

SPRING 2017

USC Chan

MAGAZINE

OT TURNS 100

Witnessing the profession's
evolution through the eyes of
four generations of
occupational therapists

Special
Double
Issue

**GREATEST
GENERATION**

DOTTIE ECKER '57, MA '69

USC Chan

MAGAZINE

Congratulations to the 23 USC alumni and faculty members named to the American Occupational Therapy Association's list of 100 Influential People who have most shaped our profession during its 100-year history — Fight On!

Claudia Allen, former faculty member

A. Jean Ayres '45, MA '54, former faculty member

Esther Bell Cert. '53

Janice Burke MA '75, former faculty member

Sharon Cermak, faculty member

Florence Clark PhD '82, faculty member

Florence Cromwell MA '52, former faculty member

Linda Florey MA '68, PhD '98, chairperson of USC Chan Board of Councilors

Mary Foto '66, member of USC Chan Board of Councilors

Anne Henderson '46

A. Joy Huss Cert. '58

Gary Kielhofner MA '75

Lorna Jean King MA '50, former faculty member

Catherine Trombly Latham MA '64

Lela Llorens, former faculty member

Mary Reilly '51, former faculty member

Joan Rogers MA '68

Margaret Rood, former faculty member

Carlotta Welles MA '53

Wilma West MA '46

Wendy Wood MA '88, PhD '95

Elizabeth Yerxa '52, MA '53, emerita faculty member

Ruth Zemke, emerita faculty member



BABY BOOMER

COLETTE NAGAMI '75



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USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

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SPRING 2017

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GENERATION X

JESS HOLGUIN '96, MA '05, OTD '11

SPRING 2017

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MAGAZINE

Celebrating 100 years of occupational therapy and 75 years of USC excellence in service to our profession.

75 USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy



MILLENNIAL

KAITLIN O'HARA '15, MA '17, OTD '18



CANVAS



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ON PARADE | The Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC) kicked off the profession's centennial earlier this year at the 128th Tournament of Roses Rose Parade. The annual event, which is broadcast to an estimated 75 million people around the globe, gave OTAC an auspicious opportunity to launch its year-long public education campaign highlighting the importance of occupational therapy. "We are beyond excited to be sharing our profession with the world," said OTAC President Heather J. Kitching MA '02, OTD '10 in a media release. "This centennial float embodies our vision of a world where all people participate in meaningful and enriching daily activities to optimize their life experience." In addition to Kitching, there were four Trojans aboard the float, including professor and former Associate Dean Florence Clark PhD '82, adjunct clinical instructor Lisa Deshaies, former faculty member Lela Llorens, and Jesus David Vidana '01, a U.S. Marine Corps reservist who sustained a severe brain injury in the line of duty. Associate Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy Sarah Bream MA '96, OTD '09 served as the 2017 OT centennial float committee chair, working for five years to bring the float to fruition. Learn more about the float in the first video at tinyurl.com/OTonParade



PHOTO BY NATE JENSEN

Grace Baranek PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It is my pleasure to introduce this special double issue of *USC Chan Magazine*, the first since I arrived in Los Angeles earlier this year as the division's new administrative leader. This publication showcases the extraordinary impact of our programs, passions and people. As I am discovering on a daily basis, we have so much to be proud of and so many milestones to celebrate!

Joining USC Chan as the new associate dean and chair has been a huge milestone for me, and is among the many reasons 2017 will be a year to remember.

Just recently, at the American Occupational Therapy Association's national conference, we celebrated the centennial anniversary of the founding meeting of the National Society for the Promotion of Occupational Therapy, considered by many to be the birth of our profession. We also commemorated the diamond anniversary of USC's first occupational therapy classes, which began 75 years ago in the fall of 1942.

Occupational therapists and occupational scientists have a unique appreciation for how milestones, landmarks and turning points help structure our life stories. They are the significant moments that shape our identities, map our pasts and provide signposts for the future.

This issue of *USC Chan* highlights an array of milestones from our past and present. Our cover story (pgs. 24–33) looks back at 100 years of occupational therapy through the stories told by four successive generations of Trojans. Later, we document how our faculty practitioners at the Keck

Medical Center of USC are offering new hope to patients living with lymphedema (pgs. 18–21) while our alumni at Children's Hospital Los Angeles are doing the same for many types of childhood populations (pgs. 38–41). We also pay tribute to the career milestones of a towering Trojan, the late Florence Cromwell MA '52 (pgs. 36–37).

I have learned many things in my short time in Southern California (some of which are noted on pgs. 22–23). But of all these early lessons, what stands out the most is experiencing the generous kindness and hospitality of the Trojan Family. To those whom I have already met, thank you for the warm welcome to USC! And to those I hope to meet soon, thank you for all you do on behalf of our division and of USC. As I now have the humble privilege of saying —

Fight On!

Grace Baranek

Grace Baranek PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Associate Dean, Chair and Professor
USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC

FEATURES

A New Hope | 18-21

A cutting-edge surgery at the Keck School of Medicine of USC is giving sufferers of lymphedema — an accumulation of fluid in the body that causes severe swelling — hope for a normal life. Find out the many ways occupational therapy is helping.

The Road to Troy | 22-23

Earlier this year, Grace Baranek took the reins as associate dean of USC Chan after Florence Clark stepped down. Get to know the new chief and find out what she has planned for one of the nation's top occupational therapy programs.

Man's Best Friend | 34-35

Diagnosed as a teen with hydrocephalus (excess fluid in the head), Simon Shlosberg has endured nearly 40 brain surgeries to correct his condition. But with a little help from occupational therapy and a four-legged friend, he is leading a healthy, balanced life.



FIGHTING ON AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL LOS ANGELES | 38-41

Meet the occupational therapists working side by side with the medical team at Children's Hospital Los Angeles to help children like Nathan (pictured here) get back to the care-free business of being a kid.

A Rich Legacy of Leadership and Service to Occupational Therapy | 36-37

AOTA Vice President (and USC Chan faculty member) Shawn Phipps '97 remembers occupational therapy great Florence Cromwell.

Let's Go Out and Play | 42-43

Occupational therapy partners with landscape architecture for an exciting new project, creating outdoor play-spaces designed to be maximally inclusive.

DEPARTMENTS

News: USC, Peking University partner for one of China's first graduate programs in occupational therapy | 7

News: Five Trojans take AOTA awards | 9

Up Front: Helping the homeless, Regarding Beauregard, GenNext | 10-17

Research Buzz: Healthy aging in the palm of your hand | 44

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A Deeper Meaning | 48

USC Chan MAGAZINE

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The magazine of the USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy is published twice yearly. For questions, comments, updates or story suggestions, contact Mike McNulty at mmcnulty@chan.usc.edu or (323) 442-2850.



USC University of
Southern California

COVER STORY



TIME AFTER TIME

24-33

In 2017, occupational therapy celebrates its centennial. Take a look at the profession's evolution through the eyes of four individuals from different generations — the Greatest Generation, Baby Boomers, Gen Xers and Millennials — who share their occupational therapy stories from different eras.

CONTRIBUTORS



SHAWN PHIPPS '97
Title: Adjunct Assistant Professor, AOTA Vice President
Writer, "A Rich Legacy of Leadership and Service to Occupational Therapy," Pages 36-37

Meaningful occupations: Leadership and service to OT, piano and tennis.
Why OT? To help people with disabilities live life to its fullest.
About his article: I have always admired Florence Cromwell and hope to capture her extraordinary legacy of leadership and service to occupational therapy.



HONG LE MA '18
Title: Occupational Therapy Student
Photographer, "A Helping Hand," Pages 10-14
Meaningful occupations: Traveling,

photography, going to concerts/movies, and spending time with my friends, family, and my cat Bruce.
Why OT? My boyfriend suggested I'd make a great OT, but I already had my sights on moving to NYC to pursue magazine work. It took me four years to finally realize he was right.
Areas of interest in OT: Adult physical disabilities and mental health.



STACY SCHEPENS NIEMIEC
Title: Assistant Professor of Research
Writer, "Healthy Aging in the Palm of Your Hand," Page 44

Meaningful occupations: Vegging out watching shows, running, eating delicious meals, reading, spending time with family and bicycling.
About her article: I'm excited to let readers know about my research connecting older adults with mobile health technology. Within our tech-savvy society, we must consider the emerging technological possibilities for health self-management available without limitations of antiquated notions of age-appropriateness.



BRYAN KANG MA '18
Title: Occupational Therapy Student
Editorial Intern and Writer, GenNext, Page 17

Meaningful occupations: I love playing the guitar or being involved in music in general. Let's jam!
Why OT? My friends encouraged me, saying I would be a great fit in the profession, and I ran with it.
Areas of interest in OT: I mainly wanted to pursue hand therapy but am now also open to pediatrics after this semester.

USC, PEKING UNIVERSITY PARTNER FOR ONE OF CHINA'S FIRST GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

The partnership has the potential to transform the quality of life for millions of people, USC provost says.

BY MIKE MCNULTY '06, MA '09, OTD '10 AND JOHN HOBBS MA '14

USC and Peking University have forged a partnership that could impact the quality of life for millions of Chinese individuals living with, or at risk for, a disability.

USC Provost Michael Quick joined a delegation of senior leaders from the Peking University Health Science Center (PUHSC) to formalize a new partnership between the academic institutions to develop one of China's first graduate programs specializing in occupational therapy.

Alongside PUHSC President Qimin Zhan, Quick formally established the China Initiative partnership between one of China's most prestigious universities and the USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

"Occupational therapy enables people throughout the world to lead healthier, happier, fuller lives," Quick said. "By advancing occupational therapy education, research and clinical care in China, this new partnership with Peking University has the potential to transform the quality of life for millions of people."

The announcement caps more than two years of intercontinental exploration and travel by USC Chan faculty members, including then-Associate Dean Florence Clark PhD '82 and the China Initiative's Interim Director Julie McLaughlin Gray MA '95, PhD '06 to better understand the nuances of occupational therapy within China's health care system and to identify an optimal partner capable of fostering the profession's growth within the country.

The China Initiative began in 2014 as part of a multimillion dollar gift from USC Trustee Ronnie C. Chan MBA '76 and his wife, Barbara, to endow and name USC's occupational therapy division and to establish a partnership with an elite Chinese university to expand occupational therapy research, education and practice.

"We would not be here today without the foresight and generosity of USC Trustee Ronnie Chan, his wife, Barbara, and their family," said USC President C. L. Max Nikias. "Thanks to the Chan family, we will be able to extend USC's faculty expertise across the Pacific in order to fortify the global occupational therapy community."

Currently, there is just one occupational therapy graduate-level



USC Provost Michael Quick (center)

program in China. Typically occupational therapy — as it is known in the United States — falls under the auspices of general rehabilitation therapy, which is a bachelor's degree program in China.

The China Initiative partnership builds upon that educational foundation, establishing one of China's first graduate-level programs in occupational therapy. The program offers students a master's in rehabilitation (with an emphasis in occupational therapy) from PUHSC through a program that will replicate the world-renowned curriculum at USC Chan. Graduates of the master's program will then be eligible to apply to the post-professional occupational therapy doctorate program at USC.

In addition to establishing the master's program, the partnership paves the way for Chinese PhD students to study at USC Chan.

Once established and implemented, the partnership promises to continue the educational evolution of occupational therapy in China, training a new generation of practitioners to provide high-quality clinical services to the estimated 85 million Chinese living with, or at risk for, a disability.

USC has been ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the nation's No. 1 occupational therapy graduate educational program for more years than all other programs combined, and USC has a legacy of professional leadership, including founding the nation's first two-year, entry-level master's degree in occupational therapy in 1962.

Peking University is China's first national university and the highest ranked in mainland China, according to the annual QS World University Rankings. Built in 1912, PUHSC was the country's first school to teach Western medicine in the style of the British medical education system and now is among China's most selective and respected medical schools.

"This historic partnership with Peking University will dramatically influence practice and research to create innovative ways of improving quality of life in China," said Clark, holder of the Mrs. T.H. Chan Professorship in Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. "By collaborating in the establishment of a state-of-the-art curriculum for educating Chinese clinicians and by fostering the development of scientists, USC continues demonstrating its investment in professional excellence throughout the world."

PHOTO BY PHIL CHANNING

News Briefs

Lectures, grants, awards — there's always so much going on at the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. Keep your finger on the pulse with these division news briefs:



AWARDS

Cermak honored with Humanitarian Award

Professor Sharon Cermak received the 2016

Humanitarian Award during a November gala hosted by the American Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro. Beit Issie Shapiro is Israel's leading disability services organization and impacts more than 30,000 people every year through clinical services, legislative advocacy and research and training. The American Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro is the nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Beit Issie's mission in the United States. Cermak, who is an internationally renowned expert on health promotion for children with disabilities and developmental coordination disorder/dyspraxia, has served on Beit Issie Shapiro Hospital's International Board of Directors and has various professional affiliations with Israeli academic organizations, including Ono Academic College, Hebrew University of Jerusalem and *The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy*.



LEADERSHIP

Lawlor elected to AOTF Board of Trustee

Professor Mary Lawlor has been elected to a three-year

term on the Board of Trustees of the American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF). Founded in 1965, the AOTF is a nonprofit organization that supports research and public awareness of occupational therapy through research grants, scholarships, programs and publications. AOTF is governed by an elected board consisting of members from the public and from the occupational therapy profession. Lawlor is an expert on pediatric occupational therapy, family-centered care and ethnographic research, some of which has been supported by AOTF pilot research funding. She is a member of the AOTF Academy of Research and has previously served the foundation as a member of the AOTA/AOTF Research Advisory Panel.



ANNIVERSARIES

Symposium celebrates silver anniversary

More than 150 researchers,

clinicians and students gathered at the 25th annual USC Occupational Science Symposium last autumn. With a theme of "Behavior Changes: Theories Informing Occupational Science," the agenda featured world-renowned researchers in the fields of behavior change, habits and patient activation. The day was capped off with the Wilma West Lecture from Mary Vining Radomski, senior scientific adviser at the Courage Kenny Research Center in Minneapolis, entitled "How Can I Change If I Don't Know What I Really Want? Reflections on Occupation, Identity, and Divining Purpose." See photos from the symposium at tinyurl.com/symposium25.



STUDENTS

Two Chan students named Schweitzer fellows

Erin Malia Sako

MA '18 and Allie Schmiesing MA '18, first-year students in the division's entry-level master's program, have been selected to the 2017-18 class of Los Angeles Albert Schweitzer Fellows. The Schweitzer fellowship program supports graduate students as they conceive and implement projects, in partnership with area organizations, designed to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable populations. Sako will conduct her fellowship at the Painted Brain where she will serve people labeled with mental illness to address their needs for accessible, affordable community-based programs that manage stress and reduce stigma. Schmiesing will design an inter-generational program for older adults using reminiscence and storytelling to improve their quality of life.



FACULTY

New undergrad course focuses on autism

The division has

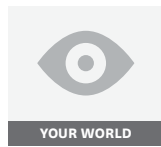
designed a new undergraduate course, OT 370: "Understanding Autism — Participation Across the Lifespan," that offers an introduction to autism spectrum disorder (ASD) from a neurodevelopmental perspective, with a particular focus on lived experiences and occupational participation of people with ASD. Students explore historical and contemporary perspectives of ASD, learn about occupational participation of individuals with ASD across a developmental trajectory and reflect on representations of ASD in media, film and television. Taught by Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy Linsey Smith '05, MA '08, OTD '15 the course reaffirms USC Chan's leadership, both on campus and off, on issues related to autism and neurodevelopmental disorders. "We're hoping that after this course," Smith said, "regardless of what major the students are in or what career choices they decide to pursue, they'll move on with a better understanding of autism."



RECOGNITION

Physical rehab residency program earns AOTA designation

The Keck Medical Center of USC physical rehabilitation residency program has received recognition from the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) as an approved residency program, one of only nine such AOTA-approved residency programs in the entire country. The robust program is designed to create expert clinicians and transformative leaders who impact health care delivery, policy, education and research to meet society's occupational needs. The Keck program is structured as a "dual residency" for students concurrently enrolled in the USC post-professional doctorate of occupational therapy degree program who, upon completing the program, intend to pursue AOTA board and/or specialty certification designation. Learn more at tinyurl.com/aota-residency.



FIVE TROJANS TAKE AOTA AWARDS

FLORENCE CLARK RECEIVES RAREFIED AOTA-AOTF PRESIDENTS' COMMENDATION

BY MIKE MCNULTY '06, MA '09, OTD '10

Five USC Trojans won annual awards from the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The recipients were revealed in November by AOTA and were presented their awards during AOTA's annual conference in April 2017, when the association celebrated the 100-year anniversary of its 1917 founding.

Florence Clark PhD '82, holder of the Mrs. T.H. Chan Professorship, received the American Occupational Therapy Association/American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) Presidents' Commendation Award in Honor of Wilma L. West. The governing boards of both AOTA and AOTF jointly established this prestigious award, given only rarely, to honor a respected leader of the profession who has made sustained contributions to occupational therapy over a lifetime of service.

More than one-third of all recipients of this prestigious award have been Trojans, including Wilma L. West MA '48 (1990), Carlotta Welles MA '53 (1991), former faculty member Lela Llorens (1997), Florence Cromwell MA '52 (1999), Joan C. Rogers MA '68 (2010) and Mary Foto '66 (2016).

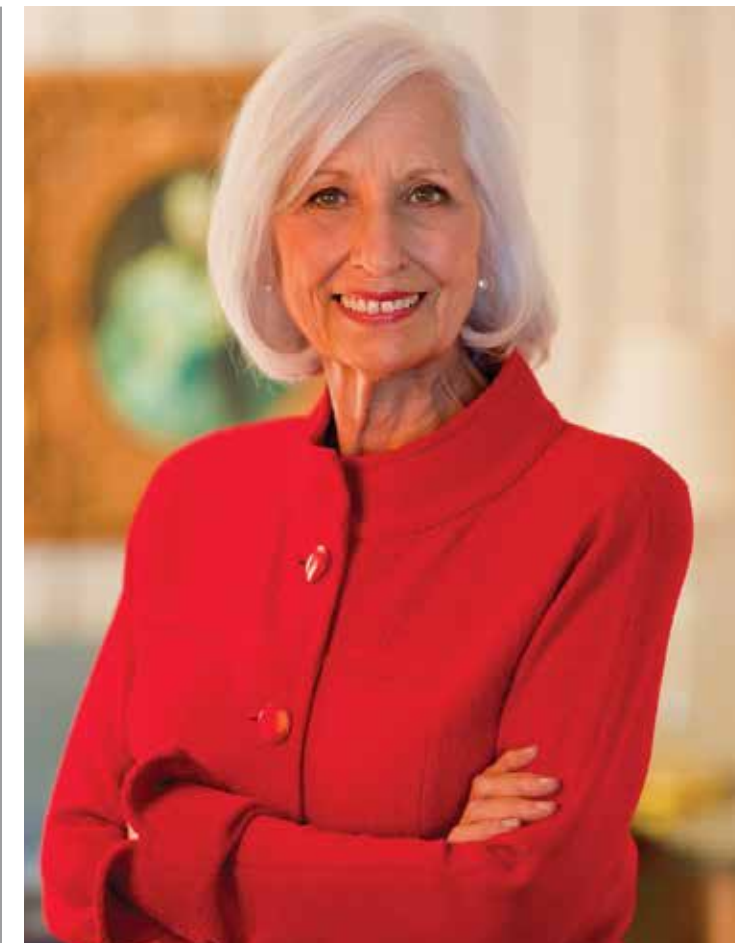
Administrative manager Kiley Hanish MA '02, OTD '11 was a recipient of the Emerging and Innovative Practice Award, a newly established award that recognizes occupational therapy practitioners who have developed non-traditional occupational therapy practices in visionary ways to achieve significant client outcomes.

Hanish developed the Return to Zero Center for Healing, which has become a resource for outreach, education and research for women who have experienced perinatal loss. Believed to be the first of its kind in the world, Hanish's center hosts activity-based bereavement retreats for women seeking healing after their traumatic losses to provide an opportunity for grieving mothers to gather in a safe group of like-minded women and create meaning and community.

Assistant Professor Natalie Leland received the Lindy Boggs Award in recognition of significant contributions by an occupational therapist toward promoting occupational therapy in political arenas such as federal or state legislation, regulations and policies or by increasing elected officials' appreciation for the profession.

Leland has worked in conjunction with AOTA for years to promote occupational therapy through leadership in Medicare policy, as her scholarship focuses on large administrative data sets, longitudinal data analysis and geographic variation in rehabilitation services, including post-acute care and nursing home settings.

Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy Jenny Martinez



'09, MA '10, OTD '11 received the Gary Kielhofner Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes emerging leadership and extraordinary service early in an occupational therapist's career. The award is named in memory of USC alumnus and former faculty member Gary Kielhofner MA '75 who developed the Model of Human Occupation.

During her six-year career in occupational therapy, Martínez has promoted occupational therapy workforce diversity and culturally responsive care for adults from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds through co-authoring four academic publications, participating in AOTA's Emerging Leaders Development Program and, most recently, beginning her term as chairperson of AOTA's Gerontology Special Interest Section.

Bonnie Nakasuji '74, MA '94, OTD '08 was a recipient of the International Service Award, a newly established award that recognizes sustained and outstanding commitment to international occupational therapy service to promote a globally connected community and address global health issues.

For more than 10 years, Nakasuji has been traveling to the West African country of Ghana to provide occupational therapy services to various groups and communities, including Mephobosheth Training Center, a boarding school for "handicapped" children located in a village approximately two hours outside Ghana's capital city of Accra. More than 250 USC occupational therapy students have traveled with Nakasuji to Ghana as part of international externship experiences, where the USC students practice task analysis, graded therapeutic activities, adaptive equipment evaluation and pre-vocational recommendations with the Ghanaian students.

ANANYA

A HELPING HAND

PHOTOS BY HONG LE MA '18

LAST YEAR, USC CHAN BEGAN OFFERING MASTER'S STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO THEIR PART TO COMBAT HOMELESSNESS — ONE OF USC PROVOST MICHAEL QUICK'S "WICKED PROBLEMS" FOR THE UNIVERSITY TO FIGHT — WITH A NEW FIELDWORK SITE AT THE CENTURY VILLAGES AT CABRILLO (CVC), A NONPROFIT FOCUSED ON OVERCOMING HOMELESSNESS.

THE ORGANIZATION'S SPRAWLING 27-ACRE CAMPUS PROVIDES HOUSING TO MORE THAN 1,000 PEOPLE EVERY NIGHT AND, THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH 20 LOCAL AGENCIES, OFFERS VALUABLE SOCIAL SERVICES (JOB TRAINING, DRUG AND ALCOHOL RECOVERY SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES) TO HELP RESIDENTS GET BACK ON THEIR FEET.

IN 2016, 12 USC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS COMPLETED THEIR FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE AT CVC, SPENDING HOURS EACH WEEK HELPING TO RUN BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP SESSIONS — INCLUDING EVERYTHING FROM GARDENING AND WALKING TO THE WILDLY POPULAR COOKING CLASS — MEANT TO GET CVC RESIDENTS BACK TO MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING.

MEET FOUR STUDENTS WHO TOOK PART IN THE CVC FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE AND HAVE HAD THEIR OUTLOOKS (AND BURGEONING CAREERS) FOREVER CHANGED:

ALISA

ERIN

MARISSA

UP FRONT



ALISA KIM '14, MA '17

What made you select this fieldwork experience?

I wanted to be part of helping individuals who were looking to turn their lives around after all that they had been through.

What did you learn about yourself during your time there?

That I like swiss chard. *(laughs)* CVC has a community garden, and swiss chard grows like crazy there. It was the main ingredient for many of our community cooking classes, and I was not complaining.

In what ways do you think this experience will inform the way you practice after school?

I have learned that I will never truly understand some of the difficulties my clients have faced, and that's OK. It's more important to focus on ways I can help and connect with them.



ERIN YODER '13, MA '17

What made you select this fieldwork experience?

I heard about what was being done at CVC and thought it was such a well-rounded place where I could be exposed to different populations. Also I love the outdoors and value the impact that exercise and engaging in productive activities such as gardening and cooking can have on well-being. I wanted to see it firsthand and wondered if I could help facilitate engagement in these valued occupations to help others.

What did you learn about yourself during your time at CVC?

I learned that I have a lot more to learn about other people. It is so imperative to listen and connect with people before you begin to assess and attempt to understand them.



ANANYA RUDRA '15, MA '17

What did you learn about yourself during your time at CVC?

I learned that I am very open to trying new things. Clients shared all kinds of knowledge and skills with me. I learned everything from drilling to making pop-up cards to aerating soil.

What inspired you about your time there?

At one point, I hit a roadblock with a client. It seemed like our efforts were hopeless in the face of her health care barriers. When my experience was coming to a close, she told me our sessions had helped her in ways nothing else had. That was a significant moment for me — both professionally and personally.

In what ways do you think this experience will inform the way you practice after school?

It taught me the importance of mutual respect and how beneficial the therapeutic relationship can be. You never know the battles your client might be fighting. That powerful lesson will play a part in the way I practice.

MARISSA MARCHIONI MA '16, OTD '17

What did you find most surprising about your time at CVC?

I really didn't expect all the opportunities! I had the opportunity to work with and sit in with a wide range of populations, including adults with serious mental illness, adults recovering from substance abuse, veterans, preschoolers, grade school children and teens. As a result, I learned even more about what occupational therapy can be, and I was able to get creative with developing intervention tools.

What did you learn about yourself during your time there?

I learned that I love bringing imagination and creativity into my work. I also learned what it meant to advocate for the role of occupational therapy in new settings.

In what ways do you think this experience will inform the way you practice after school?

CVC felt like a community, and we all felt like we were part of that. I hope to bring that same sense of community and connectedness into practice with me. Human connection is such a powerful ingredient, and I hope to help people feel connected and empower them to seek connection in their communities.



PHOTO BY GUS RUELAS/USC

TALK OF THE TOWN

Since joining the Trojan Family this past fall, Professor Beauregard Tirebiter has become something of a star. The 2-year-old black Goldendoodle works as a full-time staff member at the Office for Wellness and Health Promotion at the USC Engemann Student Health Center, where he helps students flourish despite the stress caused by the many papers, projects and tests required of them throughout the semester. Several USC Chan occupational therapists lent their expertise working with service dogs to stories covering the recruitment of what is believed to be the first full-time "facility dog" in the nation. This is what they had to say:

PETTING A THERAPY DOG ... CAN INCREASE SEROTONIN, BETA-ENDORPHIN AND OXYTOCIN — CHEMICALS AND HORMONES THAT MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY AND DECREASE CORTISOL, A STRESS HORMONE.

—OLGA SOLOMON, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE CAN DECREASE. PEOPLE HAVE USED DOGS FOR PAIN MANAGEMENT. SOMETIMES, MEDICATION USE GOES DOWN.

—ASHLEY UYESHIRO SIMON '08, MA '10, OTD '11 ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

I THINK THIS IS PROBABLY AN AREA THAT IS CONTINUING TO BE PIONEERED, AND IT'S GREAT USC IS TAKING THE LEAD.

—CATE DORR OTD '16



VIRTUAL REALITY CHECK

Could virtual reality lead you to become a more self-actualized person? USC Chan Assistant Professor Sook-Lei Liew MA '08, PhD '12 weighed in at the South by Southwest Conferences and Festival in Austin, Texas. "We know that our experiences affect our brains, but we don't know how exactly virtual experiences will do this. Because VR can give the user a sense of 'being in another's shoes,' we are especially excited about the potential to use VR to change brain circuits related to how we see ourselves and how we see others." Liew also demonstrated how to use VR coupled with real-time neurofeedback to help stroke survivors regain movement, with the REINVENT (Rehabilitation Environment using the Integration of Neuromuscular-based Virtual Enhancements for Neural Training) interface, which was named one of "six must-see VR experiences" by *Forbes* magazine. Read more at tinyurl.com/liewatsxsw.

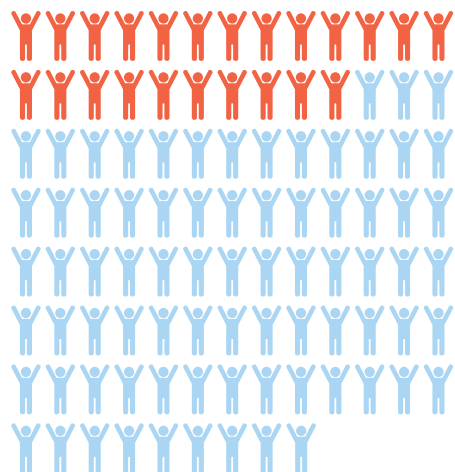
PREVENTION OVER REHABILITATION

Occupational therapists are not typically one of the first experts that an individual diagnosed with diabetes would consult. But perhaps they should be, according to a recent *ADVANCE for Occupational Therapy Practitioners* article, which explains how lifestyle interventions by occupational therapists (and physical therapists) done shortly after diagnosis can actually slow or prevent some of the disease's secondary effects. In the article, Associate Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy Chantelle Rice '07, MA '08, OTD '09 discusses the division's unique *Lifestyle Redesign* program — an intervention that, unlike other occupational therapy services, encourages lifestyle modification as a powerful preventive measure. "We're addressing both development of new routines and modifying previous activities so that the patient can continue to engage in them," Rice says. Read more at tinyurl.com/discussingdiabetes2017.

Read: tinyurl.com/proftirebiter Watch: tinyurl.com/tirebiteronvideo

THE TROJAN 23

Did you know that 23 of the 100 most influential people in occupational therapy's century-long history were affiliated with the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy? From Allen to Zemke — and with four current faculty members (two emerita) — check out which Trojans made the list at tinyurl.com/trojan23.



(L-R: Mark Jonathan Harris, Carolina Grippa, Lindsey Nebeker, David Hamrick, Jonathan Boyda and Linsey Smith)

LOVE ON THE SPECTRUM

Assistant Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy Linsey Smith '05, MA '08, OTD '15 recently moderated a panel discussion at the USC School of Cinematic Arts with producers and actors from the films, *Autism in Love* and *Jimmy & Tommy: Scenes from a Neurodiverse Romance*, both of which explore the intersection of romance and the autism spectrum. Smith recently began teaching “Understanding Autism — Participation Across the Lifespan,” an undergraduate course that investigates representations of autism spectrum disorder in media, film and television. For more information about the films, visit tinyurl.com/love-on-the-spectrum.

SNAPSHOT: USC CHAN

In the 75 years since occupational therapy took up residence at USC, it has grown from a small niche program to one that spans the entire post-secondary education spectrum. Here's a snapshot of the many study options offered at USC Chan:

OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE MINOR

USC Chan offers undergraduates an opportunity to explore occupational science with a minor.

115 No. of occupational science minors

88 percent female; 12 percent male

Top majors for OS minors:

1. Psychology
2. Human Biology
3. Health and Human Services
4. Business Administration
5. Communication

BACHELOR'S TO MASTER'S DEGREE

An undergraduate student can also embark on an accelerated bachelor's-to-master's program, granting them both degrees in just five years.

ENTRY-LEVEL MASTER'S DEGREE

This two-year program grants its graduates a master's degree, which is required to practice as an occupational therapist in the U.S.

254 No. of students

Students hail from: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Utah and Washington

POST-PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE

This program is for mid-career professionals and international students with a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy.

36 No. of students

Students hail from: Colombia, India, Israel, Italy, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, South Korea and Taiwan

DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEGREE

This one-year program confers upon its graduates (who already have master's degrees in occupational therapy) an OTD.

82 No. of students

90 percent female; 10 percent male

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

The PhD educates individuals to engage in the scientific investigation of human occupation.

14 No. of students

GenNext

Meet the next generation of occupational scientists and therapists moving the profession forward.

ANDREW DANIELS MA '17

BY BRYAN KANG MA '18

Age: 31

Hometown: Fountain Valley, Calif.

Undergraduate studies: B.A. English

OT area of interest: Physical rehabilitation

Meaningful occupations: Jamming on guitar, playing piano, watching TV with my wife, hiking

Describe OT in a few words: Connecting people to their valued occupations

Post-master's plans: OTD residency at Keck hospital inpatient rehab unit

When did you first want to pursue occupational therapy?

In high school, while vetting colleges, I explored music therapy as a possible career path. After a stint in the entertainment industry post-undergrad, I re-examined music therapy. I began volunteering as a hospice caregiver and had some amazing experiences incorporating music in the time I spent with patients. But the job prospects for music therapy were limited. Then I discovered occupational therapy, which seemed more expansive, had a stronger job outlook and demanded an equally creative approach to therapy.

You mentioned you worked in entertainment.

What was it like making the career shift? Very motivating. It was hard to maintain a satisfying work-life balance in television production — the hours were long, and the work was often trivial. It just felt like a mismatch. Learning to be an occupational therapist has been so much more fulfilling and energizing.

As you finish your master's degree, what advice would you give to current and incoming students?

Weave your extracurricular passions into your OT studies; reflecting on the things you love illuminates the multitude of therapeutic dimensions in which occupational therapists operate. And say yes to as many opportunities as you can. USC offers so many ways to get involved; it will hasten your conceptualization of occupational therapy and you will meet great people.

What is one of the most valuable lessons you've learned at USC Chan?

As the immortal David Bowie once screamed: “Oh no love, you're not alone!!” USC Chan has gathered hard-working, caring, intelligent people who are eager to lend their support to students in their development as professionals. We will have the benefit of their advice and experience throughout our careers. It's a special place on this Earth. You're not alone!



A New Hope

USC Chan's faculty clinicians offer much-needed help for people living with lymphedema.

By Michelle McCarthy



USC Chan occupational therapists taught Salvador Castellanos and his wife Jesse massage and wrapping techniques to keep the swelling down in his right leg.



Imagine having an ailment that swells one of your legs to four times its size — one that destroys your quality of life and brings with it immense pain and shame. For Salvador Castellanos, this nightmare was a reality.

“When I did go out, I couldn’t wear pants,” Castellanos says. “I would have to wear shorts. People would look at me in a weird way like, ‘Don’t get too close to this guy because he’s going to give you what he has.’ The hardest thing was not being able to take my kids to football and baseball practice. It would break my heart all the time. One day, I cried to God and asked him to send someone who would be able to help me.”

After a challenging four-year journey, the father of three was eventually diagnosed with lymphedema, an accumulation of fluid in the body that causes severe swelling. But thanks to a cutting-edge surgery being performed by Ketan Patel of the Keck School of Medicine of USC and the work of USC Chan occupational therapists, patients like Castellanos no longer have to suffer through this type of pain.

In his experience, Castellanos says there is an overall lack of awareness among physicians about lymphedema; and those who do recognize the symptoms don’t know how to help those afflicted by it, other than prescribing antibiotics for cellulitis — a common skin infection caused by lymphedema — and sending them home. And that’s what sets the occupational therapists at Keck apart. “There are a handful of us who are certified lymphedema therapists who took a specialty course to treat patients with this condition,” says Michelle Hsia MA ’08, OTD ’09, assistant professor of clinical occupational therapy and manager of the department at Keck.

“A lot of times, we’ll get referrals from community hospitals, and the patient tells us, ‘I’ve had swelling in my leg for five years and went from doctor to doctor and they just told me I was fat. Or they told me it will go away.’ Sometimes they’ll come on their own, not even knowing what lymphedema is, and say, ‘Help me with my leg.’”

While Castellanos has primary lymphedema (occurring on its own), the ailment can also be a by-product of chemotherapy, radiation or cancer-related surgery in which lymph nodes are removed or damaged.

After being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012, Sabrena Lee had a mastectomy and the removal of cancerous lymph nodes. Following radiation, she started noticing her affected arm was beginning to swell.

“I went to doctors and they would just give me a compression sleeve,” Lee says. “I’m a hairstylist, so I was taking anti-inflammatories every night because my arm was in so much pain and so heavy. I didn’t really want to go anywhere, so I stayed home. I had gotten to the point where I’d given up and was like, ‘This is what my life is going to be.’”

Castellanos and Lee both found their way to the lymphedema clinic at Keck Hospital where USC Chan occupational therapists are devoted to helping patients who are prepping to undergo surgery along with those who need to learn how to manage the lifelong ailment.

“In therapy, we do bandaging to bring down the swelling, massage, skin care education and exercise,” Hsia says. “Lymphedema changes your skin to a tree-bark texture because over time there is so much fluid that there’s no oxygen getting to the tissue. Manual lymphatic drainage is a type of massage that helps to open up the lymphatic system and push the fluid away. Once the swelling is down, we give the patients some sort of compression that keeps them at that smallest size we’ve achieved.”

Castellanos says the occupational therapists at Keck painstakingly taught him and his wife massage techniques and how to wrap his leg. “They would explain everything in detail. My wife learned how to wrap it just as well as the therapists,” he says. “So when we came home, she knew everything to do.”

A lot of the pre-surgical work the occupational therapists do involves educating their patients about what to expect from surgery, but it also includes understanding how it will impact their everyday lives once they go home. “We talk about how to change diapers, how to carry a 20-pound baby when you’re not supposed to be lifting anything, sex and positioning, clothing, fatigue and exercise,” Hsia explains. “How are you going to get into the bed? How are you going to bathe and get dressed? What are the things that are important for you to do independently?”

After Lee completed a month and a half of therapy, Patel performed a lymph node transfer surgery, a relatively new approach in which lymph nodes were taken from a healthy area in her body and placed in the limb affected by lymphedema to help drain fluid.

“I noticed a difference right away, and it gets better and better,” Lee says. “The main thing I noticed was that I wasn’t in pain.”

A second option is a lymphovenous surgery, where pathways in the lymph and venous systems are reconnected to improve flow.

“At the end of treatment, I’ve had patients say, ‘I don’t have any pain in my arm,’” Hsia says. “Now it doesn’t wake me up in the middle of the night.’ That makes a huge difference. They still have to wear a compression sleeve and manage the lymphedema, but they say, ‘I will take this over what I was experiencing before any day.’”

Castellanos is currently undergoing pre-surgical testing and is hoping to schedule lymph node transfer this summer. He says the therapy program at Keck has changed his life. “I just went to one of my son’s baseball tournaments in Perris and got to see him play baseball for the first time,” he says with a big smile. “Now I feel much better going out. I put on a pair of sweatpants the other day and was like, ‘Wow, you can’t even tell my leg is swollen.’ I know there is a long road ahead of me, but I’m really happy with the outcome of everything.”



Sabrina Lee developed lymphedema in her right arm after undergoing a mastectomy and removal of cancerous lymph nodes.

PHOTO BY NATE JENSEN

THE ROAD TO TROY

Charting Grace Baranek's route from her professional upbringing in Chicago to her new position as associate dean and chair at USC Chan.

BY MIKE MCNULTY '06, MA '09, OTD '10

The recent hit film *La La Land* opens with a musical number set amid standstill traffic on a freeway interchange high above South Los Angeles. With the city's downtown skyline — USC's campuses at its outskirts — visible in the hazy distance, commuters momentarily escape the snarl with an impromptu song and dance on the lanes of the overpass. "It's another day of sun/Another day has just begun," the chorus joyfully sings, portraying an ironic slice of daily life in the real "La La Land." Endless sunshine is welcome solace to commuters stuck in seemingly perpetual traffic.

Despite an unusually wet winter in Southern California, it's been nothing but sunshine inside the USC Chan division since newly appointed Associate Dean and Chair Grace Baranek arrived on campus in February. Baranek comes to USC from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she had been a faculty member since 1996. Her most recent appointments at UNC included associate chair for research in the Department of Allied Health Sciences and professor in the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

When asked about what drove her decision to make the move from Tar Heel to Trojan, Baranek smiles wryly.

"Well, it certainly wasn't the traffic!"

Route 66 — that most famous of American highways and an enduring icon of westward migration — stretches nearly 2,500 miles from the Santa Monica Pier in California to the shores of Lake Michigan in Chicago. Baranek likewise traces her own route to the City of Angels back from the Windy City. The proud Chicagoan ("Go Cubs!") first discovered occupational therapy as an undergraduate student at the University of Illinois, thanks to the profession's appealing mix of creativity and science in tangible service to improving the lives of others.

She earned her bachelor's degree in occupational therapy in 1981 and spent her early career in pediatric practice working in various acute, rehabilitation, outpatient and school-based settings. But it was during the late 1980s and early '90s while working at the Easter Seals Day School in Chicago that her career trajectory took a pivotal turn.

"I had all these burning questions that I was looking for definitive answers to," she recalls. "How can we better identify risk markers of autism in infants and toddlers? And how early can we do so? What interventions should we be providing in the early years in order to maximize outcomes later in life?"

To find her own answers, Baranek entered the developmental psychology doctoral program at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The quality of her scholarship and its potential implications gained attention before she even completed the program. In 1995, she received a \$20,000

award from the American Occupational Therapy Association to fund her research. One year later, she earned her PhD with her dissertation entitled, "Early Predictors of Autism Using Retrospective Video Analysis."

"The dissertation award from AOTA was extremely encouraging to me, as a young scientist looking to take the next step in academia," Baranek says. "It affirmed the significance of my work and the critical importance of early identification of autism spectrum disorder."

Upon graduating from UIC, Baranek joined the faculty at the University of North Carolina in the autumn of 1996, and recognition for her research continued to grow. In 1997, she received a UNC junior faculty award to study sensory processing disorders in children with Fragile X syndrome, a genetic condition that causes various developmental problems including autistic-like behaviors that impact daily functioning.

Beginning in 2003, she received her first federal research support as the principal investigator of the Sensory Experiences Project. Funded by the NIH National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the 10-year study, totaling more than \$4.5 million in federal grants, aimed to explain the developmental course, mechanisms and functional effects of sensory features in children with autism spectrum disorder.

"This research confirmed that sensory features were quite common but varied across children with ASD," Baranek explains. "Moreover, sensory patterns, such as hypo- and hyper-responsiveness, were found to impact children's social and adaptive development in different ways, and also limited the extent to which families could participate in community activities."

In 2010, Baranek was appointed associate chair for research at the UNC Department of Allied Health Sciences, a nod both to her own expertise and to her abilities for fostering the infrastructure, relationships and environments necessary for others' research programs to thrive. This administrative leadership experience helped cement Baranek as the successor to Florence Clark, who announced in 2015 that she would be stepping down from her administrative appointments after 27 years as the chair of USC Chan. Baranek's selection was made public in an August 2016 announcement by Avishai Sadan MBA '14, dean of the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, which oversees USC Chan.

But while she's hesitant to draw any comparisons between herself and her predecessor, Baranek points to lessons that she has learned from Clark, who is continuing her own scholarship at USC Chan as the holder of the Mrs. T.H. Chan Professorship in Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

"Dr. Clark has been a tremendous leader and role model for our whole field," Baranek says. "She's shown me how to leverage strengths and align resources in order to realize a vision of USC Chan well into the future."

This deep sense of enduring continuity and appreciation for USC's long-standing influence upon the occupational therapy profession is all the more impressive seeing as Baranek has only been an official Trojan for less than two months.

"You don't get to be a top-ranked program by doing one thing exceptionally well," she says. "You get there by doing everything exceptionally well."

Considering the career body of work that has earned her widespread respect and international renown, Baranek has shown that she knows what it takes to do many things well. That is, perhaps all but the one thing that every Angeleno, no matter how long they have lived in Southern California, would like to improve.

"I'm not really sure how to fix the L.A. traffic!" she says, with a laugh.



PHOTO BY NATE JENSEN



TIME AFTER TIME

**LOOKING AT THE EVOLUTION OF
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY THROUGH
THE EYES OF FOUR GENERATIONS OF
TROJANS**

PHOTOS BY NATE JENSEN

As occupational therapy turns 100 — and USC’s program turns 75 — we look back at the past century through the eyes of those who experienced occupational therapy’s evolution firsthand. Our story begins with Dottie Ecker, proudly representing the Greatest Generation, and finishes with millennial Kaitlin O’Hara. Each Trojan from the four generations shares a unique view of the profession, which has evolved from a craft-based technical practice to its modern day, evidence-based form in a variety of clinical settings with myriad specialties. Read on to find out how occupational therapy has changed (and how it has stayed the same) since its inception in 1917.

GREATEST GENERATION

DOTTIE ECKER '57, MA '69

BY YASMINE PEZESHKPOUR MCM '16

For as long as Dottie Ecker can remember, she has been a working woman.

At 14, she went door-to-door, selling hand-made necklaces and pins. Then, when she was finally old enough, she eagerly applied for a job at a department store in downtown Los Angeles. Like many in the Greatest Generation (born between 1922 and 1945), Ecker strove for financial independence and chose to earn her own spending money.

"I worked throughout college at a hospital's office. Even after college, when I was pregnant with my first child, I insisted on working until the last day possible," she says. "To be honest, I didn't think I would be satisfied as a retiree."

Now, retired only for one year, Ecker uses her 11-page curriculum vitae to help her recall her nearly 60-year career in occupational therapy.

"I had forgotten some of the things I had done in my career after all those years," she says, laughing.

LURED TO HEALTH CARE

As a teenager, Ecker knew she wanted to work in health care so she surrounded herself with individuals already working in her dream career.

She also accompanied her aunt, who was the principal of a rehab facility, to her workplace so she could learn more about health care.

It was one of her aunt's employees, who was a pre-OT student at USC, that introduced Ecker to occupational therapy.

"I liked working with people in general, especially helping people with disabilities, and I thought that would be very rewarding to pursue as a profession."

When it was time for Ecker to go to college,

she chose to pursue her bachelor's degree in occupational therapy at USC. At the time, a bachelor's degree was required for an occupational therapist to become certified for practice.

After completing her degree, Ecker landed a position at the Texas Rehabilitation Center in Gonzales, Texas.

"There I was working in rehab with patients with spinal cord injuries and strokes," Ecker says. "I also helped train the OT students."

Ecker and her then-beau Roland were married in 1960. Afterward, they moved back to Southern California, where Ecker continued to work as an OT and teach up-and-coming occupational therapy professionals.

THE PROFESSION'S CHANGING FOCUS

It wasn't until later in her career that she decided to pursue her master's degree in occupational therapy at USC to extend her education as was suggested by her mentor, A. Jean Ayres '45, MA '54, PhD '61.

"I never cared about the degrees," Ecker says. "I was always taking courses, so the accolades didn't really matter to me all that much. I just wanted to keep learning."

But the education was much different back then, she explains.

"For one thing, we wrote everything; we didn't use computers."

Ecker also says that, at the time of her education, the scope of occupational therapy practice was different.

"Occupation wasn't a central topic back then," she explains. "It was only briefly touched upon, and now it's paramount to the profession."

Ecker also says the use of research was completely different in both education and practice. She again credits Ayres for introducing

her to the concept of using published research to inform the way she practiced.

"I took a course on cerebral palsy with Dr. Ayres, and she always used literature on neurophysiology to justify our treatment," Ecker says. "At that time, no one was reading research to justify what they were doing, but she was."

Using peer-reviewed research to inform practice has since become the norm for the profession.

"The research is much more important these days in leading us to our decision making in practice. It's a big emphasis now whereas before it wasn't at all."

OT'S REWARDS

Ecker believes she had a rich, fulfilling career — from taking care of pediatric patients and patients with disabilities to setting up a geriatrics rehab program at LAC+USC Medical Center.

Throughout her career, Ecker also served as a clinical faculty member at USC Chan. In fact, she was selected to sit on the chair search committee that eventually chose Florence Clark PhD '82 more than 40 years ago.

"I had worked and taught with Florence so, of course, I knew she would do a great job," she says.

Ecker has also maintained active memberships in professional organizations, including the American Occupational Therapy Association, the Occupational Therapy Association of California and the World Federation of Occupational Therapy.

"It was just the right thing to do. I had a very rewarding career, I really enjoyed working and treating people. I used that experience to stay involved and sit on many boards of the professional organizations throughout my career."

Now that Ecker's professional life has taken a back seat, she still maintains her involvement with USC. She is a member of the Trojan Guild, a USC social club composed of alumni and her former colleagues.

"We attend the university tours, luncheons and workshops to keep up to date with all that's going on at USC," she says. "I really enjoy staying involved with the university and now that I have more free time, I can do just that!"

1922 - 1945

1946 - 1964

1965 - 1979

1980 - 2000

FIRST AMONG FRIENDS

For 75 years, USC occupational therapists have been dedicated to serving the greater good of the profession. Here are a few landmark moments that highlight the Trojan Family's enduring influence.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CAME TO CAMPUS

In the fall of 1942, USC began admitting students to courses in its new bachelor's degree program in occupational therapy. The program was directed by renowned ceramic artist Glen Lukens and occupational therapy coordinator Mary L. Abbey, within the College of Architecture and Fine Arts. With the country fully engaged in the World War II, the *Los Angeles Times* noted that these Trojans would "do the many things occupational therapy makes possible for men who have suffered through service in war or industry."





BABY BOOMER



COLETTE NAGAMI '75

BY HOPE HAMASHIGE

Even before starting college, Colette Nagami was drawn to working in health care. She volunteered as a candy striper while she was still in high school and also took a job at an adult day care center. She developed an affinity for helping people and was certain that a career in health care would bring her satisfaction over the course of her professional life.

When it came time to apply for college, Nagami declared her intent to pursue a degree in the health sciences. Although she was undecided at the time, she was leaning toward becoming a pharmacist. After a year of general education at USC, she was accepted into the pharmacy track, but her then-boyfriend and now husband warned her against it. He was a pharmacy major and knew that Nagami would be happier in a field that would afford her more direct contact with patients.

"I listened to what he had to say and raced over to the counseling center," Nagami recalls. "They arranged for interviews at the schools of social work, physical therapy and occupational therapy. I didn't know what occupational therapy was, so I decided that I would meet with them last."

FINDING HER CALLING

When Nagami finally had her meeting with occupational therapy, she had no idea that she was about to find her calling. She met with Harriet Zlatohlavek '45, MA '52, the former chair of the department, who got to know Nagami and her interests before explaining to her how occupational therapy could be a match for her. Nagami recalls Zlatohlavek discussing different styles of learning and adaptation and how that interaction informed the way occupational therapists work with their patients. It was nothing short of fascinating to her.

"It just became so clear to me that this was where my heart would be," says Nagami, who joined the division's Class of 1975 that day. "I am so grateful to Miss Harriet for her insights and for helping me understand that this was a better fit."

ADVOCATING FOR THE PROFESSION

By the time Nagami began her studies, it was possible to get a master's degree in occupational therapy and there were growing opportunities to do research in the field.

But most of the students, like Nagami, finished their undergraduate work, which emphasized the technical aspects of occupational therapy. All the graduates of the Class of 1975 were generalists and most of them, says Nagami, went on to work in skilled nursing facilities or in acute hospitals. Like many of her contemporaries, Nagami went to work with psychiatric inpatients at Long Beach Memorial Hospital just after graduation.

Just as her undergraduate studies at USC took unexpected turns, so too did Nagami's career in occupational therapy. One of the first things she learned after working in a hospital was that, even among medical professionals, occupational therapy wasn't a well-known professional.

She started to recognize that there were patients who would benefit from occupational therapy, but who weren't getting it because some doctors and nurses still didn't know how to use occupational therapy to help their patients reach their greatest potential. As this fact became more and more clear over the first few years working in a hospital, Nagami decided to become an advocate for the profession and not just a practitioner.

"I felt that it was important to raise awareness about occupational therapy and to increase our visibility in the hospital," Nagami says. "We needed a doctor's orders to get occupational therapy for our patients and so it was important that the doctors understood us. I totally changed my practice."

Nagami created a program for Long Beach Memorial Hospital that included education for both medical staff and for patients to help all of them understand the benefits of occupational therapy for different types of patients.

STRIKING OUT ON HER OWN

Her next career move was to quit her job after moving to Orange County and not wanting to do a daily commute to Long Beach. Some of the doctors convinced her to see their patients in their offices when they truly needed occupational therapy. In another unexpected twist, Nagami was soon running a busy private practice and, as time went on, she set up offices in acute hospitals that would serve both inpatients and outpatients.

Over time, Nagami started offering more than occupational therapy at her clinics. She had physical therapists, speech therapists, chiropractors and exercise physiologists working side by side with her occupational therapy staff. Becoming a business owner and running a string of 50 successful clinics was not anything that Nagami expected to do while she was in school.

Now a member of USC Chan's Board of Councilors, Nagami says she is impressed with how much occupational therapy has changed in the time since her graduation. She says she continues to be inspired by the depth of research and the march toward ever higher standards at the division.

And, while she was an accidental entrepreneur, she applauds the fact that many students now enter occupational therapy with the intention of starting and running businesses after graduation. Though there are several keys to running a successful business, there is one that served her particularly well when she was growing her company. She hired Trojans.

"During all the years that I was hiring therapists, I always knew that if someone came from USC, they would come with a great education and I could rely on that," she says.

FIRST AMONG FRIENDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26)

"WAR EMERGENCY" COURSES SERVED THE NATION'S WOUNDED

In 1944, the Commanding General of the Army Service Forces approved 12-month "war emergency" courses designed to quickly train occupational therapists to serve in Army hospitals across the nation. Students began enrolling at five civilian schools including USC, the only such training program west of the Mississippi River.

POST-PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PUSHED KNOWLEDGE BASE FORWARD

In 1947, USC opened the nation's first post-professional degree program in occupational therapy. The following year, Wilma West MA '48 became the first person in the country to receive a graduate degree focused on occupational therapy, with her thesis entitled, "A Proposed Kinesiology Syllabus for Occupational Therapy Based on an Analysis of Requirements of the Profession" to earn her master of arts degree in health, physical education and therapy.



GENERATION X

JESS HOLGUIN '96, MA '05, OTD '11

BY JOHN HOBBS MA '14

For Jess Holguin, the calling came early. As an 18-year-old freshman, sitting in an “Introduction to Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy” course taught by then-Associate Dean Florence Clark PhD '82, Holguin had an epiphany: He wanted to be an occupational therapist.

“At its very heart, occupational therapy was about helping people in a way that made a lot of sense to me,” says Holguin, assistant professor of clinical occupational therapy at USC Chan. “It just captured my attention, and I was really happy to come across it so young.”

That moment, in a class he took only because “the course description seemed interesting,” was the beginning of a love affair with a profession that has lasted more than two decades.

MAKING EVERY MINUTE COUNT

As an undergraduate, Holguin split his incredibly regimented time between his coursework in occupational therapy (with a minor in psychology) and the football field.

As USC football player no. 47, Holguin made some incredible college memories — scoring a touchdown against Cal at homecoming and making a tackle at the Rose Bowl. He also developed a laser-like focus on his studies.

“Division 1 Athletics is life,” he says. “You don’t have much downtime, so I was always very disciplined; every minute — on and off the field — was accounted for.”

In 1996, Holguin graduated with a bachelor’s degree in occupational therapy, which at the time was the entry-level degree for an occupational therapist. (That would change in 2007 when the master’s degree became the profession’s entry-level degree.)

Holguin entered the workforce at a time when the market was flush with jobs.

“There were quite a few jobs paying very highly,” he remembers. “But they weren’t necessarily places I wanted to work.”

Like many born in Generation X (1965-1979), Holguin endeavored for a challenging career that valued making a difference over simply filling his pockets.

He had been impressed with St. Jude Medical Center, having witnessed the care provided to family members over the years.

“The culture there was very much something I identified with,” he says. “The people were there because they wanted to be there,” he explains. “They weren’t just doing it for the paycheck; they were doing it to make a difference in people’s lives.”

CRAFTING A REWARDING CAREER

Holguin began his 16-year career at St. Jude in what is known as a “float position,” where he got the opportunity to work in various contexts to find his way in occupational therapy. “As a new grad, your first year in practice is very difficult because you don’t really know much of anything except for the fact that you don’t know much of anything,” he says, with a laugh.

As a young practitioner, Holguin gained experience on the acute and skilled nursing floors as well as the outpatient day treatment center before finding his niche in the inpatient neurorehabilitation program. “I found more than I could have possibly ever hoped for in terms of a rewarding career and opportunities within the neuro setting at St. Jude,” he says.

Nearly a year after starting his job, Holguin’s decision to practice at St. Jude was validated when his mother, who had previously suffered a number of illnesses, had spinal surgery complications, which resulted in a minor stroke. She was admitted to St. Jude.



“I was overwhelmed but so inspired by the response of my colleagues,” Holguin says of watching the way his coworkers treated his mother. “It was a very early formative experience that had profound lasting effects.”

One of the effects was his deepening interest in neurorehabilitation, especially the subtle and lingering effects of neurocognitive dysfunction.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

Eight years into practice, Holguin, who had risen through the ranks at St. Jude to senior clinician, decided to go back to school to pursue master’s and doctoral degrees.

As an experienced occupational therapist, Holguin found a greater appreciation for the graduate-level education than someone who had just come from a bachelor’s degree program. “It didn’t matter to them the same way it did me, having been in the trenches for eight years deeply caring about and arguing for the profession,” he says.

Holguin also began teaching at USC Chan, where he was able to share his love for the profession with a whole new generation of occupational therapy students.

“I loved being able to devote everything that I have to helping someone get there faster, more efficiently and ideally carrying the ball forward more than I could,” the former footballer says.

Now 44, Holguin spends his days teaching students from all levels — first year through doctoral residents — and working at Keck’s occupational therapy department, a program he hopes to put on the map for neurocognitive functioning the same way Rancho Los Amigos is considered for spinal cord injury. “That may be a lofty goal,” he says, “but it’s something that is possible given our resources and history of commitment to innovation.”

And though Holguin’s life might have changed in many ways since he had that epiphany at 18 years old — he’s now married with two children, Garvey, 6, and Quinn, 3 — one thing has remained the same: his love for occupational therapy.

“Occupational therapy and my value system are intertwined,” he says. And even after nearly 21 years in the profession, I have not lost a single ounce of enthusiasm or belief in the power of occupational therapy.”

FIRST AMONG FRIENDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

SLAGLE AWARDS ENSHRINED A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

In 1961, Mary Reilly '51 received the American Occupational Therapy Association’s Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lectureship Award. She was the second Trojan, after faculty member Margaret Rood’s 1958 Slagle Award, to receive what has become the profession’s highest academic honor. The hypothesis Reilly posited in her lecture, “that man, through the use of his hands as they are energized by mind and will, can influence the state of his own health,” would become one of the profession’s most cherished and enduring quotations. During the intervening decades, 15 Trojans have received the Slagle Award.

MILLENNIAL

KAITLIN O'HARA '15, MA '17, OTD '18

BY MIKE MCNULTY '06, MA '09, OTD '10

Kaitlin O'Hara sees potential all around — in her community, in her future profession and in herself. That's part of the beauty of being a student, the perpetually youngest generation of the Trojan Family. In the eyes of a novice, the future has never looked brighter.

SERENDIPITY AT WORK

O'Hara, who hails from Laguna Hills, Calif., discovered occupational therapy as an undergraduate student at USC thanks to what she calls a “serendipitous” combination of events. Because of a simple mistake in her course registration, she scrambled to add a class on the final day before the university's enrollment deadline. The only option that her schedule accommodated was the division's undergraduate course, “Introduction to Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.”

Around the same time, O'Hara joined *Lifestyle Redesign for College Students*, a program run by Chan faculty clinicians to support new collegians as they build health-promoting habits and routines for thriving within the campus environment. What had been a previously unknown profession quickly seemed to be a potential path ahead of her.

“I wasn't really passionate about my major,” O'Hara says, “and that semester I decided that OT was the field for me.”

ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

Throughout her undergraduate career, O'Hara's passion was ignited in other ways. When one of her Alpha Phi sorority sisters was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, including symptom flare-ups that turned the sorority house's stairs into complicated obstacles, O'Hara knew something had to be done.

“I don't know if I had even heard of MS before,” O'Hara recalls, “but she had to use the back stairs because she needed to walk on carpeted steps, not wooden ones.”

As a member at the time of the Panhellenic Executive Board — the governing body of USC's 12 national sorority chapters — O'Hara got an insider's look at USC's Greek-letter fraternity and sorority houses. Throughout many of the off-campus houses, narrow staircases and hallways offer the only pathways to accessing common spaces and residential rooms.

She developed a relationship with USC's office that oversees accessibility and accommodations for students with disabilities to begin exploring possible retrofits and modifications. But because many of the structures were built in an era predating the Americans with Disabilities Act and are privately owned by their respective national corporations, legal compliance with physical accessibility standards is optional. The case is a classic lesson of how grassroots advocacy, not top-down mandates, is a more powerful tool for change.

“I really valued the leadership and community service experiences that being in a sorority offered me,” O'Hara says. “I don't think anybody should be cut off from that purely due to stairs.”

MILLENNIAL SENSIBILITY

O'Hara has brought those experiences into her graduate student career too. She sits on the Health Sciences Campus' Graduate Student Government Executive Board and is tasked with organizing community service activities for USC's graduate and professional student body. She also sits on the board of the Occupational Therapy and Science Council, USC Chan's largest student group. She has organized sand-

wich-making parties for distributing to homelessness agencies in Los Angeles' Skid Row district, led a student team for a 5K race benefitting Special Olympics and is in the midst of rallying another team for the upcoming Walk MS at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

This type of civic and social engagement is a value often ascribed to “millennials” like O'Hara. Born between 1980 and 2000, members of the millennial generation have been described as open-minded, confident and committed to principles of justice and equality.

“When we're learning something, my class isn't afraid of asking ‘well, why?’” O'Hara explains. “Why is it done that way?”

This generation of “digital natives” grew up in the Internet age and is being trained within the evidence-based practice paradigm, so their thirst for validated information should come as no surprise.

“We've always had the whole world at our fingertips,” O'Hara says. “Of course we're going to ask questions. ‘Because that's just what you do,’ isn't a good answer.”

“IF YOU WANT TO DO IT, YOU CAN”

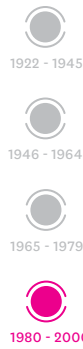
Starting this fall, O'Hara will be entering the Chan doctorate of occupational therapy degree program. Her doctoral residency site will be the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice, the very same clinic where she first found occupational therapy as a client nearly five years ago. While she isn't sure where she will be heading after the doctoral program, she does have one long-term career goal.

“I really admire how Dr. [Samia] Rafeedie makes the rehab process so human,” O'Hara says. Rafeedie is a clinical associate professor and director of the division's entry-level master's degree program.

“So one day I want to come back and be a professor to contribute to the next generation of occupational therapists.”

For the many ways that the profession has evolved since USC first began offering occupational therapy education in 1942, its core values are as timeless as ever. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

“Occupational therapy has this whole ‘If you want to do it, you can!’ attitude,” O'Hara says. “It's our job to help you figure out how.”



FIRST AMONG FRIENDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31)

OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE RESEARCH VALIDATED IN THE PAGES OF JAMA

In 1997, USC researchers led by Florence Clark published the first occupational therapy research to ever appear in the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Their article, “Occupational Therapy for Independent-Living Older Adults: A Randomized Controlled Trial,” documented significant benefits of the USC Well Elderly Study across various health, function and quality-of-life domains, suggesting that preventive health programs based on occupational therapy may mitigate the health risks of older adulthood.

CHAN ENDOWMENT GIFT ENSURES PERPETUITY

In 2014, USC again made history by receiving the first naming endowment gift, the largest ever made to any occupational therapy educational program in the history of the field. USC Trustee Ronnie C. Chan MBA '76 and his wife, Barbara, dedicated \$20 million to endow and name the division, which is today known as the USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.



MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Simon Shlosberg and his dog Zoe have weekly appointments with the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice to help them lead healthy, balanced lives.

BY YASMINE PEZESHKPOUR MCM '16

At first glance, Simon Shlosberg might look like any other pet owner, walking his dog down the tree-lined streets of his Pasadena, Calif., neighborhood.

A closer look, though, would reveal that Shlosberg, who lives with hydrocephalus, a condition where cerebrospinal fluid builds up around the brain and spinal cord, had become disoriented, and that the 5-year-old Schnauzer named Zoe is actually leading him back to the safety of his own home.

“When I left the house, I used to get lost for hours,” Shlosberg says. “So we trained Zoe for when that happens. When I say the word ‘home,’ she takes the lead and walks me back to the house from anywhere in Pasadena.”

Zoe is more than a pet. She is Shlosberg’s service dog — a lifeline that, along with regular occupational therapy appointments, helps Shlosberg lead a more balanced life after years of medical complications that disrupted even the most basic daily activities.

LENDING A HELPING PAW

At the age of 15, Shlosberg began to have debilitating headaches that left him disoriented and confused. His doctor diagnosed him with hydrocephalus, and on April 11, 1991, he had his first operation to relieve the dangerous levels of fluid pressure causing his headaches.

Since then, Shlosberg has undergone 38 surgeries for his condition, the last one as recent as May 2016. The recovery from each surgery has its own challenges and healing requirements.

“With my illness, it’s difficult because I am normal then I go through an operation and I still appear normal physically, but there’s a lot of internal recuperation that needs to take place in terms of brain function and emotional changes,” he says.

Shlosberg had Zoe trained a few years ago to help him through the complications associated with recovery from his surgeries.

Now Zoe helps Shlosberg with more than recovery, she helps him with sticking to day-to-day routines, which, he explains, is vital for his return to normalcy after operations.

“Having a routine with her is a part of my recovery too. I have to have a routine that keeps going. So it’s important to have that stability. Sometimes I get depressed and it’s difficult to be motivated to do different things, but Zoe keeps me going — she’s my little girl.”

In addition to helping him maintain a routine, Zoe can often detect when the shunt that Shlosberg had implanted to drain the excess cerebrospinal fluid from his skull is malfunctioning. She alerts him by sleeping on his head.

REDESIGNING DAILY ROUTINES

Shlosberg is preparing to complete his master’s degree in kindergarten-to-eighth grade education with a focus in special education at the USC Rossier School of Education. As any graduate student knows, it can

be challenging to balance academic demands with physical and social activities.

To help guide his routine, Shlosberg sees Stephanie Esgro OTD '17, occupational therapist and doctoral resident, at the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice.

“At the OT Faculty Practice, I work with clients in one-on-one occupational therapy sessions,” Esgro says. “I facilitate clients making health-promoting behavior changes and modifications to daily habits and routines so they can live healthier, more fulfilling lives.”

Shlosberg’s appointments are unique in that he is a telehealth patient and meets virtually with Esgro once a week using a video messaging system. This suits Shlosberg, as he is unable to drive because of his condition, and it also ends up working in Esgro’s favor as well.

“Given that Simon uses video messaging from within his home, he can actually show me around his environment,” she says. “This is more than I get to see with a client who comes to in-person sessions.”

“There have been several times when Simon was able to show me his workstation, organizational system or general environmental set-up to help me get a better idea of how his home environment affects him,” she explains.

In each session, they review Shlosberg’s progress with the goals that they set from the week before. Then they analyze what went well or problem-solve through any barriers or challenges.

“We are currently working on specific goals that focus on time management, anxiety management, organization and sleep hygiene. Improving these factors of occupation improve Simon’s ability to self-manage his diagnosis,” Esgro says.

“All of this contributes to Simon living a healthier lifestyle and attaining personally meaningful goals,” Esgro adds.

Since Shlosberg and Zoe’s lives are so intricately linked, Zoe is often included in the solutions and strategies they come up during their sessions.

“It is extremely important for Shlosberg to manage anxiety and stress since they are triggers to negative symptoms of his diagnosis,” Esgro says.

For example, one of Shlosberg’s strategies is to take Zoe for a walk when he feels overwhelmed. Zoe is trained to know when he is stressed and usually cues him, sometimes even before he is aware.

“Taking Zoe for a walk not only helps Simon to regulate his nervous system, but he also gets the emotional satisfaction of knowing he is doing something positive for his best friend. They both get to benefit from the exercise and multi-sensory experience of walking outside in nature.”

For Shlosberg, the appointments not only help him stay on track with daily routines and studying for his exams but also with his self-confidence.

“OT is very helpful for me because my illness sometimes causes me to get very confused and overwhelmed,” Shlosberg says. “So working with Stephanie, just meeting with her every week and going over what seems to be simple things, really helps a lot. It keeps me on track, and it gives me the confidence to do things.”

Still, taking care of an animal is a responsibility that requires self-discipline. Esgro explained that with conditions like Shlosberg’s, a patient’s personal self-discipline and routine engagement in self-care often fall to the wayside due to motivation, self-esteem and fatigue.

“His devotion and love for Zoe and knowing that she relies on him for her well-being gives him motivation within to also generalize those caretaking abilities to himself. It’s a positive feedback loop,” she says.

“Simon has told me that Zoe has saved his life, literally and figuratively,” she says. “Their bond is the epitome of special.”



PHOTO BY DEREK TAM

A RICH LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

An Appreciation of Florence Cromwell (1922 – 2016)

Florence Cromwell was born just five years after the occupational therapy profession was founded in 1917 and passed away at 94 years of age, just months before the profession's centennial in 2017. She left an outstanding legacy of leadership and service to occupational therapy practice, education and research that spanned more than 50 years.

I last spoke with Florence in person at the historic \$20 million gifting ceremony, the first and largest official naming endowment in occupational therapy for the USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy in 2014 and had several communications with her when I served as president of the Occupational Therapy Association of California from 2008 to 2012. She was kind, approachable and transparent. She offered her consultation, insights and wisdom with generosity.

Cromwell was a transformational and visionary leader that served the occupational therapy profession with fortitude and tenaciousness, serving in several executive leadership roles at the state and national level. She served as president of the American Occupational Therapy Association for two consecutive terms of office from 1967 to 1973 and vice president of the American Occupational Therapy Foundation from 1966 to 1969. Cromwell was instrumental in placing advocacy and public awareness of the occupational therapy profession at the center of her presidential priorities as evidenced with the move of AOTA headquarters from New York City to the Washington, D.C., area during her tenure. She also served as president of the Southern California Occupational Therapy Association before the Southern and Northern California OT Associations united in 1976 to form the Occupational Therapy Association of California.

Cromwell was pivotal in strengthening the occupational therapy profession's recognition in the wider health care landscape and became the first allied health professional to be elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences in 1965. She also served as chair of the Coalition of Independent Health Professions in 1974 to increase the power and recognition of occupational therapy in the legislative, regulatory and reimbursement arenas.

Florence was passionate about education, curriculum development and research. She earned her master's degree from USC five years after the inception of the first post-professional master's degree in the occupational therapy profession in 1947. Cromwell was appointed as a USC associate professor of clinical occupational therapy, an interim chair of occupational therapy from 1974 to 1976, and a member of the Board of Councilors from 1996 to 2001. She also shared her education, curriculum development and research expertise as an education consultant and accreditation committee member for the American Occupational Therapy Association for many years into retirement.

As a scholar, Cromwell was a prolific writer and served as the first editor of *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and served on the editorial board of *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics*. She was an editor and author to several texts including *The Occupational Therapy Managers' Survival Handbook: A Case Approach to Understanding the Basic Functions of Management*, where she shared her extensive leadership and management experience, including her role as director of occupational therapy at Orthopedic Hospital in Los Angeles.

Cromwell was also passionate about occupational therapy's distinct value in vocational evaluation and rehabilitation for persons with disabilities. She served as the associate director of the Los Angeles Job Corps, where she was in charge of vocational education. While working for the United Cerebral Palsy Association earlier in her career, she shared her expertise in vocational evaluation and rehabilitation with her infamous publication, *Basic Skills Assessment*.

Cromwell's legacy of leadership and service was recognized by AOTA and AOTF when she received the highest honor of the association with the Wilma L. West AOTA/AOTF President's Commendation. She was also in the first group to receive recognition with the prestigious AOTA Roster of Fellows in 1973 and was honored with the AOTA Award of Merit in 1974.

Cromwell serves as a role model for all occupational therapy professionals and embodies excellence in occupational therapy practice, education and research. Her legacy of leadership and service to occupational therapy will continue to inspire all of us to continually pursue excellence on behalf of the profession and the clients we serve.



Dr. Shawn Phipps '97 is the vice president of the American Occupational Therapy Association. At Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, he serves as chief quality officer and associate hospital administrator. He is an adjunct assistant professor of clinical occupational therapy at USC Chan as well as a member of the Board of Councilors.



Fighting On at Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Meet the USC Chan occupational therapists working side by side with doctors, nurses and surgeons to make a difference in the lives of sick children.

BY ANNE BURKE

When Kimberly Grenawitzke '07, MA '09, OTD '14 pulls out of her driveway at 6:15 a.m., headed from her Manhattan Beach, Calif., home to her job at Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA), she knows one thing for certain: It's going to be an interesting day.

Clad as usual in scrub pants, T-shirt, silly socks and sensible clogs, she might help a young teen with a traumatic brain injury relearn everyday activities like hand washing or writing one's name. Or find a way for a preemie with a feeding disorder to finally suckle from a breast or bottle.

Or teach hand exercises to a 17-year-old girl with a transplanted heart and a yearning to do the things that her peers do effortlessly, like hold a mascara wand steady so she doesn't smudge her face.

"One of the things that I really enjoy about my job is that no two days are alike. We'll see children as young as newborns in the neonatal ICU to kids that are 19, 20, 21 and about to transition into adult care," Grenawitzke says. "On some days, I may see 12 kids."

Grenawitzke is among an elite corps of doctors of occupational therapy at CHLA, the sprawling complex with 356 active beds that straddles Sunset Boulevard. Dating to 1901, this oldest and largest pediatric hospital in Southern California is an academic fieldwork site for the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy.

On top of her regular OTD duties on the acute, inpatient side, Grenawitzke heads the hospital's OTD residency program and is the primary clinical mentor for residents.

A specialist in feeding and swallowing, she is among a select group of CHLA OTs who are able to assess modified barium swallow studies, a procedure that determines whether food or liquid is entering a person's lungs, and is a certified practitioner of VitalStim, an electrical stimulation for the management of dysphagia, or difficulty swallowing.

And that's not all. Grenawitzke is an accomplished splint maker for patients with hand-related needs. Some of her trickier splint cases involve babies who, due to a chromosomal defect called trisomy 18, have clenched fists with overlapping fingers that are hard to straighten.

OTs who are climbing the ladder at CHLA speak of Grenawitzke with awe.

Continued on page 40



Grenawitzke playfully engages Nathan with a bottle before taking him to radiology for a closer look at his swallowing and feeding behaviors.

“She’s a remarkable combination of being fantastic as a clinician while also being one of the best teachers I have come across in any area of my life,” says Rani Waterman MA ’16, OTD ’17, an OT resident whom Grenawitzke mentors at CHLA.

When it comes to Trojans, Grenawitzke has plenty of company at CHLA. To fill OT positions and especially OT leadership ranks, CHLA draws heavily from USC Chan, whose OT program is the oldest in California and the largest as measured by research dollars.

Of the hospital’s current OT staff of 43, more came out of USC than any other single college or university, says Bryant Edwards MA ’05, OTD ’06, manager of the occupational therapy program at CHLA.

Moreover, each of the hospital’s six doctors of occupational therapy are products of the division, as are two OTs who are currently pursuing clinical doctorates (advanced standing doctorates for individuals who already have master’s degrees) and one PhD.

Anyone who’s gone through the clinical doctorate process will attest that it is no walk in the park. USC Chan’s year-long advanced standing

OTD program involves at least 20 hours a week of on-site clinical work and up to eight units per semester of theory-heavy coursework, plus at least four credits of electives taken outside the division.

After spending a number of years focusing on their full-time jobs at CHLA, Grenawitzke and her colleague Judy Hopkins ’95, OTD ’15 both returned to USC Chan for clinical doctorates. Neither have regrets.

“A lot of times an OT will ask me, ‘Is it worth it, when you’re already making a good income?’ And I say, ‘Absolutely.’ The connections with world-class faculty are amazing,” says Hopkins, who recently joined the USC Chan teaching staff as an adjunct assistant professor of clinical OT.

Like Grenawitzke, Hopkins is passionate about feeding and swallowing, the single most common type of ailment among CHLA patients. To help this large population, Hopkins developed two outpatient groups — the Lunch Bunch and the Supper Club — for youngsters who use feeding tubes due to intestinal conditions such as short bowel syndrome. Some are so averse to food that they gag at the sight of it, Hopkins says.

Once a month, in the occupational therapy kitchen, OTs get together with the Lunch Bunch and the Supper Club kids, encouraging them

to look at food, touch it and play with it. The hope is that one day, the children will be able to ditch the feeding tubes and eat on their own.

While the programs are popular with kids and their parents, Hopkins came to find out that passion and popularity are not necessarily enough.

Through her doctorate studies, Hopkins learned “that if I’m going to put together a program, I need a business plan to make it sustainable, to show what it really costs and how to get funding.”

As an undergraduate, Grenawitzke thought she was headed to medical school and a career as a pediatrician. But after getting a chance to observe an occupational therapist on the job, she changed course. What impressed her most was that the OT focused not on the child’s ailment but on “helping that child be a child.”

That’s the guiding principle that she uses today. When she’s successful, especially after 10 hours on the job and a bumper-to-bumper drive home, it makes her day.

“She still gets excited about things that she’s done a million times” says her husband, William. “Like making a hand splint and seeing a patient be able to pick up a pencil. It’s amazing to me.”

All in a Day’s Work

No two days are exactly the same for Grenawitzke, a pediatric occupational therapist at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA). A skilled practitioner, Grenawitzke must remain focused yet flexible enough to shift gears from working with patients to collaborating with doctors to mentoring OTD residents. Put on your scrubs because we’re following a day in the life of Dr. Grenawitzke.

—YASMINE PEZESHKPOUR MCM ’16

- 7:00 A.M.** Arrive at CHLA.
- 7:10 A.M.** Drink coffee, review patient charts in the electronic medical record system with OT team in the therapy gym.
- 7:30 A.M.** Huddle with acute OT team to distribute new evaluation orders and assign patients who need coverage.
- 7:45 A.M.** Huddle with speech language pathology team to distribute dysphagia orders and discuss coverage of NICU patients.
- 8:00 A.M.** Call physical therapy to arrange co-treatments for patients.
- 8:15 A.M.** Speak with radiology scheduler to get two inpatient modified barium swallow studies on the schedule for the day. Inform nurses of the study times, making sure aide staff are aware of time and checking their availability.
- 8:30 A.M.** Call nurses to schedule treatments for the morning.
- 9:00 A.M.** Work with baby who had cardiac surgery to improve bottle-feeding skills. Educate family on oral motor exercises they can perform throughout the day.
- 9:45 A.M.** Speak with cardio-thoracic nurse practitioner about baby’s progress and improvement in bottle feeding.
- 10:00 A.M.** Work with a toddler who is undergoing chemotherapy and has hand weakness.
- 10:30 A.M.** Direct two modified barium swallow studies in radiology. Follow-up with families and medical team about results.
- 12:00 P.M.** Work with baby who was admitted with failure to thrive because of severe reflux.
- 12:45 P.M.** Lunch
- 1:30 P.M.** Check electronic medical record for new evaluation orders and organize afternoon treatments.
- 2:00 P.M.** Mentor OTD resident while she completes evaluation of trauma patient in the ICU who sustained many orthopedic injuries and a severe brain injury.
- 3:00 P.M.** Debrief resident regarding successes and areas of improvement for complex patient evaluation.
- 3:30 P.M.** Work with patient with a seizure disorder on motor planning and functional cognition.
- 4:15 P.M.** Discuss patient progress with doctors and rehab coordination manager (for those getting ready to transfer to rehab).
- 4:30 P.M.** Complete patient charting, update OT scheduler spreadsheet.
- 5:30 P.M.** Leave CHLA.

Left: Hopkins watches as patient Aaron peels stickers, which encourages fine motor skills and concentration.

Right: Hopkins and Grenawitzke are two of nine USC occupational therapists working alongside medical professionals at CHLA.





A shared continuous surface in Copenhagen, Denmark that allows for multiple forms of play

PHOTO BY IWAN BAAN

LET'S GO OUT AND PLAY

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY JOINS FORCES WITH ARCHITECTURE TO CREATE URBAN PLAY SPACES FOR PEOPLE OF VARYING AGES AND ABILITIES.

BY JAMIE WETHERBE MA '04

“Barbie’s Dreamhouse is actually a nightmare for wheelchair Barbie,” says Samia Rafeedie, assistant professor of clinical occupational therapy at the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. “Mattel made the doll and the Dreamhouse, but she doesn’t fit into the space.”

About two years ago, Rafeedie — an occupational therapist dedicated

to accessibility and disability rights — teamed up with landscape architect Rennie Tang and occupational therapists specializing in pediatrics, geriatrics and art to access and evaluate the popular toy.

“We had all these beautiful perspectives from a multidisciplinary team,” explains Rafeedie, who presented the findings at conferences. “We picked apart the Dreamhouse and looked at it from different layers and lenses.”

The presentation also included an occupational therapy-designed Dreamhouse that was accessible, appealing and would facilitate independence as Barbie aged.

“Attendees were able to play with both houses and compare the differences,” Rafeedie says.

NOT JUST FOR CHILDREN

A year ago, Rafeedie, Tang and the same team of occupational therapists began planning another project focused on play.

The proposed Green Alley PLAYlab would transform an industrial area of downtown Los Angeles into a pop-up playscape for people of varying ages and abilities.

“When we say ‘play,’ we’re not just talking about children,” says Tang,

assistant professor of landscape architecture at Cal Poly Pomona. “We use the term very openly as it relates to health and physical activity.”

As children and adults increasingly spend their days at a desk, “play” becomes increasingly important.

“You have to play in order to be successful and productive at work and school, and I think that concept gets lost in Western culture,” she says. “We need to find creative and inclusive ways to be active, and there’s nothing better than being outdoors for psychological, physical and emotional well-being.”

While still in development, the PLAYlab has received a private donation from a Los Angeles developer and is being considered for different grants.

“I think it will happen one way or another,” Tang says. “We’re just waiting for things to come together.”

FROM ALLEY TO PLAYSPACE

Depending on funding, the team could break ground soon on the playscape, which would span an Arts District alley near a large housing complex.

“It’s an ideal space because there’s quite a bit of shade in one section, so it’s pleasant and easy to stay awhile,” Tang explains. “Plus, it’s adjacent to a residential block where many families live.”

Like Barbie’s Dreamhouse, creating a maximally inclusive playscape with a broad community in mind required collaboration from multiple disciplines.

“It became clear that if we were going to incorporate all ages and abilities, we needed to understand these populations beyond what we know as designers,” Tang says. “Having OTs involved with specific areas of expertise in specific populations will help people really respond to what we’re designing.”

Rafeedie adds, “OTs are very client-centered, and that’s where conversations with Rennie get very exciting. We can narrow the discussion down to mobility issues or certain deficits because we have a medical background [that an architect] doesn’t.”

Tang sees the expertise of OTs as instrumental in design, particularly when it comes to outdoor environments shared by all walks of life.

MORE THAN WHEELCHAIR RAMPS

“Most designers take the default route of simply following the ADA guidelines and meeting those defined standards,” Tang says. “But I think that can often lead to token gestures like adding an accessible swing on a playground or changing a surface to meet the accessibility guidelines.”

Rafeedie agrees. “I think when you say ‘accessible,’ people often think about wheelchairs,” she says. “But it’s so much more than that, including cognitive, mental, physical and visual deficits. How do you create a safe space that’s fun for everybody? That’s where the team went with this project.”

Instead of simply making PLAYlab accessible, the team wants the space to challenge those with disabilities.

“There are different attitudes toward being disabled and that was enlightening for me to learn,” she says. “Now, I feel inspired that we could consider offering a broader range of possibility in terms of challenge or spatial variability.”

With help from Rafeedie, Tang also considered how secondary disabilities — the social and emotional challenges that come with having a disability — could be factored into design.

“It further reinforced my thinking that designing for the disabled isn’t simply a matter of accommodation,” Tang says. “It’s about really understanding the complexities of what it means to have a disability.”

This level of multidisciplinary integration when conceiving a space was “incredibly beneficial” for Tang.

“We’re all working to make places less segregating, and I think there’s huge potential for play to really change neighborhoods in a positive way,” she says.

THROUGH AN OT’S EYES

The proposed partnership between architecture and OT would not end once the final touches were put on PLAYlab.

“If we’re able to implement the project, we need to monitor, research and analyze the playscape to see who’s using it and how, so we can access whether it’s truly effective in welcoming all these populations,” Tang says.

Rafeedie hopes that PLAYlab sets precedence for further OT involvement in landscape design.

“I think there’s so much opportunity,” she says. “OTs understand ergonomics and how to look at an environment and find a fit between a person’s abilities and the occupation being done.”

More than a singular space, Tang sees inclusive designs like PLAYlab as becoming part of a shared attitude.

“This kind of neighborhood would be really conscious of all public spaces: sidewalks, streets, alleys and parks,” she explains. “Residents would view outdoor environments as a continuous network that can be modulated in different ways so everyone can find their own comfort zone within the same space.”

Research Buzz



HEALTHY AGING IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

Leveraging smartphones and smartwatches to help seniors live longer and healthier lives

BY STACEY SCHEPENS NIEMIEC
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF RESEARCH

For older adults, the smartphone could be a key to healthier, longer lives. Skeptical? It's true: Older individuals generally are not as eager to embrace technology as millennials, but use of smartphones among elders is increasing dramatically, according to the Pew Research Center. And, it will continue to rise as the population ages.

That presents a wonderful opportunity for utilizing mobile devices to promote wellness and prevent disease among older adults, which is my research focus.

In 2011, the American Occupational Therapy Association identified telehealth — the delivery of health care services via videoconferencing, smartphones or tablets — as an emerging field in occupational therapy. Relatedly, interdisciplinary research focusing on mobile health (mHealth) technology, such as smartphone apps, suggests such technology can potentially improve patient outcomes in areas relevant to occupational therapy: mental health, weight loss, diabetes self-management, exercise and nutrition.

Despite vast potential, telehealth and mHealth for older adults are largely untapped and under-researched domains. My research background and training has centered on addressing this gap. I focus on integrating technology into the everyday lives of seniors. Presently, I have been working to build a smartphone app that improves elders' physical activity behaviors.

The need is great. More than 90 percent of people 60 years and older fail to meet national physical activity guidelines. Older adults offer plenty of reasons for avoiding physical activity. Some just feel too old. Others have physical limitations, fear injury or lack support and resources.

To help older adults overcome these barriers, I am collaborating with an eclectic team of health professionals, engineers and community stakeholders to develop, test and optimize a first-of-its-kind smartphone app suite.

This app suite, called Golden Aging, is different from generic fitness apps because it uses unique, evidence-based behavior change techniques paired with activity monitoring.

Specialty features include:

- messaging functions that promote positive views of aging and activity
- sedentary activity monitoring with motivational messaging and peer-generated suggestions
- data-driven, automated remote coaching and support tailored to older adults

We plan to assess the overall usability of Golden Aging and the effectiveness of its specialty features by testing the app in groups of



PHOTO BY CHRISTINA GANDOLFO

older adult smartphone owners. The relationship between use of the app's specialty features and the level of the user's physical activity will be evaluated.

Our team intends to use these results to create the most effective physical activity promotion tool possible for older adults, while continuing to research the app's development in future grant-funded trials. To hone my mHealth skills in preparation for these studies, I had the honor last summer of being selected for UCLA's annual mHealth Training Institute with 29 other researchers from across the nation. This exciting program advances the integration of mobile technology into health care delivery. I participated in the program's team-science projects and attended presentations by experts in the fields of engineering, design, psychology, ethics, statistics and law.

A smartphone app is one way mHealth can help shape the way elders engage in physical activity. Besides the health benefits, a wellness app for seniors can help bridge the digital divide between older and younger generations, a divide that threatens the goal of equal health care access.

Despite the many obstacles to healthy aging, I intend to utilize my research findings to develop innovative, forward-thinking health and wellness programs for the aging population. Indeed, our later years can be our best years!

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT: Grace Baranek

BY JOHN HOBBS MA '14

Meet the division's new associate dean, Grace Baranek, who comes to USC from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she served as a faculty member for 20 years. During her career, Baranek has amassed an impressive body of research in autism spectrum disorder and earned national acclaim along the way (see pages 22-23 for more on that). Here are five more things to know about Grace Baranek:

- 1 As an undergraduate, Baranek was a liberal arts major, with an interest in interior design — until she took a career aptitude test.** Baranek didn't even know what OT was when she first started college. "I was a creative student with a penchant for science who wanted to do something useful in the world," she says. It was a career aptitude test, matching Baranek with occupational therapy, that introduced her to the profession. After taking a few OT courses and shadowing OTs in the field, she knew she had found her calling.
- 2 Baranek made a lasting connection with one of her earliest patients with autism spectrum disorder.** In one of her first jobs, Baranek worked with a 4-year-old boy named Alex who really made an impression on her. "Despite many sensory challenges and motor planning difficulties, he was quite gifted artistically," she says of Alex, with whom she's stayed in touch all these years. Today, he is a college graduate who has a talent for computer-generated graphic art. "Despite all these achievements, he is still not able to live independently," she says, pointing out that it's these limitations in research and interventions that motivate her continued study of autism spectrum disorder.
- 3 Baranek is a proud immigrant and naturalized American citizen.** Believe it or not — Baranek's first language is not English. Her parents were actually born in Eastern Poland and exiled to Siberia as children during World War II. The family immigrated to Chicago, Ill., when Baranek was just 3 years old. It wasn't until she began kindergarten that Baranek learned to speak English. "It's been a huge advantage to be bilingual and to understand how different cultures shape and contribute to the strength of our nation," she says.
- 4 Baranek and her husband ran a nonprofit theater in Chapel Hill, N.C.** In Chapel Hill, Baranek and her theater director husband Paul Frellick converted a discount shoe store into a 50-seat live theater. "I managed the box office, cleaned the green room and bathroom and sometimes contributed my skills with a hot glue gun on set," Baranek says. Deep Dish Theater Company produced plays for 15 seasons before shuttering in 2015. "The theater brought a lot of joy, nourishment and meaning to our daily lives and to the community," she says.
- 5 When the going gets tough, Baranek strikes a warrior pose.** When Baranek's had a hectic week, she gives herself permission to unwind. Her preferred relaxation activity is yoga, but she says dark chocolate and red wine don't hurt either. She also loves to hike, watch movies, read interesting novels and cook gourmet meals.



PHOTO BY NATE JENSEN

In Print



Grace Baranek co-authored “Sensory and Repetitive Behaviors among Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder at Home,” published in *Autism*. Baranek also co-authored “Predictors of Parent Responsiveness to 1-Year-Olds At-Risk for Autism Spectrum Disorder,” published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

Erna Blanche was the lead author of “Effectiveness of a Sensory-Enriched Early Intervention Group Program for Children with Developmental Disabilities,” published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. The article was co-authored by **Megan Chia-Chen Chang** MA ’01, PhD ’09; **Juliana Gutiérrez** MA ’07 and **Janet Gunter** ’94, MA ’95, OTD ’10.

Sharon Cermak co-authored the chapter “Occupational Therapy,” published in the edited textbook *Health Care for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Across the Lifespan* available from Springer International Publishing. The chapter was co-written with **Ann Borreson** MA ’16. Cermak also co-authored the article “Atypical Sensory Modulation and Psychological Distress in the General Population,” published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*.

Alison Cogan MA ’12, PhD ’17; **Jeanine Blanchard** MA ’99, PhD ’10; **Cheryl Vigen**; **Michael Carlson** and **Florence Clark** PhD ’82 co-authored “Systematic Review of Behavioral and Educational Interventions to Prevent Pressure Ulcers in Adults with Spinal Cord Injury” now available via early online access from the journal *Clinical Rehabilitation*.

Camille Dieterle MA ’07, OTD ’08 wrote “Coaching and Lifestyle Redesign: Coaching as an Integral Part of Preventing and Managing Chronic Conditions,” a chapter in the edited textbook *Enabling Positive Change: Coaching Conversations in Occupational Therapy* available from Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists Publishing.

Julie McLaughlin Gray MA ’95, PhD ’06; **Gelya Frank** and **Shawn C. Roll** authored “Integrating Musculoskeletal Sonography into Rehabilitation: Therapists’ Experiences with Training and Implementation,” published in *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*.

Natalie Leland and **Karen Crum** MA ’13, OTD ’14 co-authored “Delivering High Quality Hip Fracture Rehabilitation: The Perspective of Occupational and Physical Therapy Practitioners,” published early online by *Disability and Rehabilitation*. The article was co-authored by

USC Chan students **Carin Wong** PhD ’19 and **Sun Hwa Chang** MA ’17. Leland also co-authored “Rehabilitation Practitioners’ Prioritized Care Processes in Hip Fracture Post-Acute Care,” published early online by *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics*.

Natalie Leland; **Alix Sleight** MA ’12, OTD ’13, PhD ’18; **Cheryl Vigen**; **Jeanine Blanchard** MA ’99, PhD ’10; **Michael Carlson** and **Florence Clark** PhD ’82 co-authored “Napping and Nighttime Sleep: Findings from an Occupation-Based Intervention,” published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. **Donald Fogelberg** PhD ’08 was also a co-author. Leland, Fogelberg and **Ashley Halle** MA ’11, OTD ’12 were co-authors of “Occupational Therapy and Management of Multiple Chronic Conditions in the Context of Health Care Reform,” published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*.

Deborah Pitts PhD ’12 was one of four editors of the fourth edition of the textbook *Bruce & Borg’s Psychosocial Frames of Reference* available from Slack Publishing. Within the text, Pitts and **Erin McIntyre** ’08, MA ’09, OTD ’10 co-authored three chapters: “Health Promotion and Wellness for Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities,” “Expression and Occupation (Psychodynamic Perspectives)” and “Recovery Frameworks.”

Elizabeth Pyatak MA ’04, PhD ’10; **Kristine Carandang** PhD ’18; **Cheryl Vigen** and **Jeanine Blanchard** MA ’99, PhD ’10 were co-authors of “Resilient, Empowered, Active Living with Diabetes (REAL Diabetes) Study: Methodology and Baseline Characteristics of a Randomized Controlled Trial Evaluating an Occupation-Based Diabetes Management Intervention for Young Adults,” published in the March issue of *Contemporary Clinical Trials*. Carandang, Pyatak and Vigen also wrote “Systematic Review of Educational Interventions for Rheumatoid Arthritis,” published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. Pyatak and Vigen were also co-authors of “Clinical and Psychosocial Outcomes of a Structured Transition Program Among Young Adults with Type 1 Diabetes,” published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

Shawn C. Roll co-authored [American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine] *Hand, Wrist, and Forearm Disorders Guideline*, published by Reed Group, Ltd.

Alix Sleight MA ’12, OTD ’13, PhD ’13 and **Leah Stein Duker** MA ’06, PhD ’13 co-authored “Toward a Broader Role for Occupational Therapy in Supportive Oncology Care,” published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*.

In Print

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sonography and industrial engineering/ergonomics. His research strives to advance the holistic understanding of musculoskeletal disorders and to effectively evaluate and provide prevention or rehabilitation interventions within adult populations.

“As a group, musculoskeletal conditions have a higher prevalence than many other common health conditions, and these disorders present a significant burden, both financially and functionally, to individuals and our society,” Roll said. “It is vital for occupational therapy providers to be knowledgeable about the impact of these conditions on health, wellness and function, and for our profession to be actively involved in supporting the rehabilitation, as well as habilitation, of individuals with musculoskeletal conditions to improve quality of life and participation in daily occupational pursuits.”

Within the issue, Roll authored the editorial “Current Evidence and Opportunities for Expanding the Role of Occupational Therapy for Adults with Musculoskeletal Conditions.”

Roll also co-authored two evidence reviews — concerning occupational therapy interventions for musculoskeletal conditions of the forearm, wrist and hand, and interventions for musculoskeletal shoulder conditions — and an original article examining clinical outcomes for work rehabilitation services. Two of these articles were co-authored by USC Chan occupational science doctoral student **Mark Hardison** PhD ’19.

Shawn C. Roll was the guest editor of the January/February 2017 issue of the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. The issue focuses on comprehensive summaries of evidence and multiple original research articles on the treatment of common musculoskeletal conditions, which are the second greatest cause of disability worldwide.

Roll combines his clinical occupational therapy skills with expertise in musculoskeletal



CLASS NOTES

In recent elections of the American Occupational Therapy Association, **Ann McDonald** MA ’87, PhD ’01 was elected Chairperson-Elect of the AOTA Ethics Commission and **Bill Wong** MA ’11, OTD ’13 was elected California Representative to the AOTA Representative Assembly. They both assume office on July 1, 2017.

Now retired in Northern California, **Jan Pervier-Muff** ’76, MA ’77 was a contributing author to *Atlas of Hand Surgery (Vol. 2)* by Robert Chase (1984), and held management positions at several hospitals, including Stanford Medical Center.

During October’s annual conference of the Occupational Therapy Association of California, three Trojan alumni were recognized with awards: **Gina Phelps** MA ’02 received the Fieldwork Educator Award, **Sandra Okada** ’79 received the Practice Award and **Heather Thomas** MA ’98 received the Award of Excellence.

Lora Woo ’83, OTD ’10 and **Elizabeth Russel** PhD ’99 co-authored the chapter “Tensions Regarding the Processes Associated with Decision-Making about Intervention” in the edited textbook *Ethics in Child Health: Principles and Cases in Neurodisability* published by Wiley.

Myka Winder MA ’10, OTD ’11 and husband Shiloh welcomed a daughter, Amelia Jane, born Sept. 17.

Do you have news to share — personal or professional — with the Trojan Family? Let us know by emailing fighton.ot@usc.edu and your submission will be included in the next issue of *USC Chan Magazine*. Fight On!

A DEEPER MEANING

REFLECTING ON FINDING MY OWN CAREER PATH IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

BY LINDA S. FAZIO
PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY



PHOTO BY CHRISTINA GANDOLFO

In writing this column, I join a line of distinguished and admired faculty who have shared the ways in which they have found a deeper meaning through occupational therapy.

It seems an appropriate time to reflect, since I will soon retire after teaching 32 years here at USC, 10 before that at Texas Woman's University, and another five before that at the Shorewood Opportunity School for the Arts in Milwaukee.

A career in occupational therapy was something of a default for me. As an undergraduate at the University of Kansas, I changed my major several times, jumping from poetry and narrative writing to psychology to art and design to art education and finally to art and craft.

During my junior year, just about the time my money was running out, I encountered a dilemma: What does one do with a major in art and craft? As luck would have it, someone posted an AOTA career opportunity for artists in the form of psychiatric occupational therapy!

My aunt was a psychiatric occupational therapist at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas, so I went to visit her clinic for the first time and was pleased with the several art and craft studios that looked just like my classrooms and smelled lovingly of linseed oil and turpentine.

Some patients were drawing, painting, sculpting, making gold and silver cast jewelry and sewing leather jackets. Others were making large-scale pieces of furniture in the contemporary Danish tradition.

This environment, coupled with the writings of Drs. Karl and William Menninger, provided the most fascinating environment I had ever experienced. At the recommendation of my aunt's fieldwork student, I contacted Texas Woman's University, which graciously offered me full scholarship and housing to become an occupational therapist, which I did in 1963.

Well you know what they say, "just when you find it, someone moves it," or in this case, it goes away. Opportunities for this kind of art-based psychoanalytic work didn't last long in the occupational therapy profession.

I continued to work in different kinds of occupational therapy practices, but none of them captured my attention and interest. They did, however, provide the financial support I needed to continue my art education and eventually my master's degree in anthropology/museology with an emphasis in Southwest textiles. I was also able to teach fiber arts and surface design.

In 1977, I returned to my alma mater in Texas, accompanied by my two young daughters, to work as an occupational therapy instructor. At the same time, the school's director, former Army Colonel Ruth Pershing, recommended that I begin doctoral studies to further secure my academic future and leadership opportunities in occupational therapy.

With her support, I initiated work on my doctorate in higher education administration, medical education, student services and counseling. Later, as a licensed counselor, I worked with a group of psychological associates to utilize art and craft as well as play in my practices with families and children.

Somewhere along the way, I discovered that the "crafting" of lives and futures was as interesting as my earlier work had been and practice, teaching, mentoring and academic administration became new "passions."

I've been lucky to have been able to develop and teach the creative arts in the occupational therapy curriculum, thanks to the leadership and support of Dr. Florence Clark at USC and Dr. Grace Gilkeson at Texas Woman's University.

It saddens me that so few students are coming into occupational therapy from an arts background. I'm equally saddened that so many occupational therapy academic programs either dismiss art and craft altogether or abuse creativity by making poor choices in the art and craft they provide as learning tools.

During the past 15 years or so, I've turned my efforts toward encouraging students and practicing occupational therapists, who have a passion for art, to consider taking the creative arts to the community through the establishment of nonprofits and other allied programming. There are many other venues in the community where art, craft and the creative arts can serve populations of children and adults. We are particularly suited to help those with special needs that artists alone aren't prepared to do.

To further advance these efforts and to encourage occupational therapists whose passions fall outside conventional practice, I'm pleased to share that the third edition of my textbook, *Developing Occupation-Centered Programs for the Community*, is expected to be available in the early summer.

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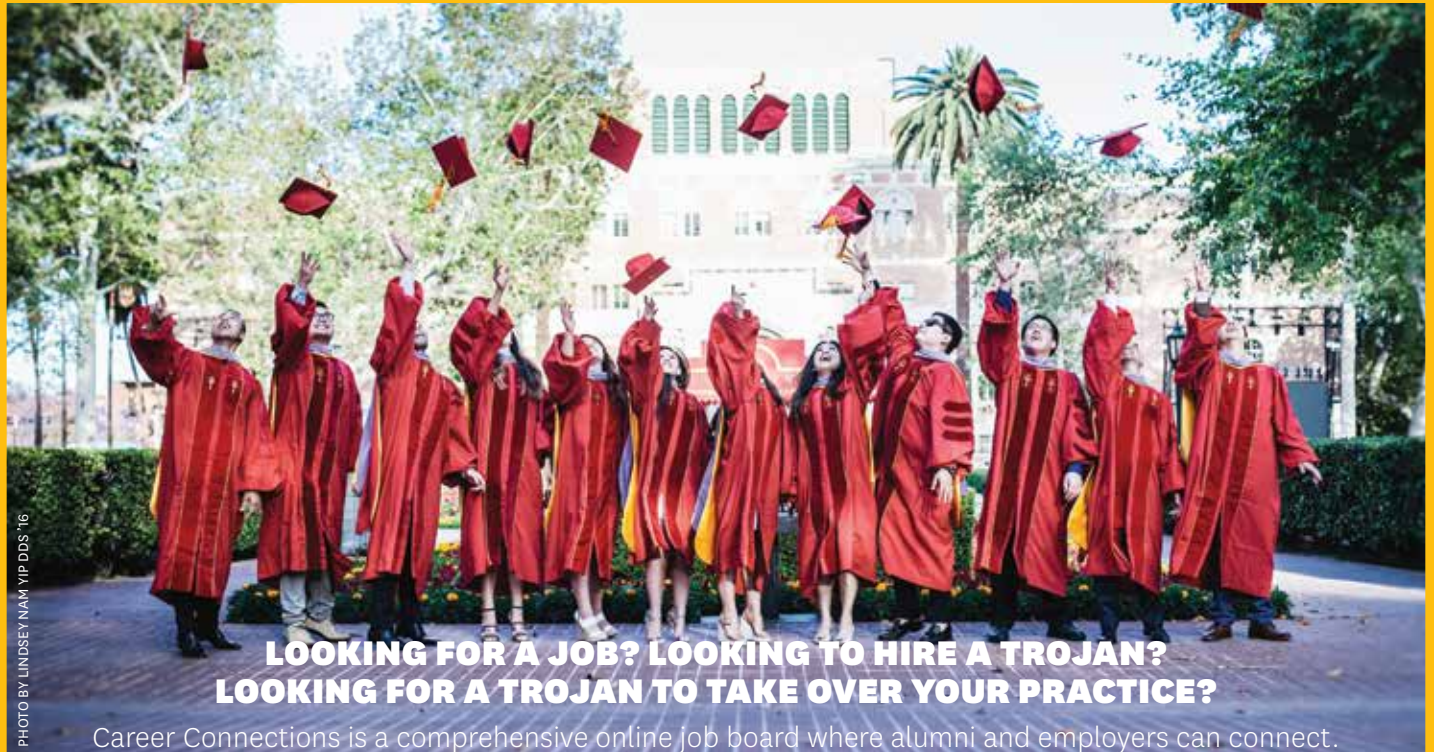


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