

WVU Occupational Therapy E-News

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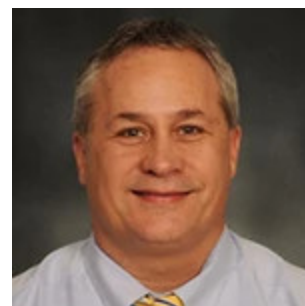
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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The spring 2022 semester culminated with the graduation of WVU's 24th Occupational Therapy Master's Program graduating class. The indoor ceremony at the WVU Coliseum symbolized the continued progression toward pre-pandemic traditions. The [Division of Occupational Therapy's](#) newest graduates saw firsthand the continued commitment of prior graduates who, on short notice, graciously donated graduation regalia as a backup in the face of supply chain issues that threatened the on-time delivery of caps, gowns, and hoods.



Ahead of this year's graduation, the Division celebrated its annual student award winners in the areas of academics, community service, leadership, and research as well as the latest outstanding alumni winner, LuAnn Mott. Mott was instrumental in innovating a Level 1 fieldwork utilizing a telehealth model to ensure OT student progression during the pandemic. Mott's excellence has been highlighted while

elevating through the roles of Director of Rehab, Senior Director of Rehab, Regional Director of Rehab, and Regional Vice President. All are invited to attend an alumni gathering at [Black Bear](#) on July 19, 2022, from 5-6 p.m. to congratulate LuAnn.



The spring also marked the return of the in-person pinning ceremony for the 2023 MOT class, a tradition that marks the transition to level II fieldwork and the graduate school portion of the occupational therapy curriculum. The class was surprised during the ceremony with a visit from Colson Glover, the Mountaineer Mascot. Glover has a familial tie to the OT Program. His cousin Emily Glover Rogers is an alumna of the MOT Program Class of 2019.

Seven students from the 2023 class joined eight faculty at the Inspire AOTA Conference in San Antonio, Texas. At the conference, alumna and current faculty member [Amanda Acord-Vira, EdD, MOT, OTR/L, CBIS](#), was awarded the [Roster of Fellows](#) at AOTA Inspire 2022. This award recognizes occupational therapists who have made a significant contribution over time to the profession with a measured impact on consumers of occupational therapy services and/or members of the Association. Alumna [Chelsea Churchfield, MOTR/L](#), presented a workshop at the conference entitled “How Do You Adapt? Treating the Patient with COVID-19.” Churchfield has clinical expertise as an occupational therapy practitioner in both the U.S. and China. She holds certifications from Cornell University in Healthcare Change and Leadership and Executive Healthcare Leadership and currently serves as a clinical director at Genesis Rehab Services.



As we begin a new academic year, the Division of Occupational Therapy is poised for continued excellence in education, research, and professional service. In May, we welcomed our second class of entry-level doctoral students to begin professional studies alongside our master’s degree program students. In the upcoming year, numerous faculty will continue to play key roles in state and national initiatives as we navigate changes in both education and healthcare.

Both OTD and MOT programs are beginning the self-study process in preparation for on-site visits from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education during the 2023-2024 academic year. We're also conducting two faculty searches, collaborating on the development of new professional development offerings, expanding student scholarships and graduate assistant opportunities, and exploring creative avenues for research and service through federal and state funding of various faculty-led projects totaling approximately \$1 million annually.

[Steven Wheeler](#), PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, CBIS
Professor & Chairman

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Livengood joins OT faculty.

We welcomed a new faculty member, [Heather Livengood, PhD, MOT, OTR/L](#). She has been involved in clinical occupational therapy practice with a focus on neurorehabilitation. Her postdoctoral training was conducted in an ophthalmology program with a focus on the application of neuro-stimulation to the eye to improve visual function in people with glaucoma.

Burt continues to grow Occupational Therapy's contributions to WVU CED



WVU Master of Occupational Therapy Program Director [Amy Burt, EdD, OTR/L](#), continues to channel her passions for pediatric rehabilitation, leadership, and advocacy to support numerous programs through the [WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities](#) (CED).

Burt serves as the occupational therapy specialist for the interdisciplinary [Feeding and Swallowing Clinic at the CED](#), designing the occupational therapy component of services for this clinic as well as developing and implementing occupational therapy training components to CED/LEND fellows while seeing families. As a faculty member for the [Country Roads Program](#), Burt teaches self-advocacy and determination courses for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities attending college. In this role, she collaborates closely with other occupational therapy faculty to provide independent living skills training to students during their first and second years in the program.

In an effort to improve and expand program offerings at the Center, Burt has obtained grant funding to examine strategies for increasing comfort with daily tasks, such as haircuts and dental appointments for individuals on the Autism Spectrum. She has also recently received funding to establish a sensory room at the Center for children to utilize during their visits.

EXPLORE MORE

[WVU Division of Occupational Therapy to celebrate 25 years of graduates in 2024](#)

We will kick-off our events at the [2024 AOTA Inspire Conference](#) in Orlando, Florida, and conclude the celebration with a number of events during WVU Homecoming weekend 2024. Hope to see you there!

[Interdisciplinary partnership strives to enhance communication and patient safety](#)



In an interdisciplinary partnership, students from the [WVU School of Nursing](#) and the [School of Medicine](#) Occupational Therapy program are working together to learn from one another and to hone their skillsets in the [WV STEPS Center](#). Improving communication to enhance patient safety is one of the main goals.

The partnership was spearheaded by Director of Simulation [Christy Barnhart](#) and implemented by [Diana Davis](#), an associate professor in Occupational Therapy; [Tonya Payerchin](#), a clinical education associate professor with the School of Nursing; and Amanda Acord-Vira, an associate professor of Occupational Therapy.

“One of the goals of Interprofessional Education nationally is to improve patient outcomes and safety through improved functioning of the health care team,” Davis said. “This partnership lays important foundation for achieving this.”

“We noticed we have different vantage points,” Payerchin said. “Nursing students are often focused on patient care for individuals who need acute care, while OT students are thinking about getting patients home and functioning by themselves. But working together, we can have a really nice mix.”



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

As leaders in the field of occupational therapy, WVU OT alumni continue to achieve success and recognition. Please join us in congratulating the alumni who have earned certifications and recognitions recently.

- Completing an additional 135 hours of additional coursework through the Klose Training, [Kristen Gibson, MOT, OTR/L, CLT](#), has earned the credential of Certified Lymphedema Therapist. Using this certification, Gibson is credentialed to provide complete decongestive therapy, including compression bandaging and manual lymphatic drainage.
- [Richard Steenson, MOT, OTR/L](#), has earned an Executive Certification in Home Modification from the University of Southern California. Steenson founded Heathy Home Therapy Solutions LLC, where he provides his clients home modification research, products, funding strategies, policies, and community planning.
- Earning a Master of Business Administration with a Healthcare Administration Concentration from Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island, alumnus [Luke Davis, MOT, MBA, OTR/L](#), has successfully transitioned to the role of Regional Director of Outpatient Rehabilitation Services in Rhode Island for the Spaulding Rehabilitation Network.
- Harlan “Doc” Greenfield, father of WVU OT alumnus [Jacob Greenfield, MOT, OTR/L](#), presented during the AOTA Inventors Showcase on June 14, 2022. Doc Greenfield began the invention process of the [MR-1000FORKLIFT](#). This accessible forklift can operated by individuals who rely on wheeled mobility due to various deficits and limitations.

Know a WVU OT alumnus who should be featured? [Submit nominations via our online form.](#)

CONNECT WITH US

A renewed commitment to alumni relations and outreach is among the many goals of the Division’s strategic plan. Current initiatives include a virtual happy hour, Division-sponsored continuing education, a quarterly newsletter and annual report and AOTA Conference social events. Those interested in participating can contact [SueAnn Woods](#).

All alumni, friends, faculty, fieldwork supervisors, and current students are invited to our informal virtual happy hour gathering on the first

Thursday of every month. If you have not participated in one of our prior events, please register using [our convenient online form](#).

For more information on the WVU Division of Occupational Therapy, visit our [website](#), follow us on [Facebook](#), or send us an [email](#). We look forward to hearing from you. Let's go, Mountaineers!

STAY CONNECTED

Support Occupational Therapy

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