occupation, Time and Space” as the Barbara Posthuma Sexton Lecturer. Dr. Zemke also presented a 3-day workshop in Taipei on occupation and well-being, co-sponsored by Taiwan OT Association and the Taiwan Dept. of Mental Health. Participating USC graduates included Jin-Ling Lo (Ph.D. ’94), Yan-Hua Huang (MA ’01, Ph.D. ’03), Ho-Fu Cheng (MA ’02) and Chia-Ling Christine Cheng (MA ’02).

As Chair of the Commission on Education for AOTA, Dr. Linda Fazio was an invited guest at the 10th Anniversary Meeting of the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education in Vienna in September. The conference’s theme was “European Citizenship Through Education.” Representing AOTA along with Dr. Fazio was Dr. Paula Kramer, Chair of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. The conference attracted attendees from 16 European countries, the U.S. and Canada. Dr. Fazio noted that her interest was to “learn more about the European effort to establish competencies for OT education, especially as they may be appropriate to the OT programs in the U.S.”

Dr. Florence Clark, Dr. Erna Blanche and Dr. L. Diane Parham presented at the 1st Latin American Congress in Sensory Integration in Santiago, Chile. In this gathering, Dr. Clark spoke on the relationship between sensory integration and OS, Dr. Parham presented on play and the use of the Sensory Integration Praxis Tests factor analysis in clinical practice, and Dr. Blanche addressed the topics of early identification and the use of play in the evaluation process. Dr. Clark also worked with the University of Chile on a possible collaboration with the Masters in OS there. “It’s pleasing to see our USC scholars helping lead the way as occupational science and occupation therapy advance around the world,” Dr. Clark observed.

Fieldwork Corner

The USC OT Fieldwork Coordination team of Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer, Jeremy Seip and Robin Turner are busily coordinating Level I and Level II fieldwork placements for the 2005-2006 academic year. We highly value and thank our loyal providers of fieldwork experiences, both locally, across the United States and even internationally.

International Level I fieldwork development is underway for Spring 2006 in Ghana at the Mephibosheth Training Center, a school for children with disabilities. Level I fieldwork in Romania is in the planning stages for Spring 2006 as well. Collaboration with Diane Kellegrew and the School-Based Training Grant continues with expansion of school-based Level II fieldwork opportunities.

If you are interested in collaborating with us to provide high-quality fieldwork experiences for our students, contact Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer at (323) 442-2857 or taguchi@usc.edu to get started!
Evidence-Based Practice a Key Topic in OT Practice

The advent of evidence-based practice in all health care fields has brought with it increased benefit to consumers and greater accountability for practitioners. Knowing when and how to research evidence for use in interventions not only helps professionals to provide state-of-the-art care to their clients, but also enables them to deal more effectively with insurance companies, which more and more rely on evidence-based practice guidelines to establish standards including the frequency and duration of services they will reimburse. Hospital and clinic management, too, use evidence-based measures to determine procedures and document outcomes. Because evidence-based practice is relatively new, not all practitioners may be familiar with it. Further, there can be challenges in finding time and appropriate resources to conduct the search required for highly effective evidence-based practice.

With these factors in mind, it was not surprising that AOTA’s publication OT Practice devoted its July 11, 2005 cover story to evidence-based practice. The authority to whom they turned for the article was USC OS/OT’s Assoc. Professor Diane Hammon Kellegrew, who teaches evidence-based practice in the Department’s core curriculum.

“Many practitioners in the field told me they were very excited about the article because it made the concept of evidence-based practice more clear and more accessible,” Dr. Kellegrew noted. She has been invited back to speak on the subject to the Occupational Therapy Los Angeles Leadership Forum in December.

Among strategies that Dr. Kellegrew recommended in her article for optimal evidence-based practice:

- Make a critical appraisal of potentially interesting research studies.

Dr. Kellegrew suggests asking oneself three basic questions when reviewing a study: (1) What are the study findings? (2) Is this study of sufficient quality? (3) How can the results help me care for my client? Having a research or evidence-based practice textbook on hand can give you reminders about elements to look for in a study to weigh its validity, reliability and other factors.

- If you have limited time available for research, consider looking for systematic reviews. Based on a concept developed by The Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org), a systematic review collects a number of studies on a topic to evaluate the efficacy of an intervention or practice. Studies are screened for currency and quality. A systematic review answers the question, “Does this intervention work?” Limitations of systematic reviews can be that they do not cover every approach, and they often omit qualitative studies from inclusion.

- Consider research-to-practice models, a method that couples systematic reviews with consumer-oriented materials. An example is The Puckett Institute (www.puckett.org), which provides resources related to early childhood issues.

- Are there guidelines relevant to the subject you are researching? Evidence-based practice guidelines from a number of national and international health care organizations can be found online at the National Guideline Clearinghouse (www.guideline.gov/). Again, limitations exist, such as exclusion of smaller studies and qualitative evidence in guideline development and less-detailed guidelines for OT.

- Databases hold a wealth of articles online. Although many require a paid subscription, that price might pay off in increased effectiveness of your research. Free databases include PubMed (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/) from the National Library of Medicine, the National Rehabilitation Information Center (www.naric.com), REHAB-DATA at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (www.ahrq.gov), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov), NIMH (www.nimh.nih.gov/), and the consumer-oriented MedlinePlus (medlineplus.gov). ScholarGoogle (scholar.google.com) is a “beta” service that is growing in content. The ACP Journal Club (www.acpjc.org) allows limited free access to reviews of research. Also check your local library or medical library to find available databases; for example, the Los Angeles Public Library subscribes to ProQuest (http://proquest.umi.com/login), which accesses a number of scholarly databases. Occupational therapy databases include OTSeeker (www.otseeker.com), and the subscription services OTD-BASE (http://www.otdbase.org) and OTSearch, which is available through the American Occupational Therapy Foundation’s Wilma L. West Library (http://otsearch.aota.org/).

- A Journal Club can be a way to join others interested in expanding their knowledge. An example would be a group of co-workers meeting over a lunch hour once a month to share new research information they find useful.

“In the age of information, resources go far beyond just journal articles,” Dr. Kellegrew emphasized. “Many other high-quality resources can help transform one’s practice. Familiarity with finding and using information is now a critical skill for OTs.”

For more information on evidence-based practice, AOTA members may see Dr. Kellegrew’s full article and other resources online at the AOTA website (www.aota.org).
Watch the Media

Instructor Hosts Documentary to Raise Awareness of Mental Illness

Occupational therapists who work with clients seeking treatment for psychosocial issues often become familiar with the daily life experiences of people with mental illness. While many “able-bodied” people willingly and sympathetically accommodate people with physical disabilities, society often reacts to those with mental illness with stigmatization, discrimination and misperceptions. It can create an “invisible” disability.

USC OS/OT clinical instructor Deborah B. Pitts, MBA, OTR/L, CPRP, is an expert in the area of psychosocial OT interventions. In addition to being responsible for USC OS/OT’s core psychosocial courses, Ms. Pitts is in her last year as chair of AOTA’s Mental Health Special Interest Section and chair of the expert panel developing the board certification in mental health for AOTA.

One-Woman Show Featured in Health, Humanity & Culture Series

Dramatic, aesthetic and performance media often provide ways to express and appreciate aspects of our lives that we may otherwise find difficult to confront directly in our everyday lives. With this in mind, USC OS/OT Professors Cheryl Mattingly and Mary Lawlor, along with USC Assoc. Professor of Anthropology Nancy Lutkehaus, hosted a performance of Lyena Strelkoff’s autobiographical one-woman show Caterpillar Soup at the Davidson Conference Center on behalf of the USC Initiative for Humanity, Health and Culture (IHHC). Dr. Mattingly is director and Dr. Lawlor is co-director of the IHHC. A reception and discussion followed the play.

IHHC consists of an interdisciplinary group of scholars who share interests in exploring the ways in which insights from the humanities, biomedicine and the social sciences might mutually inform our understanding of health, illness, and healing in cultural context. In addition to providing a forum for scholars to exchange ideas in relation to these themes, the IHHC also sponsors a number of talks and events throughout the academic year.

Caterpillar Soup is a very upfront, personal portrayal of Ms. Strelkoff’s injury, loss and steps toward recovery. By detailing in this moving fashion the transformational experiences of loss, struggle and hope that arose from a spinal cord injury that Ms. Strelkoff acquired three years ago, the play has the effect of creating a safe environment for engaging in a discussion about a range of ways of perceiving and experiencing disability that are often left out of therapeutic and academic treatments of the topic.

“The play portrays what are very intimate, private and traumatic aspects of Lyena’s lived experience in an artistic form that offers us a different lens through which to address the issues that we as scholars and researchers find compelling in our own studies of health, illness, suffering and disability,” Dr. Lawlor explained. “It opens a space for real dialogue between disciplines, between practitioners and between the people who are themselves directly experiencing suffering and illness, which is precisely what the IHHC ultimately hopes to foster here at USC.”

To raise consciousness about mental illness, Ms. Pitts sponsored a showing at the Center for Occupation and Lifestyle Redesign of the award-winning autobiographical documentary People Say I’m Crazy, by John Cadigan, an artist with schizophrenia. The film, shown in honor of Mental Illness Awareness Week 2005, was followed by a discussion moderated by Ms. Pitts about forming a chapter of Active Minds on Campus at USC.

USC OS/OT graduate Vivian Yip recommended People Say I’m Crazy to Ms. Pitts, who then saw the documentary at screenings where Mr. Cadigan was available for questions afterward. Among aspects of the film that impressed Ms. Pitts was its portrayal of Mr. Cadigan’s challenges in living with schizophrenia, as well as showing him making beautiful block print art. Creating the film itself was another endeavor that he undertook as a meaningful and health-promoting activity. “John does represent his art as an occupation and actually uses a project to help ‘keep him alive’ and give him an ‘obligation’ into the future,” Ms. Pitts explained.

Active Minds on Campus is a national mental health awareness, education and advocacy organization based on college campuses. Ms. Pitts hopes to found a chapter here at USC, to advocate for people with mental illness and increase understanding of this health condition. Her goal is to include students, faculty and staff from all USC departments, as well as OS/OT, as members of Active Minds.

To find out more about Mr. Cadigan and his film, or to see some of his art, visit his website at http://www.peoplesayimcrazy.org/. Information about Active Minds can be found at http://www.activemindsoncampus.org.

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Well Older Adults Enjoy “Healthy Pleasures Faire”

USC OS/OT’s stately Center for Lifestyle Redesign was a little more festive and a lot more colorful on July 16th, when participants in the New Well Elderly Study visited there to enjoy the Healthy Pleasures Faire, a celebration of the simple joys of playful and stimulating activities. The Faire is a key part of the New Well Elderly Program, serving to introduce older adults to the concept of occupations and how they may contribute to health and well-being. A cornerstone of the Lifestyle Redesign™ intervention is to create environments and opportunities for participants to experience simple pleasures as a means of affecting health by laughing, learning and focusing on novel or remembered activities.

First-year OT student Lisa Hickey welcomed visitors to the Center, which was “all dressed up” for the Faire. Each therapist leads three groups every week, as well as meeting with each participant in one-to-one sessions monthly.

The Healthy Pleasures Faire was planned and executed by the four occupational therapists conducting the New Well Elderly Program for the research study (see photo). The Center itself was also a big hit with Faire participants, who received a tour and history of the house. Some of them were still talking about it at their next weekly group meeting: “Oh, that big house, now that was something! I had such a good time.”

USC OS/OT Is Part of Latino Young Men’s Conference

Several USC OS/OT students and alumni took a leading role in the Latino Young Men’s Conference, recently held on the campus of Rio Hondo College in Whittier and organized by Therapy Designs, a private OT practice founded by Terry Olivas-De La O and USC OS/OT alumna Vera Arzaga Rubio. The official mission of the conference was to empower young Latino men toward successful and healthy futures.

Among the many acknowledgements received for Therapy Designs’ progressive approach to health and wellness for the Latino population was a proclamation from Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa that it was “Latino Young Men’s Mentoring and Family Day,” and a visit to the conference by staff from U.S. Rep. Grace Napolitano’s office.

The day focused on shared activities, including mentor relationships that show how to manage challenges by thinking through ways to respond actively and positively. Second-year USC OS/OT MA-II student Rudy Marticorena facilitated a breakout session with the young men’s fathers and mentors, addressing how to use shared activities to build confidence, increase social skills, learn healthy coping strategies and foster skill building. Mr. Marticorena also directed an art activity in which the adults and young men placed their handprints together on paper, signifying their commitment to a shared relationship and emphasizing the importance of goals and the support needed to achieve them. Other breakout sessions on careers in technology, journalism, law and occupational therapy were facilitated by professional Latino men; the occupational therapy session was facilitated primarily by David Escorcia with assistance from USC OS/OT Ph.D. student Heather Kitching.

The young male participants responded positively to the program. Some even inquired about OT as a potential career!

Therapy Designs works with youth in or recently emancipated from the foster care system to encourage a strong sense of identity, analyze how they spend their time, identify personal goals or “dreams” and then map out a plan of lifestyle change to achieve those goals. To learn more, go to www.therapydesigns.com.
A Dialogue with Dr. Nicolas Lori and Dr. Ruth Zemke

Moderated by Anna Nguyen

(Recently appointed USC OS/OT Asst. Professor Nicolas Lori is a physicist who was previously an Asst. Professor in the Department of Neurology at the University of Iowa. An expert in diffusion MRI, Dr. Lori plans to use neuroimaging to study engagement in occupation. Professor Emerita Ruth Zemke, long-time USC OS/OT faculty member, is a beloved educator, widely published, and one of the leading researchers in occupational science. Dr. Lori and Dr. Zemke met at the Center for Occupation and Lifestyle Redesign to share their perspectives on occupation and neurology.)

Q: Dr. Lori, what attracted you to occupational science?
NL: Well, the original attraction was neuroscience. When I was in my physics Ph.D. program at Washington University, I worked in their Neuroimaging lab with some of the best neuroscientists in the world. Then I moved to Paris to do my postdoc and again I was interacting strongly with the neuroscientist group, although I would not consider myself a neuroscientist. My interest in occupational science has to do with the fact that it is concerned with an aspect of neuroscience that has not been as addressed as other aspects, basically, the impact that occupation has on the mental health of a person.

Q: Dr. Zemke, what attracted you to neurology?
RZ: As an undergraduate in OT, we got our education about neuro from the medical school. And the doctor who was teaching our neuro — thankfully, I don’t remember his name — did a really lousy job, because in general, I was a good student and learned things well, but I almost failed the test. Well, at first, after I graduated, I studied as much as I could and learned what I could. The very first continuing education program that I went to was a neuro-based one [where I studied with] Josephine Moore. At that point, I began to get a feeling for the combination of the hierarchy of this system and, yet, the beauty of it working together. And I still didn’t know enough; I don’t see myself as a knowledgeable person in it, but a learner! Every time I study, I learn things that weren’t there before. So, I started with a student’s problem, a poor test score.

Q: What are MRIs telling us about occupation?
NL: The study that I specialize in is a kind of anatomical MRI, called the diffusion MRI, where basically what you do is you analyze the movement properties of water and you see that water tends to diffuse more in a way that is parallel to the axon; the axon is what constitutes white matter, and the function of the axon is to connect different regions of the brain, like an electric wire filled with water. What you get from diffusion MRI is orientations of white matter for each region of the brain, and then you have orientation vectors, and those match very well with the white matter orientations in the brain. Let’s see if I can give an example. You have a bunch of people in a room and you can ask, “Are you standing or sitting?” One of them says, “I’m standing,” the other says, “I’m sitting,” and so on, so even if you don’t look at the room, you can still have information about how many of them are standing or sitting. It’s a similar thing with diffusion MRI. We only have the image resolution of a volumetric pixel, or voxel, which is a 3D pixel about a cubic millimeter in size, but we can still know which water molecules are diffusing in one direction and which water molecules are diffusing in the other direction. We don’t know exactly where in the voxels they are, but we know what was their movement and how many, more or less, we have diffusing one way or the other.

RZ: I was thinking of the work that one of my Master’s students, Gudrun Arnoldottir, did. She was attempting to correlate a functional assessment to anatomical imaging of lesions from a number of patients. In our view, we were validating the imaging measures, that what they were measuring in the brain had something to do with what was really happening in that individual’s performance of their daily occupations. I was thinking how much better if we were able to do these kinds of studies in the future, if functional measurements truly could be done during some activities that are more functional activities.

Q: Do our neural pathways direct us to occupation, or do our occupations help form our neural pathways?
RZ: I think that our nervous system is a history of what we have done, seen, known, tasted, all the senses. I have trouble when people even jokingly say, “Oh, that’s how you’re hard-wired.” That isn’t hard-wiring because I really don’t think we have much “hard” in our wiring. From my view of things, from how simple you want to go in sensation and movement to the more complex, that these things combine into an occupation and shape the nervous system throughout our lives. I can’t imagine it any other way.

NL: Imaging is definitely going to try to take a look at it to see if it’s true or if it’s not true [what] some studies indicate, that indeed you can have neural sprouting even at later ages. This is just my personal opinion, but I doubt that early childhood is the end for neural sprouting, because it seems OTs learn that people do change and can recover. It’s my own experience that people can change and recover. One has to remember that the basis of science is empirical evidence, and if...
the person does improve, that’s the evidence. If the imaging says that the brain activity is the same, all it is really saying is that imaging cannot distinguish in this case. So I think that in terms of imaging, we have not achieved a state where you can go to the person who feels improved and is acting improved and say, “You haven’t improved!”

RZ: Trying to measure change is a challenge at so many levels, and I think in our health care system today our big worry is that if preliminary data that suggests that change is not likely, then it will be used to cut off treatment that we believe has an effect. I always think that if I am going to be the patient, I have learned many things that I would like to try or have a therapist try with me to see if I can improve or change, that medicine will not support today. I think we need many sources of evidence, the basic science that provides a foundation for all of this in addition to the evidence from actual ongoing therapy, which may be a behavioral evidence. It all helps us shape what really is effective.

Q: What should every occupational therapist know about neurology?

RZ: It’s not just memorizing one spot in the brain that’s responsible for this; this is not how humans function, and so they can try somehow to pull the data together and begin to think of the system as a whole that helps make us go. I feel that will allow even students who found neurology difficult to be willing to go back when they need that information and gather the specifics again. I don’t feel that we’ve had enough focus over the years in things that used to be labeled “psychosocial” that now I would assume could be added to courses, such as the behavioral links that are so strong.

NL: It is very useful to know enough so you don’t get completely lost when you read journals, and you understand what the literature is saying. A certain amount of knowledge is assumed in any field; with that knowledge, an OT can conveniently upgrade knowledge by reading the literature. Transmitting neuroscience and a little bit of physics to OT students would be important so they don’t feel overwhelmed by the scientific literature and then can interact even more with it.

Q: What should every physicist know about occupation?

NL: Well, I’m learning more and more about occupational science and OT. One of the things I have been happy to learn about is the tremendous importance of occupation in one’s happiness. I think this is not specific to neurologists or physicists, but it’s very important for all people to understand how much occupation has an impact on their overall well-being.

Q: Occupational science has been envisioned as an interdisciplinary social science. Dr. Lori’s appointment fits that vision. What do you think the future is for interdisciplinary pursuits in occupational science and OT?

RZ: I think it’s vital to development of the field. We are a small field in occupational therapy and if we want to develop a science, this “audacious” idea, as Betty Yerxa said, there’s no likelihood of it being what we want it to be without information and sharing and openness with other fields. We feel there’s enough linkage between us as people from occupational therapy who want to move into research work with other fields, that we can share these ideas and grow.

NL: The usefulness of knowing a lot about a certain field is becoming less important than the usefulness of knowing a nice chunk of other fields. That is, if you are an expert in your field and you know nothing about the other field, your capacity to enter into useful dialogue is pretty much zero. I think that this is how the expert approach is going to morph into the collaborative approach.

Q: What questions would you like to ask each other?

RZ: What are you looking forward to in this relationship with the Department of OS/OT?

NL: I would like to understand better what is the impact of occupation, and it would be interesting as an expert on brain imaging to understand how could we possibly make imaging studies that could address occupation. What kind of occupation can a person do well inside an MRI machine for us to measure? You know, metal-working would probably not be a good choice [both laugh], so basically, that would be a challenge.

RZ: Now, your turn.

NL: Do you feel quantification is something troubling or something to look forward to, for example, if you could say, “This person is feeling happy 1.75?”

RZ: I’m a traditional quantitative researcher, so it’s never bothered me to attempt to measure something and describe it quantitatively. What I feel is, how you are getting that number to define happiness? That’s one of the reasons I enjoy learning about the qualitative research. It appears to give us a different view, and so we’ve needed to learn to present it as having its own validity, in terms of, “If I’m asking you what you think, you’re telling me what you think.” It’s multiple forms that will really lead to understanding.

NL: I think people have a sense of quantification. You say, “I feel a little happy,” “I feel happy,” “I feel very happy,” or “I am so happy today!”

RZ: Like a Likert scale.

NL: Yes. The thing is, one is personal quantification, while another is through a test you run and validate. Another is quantification through imaging, which is more direct physical quantification. The more direct physical quantification you have, the more you remove the interpretational aspect, but a lot of the interesting aspects of occupational science come exactly from your interaction with your interpretation.
Alumni News

Mary Foto, BS ’66, a former president of AOTA, was recently elected to a second term as co-chair of the American Medical Association Health Care Practitioners Advisory Committee (HCPAC) Review Board. In this high-profile position, Ms. Foto represents the interests of organizations for limited-license practitioners and other allied health professionals on the AMA’s Relative Value Update Committee, which in turn recommends the values submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for use in the Medicare Fee Schedule payment formula.

Medicare Fee Schedule payment to the Centers for Medicare and...Ms. Foto assists in the Value Update Committee, which in turn recommends the values submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for use in the Medicare Fee Schedule payment formula.

Births
Suzanne Barnett Mortimer-Crawford, BS ’99, MA ’01, who is the occupational therapist for outpatient pulmonary rehab at Los Robles Hospital in Thousand Oaks and reports she is “implementing Well Baby and Bladder Techniques in Children with Spina Bifida will investigate selected bowel and bladder interventions on both physiologic outcomes and quality-of-life measures for children ages 4-12. The study is led by principal investigator Robert Jacobs, MD, MPH, head of the Division of General Pediatrics at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA); USC OS/OT Assoc. Professor Ann Neville-Jan is a co-principal investigator. Included among the interdisciplinary research team are experts in epidemiology, nursing, occupational therapy, pediatrics, psychology and urology.

The team will examine current bowel and bladder techniques along two lines suggested by ICF classifications: Body Structure and Function (BSF) and Activity, Participation and Environmental (APE). To understand BSF factors, quantitative methods will be used to assess physiologic and functional outcomes. A more unusual approach is being taken to capture data about the APE factors. Children, their caregivers and health care providers will all take part in focus groups. This is an innovative approach to take with youngsters, who will meet in groups ages 5-7, 8-10 and 11-12. For the youngest children, play or play acting might be part of the communication.

“About 60 percent of the focus groups will be conducted in actual practices and looking at children’s self-esteem with regard to bowel and bladder care,” Dr. Neville-Jan explained. “For example, meeting with primary caregivers will help us find out how interventions recommended by physicians are carried out in the home. For a bowel management program, it’s recommended to sit on the toilet for an hour; is that realistic? What happens when a child goes to a birthday party? In school, a child goes to the nurse’s office to use a catheter. Not only does it take the child out of the typical routine, but it also raises questions among the other students: ‘Where are you going? Why?’ Those kinds of practices set the children apart and can be stigmatizing.”

The ultimate purpose of the study is to improve the health and well-being of children with spina bifida at an early age by identifying the most effective intervention strategies for preventing and/or managing associated urinary and bowel problems.

Congratulations to Dr. Lawlor, Dr. Mattingly and Dr. Neville-Jan!

USC OS/OT Awarded Two New Grants (Continued from page 1)

The anticipated outcomes of this project include descriptions of the knowledge and strategies families use to shape encounters and generate desirable outcomes; how practitioners, families and children develop and draw upon their history of shared endeavors; how families and practitioners challenge and attempt to disconfirm stereotypes; and the cultural resources practitioners and families draw upon.

Children with Spina Bifida
Despite a prevalence rate of 1 in every 1,000 births in the U.S., spina bifida is a condition about which the general public has little awareness. Although urinary incontinence, constipation and bowel incontinence are nearly universal, a urologic standard of care for children with spina bifida has not been established because little data is available to evaluate the efficacy and safety of therapies that are currently used, and significant variation in care exists from region to region and practitioner to practitioner. Beyond these issues are occupational and social implications; incontinence can lead to significant limitations of activity and participation in life, as well as exposure to potentially embarrassing situations with peers.

Funded by the CDC for $1.125 million over three years, Effectiveness of Bowel and Bladder Techniques in Children with Spina Bifida will investigate selected bowel and bladder interventions on both physiologic outcomes and quality-of-life measures for children ages 4-12. The study is led by principal investigator Robert Jacobs, MD, MPH, head of the Division of General Pediatrics at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA); USC OS/OT Assoc. Professor Ann Neville-Jan is a co-principal investigator. Included among the interdisciplinary research team are experts in epidemiology, nursing, occupational therapy, pediatrics, psychology and urology.

The team will examine current bowel and bladder techniques along two lines suggested by ICF classifications: Body Structure and Function (BSF) and Activity, Participation and Environmental (APE). To understand BSF factors, quantitative methods will be used to assess physiologic and functional outcomes. A more unusual approach is being taken to capture data about the APE factors. Children, their caregivers and health care providers will all take part in focus groups. This is an innovative approach to take with youngsters, who will meet in groups ages 5-7, 8-10 and 11-12. For the youngest children, play or play acting might be part of the communication.

“The focus groups are a way of getting at actual practices and looking at children’s self-esteem with regard to bowel and bladder care,” Dr. Neville-Jan explained. “For example, meeting with primary caregivers will help us find out how interventions recommended by physicians are carried out in the home. For a bowel management program, it’s recommended to sit on the toilet for an hour; is that realistic? What happens when a child goes to a birthday party? In school, a child goes to the nurse’s office to use a catheter. Not only does it take the child out of the typical routine, but it also raises questions among the other students: ‘Where are you going? Why?’ Those kinds of practices set the children apart and can be stigmatizing.”

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Congratulations to Dr. Lawlor, Dr. Mattingly and Dr. Neville-Jan!
Jan Matsutsuyu 1934-2005

Janice Setsuko Matsutsuyu, a skilled occupational therapist, a community leader and a long-time friend of USC OS/OT, passed away June 1st at the age of 71.

Jan received her BS in occupational therapy from the University of Pennsylvania and her MA in occupational therapy from USC. The majority of Jan’s career was at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute (NPI), where she began in 1961 as the Associate Chief and assumed the position of Chief of Rehabilitation Services in 1968, a post she held until her retirement in 1992. She was also the Program Director of the Adult and Geriatric Day Treatment Program at NPI.

Jan contributed significantly to her profession. In addition to her work at NPI, she was a clinical instructor in occupational therapy at USC, published articles and book chapters, and presented scholarly materials at OT conferences and workshops. One of Jan’s many achievements was developing the Interest Checklist, a tool used to assess past, present and future interests. She also served in state and national leadership positions, including as Vice President of the Southern California Occupational Therapy Association, Secretary of the Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC), Chair of the Los Angeles Leadership Forum, Scholarship Chair for the California Foundation for Occupational Therapy (CFOT), member of the editorial board of The American Journal of Occupational Therapy, Chair of the Council on Practice for AOTA, and Chair of the USC Occupational Therapy Board of Councilors.

Beyond her professional life, Jan was a multifaceted woman with varied interests which included the arts, theatre, travel and cooking. In her retirement years, Jan continued to serve as a mentor to colleagues and students via her scholarship work with CFOT. Most of all, she treasured her family and wide circle of friends, particularly her grandnephews and grandnieces who knew Jan simply as “Auntie Setsu.”

Jan was a graduate of the USC Occupational Therapy program, and well-known for her publications in the field. “She will be greatly missed by the countless number of people whose lives she touched,” Jan’s niece Vivian Matsutsuyu said.

Dr. Florence Clark shared this fond remembrance of Jan:

“I’ve known Jan since 1993, when we met in the airport on our way to Seattle, where I was to deliver my Slagle Lecture. I felt at that moment that we would connect deeply in the future, and my intuition was correct. Jan supported the Department’s vision for occupational therapy and gave us much needed, greatly appreciated help. I asked her to join the Board of Councilors when it was instituted in 1997, and she accepted wholeheartedly, serving as chairperson from 2000 to 2002 and as a member for nearly 9 years. During that time, Jan was a Charter Donor to the Center for Lifestyle Redesign, a project to which she gave her input as well as financial support. She also attended USC homecoming events, took part in Department student activities and advised on many important developments in the Department’s steady evolution over the last decade, including the Occupational Science Symposia and the Independent Health Professions’ restructuring process.

“Jan was held in high esteem by her colleagues and had a well-deserved reputation for personal integrity and altruism. She generously gave of her time, talents and wisdom to provide guidance to our department, and participated with enthusiasm and steadfast commitment. Her leadership and dedication, as well as her friendship, were deeply treasured by me and by many others in the Department of Occupational Therapy, and, I’m certain, by the Board of Councilors.

“It was a joy to know Jan Matsutsuyu, with her kind heart and keen vision, and I will miss her.”

Jan is survived by her brothers, Ichiro George (Emiko), Toshiro (Sachi) and Yuzo (Gene Yaeko) Matsutsuyu; nephews Bruce (Kerry) and Keith (Laurie) Matsutsuyu; nieces Vivian (Rafiki McDougald) Matsutsuyu and Stephanie (Jim) Kato, and five grandnephews and grandnieces. Donations for a scholarship fund in Jan’s name may be made to The California Foundation for Occupational Therapy and sent to: Linda Florey, President, CFOT, 4040 Grandview Blvd. #43, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

Linda Florey, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA also contributed to this tribute.
USC HAS ALWAYS RELIED ON THE GENEROSITY OF OUR FRIENDS TO SUPPORT THE UNIVERSITY’S MISSION OF EXCELLENCE. ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR WAYS TO MAKE YOUR SUPPORT FELT IS WITH A GIFT ANNUITY. NOT ONLY ARE THERE AN ARRAY OF TAX BENEFITS, BUT YOU CAN ALSO RECEIVE STEADY, SECURE PAYMENTS FOR LIFE — OFTEN WITH HIGHER YIELDS THAN THOSE YOU’D RECEIVE FROM OTHER INVESTMENTS. YOU’LL EVEN ENJOY THE REWARDS OF GETTING OLDER, WITH RATES THAT INCREASE BASED UPON YOUR AGE. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SPECIFIC BENEFITS TO YOUR SITUATION, CONTACT JACKIE MARDIROSSIAN IN THE USC DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AT JMARDIRO@USC.EDU OR 323-442-2811.
Ph.D. Program Update

Ph.D. Candidate Brings OS Perspective to Interdisciplinary Studies

Capitalizing on an interest in the relationship between culture, occupation and public health, USC OS/OT Ph.D. student Cristine Carrier, a fellow in Socially Responsive Research, has entered USC’s Ph.D. Certificate program in Urban and Global Studies. Part of the USC Urban Initiative, the Certificate in Urban and Global Studies provides doctoral students from diverse professional and academic disciplines an intense intellectual interdisciplinary education, research and training experience focused on cities in global context.

Ms. Carrier’s interest in public health policy grew during a trip she took to Botswana in sub-Saharan Africa to learn more about issues surrounding the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, and the failure of current efforts to reverse this trend. Despite public health awareness campaigns, Botswana still has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world (about 37% of its population).

Ms. Carrier in Botswana on Kgale Hill, outside Gaborone

Even though HIV is an infectious disease, it could also be considered a lifestyle disease that doesn’t easily respond to large-scale public health campaigns, much as similar campaigns in the U.S. have had limited effectiveness in curbing the obesity and diabetes epidemic,” Ms. Carrier observed. While in Botswana, she investigated organizations that might potentially partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS, eventually collaborating and consulting for the Botswana Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (BONEPWA). Ms. Carrier also visited occupational therapy clinics in the country (see photo).

The Urban and Global Studies courses relate well to what Ms. Carrier learned in Botswana. The Certificate program gives a framework for students looking at the challenges of living in urban settings, and HIV/AIDS is one such challenge. For example, although Botswana is a small country, about one-third of the nation’s population lives in its capital city of Gaborone. In addition, HIV transmission rates are highest in cities, and there is a great deal of urban to rural transmission.

Of the interdisciplinary courses that are involved in Certificate studies, Ms. Carrier noted that “part of the program is learning different perspectives and learning to coordinate and complement each other. The other students are from Geography, Planning and Development, Education, Social Work and American Studies, so everyone has a different lens they’re bringing to the program. As an occupational scientist, I bring my unique understanding of the relationship between occupation, daily living and health and well-being.”

Ms. Carrier plans to complete her Certificate in Spring 2007 and her USC OS/OT Ph.D. that December.

Taiwanese Student Explores Disability Issues for Recent Immigrants

More than 10.5 million of the 55 million children in K-12 in the U.S. are members of families that have immigrated to this country. The majority of these children are of Latino or Asian heritage, and, for many, English is not their native language. It is projected that by 2015, as many as one of every three children in the U.S. will be living in a household headed by a person who is a new or recent immigrant. Currently, minority students, including newly immigrated children, are over-represented in special education programs. A common obstacle to securing appropriate services for these children is the unfamiliarity immigrant parents have with locating resources in their new country, and subsequent difficulty maneuvering successfully in this often perplexing system.

It is this topic that Yu-Ren Su, an international student and OT practitioner from Taiwan, is exploring as part of his Ph.D. program in the USC OS/OT Department. Mr. Su is researching how foreign-born parents with children with disabilities survive and construct their lives in the United States. By using primarily qualitative strategies, his goal is to add to the understanding of the disability experience and the special problems experienced by recent immigrants, and to help affect change in policies and beliefs both in the U.S. and Taiwan about migration and disability issues. Mr. Su believes that occupational scientists should be actively concerned with social issues such as disability studies in order to help keep society progressing forward. “I came to the U.S. because I was not satisfied with the overall social attitude toward the disability community in Taiwan,” he explained. “I am eager to absorb Western experience and tailor a new program for my own country. The USC Ph.D. program is the best place for these studies.”

Among USC OS/OT faculty members Mr. Su credits with supporting his research are his mentor, Dr. Ann Neville-Jan, and Dr. Diane Kellegrew, as well as Dr. Harlan Hahn, a USC Political Science Professor and disabilities studies expert.
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Ms. Dunn Goes to Washington (And Lobbies for OT)

by Claudia Dunn

After finishing fieldwork this summer, I was able to join in AOTA’s Capitol Hill Kick-Off Day. I was fortunate to pound the Congressional pavement for California with Gigi Smith, OTAC’s newly appointed Government Affairs Chair. I met with staff people in the offices of Sens. Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, and Rep. Howard Berman. We focused on asking for co-sponsorship of three pieces of legislation: the $1,500 therapy cap moratorium, the 75% rule regarding diagnosis requirements in rehab facilities, and proposed Medicaid reform that would endanger group and preventive therapy. It was a great learning experience and a lot of fun.

I will be starting the USC OS/OT Ph.D. program in January and am now starting to gear up. In the meantime, my first act of advocacy in the role of Student Liaison for the San Gabriel Valley chapter of OTAC was sharing my Washington story and photos with my fellow members. Perhaps other students and alums will get the “fire in the belly” about advocating for occupational therapy as well!
Save the Date — 18th Occupational Science Symposium in March

The 18th Occupational Science Symposium, which will focus on the growing health care and academic trend toward “Interdisciplinary Collaborations,” is scheduled for Friday, March 3, 2006. The program, which will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., will be held on the University Park Campus at the Davidson Conference Center.

The annual Wilma West Lecture, honoring an occupational therapist who has contributed in significant ways to our understanding of occupation, will also be part of the day’s activities. The USC OS/OT Department is excited to announce that this year’s honoree is Linda Tickle-Degnen, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA. Dr. Tickle-Degnen is an Associate Professor at Boston University, where she teaches research methods, research seminars, and therapeutic motivation, and works with graduate students in studying expressive behavior and the development of rapport between therapists and their clients. Her current research focus is on persons with Parkinson’s disease. A USC OS/OT graduate, Dr. Tickle-Degnen is widely published and is the Associate Editor for Evidence-Based Practice (see related story, page 5) of The American Journal of Occupational Therapy.

More information on the Occupational Science Symposium will be available in January through the USC OS/OT office at (323) 442-2850, or e-mail Peter Wittrock at wittrock@usc.edu.

Let’s Keep in Touch!

We’d like to hear from you and share your news in an upcoming issue of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy. Please mail this completed form to: USC Dept. of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, Attn: Jackie Mardirossian, 1540 Alcazar St., CHP-133, Los Angeles, CA 90089-9003; fax to 323-442-1540; or e-mail to jmardiro@usc.edu.

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I’d like to read about the following in an upcoming newsletter:

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USC Shows Strong Presence at AOTA, OTAC

One of the great benefits of attending the annual conferences of AOTA and OTAC is the opportunity to learn from and network with alumni, faculty and current students of USC OS/OT. This was certainly true in May, when AOTA held its 85th Annual Conference and Expo in Long Beach, CA. The many USC-affiliated presenters and/or contributing authors at AOTA included faculty members Dr. Nancy Bagatell, Dr. Florence Clark, Deborah B. Pitts, Dr. Gelya Frank, Dr. Jeanne Jackson, Dr. Diane Hammon Kellegrew, Dr. Mary C. Lawlor, Dr. Cheryl Mattingly, Jaynee F. Taguchi-Meyer, Dr. Ann Neville-Jan, Dr. L. Diane Parham, Faryl Saliman Reingold, Dr. Katie Salles, Dr. Mary Kay Wolfe, Prof. Emerita Elizabeth J. Yerxa and Prof. Emerita Ruth Zemke; and USC alumni Dr. Eric Asaba, Michal Atkins, Rani Bechar, Michele Berro, Amber Bertram, Christy Billock, Jeanine Blanchard, Lisa Deshaies, Lisa Dittbenner, Aaron Eakman, Dr. Shanpin Fanchiang, Stacy Frauwirth, Kathleen Gross, Colleen Harvey, Esther Huecker, Allison Joe, Heather J. Kitching, Dr. Linda Florey, Candice S. Huang, Dr. Susan H. Knox, Dr. Ferol Menks Ludwig, Wendy Mack, Zoe Mailloux, Deborah Mandel, Dr. Ann E. McDonald, Stephanie Mielke, Linda Marie Muccitelli, Bonnie J. Nakasui, Terri Chew Nishimura, Neeha Patel, Dr. Heidi McHugh Pendleton, Terry Peralta, Dr. Claudia Peyton, Shana C. Phipps, Dr. Loree A. Primeau, Pam Roberts, Dr. Dory Sabata, Renee A. Soderlund, Yu-Ren Su, Lora Woo, Dr. Wendy Wood and Elizabeth Wyckoff.

What made AOTA really fun was the raucous reception USC hosted for alums at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. No less than the USC Trojan Marching Band cheered us on, accompanied by some familiar-looking Song and Cheerleaders (see photos). USC OS/OT will be in great force at the OTAC Conference in Santa Clara, too. Presenters at OTAC include faculty member Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer and USC alumni Michele Berro, Sarah Field, Zoe Mailloux, Dr. Esther Marin, Judy Matsuoka-Sarina, Diane Mayfield, Pat Nagaishi and Dr. Heidi McHugh Pendleton.

Congratulations to all these great USC people on their accomplishments! Be sure to join the Trojan contingent at the next professional conference. Fight on!