

WVU Occupational Therapy E-News

WVU School of Medicine Division of Occupational Therapy <swheeler@hsc.wvu.edu>

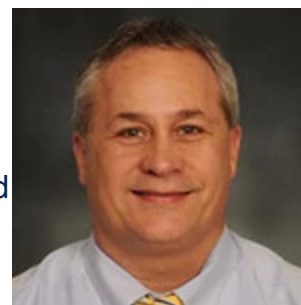
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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Leaning on creativity, resiliency, and the Mountaineer spirit, the Division of Occupational Therapy continues to successfully navigate through the pandemic. During the fall 2021 semester, the Division welcomed [new faculty](#) and an [administrative assistant](#), officially opened its newly renovated occupational therapy lab with Dr. Marsh and President Gee, hosted a continuation education event, added to its impressive list of grant-funded initiatives, and partnered with clinical partners across the area for level II student fieldwork.



Two faculty completed specialty certifications and another successfully defended her dissertation and graduated with a PhD. The Division successfully launched its first graduate teaching assistantship position,



a unique student opportunity that supports the development of teaching skills and other aspects of the faculty role. Classes returned to an on-campus format with strict adherence to health and safety measures with very limited pandemic-related class disruptions. Commitment to the continued use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing, and enhanced sanitization efforts was embraced by faculty, students, and staff.

Three faculty retired after distinguished careers at West Virginia University – Dr. Anne Cronin, Dr. Randy McCombie, and Garth Graebe combined for more than six decades of teaching, research, and service within the Division and profession of occupational therapy. Dr. Brandy Brown accepted the position of founding Program Director of the MOT program at the University of Charleston.

As we begin another year, the Division of Occupational Therapy is well-positioned for continued excellence. In May, we'll welcome our second class of doctoral students and continue to transition our master's degree program students to an innovate, collaborative curriculum. Numerous faculty play key roles on state and national initiatives, positioning the Division to be impactful at a time of significant change in both education and healthcare.



Goals for 2022 include fundraising initiatives to support student scholarships, expanded professional development offerings, and comprehensive program evaluation to support optimal curriculum delivery and student experience.

Additionally, the pandemic has negatively impacted the extent of our community outreach and service. Hopefully 2022 affords increased opportunities to continue our tradition of volunteerism and positive community change.

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

EXPLORE MORE

[Cronin achieves emeritus status](#)

Please join us in congratulating [Dr. Anne Cronin, PhD, OTR/L, ATP, FAOTA](#), on the achievement of Professor Emeritus after 24 years of service at WVU. Serving as a founding faculty member, Dr. Cronin taught core courses in the curricula and focused on her specialty

knowledge in research and pediatrics. She has been on the forefront of interprofessional education, received over \$900,000 in grant funding, and authored numerous journal articles, book chapters, and textbooks.

Renovated OT lab space opens

The newly renovated WVU OT lab space was unveiled during a [ribbon-cutting event](#) with President Gee and Vice President and Executive Dean Clay Marsh this past semester. The space was showcased at an open house [featured by the local news station WBOY](#).

Brain injury collaborations continue



The WVU Division of OT continues to work to enhance the lives of clients with brain injury through federally funded grants, collaborations, and continuing education. In collaboration with the WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities, WVU Division of OT Associate Professor

Amanda Acord-Vira, EdD, MOT, OTR/L, CBIS, was awarded a \$1 million grant (\$200,000 for five years) from the Administration for Community Living TBI State Partnership Grant Program. Collaborating with the WVU Centers for Excellence in Disability, two OT faculty presented the course entitled [“Traumatic Brain Injury: Return to Work and Community – Case Study Applications.”](#) This course focused on evaluation and intervention approaches to facilitate return to work and community participation for adults following traumatic brain injury. Additionally, content focused on [contextualized treatment rehabilitation strategies](#) was delivered on the YouTube channel Pink Concussions, the first nonprofit to focus on female brain injury, including concussions from sport, domestic violence, accidents or military service.

Woods named doctoral capstone coordinator

[SueAnn Woods, PhD, MOT, OTR/L, CHT](#), assumed the Capstone Coordinator position in the WVU OTD program. In this new role, Dr. Woods will be responsible for coordinating students’ participation in the OTD experiential and capstone project. As the inaugural capstone coordinator, Dr. Woods will be responsible developing the capstone experience at WVU, coordinating with students to identify and develop capstone sites, and ensuring that students successfully complete their capstone projects under faculty mentorship. According to the Accreditation Council for OT Education (ACOTE), the purpose of the doctoral capstone is “to provide an in-depth exposure to one or more

of the following: clinical practice skills, research skills, administration, leadership, program and policy development, advocacy, education, and theory development.”

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 over the past year.

- [Megan Martino, OTR/L](#), class of 2008, has earned certification from the Neonatal Therapy Certification® Board (NTCB). Martino provides occupational therapy services at WVU Medicine Children’s Hospital.
- In the past year, four WVU OT alumni have earned the rigorous [Certified Stroke Rehabilitation Specialist \(CSRS™\)](#) credential. The CSRS™ is the field’s only stroke certification for occupational and physical therapists. Certification includes in-depth, hands-on training in stroke rehabilitation along with a rigorous examination. Please join us in congratulating the following alumni on earning the CSRS credential:
 - [Ashley Gatewood, MOT, OTR/L, CSRS](#), class of 2013
 - [Molly Shriver, MOT, OTR/L, CSRS](#), class of 2014
 - [Jacob Greenfield, MOT, OTR/L, ATRIC, CSRS](#), class of 2018
 - [Megan Staab, OTR/L, CSRS](#), class of 2020
- [Dee Dee Hesson, MOT, OTR/L](#), class of 2009, was recognized as Fieldwork Educator of the Year. This recognition spotlights her continuous support and mentorship to the future occupational therapy student practitioners in Ohio.
- [Breanna Adkins, MOT, OTR/L, BCP](#), and [Annika Lafferty, MOT, OTR/L, BCP](#), both of the class of 2014, are among the first exam-based Board Certified Pediatric (BCP) occupational therapists in West Virginia. Beginning in 2021, the American Occupational Therapy Association began offering the [Advanced Certification Program](#) to replace the previous peer-reviewed reflective portfolio application process. This distinction has been accomplished by fewer than 1% of all occupational therapists nationally.
- [Amanda Himmelwright, OTR/L](#), class of 2004, was recognized by the Washington County Public School system in Hagerstown, Maryland, as Service Provider of the Year. Special education staff members who provided excellence in special education

during the school year 2019-2020 were nominated in five categories including teachers, paraprofessionals, case managers, service providers, and friends of special education.

- [SueAnn Woods, PhD, MOT, OTR/L, CHT, CLT](#), class of 2009, successfully defended her dissertation titled “Hands and Health: Quantifying occupational exposures and implications of disability,” which explored the role of hand function in overall health and experienced disability. Soon thereafter she received her PhD at the December commencement.

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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