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(Back row from L-R) Elizabeth Pyatak, Shawn Roll, Olga Solomon (Front row from L-R) Natalie Leland, Barbara Thompson

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scientists joining the
faculty in one of the
largest one-time
expansions in the
history of the division

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DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of the University of Southern California

Fall 2011 Newsletter

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UTUMN IS TYPICALLY A

time for repose, when nature yields summer's bounty, sheds its spent foliage, and prepares for winter's dormancy. However, this autumn

at the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy has hardly conformed to the traditional themes of the season. Instead, we are in the midst of rapid growth across all dimensions of our enterprise, and our hallways, classrooms, and offices are humming with a sense of renewal and flourishing.



We have appointed twelve new clinical faculty members and five new tenure-track research faculty members. These expert occupational therapists and junior career scientists, respectively, bring our total number of research, clinical, and adjunct faculty appointments to over seventy. Ten separate extramurally funded research projects have been in operation at some point during this year alone, cumulatively representing a record total of over eight million dollars in awards. True to the inquisitive and persistent nature of our dedicated faculty, the Division has several million dollars worth of grant submissions currently under review. In addition, this semester we introduced the first significant master's program curriculum revision since the days of the legendary Mary Reilly, incorporating a new "practice immersion" structure that synthesizes didactic coursework and clinical fieldwork. I believe that what happens here eventually disseminates, in one way or another, beyond our own walls to the benefit of the entire occupational therapy profession. I am so proud of all the faculty, students, and staff who work day in and day out to make the Division as strong as it can possibly be.

The entire university is also basking in the successful launch of The Campaign for the University of Southern California, which is a multi-year endowment and capital campaign effort seeking to raise six billion dollars or more in private support from individual donors, foundations, and corporations. The Campaign has already made headlines as the largest in the history of American higher education! I am so excited for the challenge that lies ahead of us and confident that when we realize its expected goals, this Campaign will be remembered as a turning point in the quality of USC education, research, service, and repute.

This Campaign will call upon the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy to engage the thousands of alumni, faculty, staff, community members, parents, and friends throughout the nation and across the world who share our vision of occupational science and occupational therapy optimizing human health, social participation, and personal well-being. Endowed faculty positions will allow us to recruit the best and brightest minds to USC; scholarship and fellowship programs will ensure that excellent students matriculate here; and improved infrastructure will secure our capability for being a 21st century hub of leadership and innovation. I am so eager to partner with the members of the Trojan Family who are reciprocally eager to invest in our excellence, and I know that when USC fulfills its potential, our society and world will be changed for the better.

As an example of an investment in excellence, this past summer I was astonished to learn that an anonymous alumni donor had bequeathed to the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy an unrestricted legacy gift of one million dollars. I cannot overstate how revolutionary a gift of this magnitude is. The largest ever in the nearly seventy-year history of USC occupational therapy, this gift will truly transform our educational, research, and clinical programs. What a gracious and selfless gift, and what a way to launch The Campaign for the University of Southern California at the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy!

This year's harvest has been blessedly bountiful in many ways. Though the days draw short and cold outside, inside the Division is thriving more than ever.

Thank you to all the members of the Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Trojan Family—students, parents, faculty, friends, and alumni—for all you have done and continue to do in the name of USC.

Though the days draw short and very support that every support that

Top-Down

UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES \$6B CAMPAIGN

At a September 16th celebration in Bovard Auditorium, the Trojan Family cheered the launch of The Campaign for the University of Southern California, the largest ever in the history of American higher education.

The Campaign is a multi-year endowment and capital campaign effort seeking to raise six billion dollars or more in private support from individual donors, foundations, and corporations.

Standing a few steps from the iconic statue of Tommy Trojan and borrowing the motto from Virgil's *Aeneid* inscribed on its base foretelling "the destined reign of Troy," President C. L. Max Nikias exhorted trustees, students, faculty, and staff in the audience to reach higher and farther than ever before.

Over the next few years, the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy will focus its efforts towards expanding clinic and laboratory facilities, student scholarships, and faculty endowments. The Division, through the strong leadership of Dr. Clark and support from the Board of Councilors, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends, will undoubtedly be transformed by this ambitious campaign.

More information will soon follow regarding the Division's upcoming campaign launch and, most importantly, how you can be a part of this exciting endeavor.

Learn more online at campaign.usc.edu











1 C. L. Max Nikias, USC President, greets the crowd gathered at Bovard Auditorium with a traditional USC "Fight On!" 2 Al Checcio, Senior Vice President for University Advancement, offers details about the Campaign and its targeted funding priorities 3 Elizabeth Garret, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, discusses the future impact the Campaign will have on the university's academic programs 4 The finale number brings the Trojan Marching Band, Song Girls, and parade of undergraduate scholars to the Bovard stage as the crowd stands and cheers 5 USC Thorton School of Music violinist Vincent Meklis and pianist Jiayi Shi delight the audience with a performance of Ravel's *Tzigane*







FIRST DIVISION WHITE COAT CEREMONY

The Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy hosted an inaugural White Coat Ceremony at the Pappas Quad on USC's Health Sciences Campus on August 26th. Before faculty, administrators, family, and friends, more than 200 occupational therapy graduate students donned their new white coats, a traditional symbol of professional responsibility in health care.

In her remarks to the students, USC Associate Dean and Division Chair Florence Clark described the white coat as a "symbol for an emergence into professional life, for the sacred contracts you will hold with your clients, and for the requirements of ethical practice." Clark asked students to "fulfill the ethical obligations placed upon you, live up to your potential as excellent clinicians, and treat with the heart and soul of a healer."

Because the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy is housed within the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, Ostrow Dean Avishai Sadan offered the keynote address. He congratulated the students and challenged them to fulfill the expectations that come with being an occupational therapist at USC. Together, the student body recited the Oath of an Occupational Therapist, a pledge that includes a commitment to "model and foster leadership, and facilitate spiritual, personal, and professional growth in myself, my profession, and in others."

-Kimberly Perring is a current M.A. student







1 Incoming OTD students (from L-R) Gary Gyulyan, Pierre Clay and Gustalvo Gonzalez stand and recite the "Oath of an Occupational Therapist" **2** International students (from L-R) Lily Chen (Taiwan), Siok Khoon (Singapore), Nikki Ow (Singapore), and Maggie Cheng (Taiwan) opt for the long-arm approach to portraiture **3** Dean Sadan offers his keynote remarks during the bright afternoon 4 Second year MA students (from L-R) Shain Davis, Heather How, Jacquelyn Derian, Ronald Tuleja, Aja Roley, and Angela Herman 5 OTD student Amanda Aaron and her great aunt enjoy the reception following the ceremony 6 MA student Wade Harrell, center, with proud parents **7** First year MA students (back row from L-R) Brittany Glass, Lynea Craig, Amber Bennett, Yvonne Hoang, Susan Lingelbach, Gianna Gipe, (front row from L-R) Erika Schnaps, Caryn Roach, and Tara Perry model their new white coats

At the Division

\$1M GIFT LARGEST IN USC OT HISTORY

In June, the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy was notified that a one million dollar unrestricted legacy gift was bequeathed to the Division. The gift, made by an anonymous alumni donor, is the largest single gift in any form in the nearly seventy year history of occupational therapy at the University of Southern California.

When asked for comment, Associate Dean Florence Clark replied, "I am so touched by the selfless generosity and humility on behalf of the anonymous donor in support of this university which we all so deeply love." Clark continued to explain that the gift sets an unprecedented benchmark in the context of the entire history of the Division. "The significance of a gift of this magnitude is undeniable," Clark said, "and because it has been so graciously designated as unrestricted, its impact will one day reverberate throughout the Division's research, educational, and clinical enterprises."

According to Clark, the gift is also an emphatic way for the Division to kick-start the recently launched Campaign for the University of Southern California (read more about the Campaign on page 4). "I couldn't imagine any stronger symbol of the steadfast commitment of our alumni, our Trojan Family friends, and the occupational therapy community to the vision and mission of the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy," Clark said. "This gift is a definite game-changer," she said, "and will go such a long way toward ensuring that USC occupational therapy remains a world-class program for generations into the future."

A legacy gift such as this is one type of charitable giving by which donors can pledge gifts to the university through a legal arrangement in their living trust or will. Gifts to USC can either be designated toward specific purposes or they can be 'unrestricted', meaning the gift is allocated by university leadership toward what are deemed to be the most strategically beneficial uses.

Learn more about The Campaign online at campaign.usc.edu

HAND THERAPY SOCIETY OF GREATER LOS ANGELES ENDOWS FELLOWSHIP

The Hand Therapy Society of Greater Los Angeles (HTSGLA) has contributed \$20,000 to the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy to establish an endowed fellowship for USC occupational therapy students interested in pursuing future practice in hand therapy. Thanks to the generosity and leadership of Mayuri Mody, CHT, OTR/L, immediate past president of HTSGLA, this fellowship will ensure that USC students hoping to become future CHTs will be nurtured and supported during their entry-level education.

Learn more about the Hand Therapy Society of Greater Los Angeles online at www.htsgla.org

YELLOW RIBBON IS PROMISE TO VETS

USC Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy reaffirmed its commitment to the armed services veterans community by enrolling in the United States Department of Veterans Affairs' Yellow Ribbon Program for the 2011-2012 academic year. The Yellow Ribbon Program is a component of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and it provides federal financial aid to eligible military veterans who matriculate into graduate educational programs through dollar-for-dollar matching of the financial commitments of host institutions.

The Division has committed to supporting up to five veteran students a year, at a maximum of \$10,000 per student per year, for a total potential commitment of \$50,000 to these deserving students. To date, occupational therapy is one of four graduate programs at USC to volunteer participation in the Yellow Ribbon Program.

TREET COHORT TRAINING UNDERWAY

The first cohort of Training in Rehabilitation Efficacy and Effectiveness Trials (TREET) T32 training grant postdoctoral fellows has been selected. Stefanie Bodison, O.T.D, OTR/L, is a specialist in sensory integration, Neuro-Developmental TreatmentTM, feeding, and oralmotor interventions for children. Eric Wade, Ph.D., is a mechanical engineer whose research interests include wearable health monitoring, biological signal processing, motor learning and rehabilitation, robotics, mechatronics, and system dynamics. Read more at *treet.usc.edu*

O.T. FROSH ADMISSIONS ENCOURAGING

The 2011-2012 academic year is the first in which freshman applications to the B.S. to M.A. program have been accepted, and Division admissions staff are highly encouraged by the response from applicants. One hundred twenty eight hopeful freshmen applied for admission to the undergraduate OT major in Fall 2011. The academic records of these applicants are also impressive. The average GPA of the select freshman cohort admitted to the OT major was 4.0 (weighted high school GPA).

WAYNE HINTHORN JOINS COUNCILORS

Wayne Hinthorn (M.S. '79) has joined the Division Board of Councilors. Mr. Hinthorn is a retired mechanical engineer with a USC graduate degree in Systems Management. His late wife Micky Hinthorn (B.S. '53) was a beloved occupational therapist and USC alumna, and the Hinthorns have contributed in multiple ways to the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy for over twenty years.

PYATAK KL2 GRANT TO "BEAT THE ODDS"

Elizabeth Pyatak, Ph.D., OTR/L, assistant professor, received a highly selective KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Award through the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. The KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Award is given to promising USC-affiliated scholars in the early stages of their academic careers.

In 2009, the CTSI received a \$56.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to accelerate the pace at which research discoveries are translated into clinical practice. In partial fulfillment of this goal for translational science acceleration, the three-year KL2 Program supports the mentored research career development for individuals with health professional or research doctoral degrees who are seeking advanced training in clinical and translational research.

Through her research program "Beating the Odds: Facilitating Lifestyle Change in Urban Latino Young Adults with Diabetes," Pyatak is filling a critical gap in knowledge and care by developing targeted strategies specifically for young adults to cope with their diabetes. Young adults with diabetes—those 18 to 25 years of age—have to go through the same adjustment to adulthood as their nondiabetic peers, all while dealing with a disease that involves injections, insulin pumps, and frequent blood tests. Diabetes can fluctuate unpredictably as a result of stress, illness, physical activity, or changes in schedule. Management of diabetes can often fall by the wayside, with potentially fatal consequences.

"This is a really critical point in their lives," says
Pyatak. Choices made at this juncture have the potential
to instead put young adults on the path to a long, healthy
life, and yet little research and even less outreach has
been conducted for young adults with diabetes. "For
whatever reason, they weren't getting good guidance,
often because they were reluctant to bring up these issues
with a health care provider or because when they did,
they received advice that was not realistic given their life
circumstances," she said.

The USC CTSI KL2 award is a highly competitive award among postdoctoral trainees. After reviewing entries from across the entire university, four KL2 grants were awarded to this most recent cohort. Of those four recipients, Pyatak is the only scholar outside of the Keck School of Medicine of USC and affiliated Children's Hospital Los Angeles to receive a KL2 award. Read more about Pyatak on page 16 in this issue.

-Robert Perkins is representative, USC Media and Public Relations

Learn more about "Beating The Odds" research at ot.usc.edu|research|active|beatingtheodds

CERMAK GRANT TO STUDY ADAPTED DENTAL CLINIC ENVIRONMENTS

A two-year grant totaling \$531,376 was recently awarded to the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. Principal investigator Sharon Cermak, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, and co-investigators Jose Polido, Marian Williams, Michael Dawson, and Christianne Lane, representing both the Keck School of Medicine of USC and the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, will study

Sharon Cermak, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA

the effectiveness of sensory adapted dental environments (SADE) for children, including those who have difficulty tolerating oral care in the dental clinic.

Two groups of ethnically diverse children ages 6-12 will be studied: twenty will be children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), and twenty will be

typically developing children, including those who are overreactive to sensory stimulation. Such children commonly exhibit anxiety and negative behavioral reactions when confronted with experiential aspects of visits to the dentist's office.

The SADE intervention group will include environmental adaptations such as dimmed lighting, soothing music, and the application of a special vest, which provides calming deep-pressure sensations, all of which are designed to reduce the triggering of a child's anxiety and behavioral problems while at the dentist. If this study, which is being conducted in collaboration with Children's Hospital Los Angeles, produces promising results, investigators plan to more comprehensively test the intervention in a full-scale randomized controlled trial.

According to Cermak, the planned research will contribute to a "safer, more efficient, less-costly treatment" while having "the potential to revolutionize clinic-based dental care for the growing population of children with ASD, as well as for typically developing children who have sensory sensitivities and/or dental anxieties."

-Vivian Tang is a current M.A. student

Read more about the SADE research project at ot.usc.edu/research/active/sade

TWELVE NEW CLINICAL FACULTY MEMBERS APPOINTED FOR 2011-2012 ACADEMIC YEAR

Sarah Bream, O.T.D., OTR/L, joins the Division faculty as an expert in community-based mental health practice and administration, having been Division Director at Occupational Therapy Training Program, in Torrance, CA, where she was responsible for clinical service delivery, daily operations, and administrative leadership for interdisciplinary mental health services with a staff numbering greater than 100. She holds her O.T.D. ('09) and M.A. ('96) from USC and her B.A.in Art from Moorhead State University, Moorhead, MN.

Carlin Daley, O.T.D., OTR/L, was previously at USC in the role of Assistant Director of Wellness Initiatives within the Division of Career and Protective Services, where she worked to improve the health and well-being of USC employees. A certified Pilates and yoga instructor, she also developed the Lifestyle Redesign® Office Wellness program as an Occupational Therapy Doctoral Resident at the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice. She holds her O.T.D. ('07) and M.A. ('06) degrees in Occupational Therapy, and B.S. ('02) in Psychology, all from USC.

Michelle Farmer, O.T.D., OTR/L, was previously a USC Occupational Therapy Doctoral Resident, where she worked on public policy initiatives with the American Occupational Therapy Association and Occupational Therapy Association of California. She holds her O.T.D. ('11) and M.A. ('10) degrees in Occupational Therapy from USC, and B.S. in Kinesiology from San Francisco State University.

Kiley Hanish, O.T.D., OTR/L, was previously an Occupational Therapy Doctoral Resident at USC, where she played critical roles in revising the OTD curriculum and representing the Division in the Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy's *Add Us In* initiative. She completed her O.T.D. ('11) and M.A. ('02) degrees in Occupational Therapy at USC. She holds a B.A. degree in Psychology from Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA.

Tessa Milman, O.T.D., OTR/L, was previously a Post-doctoral Research Associate at the Division working on the Autism in Urban Context Research Project (AUCP). She now holds the dual roles of Assistant Admissions Director and researcher, where she will continue working on the AUCP with a new focus on mentoring teaching assistants through the research process. She holds her O.T.D. ('09) and M.A. ('08) degrees in Occupational Therapy from USC, and her B.A. in Sociology from Smith College, Northampton, MA.

Bonnie Nakasuji, O.T.D., OTR/L, C/NDT, is co-owner of Therapy West, Inc., an internationally recognized leader in clinical services for pediatric populations with physical and neurodevelopmental disabilities. She holds many professional certifications, including those for the Sensory Integration and Praxis Test, and Neuro-Developmental TreatmentTM. She holds her O.T.D. ('08), M.A. ('94) and B.S. ('73) degrees from USC.

Phoung Nguyen, O.T.D., OTR/L, was most recently a USC Occupational Therapy Doctoral Resident at USC University Hospital (now named Keck Hospital of USC), where she

provided direct patient care for cardiac populations requiring mechanical circulatory support. She continues those responsibilities as a clinical faculty member at the newly renamed Keck Hospital of USC. She holds her O.T.D. ('11) and M.A. ('10) degrees in Occupational Therapy from USC and her B.S. in Biological Sciences from the University of California, Irvine.

Daniel Park, O.T.D., OTR/L, was most recently a clinical occupational therapist at Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Burbank, CA, where he developed and launched the Outpatient Occupational Therapy Program at the Roy and Patricia Disney Family Cancer Center, designed specifically for the lifestyle and occupational performance needs of cancer survivor patients. He holds his O.T.D. ('10) and M.A. ('09) degrees in Occupational Therapy from USC. He also holds a Master of Social Welfare, Health Services Specialization degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, a Master of Education degree from Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA, and a B.S. in Human Development from Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

Susan Spitzer, Ph.D., OTR/L, is an expert in clinical care and research within pediatrics, autism, and sensory integration intervention. She has been published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* and has been awarded the American Occupational Therapy Association Cordelia Myers Writer's Award. She holds her Ph.D. ('01) in Occupational Science and M.A. ('95) in Occupational Therapy from USC and her B.A. in Psychology from Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, CA.

Ashley Uyeshiro, O.T.D., OTR/L, was most recently Occupational Therapy Doctoral Resident at the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice, where she worked with various populations using the Lifestyle Redesign® intervention approach. She also has experience developing health service marketing plans and operations. She holds her O.T.D. ('11) and M.A. ('10) degrees in Occupational Therapy and her B.A. ('04) in Psychology, all from USC.

Joan Vartanian, OTR/L, has delivered occupational therapy interventions in many practice settings, including acute care, rehabilitation, and long-term care. She has previously served as Chief of Occupational Therapy at USC University Hospital, as an intervener in the NIH-funded USC Well Elderly 2 and Pressure Ulcer Prevention Studies, and as an Adjunct Instructor. She holds a B.A. in Occupational Therapy from College of Saint Catherine, St. Paul, MN.

Myka Winder, O.T.D., OTR/L, was most recently Assistant Lecturer in the Division's professional program, and Occupational Therapy Doctoral Resident at the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice. She has presented continuing education courses on adult pedagogy theory and practice. She completed her O.T.D. ('11) and M.A. ('10) degrees in Occupational Therapy and her B.A. ('07) degrees in Neuroscience and Creative Writing, all from USC.



2011 OTAC Awardees (Back row from L-R): John Goodfellow, Heidi McHugh Pendleton, Michelle Farmer and Deborah Pitts (Front row from L-R): Heather Kitching, Charlie Yu, Gloria Romero and Erna Blanche

TROJANS TAKE FIVE AWARDS AT OTAC

Trojans won five of the eight awards given at the 35th annual Occupational Therapy Association of California Annual Conference, held mid-October in Sacramento:

Award of Excellence

Erna Blanche (Ph.D. '98, M.A. '88), Associate Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy

Luella Grangaard Political Action Award Michalla Farmar (O.T.D. 211, M.A. 210) Acc

Michelle Farmer (O.T.D. '11, M.A. '10), Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy

Janice Matsutsuyu Outstanding Service Award Heather Kitching (O.T.D. '10, M.A. '02), clinical faculty at Keck Hospital of USC

Lifetime Achievement Award

Heidi McHugh Pendleton (Ph.D. '98, M.A. '86)

OT Practice Award

Deborah Pitts, Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy, USC Occupational Science Ph.D. candidate

TROJANS TAKE TO THE HILL

Arameh Anvarizadeh (O.T.D. '07, M.A. '06, B.S. '05) was quoted in an article featured on www.aota.org about AOTA's 2011 Capitol Hill Day. "[Senate staff] were responding, they were asking questions, they appeared interested, they were taking notes, they were willing to be open, and they were willing for us to follow up with them. So it was a great back and forth conversation," Anvarizadeh said.



AOTA President Florence Clark addresses the D.C. audience with a dramatic backdrop

WORKING TO "ADD US IN" FOR MINORITY EMPLOYMENT

Members of the Los Angeles, CA and Kansas City, MO consortia of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy's "Add Us In" initiative met recently in Los Angeles in order to provide updates on their progress toward building best practices aimed at improving small business minority employment. Brenda Simmons, a vocational rehabilitation counselor, and her colleague Barbara Hoelzer traveled to Los Angeles to visit Homeboy Industries and met with Father Gregory Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries, as well as the Division's Pressure Ulcer Prevention in Spinal Cord Injury research team, which works closely with minority patients with spinal cord injury within community-based settings. The Division is a participating partner of the "Add Us In" Los Angeles Consortium.



After speaking to USC's Pressure Ulcer Prevention in Spinal Cord Injury research team, representatives of the "Add Us In" Consortia join Father Greg Boyle for a tour of East Los Angeles' Homeboy Industries. From L-R: Kiley Hanish, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy, Brenda Simmons, Father Gregory Boyle, Barbara Hoelzer and Celso Delgado, Adjunct Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy

CURRICULUM OVERHAUL IN PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM LINKS COURSES TO FIELDWORK

Beginning with the fall 2011 semester, the Division's entry-level master's program curriculum has been significantly restructured to incorporate "practice immersions" that more closely combine didactic classroom learning with hands-on clinical practice at fieldwork sites.

This new structure divides each incoming class of students into three cohorts, which then spend each of three semesters focused exclusively on content and practice in a single occupational therapy practice area (pediatrics, mental health, and adult physical rehabilitation and geriatrics). Previously, during the first year of the program, professional content knowledge across multiple practice areas was taught concurrently.

Students are now assigned to a local Level I fieldwork site as part of that semester's practice immersion course, for one day per week and one full week per semester. By attending Level I fieldwork throughout the entire semester and tying it to a didactic course, entry-level students at USC will synthesize knowledge taught in the classroom with actual applications to clinical practice faster than ever before.

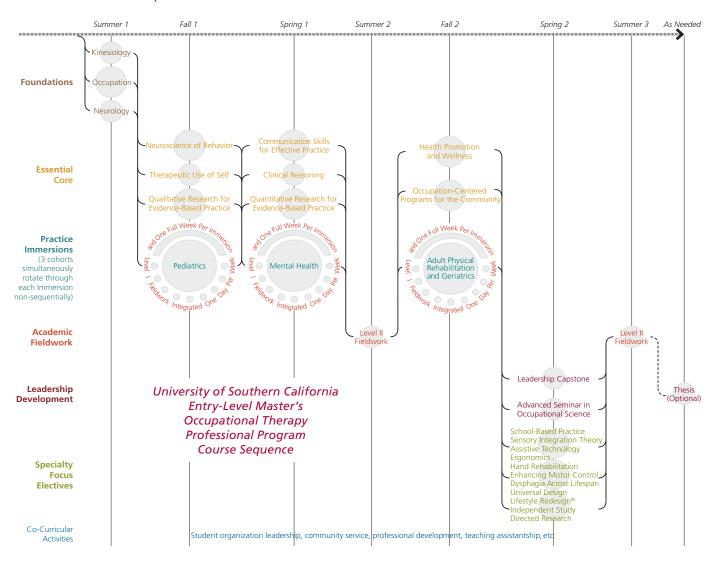
The curriculum revision is a result of over two years of planning by professional program faculty, led by Julie McLaughlin Gray, Ph.D., OTR/L, Director of the Professional Program, and Ann Neville-Jan, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Chair of Curriculum & Faculty.

According to Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer, O.T.D., OTR/L, Academic Coordinator of Fieldwork Education, it is hoped that the revamped curriculum will facilitate increased interaction between the Divi-

sion faculty and local fieldwork sites, strengthening the ties between academic and practice organizations.

"This is an invitation to our local area fieldwork sites to take a more active role in partnering with our academic program and become more closely affiliated and integrated into our entry-level master's curriculum through what we are terming our 'USC Education Affiliates' program," explains Taguchi-Meyer. "By fostering stronger relationships between didactic and clinical learning experiences," she explained, "students benefit with a richer learning experience, and local community organizations may benefit from drawing upon the infrastructure of evidence-based learning and academic research at USC."

For more information about the USC Education Affiliates program, contact Jaynee Taguchi-Meyer at (323)442-2857 or taguchi@usc.edu



Partner in USC OT Education



The USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy invites you to become a

USC Education Affiliate

Your Commitment to USC

- Take an increased number of Level I Fieldwork students once a week and one full-time week as part of the USC OT Practice Immersion Courses in the fall and spring
 - Adult Physical Rehabilitation & Geriatrics
 - Mental Health
 - Pediatrics
- Take an increased number of Level II
 Fieldwork students for 12 weeks in
 the summer (mid-May to early August)
- Facilitate student development and growth through clinical experience and mentorship
- Provide a supportive and positive learning environment

USC's Commitment to You

- Recognize Facility as an Education Affiliate on Division website, student handbook and newsletter
- Collaborate with Facility to more closely align classroom experiences with fieldwork
- Mentor students in a project or activity tailored to meet the needs of the Facility (e.g. Evidence-Based Practice review)
- Facilitate access to USC library system resources (via membership in the USC Alumni Association)
- Provide access to the Center for Occupation and Lifestyle Redesign® for meetings and other events, subject to availability
- Offer one complimentary admission to the USC Occupational Science Symposium
- Offer the opportunity to apply as voluntary clinical faculty within the School

Contact Jaynee Taguchi Meyer, OTD, OTR/L, Academic Coordinator of Fieldwork Education at (323) 442-2857 or via email at taguchi@usc.edu for further information.

USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

Published

The April/June 2011 issue of the *Journal of Occupational Science* prominently featured USC faculty and alumni. Authors in the issue included: GELYA FRANK, PH.D., Professor; ELIZABETH PYATAK, PH.D., OTR/L, who at the time was a Postdoctoral Research Associate; LINDA MUCCITELLI (M.A. '05), who is a current USC Occupational Science Ph.D. student; SOOK-LEI LIEW (M.A. '08), who is a current USC Occupational Science Ph.D. student; LISA AZIZ-ZADEH, PH.D., Assistant Professor; LEAH STEIN (M.A. '06), who is a current USC Occupational Science Ph.D. student; AMANDA FORAN, who is a current USC Occupational Science Ph.D. student; SHARON CERMAK, ED.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor; ANN KUO, who is a current USC Occupational Science Ph.D. student; and JEANNE JACK-SON, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Professor.

Citations from the issue include:

Frank G, The transactional relationship between occupation and place: indigenous cultures in the American Southwest; Pyatak E & Muccitelli L, Rap music as resistive occupation: constructions of Black American identity and culture for performers and their audiences; Liew S-L & Aziz-Zadeh L, The neuroscience of language and action in occupations: a review of findings from brain and behavioral sciences; Stein LI, Foran AC, & Cermak S, Occupational patterns of parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: revisiting Matuska and Christiansen's Model of Lifestyle Balance; Kuo A, A transactional view: Occupation as a means to create experiences that matter; Asaba E & Jackson J, Social ideologies embedded in everyday life: a narrative analysis about disability, identities, and occupation.

www.jos.edu.au

SHARON CERMAK, ED.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor, co-published an article in Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders investigating the relationship between sensory processing dysfunction and emotional and behavioral problems in preschool children with autism.

www.elsevier.com

GELYA FRANK, PH.D., Professor, participated in a panel discussion at the University of California, Los Angeles' American Indian Studies Center and Tribal Learning Community & Educational Exchange entitled "Tribal History." The panel discussed challenges and opportunities with writing histories of indigenous tribes. Gelya Frank is an anthropologist, and co-authored the tribal history "Defying the Odds: The Tule River Tribe's Struggle for Sovereignty in Three Centuries."

In May, the USC Department of Anthropology presented the inaugural "Influential Scholar Series" lecture by featuring CHERYL MATTINGLY, PH.D., Professor with appointments in both the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and the Department of Anthropology. Her lecture was entitled "Moral Laboratories—The Creativity of Moral Life."

The Occupational Therapy Association of California's "10th Annual Afternoon Tea with a Scholar" featured FLORENCE CLARK, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Dean and Professor, whose lecture was entitled "The Evidence-Based Practitioner in HD—Knowledge, Attitude, and Voice."

TRUDY MALLINSON, PH.D., OTR/L, NZROT, Assistant Professor, was the lead author of an article comparing functional discharge status in skilled nursing, home health, and medical rehabilitation settings for patients after lower-extremity joint replacement surgery, published in the May issue of *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*.

www.archives-pmr.org

TRUDY MALLINSON, PH.D., OTR/L, NZROT, Assistant Professor, co-authored the article "Pelvic Floor Muscle Examination in Female Chronic Pelvic Pain" published in *The Journal of Reproductive Medicine*. The study found that vaginal pelvic floor muscle tenderness was more frequent in women with self-reported chronic pelvic pain than in pain-free women, a potentially significant distinction between subgroups of women reporting chronic pelvic pain.

www.reproductivemedicine.com

CHERYL MATTINGLY, PH.D., Professor, was the lead author of an article published in the September issue of *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*. The article critically reflects on the idea of "chronic homework," the care activities that patients and families are expected to perform in their home contexts as part of the treatment of chronic conditions and illnesses, and how clinicians, patients, and family caregivers navigate the transition of health care activities from clinic to home settings. The article considers the issue within the differing contexts of Uganda, Denmark, and the United States. *www.springer.com/journal/11013*

ELIZABETH PYATAK, PH.D., OTR/L, Assistant Professor, authored "Participation in Occupation and Diabetes Self-Management in Emerging Adulthood" in the July/August issue of the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. Pyatak interviewed young adults with Type 2 diabetes and identified several themes regarding the experience of tension between diabetes self-management and participation in valued occupations, which requires careful decisions about how to balance competing priorities in everyday life.

ajot.aotapress.net

Current occupational science Ph.D. student LEAH STEIN (M.A. '06), current O.T.D. student ZOE MAILLOUX (M.A. '81, B.S. '77), GINA GEPPERT COLEMAN (M.A. '85), and SHARON CERMAK, ED.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor, co-authored with Jose Polido, Head of the Division of Dentistry at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, an article on oral care and sensory sensitivities in children with Autism Spectrum Disorders published in *Special Care in Dentistry*. onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1754-4505

FLORENCE CLARK, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Dean and Professor, led a team of researchers including JEANNE JACKSON, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor, and MICHAEL CARLSON, PH.D., Research Professor, on the USC Well Elderly 2 Study, the results of which were published in June in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* entitled "Effectiveness of a Lifestyle Intervention in Promoting the Well-being of Independently Living Older People: Results of the Well Elderly 2 Randomised Controlled Trial." The study, a randomized clinical trial design conducted between 2004 and 2009, validates the findings of the seminal USC Well Elderly Study conducted during the 1990's, which was the first occupational therapy study to be published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, as applied to a wider range of ethnically diverse adults within less-controlled, more real-world contexts. The Well Elderly 2 Study was featured as a cover story in *OT Practice* and also received coverage in *Advance for Occupational Therapy Practitioners* and *Rehab Management*.

Www.jech.bmj.com



—USC Well Elderly 2 Study

A quartet of Trojans published an article in *Advances in Skin***Wound Care* examining the prevention of pressure ulcers in people with spinal cord injuries through community-based interventions aimed at avoiding and managing risky everyday circumstances. Authors were ASHWINI VAISHAMPAYAN (O.T.D. '10), FLORENCE CLARK, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Dean and Professor, MICHAEL CARLSON, PH.D., Research Professor, and ERNA BLANCHE, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy.

*journals.lww.com/aswcjournal**

RACHEL PROFFITT, O.T.D, OTR/L, Adjunct Assistant Professor, was the lead author of the article entitled "Use of Computer Games as an Intervention for Stroke" published in *Topics in Stroke Rehabilitation*, examining the feasibility of using computer games as a six-week home therapy intervention to improve upper extremity function for a person after stroke. http://thomasland.metapress.com/content/300381

Three Occupational Science Ph.D. students were lead authors of 2011 publications. AARON BONSALL authored "An Examination of the Pairing Between Narrative and Occupational Science" published early online in the *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. AMANDA FORAN authored "Learning From Experience: The Relation of Virtual Reality and Occupational Therapy" in the *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*, and JULIE WERNER was lead author, with MICHAEL CARLSON, PH.D., Research Professor, and FLORENCE CLARK, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Dean and Professor, of "Predictors of Computer Use in Community-Dwelling, Ethnically Diverse Older Adults" published in *Human Factors*.

LISA AZIZ-ZADEH, PH.D., Assistant Professor, copublished an article in *Cerebral Cortex* investigating the neural processes by which an individual with a radically different body type engages sensory-motor representations as a means to understand other people's body actions or emotional states. The findings reveal that the neural pathways activated during the experience of the phenomena of empathy are partially dependent upon the physical attributes of the observer and the observed. SOOK-LEI LIEW (M.A. '08), current USC Occupational Science Ph.D. student, was a co-author of the article. *cercor.oxfordjournals.org*

ERNA BLANCHE, PH.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy, co-authored with Roseann Schaaf, occupational therapy faculty at Thomas Jefferson College of Health Professions, a letter to the editor in the June issue of the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, concerning the validity and fidelity of treatments described as "sensory integration therapy" as compared against behavioral interventions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *www.springer.com/10803*

MARY LAWLOR, SC.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Professor, and CHERYL MATTINGLY, PH.D., Professor, co-authored the article "I/We Narratives Among African American Families Raising Children with Special Needs" in *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry.*www.springer.com/journal/11013

What do

GFRIATRIC FALL PREVENTION

DIABETES MANAGEMENT

WORK INJURY DIAGNOSTICS

AUTISM-FOCUSED LINGUISTICS &

BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

have in common?

They are the five research disciplines of the newest cohort of tenure-track faculty appointed to the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

Learn more about this party of five scientists.





Every day, an estimated 850 Americans fracture a hip after falling at home or in the community. For Natalie Leland, that's a statistic that must be reduced through improved preventive and post-acute occupational therapy care for older adults, and her research is exploring ways of doing just that.

Natalie Leland comes to USC from Brown University's Center for Gerontology and Health Care Research. There, she completed a postdoctoral fellowship in which she examined questions related to post-acute care access, patient outcomes, and quality of care among Medicare bene ciaries who experienced their rst hip fracture.

Though she is a gerontologist by research training, having earned her Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Gerontology from the University of Massachusetts, Boston, Leland's research questions retain an occupation-centered focus on activity performance and participation re ective of her clinical training and practice as an occupational therapist.

After graduating with a B.S. degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of New Hampshire, Leland practiced as an occupational therapist in nursing homes. "I loved the time I spent working in nursing homes," she explains. "I see the value of what we do as occupational therapy practitioners in this setting as facilitating participation among our clients."

But too many of the clients she was treating in nursing homes, a majority of whom were admitted after a hip fracture sustained from falling at home or out in the community, told a strikingly similar tale. "So many of my patients shared the same story of experiencing a cycle of falling, being picked up off the oor by rst responders, taken to the

hospital, and then sent home without being admitted," Leland says. "This cycle continued until nally a bone was broken."

After fracturing a hip, older adults typically undergo orthopedic surgery, stay a few days at a hospital, and are discharged to a nursing or rehabilitation facility. But for many who have fractured a hip, the combination of immobility, deconditioning, and physical complications during rehabilitation means they never fully return to their pre-fall levels of mobility, functional activity, or social participation.

To clinicians like Leland with a keen appreciation of how activities and the physical environment interact to contribute to a person's fall, improved occupational therapy practice patterns are anticipated to improve the patient's overall rehabilitation outcomes, which ultimately translates to improved quality of life. The promise of better clinical results through research was Leland's motivation to pursue a research science career dedicated to preventing falls, examining how and why they occur, and optimizing the rehabilitative care afterwards.

"My work aims to gain a better understanding of fall prevention and how we can improve care for older adults who have experienced a fall or are at risk for a fall," says Leland. And though gerontological occupational therapists are well positioned as the health professionals of choice for preventing falls, the scienti c research base for therapeutic interventions can still be expanded. "We need more research demonstrating the quality and ef cacy of that care."

Fortifying this research base will be Leland's primary objective at the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. "Identifying patient outcomes and examining the best practices for occupational therapy interventions in nursing homes will serve to inform how we practice," she explains, "including the approaches we use, how we design our interventions, and how to best support our clients in their desired outcomes."

Leland is dually appointed at USC with the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and the Davis School of Gerontology. She has already co-authored research publications in collaboration with faculty members at the Davis School of Gerontology.

In addition to her research activities, she is teaching in the occupational therapy professional program. Leland also has public leadership experience as the Chair of the Emerging Scholars and Professionals Organization (ESPO) within the Gerontological Society of America and is the immediate past President of the Rhode Island Occupational Therapy Association.



Once a disease typically reserved for life's later stages, type 2 diabetes is now affecting the health and lifestyles of increasingly younger populations.

Elizabeth Pyatak is researching approaches to help manage the new face of diabetes.

In 1998, Elizabeth Pyatak set foot on the USC campus as a Trojan freshman. After completing her undergraduate degree in Psychology and graduate and postdoctoral training at the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Pyatak joins the Division as an assistant professor. Thirteen years after arriving, her USC academic journey has drawn her into studying the intricate choices people make within the everyday contexts of chronic care management.

As an Occupational Science doctoral student, Pyatak interviewed young adults with diabetes to examine how their occupational choices impact their everyday performance of the activities required for successful diabetes self-care, such as monitoring blood glucose, injecting insulin, managing medications, and making health-promoting nutritional decisions. Her ndings, which were published earlier this year in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, will help researchers understand the ways people with diabetes, especially young adults, manage their own health within the course of everyday life.

It's a complicated issue that has been relatively unexplored within occupational science and occupational therapy literature until now. "Not much is known about young people with type 2 diabetes because it's such a recent phenomenon," explains Pyatak. "We don't really know what 'health' looks like over the long term for people who get type 2 diabetes at sixteen years old, as opposed to 60 years old."

"My doctoral research revealed signi cant

areas of disconnect between the lifestyles of young adults and their approach to diabetes self-care," says Pyatak. Lifestyle choices and self-care behaviors signi cantly affect health and quality-of-life outcomes in chronic diseases such as diabetes, yet they are some of the most challenging issues to address in traditional health care settings. Thus, the signi cance of Pyatak's future research lies in developing therapeutic interventions aimed at enacting lifestyle changes that are still sustainable within individuals' life circumstances. "Ultimately I'm looking for ways to help people with diabetes live healthier, longer lives," she says.

During her postdoctoral fellowship, Pyatak worked on the USC Pressure Ulcer Prevention in Spinal Cord Injury trial, which is investigating the ef cacy of a promising lifestyle intervention to prevent pressure ulcers among at-risk populations with spinal cord injury. As a result, she received advanced training in the design and operation of clinical trials involving lifestyle interventions. Like diabetes, spinal cord injury is a lifelong condition that requires daily monitoring and actions to prevent secondary complications. Building upon these principles of chronic care management and intervention, Pyatak has begun to collaborate with faculty at the Keck School of Medicine of USC and LAC+USC Medical Center to implement a transition program, funded by the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, aimed at improving health and psychosocial outcomes as well as increase rates of medical

follow-up among young adults with diabetes.

fami

Her postdoctoral work also positioned her to win a KL2 mentored postdoctoral research grant from the USC Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute, a competitive award for young career scientists at USC to accelerate the development of translational health care science. The award supports Pyatak's current study, entitled "Beating the Odds: Facilitating Lifestyle Change in Urban Latino Young Adults with Diabetes." Building upon her doctoral and postdoctoral research, the study develops and validates an innovative, context-sensitive, community-based, manualized lifestyle intervention for diabetes management and will include a pilot study to analyze its potential to improve health and quality of life outcomes among urban, low socioeconomic status Latino young adults with diabetes.

To Pyatak, the implications for occupational therapy clinicians are clear. "Occupational therapy practitioners are an untapped resource for chronic care management, especially among minority and underserved populations in primary care settings," she says. Regardless of the presenting condition, she also believes that preventive lifestylebased occupational therapy interventions aimed at chronic disease management and primary care populations will become a signi cant practice area for the profession. "My work is part of a broader movement to bring occupational therapy into primary care," says Pyatak, "and to generate research showing our ef cacy in that area."

Every day an estimated 9000 Americans are injured at work, amounting to a total annual economic cost of over \$170 billion, in addition to the more intangible impacts to human health, workplace self-identities, and job-related skills. Shawn Roll is investigating ways of using diagnostic ultrasonography to understand work-related injuries and to develop interventions to put injured workers on a faster track to recovery.

The sheer incidence of work-related injuries was perhaps one motivation for the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) to explicitly target Work and Industry as a key practice area for occupational therapy to make a scienti c and societal impact for realizing the 2017 AOTA Centennial Vision. Quality clinical interventions, and the research evidence supporting them, have the potential to keep workers healthier by preventing injuries and accelerating recovery, especially for repetitive stress injuries sustained in the workplace. Research scientists such as Shawn Roll are playing a critical role in nding innovative methods of keeping workers healthier and rehabilitating injured workers faster. Roll notes that as the work force ages and technologies continue to be developed, "understanding the interplay of the person, occupation, and environment makes occupational therapists the ideal professionals to have a profound impact on the health of the working population."

Roll researches the utility of diagnostic ultrasonography for the evaluation and clinical management of carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) and other musculoskeletal work-related injuries. Carpal tunnel syndrome, caused by a combination of factors that increase pressure on the median nerve within the wrist's carpal tunnel, is the most common peripheral neuropathy, and left untreated can cause permanent numbness, pain, and muscle atrophy in the upper extremities. While the condition is typically diagnosed using a variety of methods, ultrasonography provides the advantage of allowing real-time observation of the movements and measurements of nerves and tendons as they pass through the carpal tunnel.

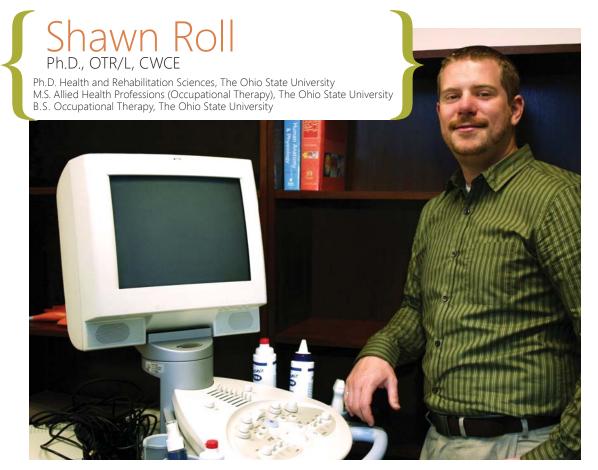
Roll's interests in using ultrasound to evaluate tissue morphology in work-related

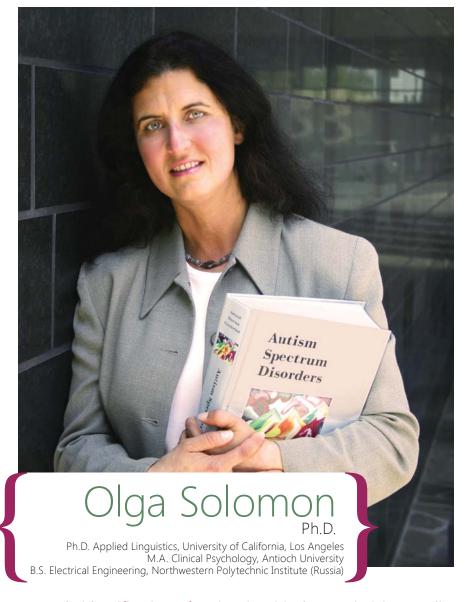
injuries come from his early career clinical experience as an occupational therapist, when he treated patients in programs focused on assessment, prevention, and rehabilitation of work-related injuries. After completing his undergraduate studies at The Ohio State University (OSU), Roll continued his postgraduate training at OSU as well, obtaining an M.S. in Allied Health Education with a Minor in Research Methods and his Ph.D. in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences with an Interdisciplinary Specialization in College and University Teaching.

As a Ph.D. student, Roll worked with the research team at The Laboratory for Investigatory Imaging at The Ohio State University College of Medicine School of Allied Medical Professions, directed by Kevin Evans, PhD. The laboratory's dedicated purpose is to investigate the translational potential for ultrasound imaging innovations. For research conducted in collaboration with lab faculty, Roll has already received publication in the Journal of Diagnostic Medical *Sonography*, the *Journal of Ultrasound in* Medicine, and Ultrasound in Medicine and *Biology*, with several more forthcoming articles under review and in press. He also currently serves on the editorial board of WORK: A Journal of Prevention. Assessment, & Rehabilitation.

Now beginning his tenure-track career at USC, Roll's research will not only include

the evaluation, prevention, and treatment of upper extremity work-related disorders, but will also focus on the role of stress, psychosocial factors, and personality traits as related to the development of work-related injury, and how each mitigates or promotes successful prevention and rehabilitation. He is also studying tools and approaches for determining functional capacity in healthy and injured workers. Taken together, Roll's expertise on research related to Work and Industry with his impressive scholastic productivity expands the Division's occupational science research portfolio to now incorporate the critical practice area of Work and Industry. According to Roll, the choice to come to USC was easy, driven by "the availability of resources, the forward thinking, and the opportunities to develop a new line of research in a well-established, respected, and top-ranked division."





Early identification of autism is critical to optimizing quality of life for children with autism and their families. But the path to diagnosis may be shaped by both structural and interactional factors. Olga Solomon is investigating these and other social aspects of families' experience of autism diagnosis and services.

Of the new tenure-track faculty appointed at the USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Olga Solomon is perhaps the most familiar. That's because since 2005, Solomon has been a key contributor to the Division's core research programs in autism, engagement, and family life.

Over the past two years Solomon has led an interdisciplinary research team as Principal Investigator of the NIH-funded R01 research grant "Autism in Urban Context: Linking Heterogeneity with Health and Service Disparities." The study, which concluded its data collection phase in September of this year, utilizes multi-method and ethnographic

approaches to investigate health and service disparities in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) diagnosis of African American children living in Los Angeles. By examining heterogeneity in ASD, the project anticipates to identify opportunities for, and barriers to, the development of collaboration among families and practitioners in timely and efficient ASD diagnosis and interventions for African American children. Explains Solomon, "this project is a unique opportunity to have a direct positive impact on the lives of children and families, which is consistent with the goals of occupational science."

While acquiring funded research grants

from the National Institutes of Health is certainly a signicant metric of academic success, Solomon's portfolio of autism-related scholarship is even more comprehensive. In 2008, she received an Individual Award from USC's James H. Zumberge Faculty Research and Innovation Fund for her project, "Animal Assisted Therapy as Socially Assistive Technology: Implications for Autism." A passionate dog owner herself, Solomon hypothesized that the human-to-animal interactions facilitated by trained therapy dogs could help children with ASD to practice the social interactions that form the underlying foundation for human-to-human communication.

She also designed and taught the Special Topics graduate course "Innovative Technology for Autism Spectrum Disorders." The seminar course, which was hosted at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering, was designed to bring engineering expertise to bear on innovative technologies for ASD, with potential clinical applications. Solomon also hopes to take autism research in as yet unexplored directions by focusing on how communicative bodies in cultural space use a range of semiotic resources (speech, literacy-based artifacts, objects, equipment, therapy animals, etc.) to engage in shared actions, activities, and meaning-making that shape human life.

That Solomon holds these interdisciplinary perspectives in such high regard comes as no surprise in light of her own interdisciplinary academic training. She holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from the University of California, Los Angeles, an M.A. in Clinical Psychology from Antioch University, and a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Northwestern Polytechnic Institute, in her native Russia. This unique mix of academic training, combined with her personal perspectives on cross-cultural experiences and communication, is an asset to conducting the essentially interdisciplinary nature of occupational science research.

According to Solomon, occupational science is a social science, and as such, has made and will continue to make contributions to social science disciplines. "Ind the occupational science and occupational therapy perspective conceptually rich and theoretically exciting, because of my interest in the intersections of embodiment, experience, action, and activity," she says. And though she had already held a faculty position within the Division for the past several years, the transition to the tenure track marks a turning point in every scientist's career trajectory. "I do feel that this is a new adventure," said Solomon, "and I am very excited about it."



Test tubes and pipettes—the trademark tools for conducting bioscience research—are objects not typically handled by many occupational science or occupational therapy faculty members in the course of everyday research. But in the hands of behavioral neuroscientist Barbara Thompson, these tools aid in translating basic science into improved clinical interventions for people with autism.

Today, nearly seventy years after the rst report of autism in the 1940's, scientists are still working to delineate and clarify the underlying neurological mechanisms outwardly manifested as the condition's classic behaviors— impaired social interaction, communication de cits, and restricted or repetitive interests. A better understanding of the neuroscience of autism and autism spectrum disorders (ASD) may lead to breakthroughs in clinical treatment approaches, with potential bene ts for children, adults, and the families of those who live with the disorder. Barbara Thompson is optimistic that her neuroscience research will help elucidate the neurobiological disruptions in autism and help drive innovative clinical approaches to improving the lives of those with autism and ASD.

Thompson comes to the Division from her previous position as research assistant professor in the Department of Cell and Neurobiology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. There, she worked with renowned neurobiologist Pat Levitt at USC's Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute. Prior to arriving at USC, Thompson received her Ph.D. from the University of Delaware and was a postdoctoral fellow at Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Department of Pharmacology.

"As an undergraduate I studied feeding behaviors in rats, and as a graduate student I transitioned into studying fear and anxiety in rats. As a postdoctoral fellow, I felt pulled back towards basic psychology and wanted to work with a speci c clinical population." As Thompson discovered, interdisciplinary interests are valuable commodities in neuroscience research programs. "I think in this day and age, when the buzzwords are 'translational science,' it is necessary to incorporate multiple viewpoints and expertise into research programs to actually conduct translational research. I was able to take all that knowledge and years of education and training of behavioral observations in animals across multiple disciplines—appetitive behaviors, fear and anxiety, and reward—and apply similar techniques to clinical populations. Today I am lucky to incorporate both avenues of research, human and animal, into one focused research program."

As a postdoctoral fellow, Thompson studied the brain's reward system and its associated pathologies in both mice and rabbits. This work linking conceptual neurobehavioral models in human populations to basic research using animal models provided a blueprint for Thompson to examine clinical therapeutic applications for humans through the use of animal models. Her research, published in *Neuron*, *Autism Research*, and *Behavioural Brain Research*, demonstrates a synthesis of neuroscience and clinical psychology perspectives.

Thompson hopes to discover new information about the ways in which brain anatomy, neurological pathways, and preexisting vulnerabilities coalesce to contribute to the be-

haviors observed in people with autism spectrum disorders. "While we know there are multiple disrupted behaviors in autism, we don't truly understand why these behaviors exist, why these behaviors persist, or what is driving these behaviors, be it differences in genetics, neuroanatomy, or environmental exposures," she explains. "Part of this is due to the heterogeneity of the disorder, especially within the behavioral domains." While such heterogeneity is indeed a hallmark of ASD, it is also a confound contributing to the mysterious etiology, or causes, of the disorder. "Hopefully, our research will shed light on some of this heterogeneity, and will help begin to elucidate some of the unique disruptions in neuroanatomical circuitry and genetic and environmental susceptibilities," she explains.

Her research holds potential implications for thousands of clinicians, including occupational therapy practitioners, who provide therapeutic interventions for children with ASD every day. "We hypothesize that each child will display unique behaviors and will therefore bene t most from individualized intervention. However, for individualized intervention to occur, we must rst understand the behaviors within each child, and therefore the underlying neurobiological disruptions," says Thompson. Developing fully individualized interventions will, in many ways, depend on the type of neuroscience knowledge that Thompson is working to discover.

All in the Family

Terry Peralta-Catipon (Ph.D. '04, M.A. '98) co-published the article "Personal Factors Predictive of Health-Related Lifestyles of Community-Dwelling Older Adults" in the May/June 2011 issue of the American Journal of Occupational Therapy.

Noomi Katz (M.A. '79) co-published the article "Effectiveness of Occupational Goal Intervention for Clients With Schizophrenia" in the May/June 2011 issue of the American Journal of Occupational Therapy.

Ferol Ludwig (Ph.D. '95) co-published the article "Observing the Jewish Sabbath: A Meaningful Restorative Ritual for Modern Times" in the fourth 2011 issue of the *Journal of Occupational Science*.

Eric Asaba (Ph.D. '05) co-published with Professor Jeanne Jackson the article "Social Ideologies Embedded in Everyday Life: A Narrative Analysis about Disability, Identities, and Occupation" in the second 2011 issue of the *Journal of Occupational Science*.

Rebecca Aldrich (M.A. '06) co-published the article "Insights about Researching Discouraged Workers" in the second 2011 issue of the *Journal of Occupational Science*.

Phyllis Meltzer (Ph.D. '97) interviewed Eric Hamburg in the second 2011 issue of the *Journal of Occupational Science*.

L. Diane Parham (M.A. '81) was a keynote speaker at the 2nd European Congress of Sensory Integration, in Algarve, Portugal.

One dozen USC Trojans were honored with awards at the 2011 American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference and Exposition, in Philadel-

phia, PA, in April. They included: Asha Asher (M.A. '91)—Service Commendation; Esther Bell (B.S. '53)—Service Commendation; Janice Burke (M.A. '75)—Service Commendation; Mary Foto (B.S. '66)—Service Commendation; Sheama Krishnagiri (Ph.D. '94, M.A. '89)— AOTA Roster of Fellows, Leadership in Professional Education, Service and Research; Gary Kielhofner (M.A. '75)— AOTA Award of Merit (posthumously); Natalie Leland (Assistant Professor)—Service Commendation; Trudy Mallinson (Assistant Professor)—Service Commendation; Ashly Moore (M.A. '11)—Service Commendation; Shawn Phipps (B.S. '97)—AOTA Roster of Fellows, Excellence in Leadership and Service; Deborah Pitts (Instructor of Clinical Occupational Therapy and current Ph.D. candidate)— Service Commendation; Nancy Scott (B.S. '70)—Service Commendation.

Shawn Phipps (B.S. '97) completed his Ph.D. in Healthcare Administration from Touro College with his dissertation entitled "The Effect of Cerebral Palsy on Self-Care, Mobility, and Social Function."

Gene Hurwin (M.A. '99) published the article entitled "The Obstacle Course" in the April issue of *Advance for Occupational Therapy Practitioners*.

Claudine (Mergenthaler) Song (B.S. '98) was elected as President of ArizOTa, the Arizona Occupational Therapy Association.

46 Trojan alumni, students, and faculty presented lectures and posters at the Occupational Therapy Association's 35th annual conference in Sacramento, CA, in October.

USC OT Wants To Know

How can we better meet your Continuing Education needs? Tell us by completing a brief survey at

ot.usc.edu/alumni/survey

and be entered in a drawing to win a FREE USC CONTINUING ED COURSE

For the second consecutive year, 100% of current USC occupational therapy students joined the American Occupational Therapy Association, designating USC as a Gold Level institution of AOTA's Student Membership Circle. USC was also recognized at the 2011 AOTA Conference in Philadelphia for achieving Gold Level membership status for the first time ever in 2010. Congratulations students and thanks to Samia Rafeedie (O.T.D. '06, M.A. '05), Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy, for advocating the importance of professional association membership.

Congratulations to current Master's students Yvonne Hoang, Amy Jensen and Maggie Teske for sharing their passion for the AOTA Centennial Vision in a video which won "OTAC's Got Talent!" video contest at the OTAC Conference! View the video at www.youtube.com/uscosot

David Leary successfully completed his continued on page 23

SAVE THE DATE

USC Occupational Science Symposium XXIII: Autism in Everyday Life Revisited: Interdisciplinary Research Perspectives at USC Wilma L. West Award and Lectureship: Susan Knox, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA

> Friday, March 9, 2012 USC University Park Campus, Los Angeles, California

Details as they become available at: ot.usc.edu/research/symposium











1 Carly Rogers (O.T.D. '11, M.A. '04), second from left, whose therapeutic surfing program helps military veterans return to full social participation, was featured on a photoblog (http://ow.ly/4Yo8O) by Reuters photojournalist Lucy Nicholson 2 Shawn Phipps (B.S. '97), right, is awarded a Widney Alumni House Volunteer Recognition Award by the USC Alumni Association 3 Sanjukta Asgekar (M.A. '11), an international student from Navi Mumbai, India, receives an Academic Achievement Award from the USC Office of International Services 4 Occupational therapy students smile through the night during the 24-hour-long 2011 Relay for Life at USC's Cromwell Track and Field 5 Occupational therapy master's student Casey Neiman, right, stops a passerby in USC's Alumni Park to raise awareness for college campus suicide prevention resources, during the Send Silence Packing exhibition hosted by Active Minds, Inc. 6 Jesus Diaz (O.T.D. '09, M.A. '08), Adjunct Research Assistant Professor, introduced on-field prior to USC Night at Dodger Stadium, which included over fifty Division alumni and friends also in attendance





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All in the Family continued from page 20 dissertation and dissertation defense, earning his Ph.D. ('11) in Occupational Science. His dissertation is entitled "Lived Experiences of Gay Men with HIV: Intersections of Portraiture, Narrative and Engagement."

Clarissa Saunders-Newton successfully completed her dissertation and dissertation defense, earning her Ph.D. ('11) in Occupational Science. Her dissertation is entitled "Spirituality and Well-Being in the Daily Lives of African American Women."

The USC Graduate and Professional Student Senate presented the 2010-2011 "Outstanding Graduate/Professional Student Organization Award" to "Trojan Neighbors – ENGAGE" organizers Jennifer Craft (M.A. '11) and Maytal Shvartz (M.A. '11). ENGAGE is a student-run community-based program based at the USC OT House.



Allison Chu (O.T.D. '11, M.A. '01, B.S. '99) cradles son Andrew Ryan Quock, who was born April 2, 2011, at 6 lbs. and 18.75 inches. Congratulations!



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In Memoriam

G. PATRICIA BECKMAN, 78

G. Patricia "Pat" Beckman, an occupational therapist and honorary USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Board of Councilors member, died at her home in Corona del Mar, California, in August. She was 78.

Pat earned her Bachelor of Science degree in occupational therapy from Mills College, Oakland, California, and her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from California State University, Los Angeles. She worked as an occupational therapist and registered nurse for many years.

Pat was recruited by Mary Reilly to be part of a "dream team" of occupational therapists at the University of California, Los Angeles Neuropsychiatric Institute along with renowned clinicians Jan Matsutsuyu, Linda Florey, and Lenore "Lee" Pezzuti. She was a lifelong advocate of occupational therapy and an ardent advocate of the profession's links to science, health, and wellness.

Pat was the founding president and member of the Orange County chapter of the ARCS Foundation (Achievement Rewards for College Scholars) and also sat on the boards of the Chicago, Colorado, and Pittsburgh chapters. She was an active board member of the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation, a lifetime trustee of the California Institute of Technology, as well as a board member of the Caltech



(From L-R) Lee Pezzuti (M.A. '70), Janice Matsutsuyu (M.A. '68), Linda Florey (Ph.D. '98, M.A. '68), Mary Reilly (B.S. '51), Pat Beckman, and former Chair Harriet Zlatholavek

Division of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering.

She was also a member of the University of California, Irvine Nursing Program Leadership Council and had served as an honorary member of the University of Southern California Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Board of Councilors and earlier on the Board of the UCLA School of Nursing.

An avid traveler, Pat spent weeks and

months at a time on her road trips and adventures around the world. She loved nature and hiking, gardening, reading, and most of all, encouraging young people in their pursuit of science and education. She was a quiet but very generous philanthropist. There are hundreds if not thousands of people she affected with her generosity and kindness. Pat will be missed by all.

JENNIFER KING, 36

Jennifer King (MA '01), died in August after being struck by lightning while vacationing in Costa Rica. She was 36.

Jennifer worked as an occupational therapist for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, at the Rio Hondo Community Mental Health Center, and educated several USC occupational therapy fieldwork students in this capacity. The Department of Mental Health board of directors posthumously issued a proclamation in honor of Jennifer. She will be dearly missed.

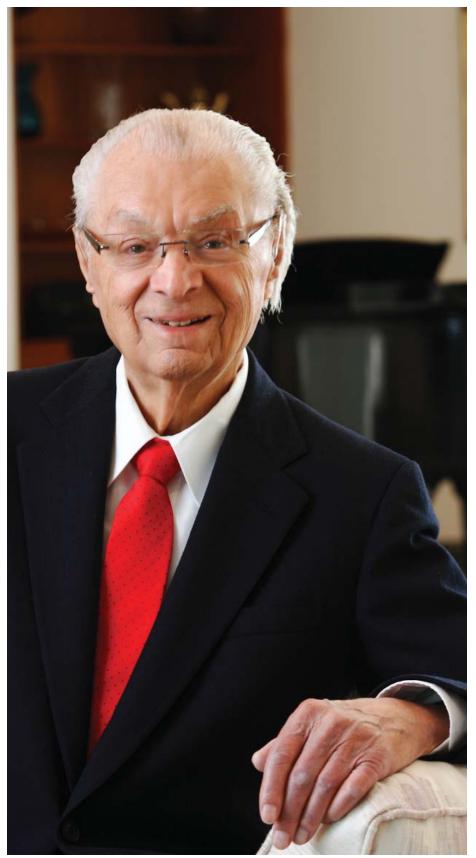
MARGARET AKERS, 92

Margaret "Peggie" Akers (MA '46), died in February. She was 92.

Peggie was the oldest alumna in attendance at a recent USC occupational therapy reunion. She was awarded a scholarship upon the conclusion of World War Two in anticipation of rehabilitating returning servicemen.

Her first clinical assignment after graduation was at Dibble Hospital in Palo Alto, California, where one of her patients asked her to marry him. After their wedding in 1946, that patient became her husband of 32 years until his early death in 1978.

According to her son Steve Akers, Peggie lived a wonderful life, loved her work as an occupational therapist, and always looked forward to hearing about the continuing good news that came from USC. She will be remembered fondly.



HERMAN OSTROW, 88

Herman Ostrow (D.D.S. '45), the benefactor whose name is shared by the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, died in April. He was 88.

A lifelong resident of Los Angeles, Ostrow was born in East Los Angeles and grew up in the Belvedere neighborhood, graduating from James A. Garfield High School. After receiving his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from USC, he served in the U.S. Army Dental Corps before returning to Los Angeles to treat patients in private practice.

He practiced dentistry full- and parttime for 17 years before entering the Los Angeles construction and real estate market. In his spare time, he enjoyed collecting and cultivating rare fruit trees in the hillside orchard behind his Beverly Hills home.

It was a 2009 visit to the Griffith Observatory, where he saw how private gifts helped a beloved educational institution grow and develop, which served as the inspiration for his historic gift to the School of Dentistry.

In a ceremony on January 20, 2010, the university announced his unprecedented gift of \$35 million to name the school—the largest gift ever made by an individual to a dental school. The USC Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy has been administratively housed at the School of Dentistry since 2006.

"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," he said of his gift. "I am thrilled that my legacy will provide tomorrow's talented professionals with opportunities to achieve great successes. This is the best thing I've ever done; it's the right thing to do."

—Beth Dunham is Editor at the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry

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