

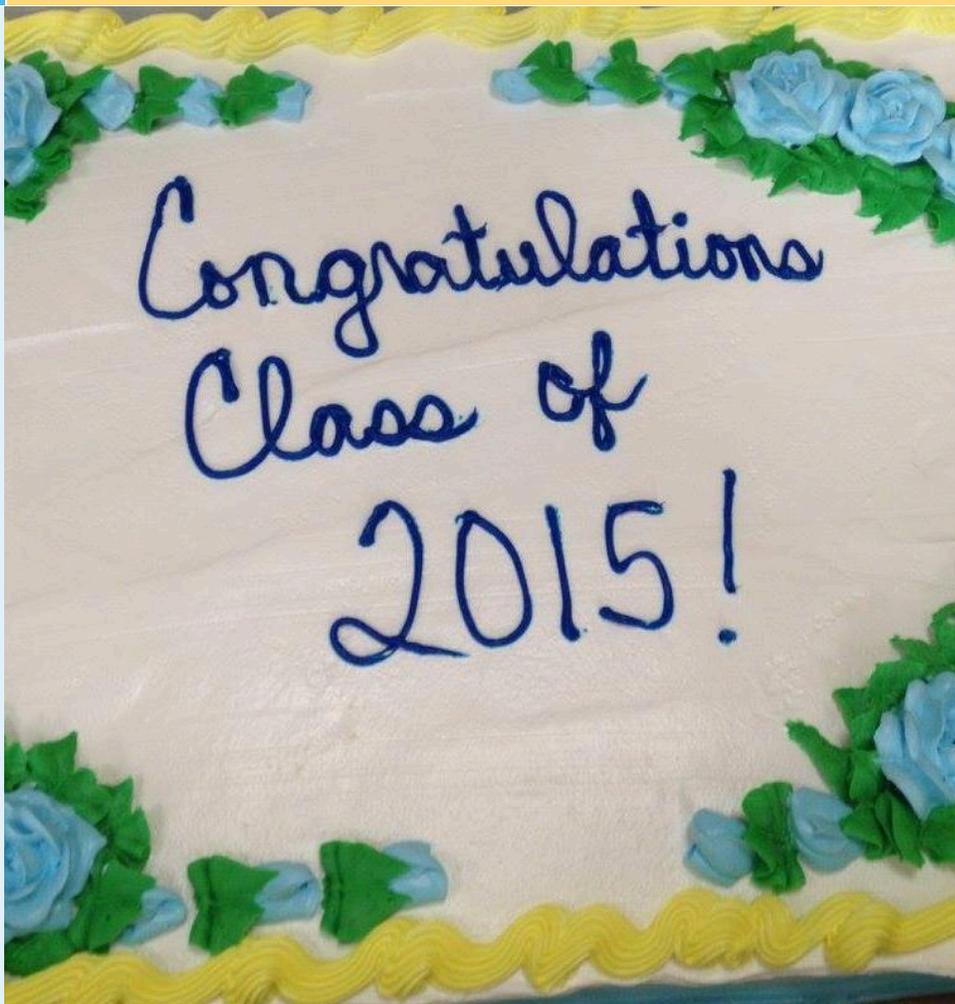
West Virginia
University
SOTA
Newsletter



March 2015

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Point in Time Count



The WVU Occupational Therapy Program has had a connection with the Caritas House for many years now as an option for a nontraditional fieldwork site. Students are able to partner with the Caritas House to work with the chronically homeless and individuals with HIV/AIDS and understand their steps to assist in advocacy, case management, transitional housing and other lifestyle occupations. However, for the first time this year, WVU SOTA students members participated in the 2015 Point in Time Count annually held by the Caritas House and other Monongalia County community organizations. The Point in Time Count (PIT) is an event lasting 24 straight hours followed by consecutive hours the

following days to survey the homeless population in Monongalia County. This helps determine the amount of individuals experiencing homelessness in the area, who is most qualified for federal funding services, and to make those that are homeless aware of the services provided to them. The event consisted of groups of individuals walking the streets, trails, and other known populated areas to reach the homeless population where they are to administer the surveys. Also, hot meals, emergency supplies, and clothing were available for the homeless population at the Bartlett House throughout the time the PIT was being held. Two OT students were trained and prepared to administer the surveys throughout the event while another eight students participated by assisting in the survey walks, serving food, and simply engaging in meaningful conversation with the individuals experiencing homelessness that they were in contact with. Nothing sums up the event better than the quote by Gretchen Herzberger, a second year student that participated in the event: "Participating in the point in time count really gave me an opportunity to realize all the things I have been blessed with and the things I need to be more thankful for. Also, realizing homelessness can happen to good people in just the blink of an eye." I cannot wait for the WVU OT Program to continue to be involved in this event and many more like it to better serve our local homeless population in years to come.

-Jesse Stemple





Relay for Life Kick-Off!

The Relay for Life kick off event was held on January 28, 2015. The kick off event is a time where participants, and team members can come and learn more about Relay for Life. This is also a night filled with lots of fun and games. This years Relay for Life event is going to be "Relay Around the World." Each team will pick a different country, and then represent that country on the night of Relay. Our program was recognized at the kick off event for winning the "sign up challenge." Which was a challenge back in December for which team could get the highest number of participants to sign up in that designated time frame. So congrats, to everyone who has signed up, we thank you for your support, and remember there is still plenty of time to join our Relay for Life team! Hope to see everyone there April 24, 2015! If you have any questions about Relay or ideas please see Kasey Feiertag!

- Kasey Feiertag

Have you
signed up
for Relay for
Life yet!?



Relay is
April, 25th!
Sign up online at
relayforlife.org



Grad Send Off

Thursday

February 5th marked the last day of classes for the grads. We hope everyone had a good time at the grad farewell, and enjoyed

the bittersweet goodbye to the 3rd years. The grads are giving our program a second microwave to add to the large OT lab. So we no longer have the grueling long lunch line waits. Our program is very proud of the 3rd years, and wishes them nothing but the best of luck on their fieldwork placements, and the journey after graduation. As one of the third years beautifully put it “ looking back, these three years of OT school have been some of the best years of my life. So enjoy your time in school, it goes pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look

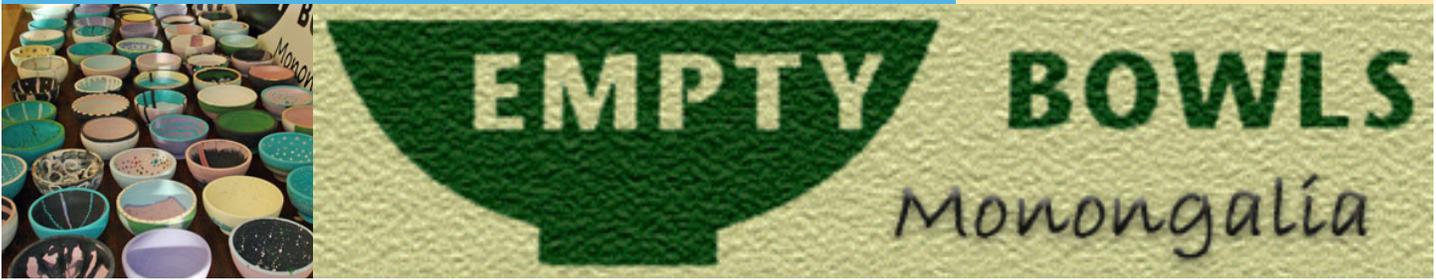


around once in a while, you could miss it” (Hannah Fox). Another student stated, “Don’t waste your time stressing over the small things, because in the end you really do know more than you think you do.”
- Ashley Greer



On Saturday, February 28, several first and second year OT students participated in the Mountaineer Dance Marathon at the Erikson Alumni Center to raise money for the kids at WVU Children’s Hospital and to “dance for those who can’t.” The day was full of crafts, games, food, meeting some of the kids and their families who had been impacted by the WVU Children’s Hospital, playing with the kids and lots of dancing! The OT team raised a total of \$355 for the hospital and we look forward to participating in the event again next year! Special thanks to Allie Chieppo for making our awesome 90’s themed Lisa Frank banner and for all of those who donated both time and money to this great cause! -Jenna Stear





On February 28th, I volunteered as a host at the Empty Bowls Luncheon at Mylan Park. We served over 1,800 people soup, which is the largest crowd Empty Bowls has had so far! The premise of the Empty Bowls event is that guests are served soup in a homemade bowl made and painted by individuals in the community in exchange for a cash donation to fight hunger. People who come to the luncheon get to keep the homemade bowl to remind them of the event's purpose. The Empty Bowls Luncheon is truly a team effort! From the hosts taking the guests to their tables as quickly as possible to minimize wait lines, to the bus boys keeping the tables clean and ready for new guests, to the people serving soups in line - everyone truly has their heart in it and works together to make the event successful! Over 400 gallons of soup was donated by different organizations throughout Mon County, and people bake plenty of cookies and bread in their own kitchens to go along with the soup. Individuals come and play music and provide entertainment throughout the duration of the event. It really is an unforgettable and very moving experience! All of the proceeds from this event go to support local food pantries and kitchens to help end hunger in Mon County. Not only does this event raise money to help combat hunger, but it raises much needed awareness to the fact there are many homeless people in Mon County and aims to remind people they can donate and help out the homeless in our county any time they choose.

-Kaitlin Sims



First year occupational therapy student, Brianna Kerekes, competes on West Virginia University's Cross Country and Track and Field teams. On February 27th and 28th, Kerekes competed at the 2015 Big 12 Indoor Track Championships at the Lied Recreation Facility in

Ames, Iowa. On Friday, Kerekes raced in the preliminaries for the 1000m and finished second in her heat to automatically advance to the finals. Later that evening, Kerekes raced on the 800m leg of WVU's Distance Medley Relay team to finish 6th in the conference, earning their spot on the podium. On Saturday, Kerekes raced in the 1000m finals with a fifth-place finish in the conference and also a personal best time of 2:49.99. Now the team will prepare for the outdoor season that kicks off on April 3rd at the Stanford Invitational.

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Outside of our coursework, Senior Cara Bacher has had a very busy semester! She had a freezing cycling road race at NC State and got 6th place, then had a horse show near Altoona PA and got 2nd. This past weekend she got 2nd place at the home horse show and 3rd at regionals. Coming up she has the rest of the cycling season with this weekend at Duke, then the following weekend at Navy, then the home WVU race, Appalachian state, conference championships at Virginia Tech, and finally nationals down in North Carolina. Right now the cycling team is sitting at 3rd overall in the ACC conference for Division 1 and the Equestrian team finished the season with 2nd in the region, which was super upsetting because it was the first time ever that they didn't win the region. Cara recently resigned her contract with Dynamic Physical Therapy Cycling powered by Pathfinder so she will be competing with them for the Appalachian Racing Association Road Series over the summer.



Fundraising



Throughout the semester SOTA has been working hard to raise money to offset the cost for students attending the AOTA conference in Nashville, TN this year. So far there have been two dine-to-donate fundraisers at Applebees and Buffalo Wild Wings and a One Stop Shop fundraiser featuring products from Mary Kay, Mary & Martha, Scentsy, and Thirty-One. Through these fundraisers we have been able to raise over \$680 for our students! Thank you to everyone who has helped set up the fundraisers as well as participated in them, this money will be a huge help for those attending conference and your participation now will help encourage more students to attend the AOTA conference in the future!

Upcoming Events:

CarFit	4/10
AOTA Conference	4/16-4/19
Kid's Fair	4/18
Relay for Life	4/24