With a history including memorable presentations by interdisciplinary scholars including Jane Goodall, the 22nd annual Occupational Science Symposium took a new approach to programming: all the presentations were by scholars doing research in the Division. This “homegrown” theme allowed 15 scholars to introduce their areas of expertise and discuss several of the extramurally-funded research projects currently in the Division’s portfolio.

Florence Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, welcomed the more than 100 attendees, explaining that one of the goals of the day was to encourage synergies for collaboration. She noted that the Division is growing dramatically, with 61 faculty members, 31 of whom are full-time and about equally split between clinical and tenure-track.

William Morgan, Ph.D. (see related story, page 8), was keynote speaker, addressing “Occupations, Fulsome Engagement, and the Good Life.” He explored the question of what makes an occupationally fulfilling life from a literally philosophical point of view. This is a normative question, that is, one where answers must be reached through weighing arguments and reasoning, but, unlike purely subjective questions, some answers are better than others. He used Harry Frankfurt’s definition of “whole-hearted action” as being something that creates engagement and “depth.” Negative activities that might still meet Csikszentmihalyi’s definition of “flow,” such as gambling, might not be satisfying because they lack “worth.” Thus, truly satisfying occupations are grounded in values as well as being challenging.

Mary Lawlor, Sc.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Cheryl Mattingly, Ph.D., Lamita Jacobs-Huey, Ph.D., and Olga Solomon, Ph.D. all presented on aspects of the Division’s Boundary Crossing research, now in its 14th year. Dr. Lawlor described that the study is a longitudinal study with a phenomenological and narrative approach to capture “lives in motion” of a cohort of African American children with illness or disability and their families as they work with health care providers. Dr. Mattingly addressed how hope and trust arise in clinical encounters. Families must sometimes “find strength to hope,” and other times seek out therapists who are willing to have hope for a future outcome for their children with illness or disability. The clinical encounter, then, becomes a “subplot” in a transformative journey in which hope changes over time in response to the journey. Dr. Jacobs-Huey told the moving story of her relationship with one particular research participant, a young boy named Desmond who passed away during the study. She related having to contend with Desmond’s death in both affective and analytical terms. Dr. Solomon outlined her new study centering on the clinical experiences and social networking resources of African American families whose children receive an autism diagnosis (see Fall 2009 Newsletter).

Four professors addressed research with rehabilitation populations. Ann Neville-Jan, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, shared findings from her qualitative research into the daily experiences of children with spina bifida related to bowel and bladder incontinence. This often leads to significant limitations in activity and participation that vary with the age of the child. Trudy Mallinson, Ph.D., OTR/L, NZROT (see related story, page 3), also discussed the issue of incontinence and challenges it can cause, examining its role for the older rehabilitation population. Often, incontinence is a deciding factor when planning discharge for in-patients to another post-acute care setting. Dr. Clark presented on the current study of cost-effectiveness and efficacy of a Lifestyle Redesign® intervention to prevent pressure ulcer occurrence for people with spinal cord injuries. Erna

(Continued on page 7)
Message from the Associate Dean and Chair

As a member of the wider academic occupational therapy community, our goal at USC has been to enrich scholarship and practice in our field across the nation and worldwide, and forge a translational link between research and practice. Our history is rich with leaders who identified challenges in people’s lives and had the vision and courage to help them in innovative ways. Our respect for the past can only be matched by our passion for the future of occupational science and occupational therapy. In concert with the increasing sophistication of occupational therapy scholarship, by promoting practice, expanding evidence, enriching education, and developing diversity, we fortify the profession.

Occupational science, the science of everyday living, has not only enriched our understanding of occupation, but has also provided evidence that occupational therapy is cost-effective. In today’s world in which there is a huge demand for science to be relevant, occupational science is an exemplar. There is a direct link between our evidence-based research programs and the interventions we are incubating to enhance practice. For example, we are now conducting another large-scale, randomized controlled trial to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of occupational therapy in reducing pressure ulcer risk in people with spinal cord injury. And by collecting outcomes data, we are demonstrating that occupational therapy interventions, such as Lifestyle Redesign®, provide scientifically-grounded solutions for people seeking positive changes in their lives such as weight loss, decrease in chronic pain, or reduction of age-related declines.

The Division’s contributions to the profession’s evidence base stem from the nearly 14 million dollars in extramural research funding we have received from the National Institutes of Health, Department of Education and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. By ensuring that occupational science is extramurally supported, we have paved the way for occupational therapy faculty nationwide to secure large-scale grant funding. The continued pursuit of extramurally funded grants represents a critical strategy for guaranteeing that the quality of people’s lives will continue to be improved through occupational therapy. In addition to its role in fortifying occupational therapy practice, our profession’s research has broader societal implications. The strong evidence base we are generating is a repository for convincing other health care professionals and policy leaders of the unique contribution we make to the health of all people.

Today, we continue our investment in doctoral education to provide academic and public policy leadership. Through our OTD program, we prepare leaders in education, administration, clinical research and advanced practice. But once again, in response to a critical need, we have launched a new program: our Ph.D. career scientist immersion program, which equips budding scientists with the foundational skills to be successful in acquiring extramurally funded research programs. Now in its fourth year, the program is fully financially supported, requires full-time student commitment, and entails extensive immersion in our NIH and other extramurally funded research programs. Its impact will be apparent nationwide as its graduates complete postdoctoral training and then acquire faculty positions in those settings where their advanced skill set and ambition are sorely needed to ensure sustainability. We hope that our emphasis on doctoral level preparation, including the relatively new career scientist immersion program, becomes an important resource for reducing the faculty shortage in occupational therapy nationwide.

Occupational therapy is grounded in diversity. By improving performance, preventing illness and disability, and promoting adaptation to life changes, we help all people, including those with disabilities, live healthier, happier and more productive lives. Both USC’s research and educational programs demonstrate the depth of our commitment to diversity. Our research boldly addresses pressing social issues. We confront entrenched health disparities in underserved, ethnically diverse groups by providing data-based understandings of the barriers that limit access to occupational therapy and overall quality health care. We develop cost-effective interventions for those who are underinsured and at high risk for health disparities. We help people living with disabilities to avoid secondary complications, to be successful in the workplace and improve their overall quality of life. Through our science, we tackle complex problems and develop ground breaking solutions. From spinal cord injured victims of gang-related violence to children with disabilities, from low-income, ethnically diverse older people struggling to stay independent to individuals with mental illness, we help people live more satisfying lives through development of creative interventions that take cultural contexts fully into account.

By the time you receive this Newsletter, I will have been inaugurated as President of the American Occupational Therapy Association. I am grateful to many colleagues, students and friends who have helped make this great honor possible for me. I intend to apply the lessons we’ve learned at USC to our activities in AOTA. I look forward to the opportunity this will afford me to help fortify the future of our profession as we work toward enacting AOTA’s Centennial Vision through leadership, research and innovation.
Dr. Trudy Mallinson Appointed as Assistant Professor

Occupational therapist and health services researcher Trudy Mallinson, Ph.D., OTR/L, NZROT has joined the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy as Assistant Professor. Originally from Christchurch, New Zealand, Dr. Mallinson earned an MSc in Occupational Therapy and Ph.D. in Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and had a post-doctoral fellowship in Health Services Research and Health Policy at Northwestern University. Most recently, she was Associate Director at the Center for Rehabilitation Outcomes Research at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

Question: What influenced you to come to USC from Chicago?

Dr. Mallinson: It was really a number of things. USC has a great reputation as one of the best schools for occupational therapy. In addition, I had been doing work in Chicago on health promotion in people with arthritis using some of the ideas of Lifestyle Redesign®. The opportunity to learn more about Lifestyle Redesign® from Dr. Clark and her team was definitely appealing. Other factors were that I had been working in health services research and moving back to a department of occupational therapy was appealing. Finally, 17 years of Chicago winters – you can’t beat the upgrade in weather in L.A.!

Q: What kinds of research will you be involved with here at USC?

Dr. Mallinson: I bring some research with me related to measuring function in post-acute care. One project equates the IRF-PAI, MDS and OASIS instruments, which are required by Medicare. I am also a team member for CARE instrument development and payment reform demonstration projects. Funded by Medicare, these projects are developing a new single instrument for post-acute care and examining payment alternatives. I also bring continuing collaborations with colleagues at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and Brooks Rehabilitation Hospital in Florida on urinary incontinence and pelvic floor pain in women. In addition, I am starting to work with the Well Elderly Study II and PUPS teams. I am hoping to take some of the knowledge gained from these two studies to develop a grant proposal that would study the effectiveness of a lifestyle intervention in preventing poor outcomes (such as falls and nursing home admissions) for older women with urinary incontinence.

Q: How did you first become interested in instrument development?

Dr. Mallinson: I was at UIC when Ann Fisher and Gary Kielhofner were starting to use Rasch Analysis in the development of various instruments they had been working on. This approach seemed to make a lot of practical and intuitive sense to me but also made me realize how poorly we have often measured the outcomes of our practice in the past. I took several classes with Ben Wright and Mike Linacre at the University of Chicago and had the opportunity to work on a number of measurement projects with Gary Kielhofner and Craig Velozo during my Master’s and Ph.D.

Q: What do you most enjoy about doing research?

Dr. Mallinson: I would say what motivates me is trying to improve the lives of people with chronic disabilities by trying to better understand how practice achieves meaningful, practical results – but first we’ve got to be able to measure and describe those results.

Q: What would you say is your goal or passion as an educator?

Dr. Mallinson: I am really excited about the opportunity to begin working with Ph.D. students. I have not had that opportunity before and think I will really enjoy learning from and with them. I am enjoying teaching evidence-based practice to the entry-level students. Increasingly in practice, clinicians are being asked to provide care that research has shown to be effective. Helping prepare future clinicians to work in that environment is an exciting opportunity.

Q: What originally attracted you to the field of occupational therapy?

Dr. Mallinson: I grew up in a family that had strong values around creativity and generativity. When I found out about occupational therapy, it just seemed like a natural fit.

Q: What drew you to the U.S. for graduate school, and then to stay here?

Dr. Mallinson: Honestly, my first choice would have been Sweden but I just couldn’t see learning the language and taking graduate school classes at the same time! I had been interested in the concept of volition and had been having long conversations with a colleague about Gary Kielhofner’s article, The Demise of Diffidence. UIC seemed like it would be a good fit. I didn’t know anything about Chicago, but it did seem like I could get the kind of graduate experience in occupational therapy I was looking for there. And graduate school takes a long time. When you finally get out of school, you realize that this has become home. In addition, the U.S. has provided me with so many opportunities to grow as an individual.
Dr. Carolyn Baum Lectures at USC, Meets with Faculty

In January, the Division played host to a visit by Dr. Carolyn M. Baum, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, currently Professor of Occupational Therapy and Neurology and Director of the Program in Occupational Therapy at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. A past Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lecturer, Dr. Baum was President of AOTA from 1982 to 1983, and again from 2004 to 2007.

During her visit, Dr. Baum lectured on “Cognition and Stroke,” a talk attended by both students from the Division and students from USC’s Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy. She also toured USC facilities including the USC Institute for Creative Technologies, USC University Hospital and the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice. Faculty of the Division were able to meet with Dr. Baum, as well as to participate in a discussion on “Thoughts on Strategic Planning for Occupational Science” at the Center for Occupation and Lifestyle Redesign®. This forum was followed by a reception at the Center.

“It was so inspiring and informative to have Dr. Baum with us,” said Florence Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor and Associate Dean and Chair of the Division. “She is a magnificent leader and has taken our profession to extremely high levels of excellence. The founders of our profession would be so very proud of her work!”

Students Seek Authenticity to Understand Disability

If an occupational therapist sympathetically says, “I know just how you feel,” is it really possible to grasp a client’s situation fully? Or, as occupational therapy students might wonder, does one help a client plan strategies to live life fully unless one knows “just how it feels” for a client with physical challenges to take part in everyday activities? This is the goal of all practitioners who follow the principles of gaining cultural competence when working with people who have different cultural values, but also pertains to understanding daily living for people with chronic physical disabilities.

Until this year, students in the first year of the Division’s MA-II program spent 24 hours in a wheelchair to simulate disability as part of OT 452: Occupational Therapy, Theory and Practice/Physical Disabilities. However, feedback from past students and research that has found that people living in the disability community generally do not support such simulations led the faculty in the Division to suggest a change in this student experience.

Samia H. Rafeedie, OTD, OTR/L, professor for the course, explained that “because the simulation was for such a short duration and the students had no diagnosed medical conditions, they came away from the simulation with feelings of frustration and sympathy, which came through in their reflection papers. They do not get a sense of how people adapt their lives to overcome social and environmental barriers. They did not apprehend the positive aspects of disability from this simulation.”

“I felt like I was giving a false impression when going into the community,” recalled Barbara Leung, a 2nd-year MA-II student. “I could not fully identify with the experience of a person with a disability because the context is different. It is more about the mechanics of the wheelchair than the experience of the disability. I learned more about environmental barriers than the lived experience.”

To gain a more accurate understanding of the experience of a person with physical disabilities, Dr. Rafeedie’s students engaged in alternative approaches such as discussing the debate over simulations, reading relevant autobiographical books and articles and watching videos to gain additional perspectives on the lived experience of physical disability.

Second-year MA-II student Nicole Wilson, who uses a wheelchair, discussed her experiences with students in the course, addressing both the challenges and the positive aspects of living with a disability. “Lecturing to the class was the most effective way to translate the knowledge the Division was hoping to capture,” Ms. Wilson observed. “The original wheelchair simulation assignment was structured in a way that could only result in negative connotations about people who use chairs for mobility. The students were given little to no wheelchair training, and this was unrealistic because chair users experience months or years of rigorous training, usually with an occupational therapist. The simulation was set up for failure, not positive education.”

“I felt that it was actually better to hear from someone like Nicole who has a disability instead of pretending,” reflected Amy Oettle, 1st-year occupational therapy student. “It is more accurate because a person with a disability would have had training as well as experience from managing their daily life.”
Division Students Present Posters at Research Day

The Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC recently held its annual Research Day, bringing together faculty and students from the Ostrow School and the Divisions of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy. Among 112 posters at the event were 14 entries from Division students, as well as 10 from Division faculty. Student posters were eligible for judging; Division honorees were Megan Chang (1st place, Graduate Postdoctoral Trainee category) for “Using electrodermal activity to understand sensory behaviors in children with autism,” and Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy category winners Leah Stein (1st place) for “Oral Care and Sensory Sensitivities in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder,” and Sook-Lei Liew (2nd place) for “The Neural Correlates of Observing Physical Differences and Empathy Correlations.”


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B onnie Nakasuji, BS ’74, MA ’94, OTD ’08, will co-present with faculty member Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer, MA ’99, OTD ’06, a poster on creating culturally-relevant learning experiences in international fieldwork sites at the WFOT Congress in Santiago, Chile in May.

Nancie Furgang, MA ’78, is the first occupational therapist to be named a Fellow of the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA). Her current position is Director, Developmental Care Program, Department of Pediatrics/Neonatology at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. She is also a clinical faculty member at the School of Medicine, teaching in UNM’s graduate program in occupational therapy.

Gail Alcorn McGonigle, MA ’81, wrote the book Dad’s Home Alone: Caring for Your Elderly Parent, released in late 2009 by BookSurge Publishing.

Farley Hom, BS ’94, and Shawn Phipps, BS ’97, were interviewed in a story entitled Wanted: Men for Occupational Therapy Jobs, that was aired on NPR in January 2010. The audio of the interview as well as a written transcript can be found online at http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122970930.

Phyllis Meltzer, Ph.D. ’97, was invited to present a stand-up comedy routine at the SSO-USA Conference in New Haven, CT in October 2009. Current students in October 2009. Current students were Aaron Bonsall, Amanda C. Foran (two papers, one a co-presentation), Sook-Lei Liew (with Lisa Aziz-Zadeh, Ph.D.) and Beth Pyatak (with Florence Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA). Alumni presenters were Karla Ausderaau, MA ’00, Ph.D. ’09, Thomas Mernar, Ph.D. ’08, Etsuko Odawara, MA ’98, Ph.D. ’06, Kimberly Wilkinson, MA ’01, Ph.D. ’09. Abstracts of all papers are downloadable in PDF form at http://www.sso-usa.org/prior_conference.htm#EighthAnnual.

Fifteen current OTD and Ph.D. students presented posters at the Ostrow School Research Day (see related story, page 5) and the Pi Theta Epsilon Research Day (see related story, page 10).

Births
Karen Park, MA ’02, gave birth to daughter Amelie Grace Park on February 8, 2010. Amelie weighed 7 lbs., 5 oz., and measured 19 inches tall.

Elizabeth Kim, MA ’09, gave birth to daughter Lillian Gyu-ri Kim on December 2, 2009. Lillian weighed 7 lbs., 9 oz., and measured 19 inches tall.

Jennifer Glover, current Ph.D. student, gave birth to daughter Gillian Gray Glover on June 1, 2009. Gillian weighed 8 lbs., 2 oz., and measured 20 inches tall.

Deaths
Donabelle Casey, BS ’54, passed away in Cedar Falls, IA on March 29, 2009 from complications from a stroke. She served in the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War, later retiring with the rank of Captain in 1984. Ms. Casey was also active with the California Elks Club. Survivors include her sister, Marie Cook, and numerous nieces, nephews, grandnephews, great-grandnieces and great-grandnephews.
Nancy Darling 1941-2009

The Division family lost a friend with the passing of Nancy Darling at her home in Long Beach, CA on December 6, 2009. She was 68. Raised in New Jersey, Ms. Darling earned an MA from the Division in 1968, after graduating from Connecticut College, where she studied zoology. Ms. Darling’s career as an occupational therapist and supervisor included affiliations with Rancho Los Amigos, Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital and LA County-USC Medical Center. Nature and wildlife remained a lifelong interest for Ms. Darling. She was an avid bicyclist and hiker for many years, and continued to be active in the Canyon Explorers Club and the Sierra Club. Ms. Darling travelled extensively throughout Africa, Asia and, last August, Papua New Guinea. “Nancy Darling was a dear friend of mine,” reflected Florence Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA. “She embodied the occupational therapy spirit by truly caring for others and being fully engaged in the world of activities she loved. Our memory of her will always be cherished in the Division.”

Ph.D. Students Publish, Present Papers and Posters

With its reputation as one of the top programs in the nation reaffirmed every year, the Division consistently attracts outstanding students to pursue OTDs (see related story, page 9) and Ph.D.s in occupational science. A key measure confirming the success of the Division’s Ph.D. scholars is the high number of publications, presentations and honors they have earned.

In 2008 to 2009, our Ph.D. students presented five posters, 12 papers, two short courses and one preconference institute. Organizations hosting presentations by Division students include AOTA, American Public Health Association (APHA), Cognitive Neuroscience Society, Gerontological Society of America (GSA), International Meeting for Autism Research (IMFAR), Society for Neuroscience, SSO-USA and WFOT. Ten papers submitted during the year are under review, two are in revision and five were published or are in press, including a book chapter. Among honors bestowed on Division Ph.D. students (see related story, page 6), Sook-Lei Liew was one of four students nationwide to win a highly competitive National Science Foundation Fellowship. Jess Holguin received the Cornelia Meyers Writing Award from AOTA for his article Occupational Therapy and the Journal Citation Reports: 10-Year Performance Trajectories, published in the January/February 2009 issue of American Journal of Occupational Therapy.

Occupational Science Symposium (Continued from page 1)

Blanche, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA elaborated on how the pressure ulcer prevention program was manualized for use in the study. Manualization creates guidelines for delivery of an intervention that contribute to fidelity during research, as well as describing underlying theoretical models and treatment principles and strategies.

After lunch, Sharon Cermak, Ed.D., FAOTA, delivered the Wilma West Lecture. Her topic was “Promoting Physical Activity and Participation of Children with Disabilities.” Dr. Cermak observed that the five “shoulds” Dr. Wilma West identified in her 1968 Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lecture — i.e., occupational therapists should identify with the field of health service rather than “medicine,” enlarge from therapist to health agent, think about prevention, think about the socioeconomic/cultural origins of disease and dysfunction, and serve in settings outside the hospital — are still valid goals for the profession today.

Presentations on neuroscience and sensory integration began with Dr. Blanche’s introduction to current news in the field, including the updating of the SIPT by a team including Dr. Blanche and Dr. Cermak. Megan Chang, Ph.D., OTR/L, provided insight into her current research that uses measures of electrodermal activity (formerly called “galvanic skin response”) to learn whether children with autism have characteristic sympathetic nervous system activity. Doctoral student Sook-Lei Liew, MA, OTR/L talked about her research using functional MRIs to study how the brain reacts when one sees others do motor activities, including the reactions of people without limbs.

Aspects of the Well Elderly Study II were discussed by Dr. Clark, Jeanne Jackson, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Chih-Ping Chou, Ph.D., and Barbara J. Cherry, Ph.D. Dr. Clark provided an overview. Dr. Jackson explained what was learned about recruitment and retention of older ethnic minorities. Dr. Chou identified healthy activity as key to the therapeutic effect of the Lifestyle Redesign® intervention. Dr. Cherry detailed how cortisol measures were performed during the study. Findings included that typical versus atypical social support lowers cortisol levels.

After a brief Q&A with panelists, the Symposium concluded with presentation of a commemorative gift to the Division from Chris Gaskins, a Level II Master’s student at Howard University. Mr. Gaskins was one of four Howard students invited to the Symposium by the Division as part of the two universities’ partnership to foster diverse enrollment in USC’s occupational science Ph.D. program (see Spring 2008 Newsletter).
Sports Ethics and Occupation: A Conversation

Dr. William Morgan joined the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy as a Professor in 2007. He had previously been a Professor of Sports Studies at Ohio State University and Interim Director of the Center for Sport, Citizenship and Society Initiative at the John Glenn School of Public Policy at Ohio State University. A widely published scholar with an emphasis on ethical issues in sport and leisure, Dr. Morgan is a former president of the International Association of the Philosophy of Sport and was editor of that organization’s academic journal. As part of the Division at USC, Dr. Morgan is Director of the Ph.D. Program in Occupational Science as well as teaching courses. What follows is a Q&A with Dr. Morgan about his specialty field, the philosophy of sports ethics, and how this relates to occupational therapy and occupational science.

Question: Let’s start with basics: how would you define sports ethics?

Dr. Morgan: Ethics is concerned with normative judgments about how people ought to treat one another. That is, it considers what norms should govern people’s interactions with one another. When we plug sport into the picture, the question becomes, how should people treat one another in sport settings? Thus, questions of the following sort arise: What place, if any, does sport have in conceptions of the “good” life, the life most worth living? What constitutes fairness in sports? Is it morally permissible to use performance-enhancing drugs or genetic forms of enhancement to boost athletic performance? How is it possible to achieve sexual equality in sports for women, since our present sports privilege the male body, and so features such as power, strength, and speed? Should a civilized moral society accept sports like boxing in which the intent is to do harm to other human beings, or sports like hunting that involve the killing of sentient beings?

Q: What originally drew you to this topic as a subject of research? How did you develop a passion for sports ethics?

Dr. Morgan: I had a very inspiring teacher as an undergraduate who was interested in this area. I also realized this gave me a chance to do philosophy, often considered an arcane, highly technical and abstract subject, in the “real” world, where people don’t just care about what’s going on in the field or in the arena, but really care.

Q: What are some of the parameters of examining sports ethics from an academic perspective? In other words, how do scholars study sports ethics?

Dr. Morgan: There are a number of ethical theories that make for fascinating study when considered in a popular cultural context. For example, there is a normative theory called utilitarianism that asks us to consider the greatest good of the greatest number. There are also deontological ethical theories that focus on the aims and intentions of individual agents, and consequentialist ethical theories that argue it is the consequences of our actions, not the intentions that lie behind them, that matter most.

Q: What sorts of things do we as scholars learn by studying this area?

Dr. Morgan: We learn how to distinguish moral questions from other kinds of intellectual questions, how to think about ethical problems we run up against in our everyday lives and how to think critically about these issues.

Q: How did you originally make the connection between sports ethics and occupational therapy and occupational science?

Dr. Morgan: When I first met Dr. Florence Clark, she immediately opened my eyes to the connection between sports and other occupations that are of a similar perfectionist bent, that is, where excellence in one form or another is the point of the social practice. I also realized after reading the literature in occupational science just how similar some of the ethical quandaries were in both kinds of social practice. Further, there is the whole matter of health and well-being, which seem to figure prominently in both sports and occupations. Finally, it occurred to me that sport itself is a specific kind of occupation.

Q: In what ways do you feel that occupational therapy and occupational science students apply investigation of sports ethics to their overall educational program?

Dr. Morgan: The sport ethics course I teach is at the undergraduate level. So far the response has been very positive. Students seem to be very intrigued about discussing sports in a way many are not accustomed to, and in a way a lot of them never thought about before.

Q: We have recently seen the media report on the low numbers of men in occupational therapy as practitioners. Do you feel in a “minority” as an educator in occupational science because of your gender?

(Continued on page 12)
OTD News

The Division congratulates these students who will be awarded a Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD) degree this year. To earn the degree, each student developed an advanced clinical expertise or a project based on principles of occupational science. The new graduates are listed below, along with the titles of their OTD doctoral projects.

Nicole Buss – Program Evaluation for Group-Based Pediatric Programs
Katie Christiansen – Oral Sensitivities and Dental Care: Improving Oral Hygiene in Children with Disabilities
Mansi Dalal – Virtual Reality Games: An Assessment Tool
Celso Delgado Jr. – Enhancements for a Pressure Ulcer Prevention Intervention Program for People with Spinal Cord Injury
Emilia Dewi – Navigating Life after Breast Cancer
Andrea Heinrich – Advocacy Explained: A Beginner’s Guide to Advocacy for Occupational Therapists
Laura Herrell – An Occupation-Based Program for Children with Emotional and Behavior Disorders
Merry Lee – Occupational Therapy and Publically Funded Mental Health Services for Children
Melody Lin – Employment Services for Youth on Probation
Erin McIntyre – Navigating Peer Support Programs: A Toolkit for Occupational Therapy Consultants
Michael McNulty – Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy’s Place in Healthcare Administration
Susan McNulty – Lifestyle Redesign® for Chronic Headaches
Jennifer Mele – Yoga in Pediatric Occupational Therapy
Natasha Melton – Occupational Therapy at Multiple Sclerosis Comprehensive Care Center at USC
Christine Nguyen – A Weight Management Intervention for Persons during an Acute Psychiatric Hospitalization
Dzung Nguyen – A Guidebook for Occupational Therapists in Adult Vision Care
Carla Perea – Lifestyle Redesign®: Smoking Cessation
Mark Peterson – Low Vision Services at USC University Hospital
Tiffany Shuster – Getting Candid with the Candidates for Lung Transplantation
Virginia Sievers – Maintenance and Relapse Prevention for Smoking Cessation
Jennifer Slusser – Staying Healthy and Active after Childhood Cancer
Tritia Woo – VISIONS: Visual Instructional Strategies in Occupational Therapy for School-Aged Children
Grace Yi – Lunch Bunch: An Interactive Mealtime Experience for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

First-Person Perspective: Lisa Test, OTD ’09, OTR/L

Lisa Test earned her Master’s in Occupational Therapy from the Division in 1989, and returned to USC for an OTD last year.

I am currently the coordinating therapist for the Los Angeles Unified School District, the second largest school district in the country. I am responsible for the clinical oversight of the school-based occupational therapy and physical therapy services at over 900 school sites. We have approximately 225 staff including 167 OTs, 35 PTs, 4 COTAs and 19 AT teachers.

I decided to go back to school to get an OTD because, as an occupational therapist in a “leadership” position, it was imperative to have a degree that was at least on par with or higher than staff that I supervise. Our program has several therapists with clinical doctorates. Additionally, the discipline of occupational science has evolved since the time I received my OT degree. I wanted to ensure I was keeping abreast of current theoretical and practice models and truly understood them.

I investigated several OTD programs. USC provided the best fit for my needs. I chose a program that was not online so I could participate and learn from face-to-face didactic interaction. I also was interested in taking the cognate courses to learn what information other disciplines would bring to the table. Furthermore, the high caliber of professors that the program offers was attractive to me.

My employer was very supportive of my endeavors. I flexed my work schedule on days when classes took place during traditional work hours and sought evening courses that met my needs.

My biggest challenge was time. The majority of my “leisure” time was spent reading or working on class assignments. I was “on” as an OT 24 hours per day. My employer saw the benefits of what I brought back from my learning to the program.

The outcome of my OTD project was the development of a simple handbook for families of children with autism who reside in countries or communities where they do not have readily available resources. I have worked with families and children with autism since my undergraduate studies; it is a passion and interest of mine. I specifically chose a project that was not directly related to my current position so that I could grow and work outside of my comfort zone.

The Division’s OTD program has highlighted the broad opportunities there are for OT to develop programs. If a colleague or a long-time practitioner of occupational therapy asked my advice, I would highly recommend the program as a necessity in this highly competitive market.
Student Organizations Sponsor Wide Range of Events

Throughout participation in student-led organizations, students of the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy are balancing their classroom and clinical experiences with a variety of activities that train and support skills that help advance a career — networking, mentoring, presenting research, advocacy, and more.

The Occupational Therapy and Science Council (OTSC) sponsors events related to academics, philanthropy, fundraising, international education and/or social networking. A recent example was the OTSC International Forum, which featured a panel of six established practitioners, some of whom were faculty members from the Division, who spoke about their experiences providing occupational therapy services outside the U.S. Panelists were Keri Bronson, MA, OTR/L (who worked with faculty member Gelya Frank, Ph.D., at a field school in Guatemala), Bonnie Nakasui, OTD, OTR/L (who travels to Ghana annually to supervise fieldwork), Michal Atkins, MA, OTR/L (who is a native of Israel), Ashwini Vaishampayan, OTR (an OTD student who is a native of India), and Division faculty members Sharon Cermak, Ed.D., FAOTA (who has worked extensively in orphanages in Romania), Trudy Mallinson, Ph.D., OTR/L (who is a native of New Zealand) and moderator Erna Blanche, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA (who is a native of Chile and has taught occupational science there). The evening started with an opportunity for students to network with each other and with the invited guests alike, followed by the panel.

Another student organization is the national honor society Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE), which recognizes and encourages superior scholarship among students enrolled in undergraduate and entry-level graduate programs in occupational therapy. The Alpha Eta Chapter of PTE was established at USC in 1991. Among activities held under PTE’s auspices this year was an Academic Exchange, the goal of which was to foster mentorship of 1st year MA-II students by 2nd year students with advice to share about fieldwork, coursework and other areas of interest.

PTE also sponsored a Research Day, which allowed Division scholars who presented posters at the Ostrow School Research Day (see related story, page 5) to share their posters in a more casual atmosphere at the Center for Health Professions. This program attracted over 40 Master’s students who were unable to attend the Ostrow School event, thus giving them the opportunity to learn about research taking place in the Division, and to network with OTD and Ph.D. candidates as well as members of the Well Elderly Study II research team.

The 3rd annual PTE Occupational Extravaganza, held in February at the Center for Occupation and Lifestyle Redesign®, included a casual lunch, a poster session, hands-on activities such as origami, information tables explaining a variety of practice areas and two presentations. The first talk, with guest speakers Dr. Blanche, Susan Harris OTR/L and Tammy Richmond, MS, OTR/L, centered on leadership and entrepreneurship. This was followed by a panel discussing interdisciplinary health care practice, moderated by faculty member Samia Rafeedie, OTD, OTR/L and composed of Good Samaritan Hospital staff members Katherine A. Cass, RN, Erika Cohen, OTS, Melissa de Boda, PT, Feby Martinez, PT, Yuki Tanaka, ST, Susie Wong Okamoto, OTR/L and Division alumni Paul L. Penoliar, BS ’00, OTR/L. This edition of the Extravaganza was the largest yet, with over 80 people in attendance.

A new student group is Occupational Therapy Policy and Advocacy Organization (OTPAO), whose stated mission is to provide an open forum to explore state and federal public policies that inform our occupational therapy practice. “As a first year Master’s student learning about Medicare therapy caps and occupational therapists’ inability to open home health care cases, I quickly became interested in the larger political entities that influence our ability to practice,” explained Michelle E. Farmer, OTS, who will graduate in May. “I reasoned that it is vital for entry-level professionals to have an awareness of the political process and a toolbox of resources to advocate for both our profession and our clients.” Among OTPAO activities have been hosting a talk by Sara Rogers, legislative aide to California State Senator Mark Leno, on health care reform, and sponsoring 20 MA-II students to travel to Sacramento for the California Health Professional Student Alliance’s Lobby Day in January.

Division students also create primarily social events. OTSC recently arranged for group tickets to see the musical “Chicago,” preceded by a talk by Division faculty member Kimberly Eggleston, MA, OTR/L about how theater can fit into the practice of occupational therapy.

(Contributors to this article included Roxanne Abrams, OTS, Michelle E. Farmer, OTS and Phoebe Ning, OTS.)
Fieldwork Update

The USC OT Fieldwork Coordination team including Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer, OTD, OTR/L, Karen Park, MA, OTR/L, and Robin Turner, Fieldwork Assistant, busily coordinated approximately 575 Level I fieldwork and Level II fieldwork assignments for the 2009-2010 academic year. We are thankful for and grateful to our very loyal and continually growing local, national, and international fieldwork communities.

In Fall 2009, a “dose model” Level I fieldwork experience was added to existing one- and two-week full-time “immersion” experiences during the 1st year of the entry-level Master’s program. Students went to practice sites one day per week for six weeks in September and October 2009. This allowed students to observe and participate in clinics and practices earlier in their academic program than in past years, and also enabled them to experience a third practice setting before going on to Level II fieldwork. Thus, learning was stimulated and enhanced by early opportunities for application of content learned in their didactic coursework.

The international fieldwork program continues to flourish. Students participated in Level I fieldwork experiences in Ghana, Romania and Hong Kong in Spring 2010. Bonnie Nakasuji, OTD, OTR/L of Training Center in Ghana, and Dr. Taguchi-Meyer will present a poster at the upcoming WFOT Congress in Santiago, Chile titled “International Fieldwork: Creating, Partnering and Expanding Culturally-Relevant Learning Experiences.” The presentation largely draws from their collaborative efforts to provide Level I fieldwork experience in Ghana for USC occupational therapy students.

Collaboration with Diane Kellegrew, Ph.D., OTR/L on the new TOTS Training Grant continues. The grant program provides early intervention Level II part-time fieldwork opportunities for students.

First-Person Perspective: Fieldwork in Hong Kong

by Lauren Chen, OTS

I was born in London and emigrated to Hong Kong at the age of 8, and am currently a 1st year MA-II student in the Division at USC. After my first, “dose model” fieldwork at Greco’s World, a private pediatric/sensory integration (SI) clinic in Culver City, CA, I went to Hong Kong for my two-week Level I fieldwork. The site was Rehabilitation Consultants, a private sensory integration clinic tailored mostly to pediatric clients, but also has some clients who required speech therapy or hand therapy, one of the areas of expertise for my clinical instructor (C.I.). There was no language barrier, as everyone I worked with was bilingual in English and Cantonese.

I extremely enjoyed seeing practice in a completely different setting while on fieldwork. There were three very knowledgeable OTs on staff who had trained in the UK, Canada and Hong Kong. All of them were extremely enthusiastic and passionate about what they did, greatly enhancing my learning during treatments I observed.

One of the my fieldwork days was a visit to Hong Kong Polytechnic University to observe an SI treatment session led by a 3rd-year occupational therapy student at the university-based clinic. I also had lunch with a few 1st-years and toured the teaching labs and facilities at Polytechnic, the only university in Hong Kong that offers an occupational therapy degree program.

While on my fieldwork, I also attended a symposium on hand therapy, as my C.I. is the Vice-Chairperson of the Hong Kong Society for Hand Therapy. It was extremely informative and exceeded my expectations completely, as it was the first time I ever attended a symposium focused on this area.

Overall, this exposure was really an amazing experience and has greatly contributed to my professional growth and development. My passion for using SI in practice with pediatric clients in Hong Kong has increased to a whole new level. I am really excited about future opportunities and can’t wait until I can finally go back there as a practitioner and actually make a difference in clients’ lives!
Awards and Recognition

In the Fall 2009 issue of this newsletter, the credentials of two esteemed members of the Division's faculty and staff were erroneously reported. These two people are Sharon Cermak, Ed.D., FAOTA, and Jackie Mardirossian, COTA/C, ROH. We apologize for any confusion caused by the error made at that time.

Lisa Aziz-Zadeh, Ph.D., was interviewed by the USC Chronicle about her research on prosody and empathy. The story can be found online at http://stevens.usc.edu/read.article.php?news_id=572.

Julie Bissell, MA ’79, OTR/L, was awarded the Pediatric Therapy Network Alice S. Bachman Clinician Award 2010: Linking Practice with Research.

Erna Blanche, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, was honored as the recipient of the A. Jean Ayres Award at the AOTA Conference in Orlando, FL.

Florence Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, convened with other experts in health care provision developing quality of care measures for people with disabilities. The meeting was sponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. She authored a paper at the SSO-USA Conference to be held in London, Ontario in October. She co-authored the new book, Defying the Odds: The Tule River Tribe’s Struggle for Sovereignty in Three Centuries.

Don Gordon, Ph.D., OTR/L, authored the chapter, The History of Occupational Therapy, in the 11th edition of Willard and Spackman’s Occupational Therapy. He presented on mental health issues in patients with physical disabilities at the OTAC Spring Symposium, and will present on psychiatric issues at the OTAC Conference in the fall.

Karen McNulty, OTD, OTR/L, wrote an article on sleep and healthy lifestyle that was featured in the first issue of the Healthy Trojans newsletter, distributed to all USC students, faculty and staff.

Samia H. Rafeedie, OTD, OTR/L, co-presented a poster at the AOTA Conference in Orlando, FL, and will present another at the WFOT Congress in Santiago, Chile. She also co-presented a paper at the OTAC Spring Symposium in Anaheim, CA.

Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer, OTD, OTR/L, and Division alum Bonnie Nakasugi, BS ’74, MA ’94, OTD ’08, will co-present a poster on creating culturally-relevant learning experiences in international fieldwork sites at the WFOT Congress in Santiago, Chile in May.

Posters were presented at the Ostrow School Research Day (see related story, page 5) by faculty members Erna Blanche (with Florence Clark), Mike Carlson, Ph.D., Florence Clark (solo, and with Erna Blanche), Camille Dieterle, OTD, OTR/L, Jeanne Jackson, Karen McNulty, Olga Solomon, Ph.D., and Shannon Wendorf, OTD, OTR/L.

Sports Ethics and Occupation (Continued from page 8)

Dr. Morgan: I often forget how few men there are in our Division faculty, and how so many of our students are women. But I don’t feel like a minority at all, and actually think I shouldn’t because, despite all the, what I frankly think is, foolish talk about how white men are presently under siege, everywhere I look in the University and most of our major social institutions all I see are white men just like myself. To be honest, I quite like the fact there are so many women in the field, and I consider it a privilege to teach our women students. They are without question the best students I’ve ever worked with. I also adore all of my colleagues, who are mostly women. They’re such an intelligent and accomplished group. I’m proud to be one of them.

Dr. Morgan: I couldn’t be happier with my colleagues or my students. I’ve taught at three other Division I research universities, and my colleagues and students here are the best without question. I also think USC is the best university I’ve been affiliated with.

Q: You are the faculty liaison for the Ph.D. program in occupational science. What are some of your observations about the program?

Dr. Morgan: I think we have one of the premier Ph.D. programs in the country. The students, as I noted, are first rate. We’ve expanded the curriculum considerably. And the immersion experiences we offer the doctoral students in group research projects distinguish us in a significant way from other Ph.D. programs.
Four Join Clinical Occupational Therapy Faculty

The USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy was pleased to add four more members to our faculty this academic year. They all have demonstrated excellence as occupational therapists, and facility for teaching graduate students. The Division welcomes them to the faculty.

Heather J. Kitching, MA, OTR/L has been named Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy. She has been an occupational therapist since receiving her BA from Quinnipiac University in 1991. She earned an MA from the Division in 2002. Ms. Kitching has experience in a number of settings, specializing in adult rehabilitative and acute medical interventions. She has been a per diem senior clinician at USC University Hospital (USCUH) since 2005, and a clinical lecturer in the Division’s courses on physical dysfunction, basic medical lectures and evidence-based practice. Additionally, Ms. Kitching is a past Director of Region 2 on the Occupational Therapy Association of California’s Board of Directors.

In her new position, Ms. Kitching provides direct care to clients, especially those receiving cardiothoracic surgery, cardiology, neurology, in-patient psychiatry and pulmonary care (including heart and lung transplantation) services. She also educates administrators and providers about, and advocates for, occupational therapy, including clinical services, program development and referrals.

Barb Phillips-Meltzer, MS, OTR/L has been named Adjunct Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy. She has been an occupational therapist since earning her Master’s from Columbia University in 1988. Ms. Phillips-Meltzer’s specialties are assistive technology, having worked at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center’s Center for Applied Rehabilitation Technology (CART) for 15 years, and ergonomics. Currently, she runs the Ergonomic Program for the City of Los Angeles, and is studying for an OTD in the Division. Since taking the Lifestyle Redesign® course taught by Florence Clark, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Ms. Phillips-Meltzer has been influenced to seek opportunities to incorporate elements to support wellness into her program. She has taught and presented extensively to both professional and community groups.

In her new position, Ms. Phillips-Meltzer teaches OT 571, “Assistive Technology.”

Heather J. Kitching, MA, OTR/L was named Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy. She has been an occupational therapist since graduating Boston University in 1985. She is secretary of the Hand Therapy Society of Greater Los Angeles.

In her new position, Ms. Phillips-Meltzer evaluates and treats clients with hand or arm injuries at USC University Hospital. She will also give lectures on hand therapy as well as collaborating on relevant research and establishing a clinical internship in hand therapy for Division students. “I have mentored many students through the years,” commented Ms. Rocker. “It is nice to see them grow.”

Janice Rocker, MS, OTR/L has been named Adjunct Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy. She has been an occupational therapist since graduating from the University of Michigan in 1990. Ms. Rocker has specialized in working with pediatric populations, focusing on interventions for feeding and swallowing as well as sensory integration. Currently, she is Supervisor of Occupational Therapy and a Feeding and Oral Motor Specialist with Pediatric Therapy Network in Torrance, CA. She utilizes her vacations to volunteer teaching and therapy services for underserved populations, including children in Bucharest, Romania.

In her new position, Ms. Rocker co-teaches OT 575, “Dysphagia Across the Lifespan: Pediatrics through Geriatrics.”

Joan Surfus, BS, OTR/L has been named Adjunct Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy. She has been an occupational therapy practitioner since earning her BS from Western Michigan University in 1990. Ms. Surfus has been published in the American Journal of Occupational Therapy and the newsletter of the American Society of Hand Therapists, as well as lecturing on wound healing and splinting. Ms. Rocker has been an occupational therapist since graduating from Boston University in 1985. She is secretary of the Hand Therapy Society of Greater Los Angeles.

In her new position, Ms. Rocker evaluates and treats clients with hand or arm injuries at USC University Hospital. She will also give lectures on hand therapy as well as collaborating on relevant research and establishing a clinical internship in hand therapy for Division students. “I have mentored many students through the years,” commented Ms. Rocker. “It is nice to see them grow.”

"I am very excited to be teaching," said Ms. Phillips-Meltzer. "My students are great!"

"I am sure I can blossom here, learn from my colleagues, and upgrade the hand center to a state-of-the-art facility," said Ms. Rocker.

"OT 575 offers students a unique opportunity that is not offered at most universities," said Ms. Surfus. "They will have a solid foundation of knowledge in the area of dysphagia across the lifespan, which in turn will benefit them in their clinical fieldworks and as they enter the occupational therapy world."

"It is nice to see them grow."

"I am delighted for this opportunity to continue my affiliation with the Division," said Ms. Phillips-Meltzer. "My students are great!"

"I am very excited to be teaching," said Ms. Phillips-Meltzer. "My students are great!"
School of Dentistry Renamed as Ostrow School

Herman Ostrow, a USC trustee, alumnus and lifelong Southern Californian, has donated $35 million to USC for its School of Dentistry. The gift was announced January 20th by USC President Steven B. Sample at a gala unveiling ceremony at the Norris Dental Science Center on the University Park Campus.

In recognition of the gift – believed to be the largest individual donation to a dental school in the United States – the School has been renamed the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, Dr. Sample announced.

“This magnificent gift will be a powerful catalyst for innovations and improvements in human health and for building on USC’s long tradition of leadership in dentistry,” Dr. Sample said. He added that the School “also houses two divisions that are very important to USC’s prestige and its overall strength in the health-related disciplines.” Of the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Dr. Sample noted that it “has been number one for eight of the last nine years, and is currently ranked number three” in the nation.

The gift will be pivotal in raising the School to the next level of effectiveness by providing resources to renovate and improve clinical facilities, to bring in new faculty members, to continue to support dental and craniofacial research, to enhance service programs in downtown Los Angeles and to attract and retain the best students, according to Avishai Sadan, Dean of the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC.

“We are grateful and proud that an alumnus of our school has chosen us to carry his legacy,” Dr. Sadan commented. “Our tradition of excellence in clinical education, research and community outreach; our world-renowned, dedicated faculty and staff; and loyal alumni such as Dr. Ostrow will safeguard the lofty reputation of the school for decades to come.”

Dr. Ostrow, who earned his DDS from USC in 1945, has a history of hard work and entrepreneurship. He spent 17 years practicing dentistry, including both private practice and service in the Army Dental Corps, before delving into Los Angeles construction and the real estate market. He also enjoys growing rare fruit trees. “I’m proud to give my support and my name to the USC School of Dentistry, an institution with a well-earned reputation for excellence,” Dr. Ostrow explained. “I am thrilled that my legacy will provide tomorrow’s talented professionals with opportunities to achieve great successes.”

The Ostrow School of Dentistry’s traditional curricula for dental students include the Doctor of Dental Surgery program, the Baccalaureate in Dental Hygiene program, as well as several postdoctoral programs in dental specialties. Other available degrees include combined DDS/MBA and DDS/M.S. programs, gerontology programs, Master’s and Ph.D. opportunities in the craniofacial biology program in addition to the Advanced Standing Program for International Dentists.

Videos Showcase Division Activities, Faculty, Students

As part of the recent redesign of the Division’s website, a new section has been introduced where videos featuring the Division’s activities, as well as the innovative intervention programs at the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice (OTFP), are available. It is also an Internet destination for videos by and about students and alumni, detailing their practice areas and research.

Among videos currently on the site are clips exploring the practice of community mental health, Lifestyle Redesign® and pediatrics/sensory integration; interventions offered at the OTFP including Lifestyle Redesign® for the College Student and Lifestyle Redesign® for Weight Management; routines and well-being; feedback from students; focus on the Occupational Science Minor; Engage (a project in which Division students work with neighborhood children); and recent events including the Seward Johnson sculpture display, Visions and Voices program “Slowing Down in a Fast New World,” and guest speakers Paul Fontana and Shawn Phipps.

The web address for these videos is: http://ot.usc.edu/about-us/videos/. Division videos are also available on a dedicated YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/user/USCOSOT.
Join the USC Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Alumni groups!

Go to http://ot.usc.edu/alumni/

Nikias to Succeed Sample as President of USC

Steve B. Sample, the 10th President of USC, will retire in August. He will be succeeded by USC Executive Vice President and Provost C. L. Max Nikias.

Dr. Sample came to USC in 1991 after service as President of the University at Buffalo of The State University of New York. Among USC milestones during Dr. Sample’s tenure are a climb of 25 points in annual U.S. News & World Report college rankings and a record-setting fundraising campaign that totaled $2.85 billion. Faculty achievements have included the Nobel Prize in Chemistry and the MacArthur Fellowship.

Dr. Sample, the first holder of the Robert C. Packard President’s Chair, has numerous honors and co-teaches a popular course for juniors and seniors on leadership. Dr. Sample’s book, The Contrarian’s Guide to Leadership, is a Los Angeles Times best-seller and was translated into five languages. His patents for digital appliance controls have been licensed to most major manufacturers of microwave ovens in the world. Dr. Sample earned B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He and his wife Kathryn have two daughters and two grandchildren.

“For Kathryn and me, the presidency of USC has been far more than just a job,” said Sample. “It has been a calling, an all-consuming passion to move this university ahead farther and faster than any other university in the U.S. We have been blessed to have shared this mission in the company of many colleagues and friends who share our commitment to USC’s advancement. Our years here have simply been exhilarating.”

Dr. Nikias also joined USC in 1991, and has been USC’s chief academic officer since June 2005, overseeing the Keck School of Medicine, and 16 professional schools, as well as the divisions of Student Affairs, Libraries, Information Technology Services, Student Religious Life, and Enrollment Services. Dr. Nikias was instrumental in bringing the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education and the Edward R. Roybal Institute on Applied Gerontology to USC, and established the Stevens Institute for Innovation at USC. He also launched Visions and Voices, an arts and humanities initiative, as well as a grant program to advance scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. He teaches freshman student courses on ancient Athenian democracy and drama.

Dr. Nikias recruited a new dean to the Keck School of Medicine, spearheaded the integration of the school’s 19 Faculty Practice Plans and oversaw the transfer of University Hospital and Norris Cancer Center from Tenet Healthcare Corporation to USC. He chaired the USC Hospitals Governing Board, which oversees both hospitals.

Dr. Nikias holds the Malcolm R. Currie Chair in Technology and the Humanities. From 2001 to 2005, he was Dean of the Viterbi School of Engineering, expanding its biomedical engineering program and distance learning program to make it the largest in the country. He has pioneered research on digital signal processing and communications, digital media systems and biomedicine. He authored more than 275 journal articles and papers, three textbooks, and eight patents. He graduated with honors from the Famagusta Gymnasium and National Technical University of Athens, and earned an M.S. and Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

April is OT Month

In recognition of OT Month, the Division is holding several events including a career fair on the University Park Campus, talks from faculty about the importance of advocating for occupational therapy, and distribution of campaign-type buttons for Division students to wear to help them raise awareness of our profession.

Let’s Keep in Touch!

Do you have news you’d like to share with fellow alums? A new position, a publication or honor, or an addition to your family? We’d like to report your news in an upcoming issue of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy. Please e-mail your news, and/or updated contact information, to jmardiro@usc.edu. You can also send your information to: USC Division of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, Attn: Jackie Mardirossian, 1540 Alcazar St., CHP-133, Los Angeles, CA 90089-9003. Be sure to include your name, degree and class year, home and e-mail addresses, and telephone number. We would also like to know what you’d like to see in upcoming issues.
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