



WMU Grand Rapids



Dr. Nancy Hock, Chair



WMU Kalamazoo

Letter from Dr. Nancy Hock,

I am pleased to share this issue of the WMU Department of Occupational Therapy Newsletter. It is hard to believe that a year has gone by since I became chair of this outstanding department. It has been a busy year and we have many significant milestones to celebrate. We began the year by welcoming the first cohort of our undergraduate students to our Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant Program (BSOT). Students who complete this program acquire a strong foundation of academic and clinical preparation and are eligible for NBCOT certification as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). Completion of the bachelor's degree also provides the opportunity to apply to the Entry Level Clinical Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) program for those interested.

In early spring, we celebrated the OTD Pre-Accreditation Status which was granted by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). In September, we completed our site visit with the ACOTE team reporting full compliance with all accreditation standards along with commendation of significant strengths. This led to full accreditation status awarded in December of 2022 for the full seven-year period. It was a wonderful, definitive outcome of faculty and staff coming together as a team to make all of this happen. Along with these major accomplishments, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of our department which was founded in 1922 by Miss. Marion R Spear, who served as its first faculty member with only two students enrolled in a three-month program at the Kalamazoo State Hospital. We enjoyed a day and a half of wonderful educational presentations by alumni across the country along with a festive celebration. A great time was had by all.



In the fall of 2022, we enjoyed significant participation from our department at the annual Michigan Occupational Therapy Conference with many student and faculty presentations. The OT Department began a new AOTA Neurology Fellowship Program in collaboration with Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Students and faculty within the department were engaged throughout the year in inter-professional opportunities with other students from social work, speech language and pathology, physical therapy, nursing, physician assistants and the medical school. OTD students engaged with OTA students in collaborative activities to learn about role delineation and establishing competency.

After being cancelled for two years due to the pandemic, the Barbara A Rider Colloquium took place in October of 2022. It was wonderful to hold this very important educational event to support collaboration of local clinicians, faculty, fieldwork educators and students.

I am eagerly looking forward to what the next year brings!

Nancy Hock, Ph. D., OTRL, CHT

Faculty Awards



Kim Ganzevoort, COTAL, CCCCE, CBIS

We congratulate Kim on her achievement of receiving MiOTA's COTA Excellence Award. Kim is an accomplished clinician, educator, and leader. In addition to her work at WMU, Kim has been employed in long term acute care at Spectrum for the majority of her career and is currently pursuing her Master's in Educational and Instructional Technology.



Holly Grievess, OTD, OTR/L

We congratulate Holly on her achievement of receiving MiOTA's Distinguished Service Award. Holly is not only an innovative and dedicated educator, but she has taken on several leadership roles in community organizations such as Alternatives in Motion, MiOTA, and Michigan Occupational Therapy Education Consortium.

Faculty Scholarly Advancements



Ben J. Atchison
Editor & Author
Ch. 14 Complex Trauma



Diane Powers Dierette
Editor & Author
Ch. 20 Acquired Brain Injury
Ch. 22 Progressive Neurodegenerative Disorders
Ch. 28 Low Vision



Dr. Michelle Suarez
Author
Ch. 3 Autism Spectrum Disorder
Ch. 4 Intellectual Disability



Dr. Amy Wagenfeld
Author
Ch. 16 Feeding and Eating Disorders



Holly Grievess
Author
Ch. 20 Acquired Brain Injury



Nancy Hock
Author
Ch. 25 Orthopedics



Tracy Young
Author
Ch. 4 Intellectual Disabilities



Maureen Mickus, Ph.D, MSG

We congratulate Maureen on received \$148,440 grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund for a 2-year project to establish a *virtual support group* for college students who are dementia caregivers. This work will focus on helping students cope with the caregiver role, build skills, and navigate dementia care services. The project represents a collaborative effort with Drs. Maria Roche-Dean (WMU Bronson School of Nursing), Katey Price (Albion College) and the Michigan Alzheimer's Association.



Michelle Suarez, Ph.D, OTRL

McCoy-Powlen, J.D., Gallen, D.B. & **Suarez, M.A.** (in press). Hand Development. In A. Wagenfeld & J.Kaldenberg (Eds.), *Foundations of Pediatric Practice for the Occupational Therapy Assistant*. Slack. (Invited chapter revision)

Atchison, B. & **Suarez, M.A.** (2022). Introduction to Trauma and Considerations within the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework. In A. Lynch, R. Ashcraft & L. Tekell (Eds.), *Promoting Healing through Meaningful Occupation: A Trauma Informed Care Manual for the Occupational Therapy Practitioner*. AOTA Press. (Invited chapter)



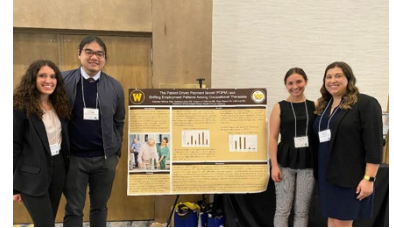
This year **Michelle Suarez, Ph.D, OTRL** was named coleader of The WMU Child and Family Resiliency Center along with Dr. Yvette Hyter. Established by the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) in 2020 through a state appropriation of \$1.5 million. The center addresses the many needs of those experiencing trauma, toxic stress, chronic disability, neurodevelopmental disorders or substance use disorder. Click [*here*](#) to learn more about the Resiliency Center!

Student Spotlight



WMU's **Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA)** participated in Kalamazoo's annual ***Walk to End Alzheimer's***. This walk is considered to be the largest fundraiser for Alzheimer's to exist in the world with annual events held in 600+ communities. Thanks to the generosity of donors, SOTA was able to raise \$5,582 to contribute to the cause. This year alone, The Walk to End Alzheimer's Kalamazoo Chapter has raised \$71,061.

Luke Lee, Sydney Leroy, Piper Friend, and Kenzie Callahan presented with principal investigator **Maureen Mickus, Ph.D, MSG**, at MiOTA's annual 2022 conference. The team presented on their research titled "The Patient Driven Payment Model (PDPM) and Shifting Employment Patterns Among Occupational Therapists".



Shreena Shah presented "Lessons Learned Through AOTF's Research Symposium for Future Scientists in OT" at the 2022 MiOTA conference. Shah was given the opportunity to learn about cutting-edge research and network with a community of dedicated OT scientists through attending AOTF's conference. Inspired by her experience at the conference, Shah felt moved to share the wealth of knowledge she gained from the event with other OT students.

David Sherman is a third year WMU OTD student whose research was represented at this year's AOTA 2022 conference. The title of his poster presentation was "The Role of Occupational Participation and Purpose in Promoting Well-Being for Older Adults".



Shreena Shah and Ann Chapleau, DHS, OTRL, FAOTA presented on "Research and Reflections From a History Geek: Exploring Historical Mental Health Outcomes to Challenge the Status Quo". Dr. Chapleau and Shreena discussed the importance of historical data collection, preservation, and digitization to allow researchers access to data that can support the efficacy of occupational therapy as a primary modality for people with serious mental illness.



COTAD (Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity) is a national organization with a mission to address diversity and inclusion in the Occupational Therapy profession. A new chapter at WMU was recently established by two OTD students, **Shreena Shah and Sarah Aguilar** (Faculty advisors- **Drs. Maureen Mickus, Deb Lindstrom**) The group is open to faculty, staff, and students interested in increasing awareness related to diverse populations. The first event in December provided student with an immersive VR experience titled “Traveling while Black” which highlighted the challenges faced by Black individuals over the past 50 years. After the VR experience, students met with older Black individuals from the community to discuss race relations and ways future healthcare providers can improve their interactions with minority populations. Upcoming events include participation in *adaptive sports* at MSU and an interactive session on “Grooming around the World.” Click [here](#) to learn more about COTAD!

WMU Celebrates 100 Years of Occupational Therapy



From left to right: Representative Julia Rodger, Fred Sammons, Barbara Rider, and Senator McCain



Quilt created by alum and 50 year OT educator and WMU, Lynne Hall

From humble beginnings in 1922 Marion R. Spears paved the way for occupational therapy by founding the fifth occupational therapy program in the nation. With an inaugural class of 3 students and one instructor, Western Michigan University’s Occupational Therapy Department is proud to celebrate its 100th year anniversary. Now, consistently recognized as one of the top 50 OT programs nationally by U.S. News & World Report, this program has graduated more than 10,000 occupational therapists who have gone on to advance the field. In July of 2022, WMU’s Department of Occupational Therapy held an educational event that spanned a day and a half. Following this event, WMU officially celebrated 100 years of contribution to the profession at its 100th Anniversary Gala on July 23. Some highlights were “Photos with Fred Sammons”, a presentation of videos from past departmental chairs and leaders, an anniversary quilt created by outstanding alum Lynn Hall, an opportunity to weave on a loom to create a tapestry in honor of the event with Dr. Jackie Ryan, a display of departmental archives of publications and textbooks, adaptive equipment and even a loom used by Ms. Spear with WMU OT students at the Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital. Additionally, a document proclaiming July 23 as Michigan's OT day was presented in recognition of WMU's 100th year anniversary. Read more about WMU's 100 year Celebration [here](#).

Doctoral Capstone

Capstone Timeline

YEAR:	2020	2021	2022		2023
SEMESTER:	SUMMER II	SPRING	SUMMER I	FALL	SPRING
WITH GUIDANCE FROM CAPSTONE COORDINATOR, STUDENT WILL:	ORIENT TO CAPSTONE PROGRAM	MATCH WITH FACULTY ADVISOR	COMPLETE OT 7201- CAPSTONE PREP COURSE (2 CR)	FINALIZE & SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)	COMPLETE OT 7202- CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE (6 CR)

--MATCH WITH SITE MENTOR -->

As a part of the Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) curriculum, students are required to complete a capstone experience and project. The doctoral capstone is a 14-week experience that takes place in the final semester of the program under the direction of Dr. Holly Grieves, the Capstone Coordinator for all WMU OTD students. The purpose of the doctoral capstone is for the student to achieve in-depth knowledge, focusing on a topic in occupational therapy that the student is passionate about. Students are encouraged to pursue opportunities in non-traditional and role-emerging areas of practice, but students may also choose traditional practice settings. In preparation for their capstone experience, students are guided through multiple phases of planning to implement their final capstone project. All students disseminate their work through the publication of a capstone project paper on *WMU's Scholarworks Database*, a video-recorded presentation made available on WMU OT's website, and a live presentation at both the capstone site as well as at OT departmental level capstone dissemination event.

Within this cohort, we would like to highlight two capstone students: **Alex Field** and **Kelyn Sckrabulis**, who have received grants to help fund their innovative capstone projects.



Alex Field was awarded \$2,150 which aims to determine physical supports and barriers that exist with current adaptive birding equipment used by non-ambulatory individuals. Alex will conduct focus groups and equipment trials of current optics (binoculars, monoculars, and spotting scopes) as well as various mounting system options, and ask participants to rate each item on overall usability. Alex intends to partner with the Department of Engineering at WMU to design a more accessible optic mounting system that enhances the birding experience and quality of life for non-ambulatory individuals.



Kelyn Sckrabulis earned WMU's *Student Sustainability Grant (SSG)* which provides support to student projects and research intended to advance sustainability. Kelyn was awarded the SSG in the amount of \$5,642 to fund the building of raised garden beds that are wheelchair accessible for individuals involved with the Center for Disability Services at WMU. Kelyn will establish a program centered around the renovated garden to provide ample opportunities for future OT and PT students to enhance further community participation for individuals attending CDS.

Sammons Center for Innovation and Research



The **Sammons Center for Innovation and Research in Occupation Based Technology** provides funding to inventors with creative and effective ideas for products that enable people to engage and participate in everyday occupation. **Dr. Fred Sammons** is an occupational therapist well-known for his innovative contributions while working in the OT field. Students, faculty, and individuals outside of WMU can submit proposals to fund their own innovative ideas to benefit the community through the generosity of the Sammons Center.

- Role of OT in pediatrics and on the impact of sensory processing differences on a child's holistic development - **Kaylee Toren, OTD Student with mentor Wendy Tremaine, Ph.D., OTRL**
- Ty Safety Belt - **Tyrone & Valerie Sanders**
- A Storytelling VR Experience to improve Cultural Humility among Occupational and Physical Therapy Students - **Shreena Shah, Sarah Aguilar, & Dr. Maureen Mickus**
- The Raising Families App: A Community University Partnership Addressing Pandemic Slide Through Unique App Development - **Dr. Zahava Friedman**
- Product design of a device for individuals who enjoy the occupation of birding - **Alex Field, OTD student**

Open Journal of Occupational Therapy

The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy (OJOT) continues its success, reaching a milestone of over 850,000 full text downloads of articles across 206 countries in 2022. The journal provides open access (free subscription at www.ojot.org) of peer reviewed research allowing clinicians throughout the world to engage in evidence based practice when they otherwise may be unable to do so. This would not be possible without the leadership of Dr. Diane Powers-Dirette, Editor in Chief, and the work of Allison Miller, Assistant Editor in Chief. The generosity of Dr. Barbara Rider and Dr. Fred Sammons has been instrumental in the success of OJOT as well as our donors who sponsor the 2022 Sponsor Profiles, including Dr. Barbara Rider and Dr. Fred Sammons, Professor Emerita Sandra Edwards, Dr. Diane Powers-Dirette, Dr. Paula Jamison, and the NYU Steinhardt Department of Occupational Therapy, NYU. New editions are released quarterly with each new release including two sponsors. For more information, click [**here!**](#)

Featured OJOT Profiles 2022



Sandra E.
Edwards
MA,
OTRL,
FAOTA
Volume
10, No 4
Fall 2022



Emily
Schulz
PhD,
OTRL
Volume
10, No 4
Fall 2022



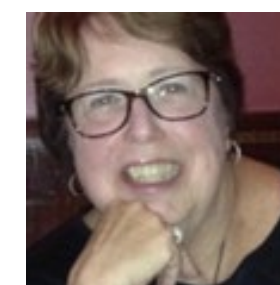
Paula W.
Jamison
PhD,
OTR
Volume
10, No 3
Summer
2022



Department of
OT
Western
Michigan
University
Volume 10,
No 2
Spring 2022



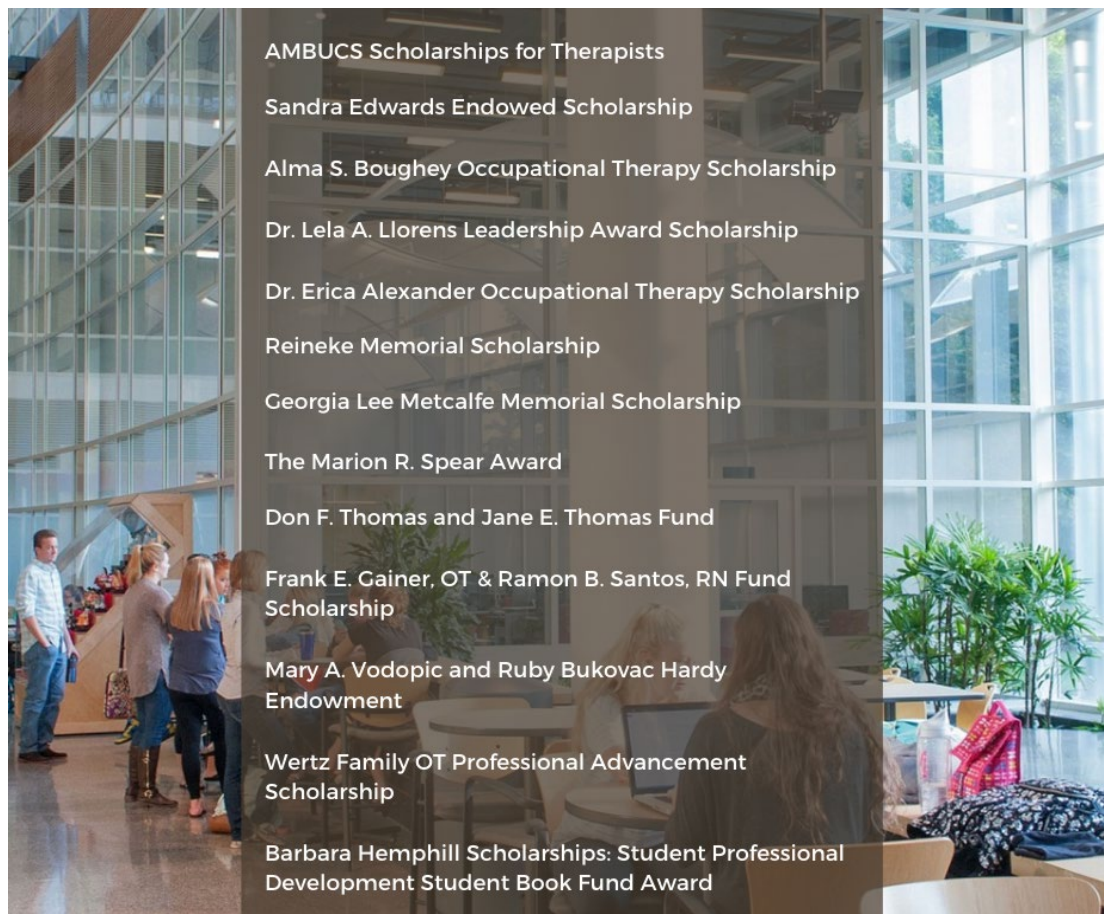
Sharon
A.
Gutman
PhD,
OTRL,
FAOTA
Volume
10, No 1
Fall 2022



Melanie T.
Ellexson,
DHSc,
MBA,
OTRL,
FAOTA
Volume 10,
No 1
Fall 2022

Scholarships

In 2022, over \$27,000 was awarded to WMU OT students. We are very thankful for our generous scholarship donors who invest in the future of our students! Click [*here*](#) to learn more about our available scholarships.





Dr. Barbara Rider established this annual colloquium in 2004 in an effort to bring together students, educators, clinicians, and scholars to cultivate professional development. Dr. Rider is a professor and chair emerita of Occupational Therapy at Western Michigan University and has served six decades as an educator, researcher, clinician, and scholar.

This year's Barbara Rider Colloquium opened with a keynote presentation by Dr. Amy Lynch on: Empathy Across the Lifespan: Considerations for Becoming a Trauma Informed Occupational Therapy Practitioner. Following the keynote presentation, Dr. James Henry gave a powerful plenary presentation focused on Collective Trauma and Grief: Reframing Resiliency Following a School Shooting. During the breakout portion of the daylong event, attendees chose 1 of 4 different breakout session to attend. The speakers in the breakout rooms presented on the following:

1. Caregiver Co-Regulation Coaching: Creating Opportunities for Joyful Participation in Occupation for Children who have Experienced Trauma by Dr. Michelle Suarez
2. Recovering From the Trauma of Human Trafficking: An Occupation Based Approach by Dr. Danielle Baker, Karen Moore, and Samantha Mansfield
3. The Pathway to Resilience for Post Traumatic Growth Among Adult Populations: Safety, Relationship, and Connection by Breezy Barcelo
4. Lessons and Reflections from Working with Immigrant and Refugee Youth by Dr. Katie Mesko

Click [here](#) to learn more!

Meet Our First Mary Free Bed Fellow



Leah was raised in Fairbanks, Alaska and earned her MSOT at Eastern Washington University. Since graduating, Leah has worked as an inpatient OT at St. Mary Medical Center's. Leah was selected as the first ever recipient of the Neurological OT Fellowship developed through the partnership of Mary Free Bed and Western Michigan University's OT Department. In Fall of 2022, Leah received instructor training under the mentorship of WMU OT Professor Holly Grieves (OTD, OTRL). This fellowship will provide hands-on learning opportunities that will cultivate Leah's professional development. Learning opportunities will include contributing/co-leading a doctoral level OT course, serving as a lab assistant, contributing to the planning and execution of the adult simulation, and serving as an oral exam evaluator during finals week. In addition, Leah will complete 4 clinical rotations at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital.

To learn more about application process for 2023-2024 and the fellowship opportunities at Mary Free Bed [visit the website.](#)

Alumni Updates



CAYA THERAPIES

come as you are

Dr. Katie Mesko is a WMU MSOT alumni who recently earned her post-professional OTD from Grand Valley State University. Katie's involvement in WMU's OT program has extended well beyond her years as a student including appointment as a part time faculty member, teaching several courses, and serving as a level I fieldwork supervisor. In the past year, Katie has opened an OT clinic called CAYA Therapies located in Grand Rapids, MI. CAYA stands for "Come As You Are" with the mission to "empower belonging and purpose" in each individual who walks through their clinic door.

Katie's passion for both OT and serving youth who have experienced trauma coalesced to create a clinic accessible to families whose socioeconomic status has prohibited them from receiving quality OT. Part of what distinguishes CAYA from other OT clinics, is its acceptance of insurance from Medicaid providers and its emphasis on providing trauma-informed, relationship-based care. In the short period CAYA has been in operation, it has developed a stellar reputation with clients praising the therapists for fostering a comfortable environment and truly listening to the client's family. CAYA's rapid growth and tremendously high demand is a testament to the inequity in the healthcare system that CAYA seeks to bring justice to. Click [here](#) to learn more!

We invite any WMU OT Department Alum to send us updates on accomplishments. We would love to highlight more of our wonderful alumni! Please click [here](#) if interested!

Level I Fieldwork

All students gain level I fieldwork experience at local sites in their respective city. Grand Rapids students have the unique opportunity to gain experience at pro-bono clinics providing occupational therapy to underserved members of the community who may not have financial access to OT services. Kalamazoo students are offered experiences at a psychiatric hospital, elementary school, and community-based settings. At each clinic, students work in teams of two and are assigned a caseload of clients for which they are expected to evaluate as well as develop and implement treatment programs. Students gain additional technical experience in documentation requirements. All the WMU clinics include intensive hands-on approaches under the supervision of a licensed OT. With three, twelve-week rotations in a diverse set of clinics, students gain a well-rounded education as they prepare for their level II fieldwork assignments. Learn more about WMU's Level I opportunities [here](#).



The **Bethany Christian Services** Ridgeview Clinic offers students an unique opportunity to work with adolescent males (ages 11-18) residing in the Juvenile Justice Residential Facility. This facility welcomes male youth who have been convicted of crimes and oftentimes experienced significant childhood trauma. The strong psychosocial emphasis in this clinic provides students with rich opportunities to practice trauma-informed care. This is a once a week clinic where student pairs treat 4 individuals for hour long sessions. Click [*here*](#) for more information!



The **WMU Hand Clinic** is run twice a week at the Grand Rapids WMU location by students under the supervision of a licensed occupational therapists and certified hand therapist. This clinic specializes in treating individuals with orthopedic disease and injury to help individuals re-engage in meaningful activities. Frequently treated diagnoses include arthritis, tendon injuries, nerve compression, trigger finger, tendinitis, trauma/crush injury, and fractures. However, the clinic welcomes individuals with a host of other conditions. Click [*here*](#) for more information!



The **WMU Neuro Rehab Clinic** is also located at the Grand Rapids WMU building. The goal of this clinic is to promote function and engagement in all areas of an individual's life. Clients include children and adults with a variety of complex medical issues including, but not limited to, traumatic brain injuries, stroke, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injuries, and neurovisual difficulties. Areas addressed may include I/ADLs, fine motor skills, visual motor skills, coordination skills, and cognitive skills. Click [*here*](#) for more information!



At the **Calvin Pediatric Clinic** WMU students provide OT services alongside Calvin SLP students. The goal is to promote function and engagement at home, school, and play across all areas of a child's development. Complex medical conditions represented in the pediatric clientele includes, but is not limited to, cerebral palsy, neuromuscular disorders, developmental delays, autism spectrum disorders, traumatic brain injury, Down syndrome, sensory processing disorders, and other genetic disorders. Click [here](#) for more information!



A unique feature on WMU's home campus is the **Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital**. This acute-care psychiatric facility offers students an opportunity to serve adults with severe mental illness. Common diagnoses treated includes schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, major depressive disorder, substance abuse and dementia. Treatment focuses on social participation in meaningful activities, functional skills, and transitional skills for community living. Click [here](#) for more information!



SOAR Occupational Therapy is a community-based clinic that exposes students to occupational therapy in an elementary school setting. Young students who score significantly below benchmark in literacy skills are referred to this clinic by teachers and principles. OT student therapists work with elementary students for 30–45-minute sessions twice a week with the primary focus of improving school performance and assisting students in reaching their fullest academic potential. Click [here](#) for more information!



The Adult Doing Life Clinic serves adults with intellectual impairments, development disorders, epilepsy, autism, brain injury, and cerebral palsy. The Center for Disability Services refers adults with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities to this clinic. Clients meet with student therapists twice a week for 2.5-hour sessions where individualized interventions are implemented to help clients engage in meaningful occupations. Click [here](#) for more information!



WMU's Work to Work Program strives to provide young adults diagnosed with a variety of conditions skills to enhance independence and engage in meaningful occupations. Young adults who are referred to this program have diagnoses including autism, Asperger syndrome, learning disability, cognitive impairment, and other mental health disorders. Students in this clinic gain experience facilitating therapy in social groups, task groups, and one-on-one sessions with the goal of supporting young adults with independent living. Click [here](#) for more information!

December 2022 Fieldwork Educator Nominations

Each year, Western Michigan University's Occupational Therapy program asks Level II fieldwork students to consider nominating their supervisor for the WMU fieldwork Educator Award. Fieldwork Educator is the term used to describe the direct supervisor of the student on site, during their fieldwork rotation.

Please take the time to read the list of all the amazing nominees. Selecting the winner is a very hard decision, because WMU is lucky to work with so many wonderful clinical teachers. The most significant factor distinguishing an average instructor from an excellent fieldwork educator, is the ability for the teacher to instill self-efficacy in their student. Starting Level II fieldwork is one of the most stressful transitions for graduate OT students: moving from classroom case scenario discussions to professional reasoning in the clinic, with real people and dynamic environments.



December 2022 Fieldwork Educator Award Winner

Wendy Beam, OTRL

Broad River Rehab: South Haven Nursing and Rehabilitation Community,
South Haven, MI

Nominated by Casey Gervase

Michelle Teshome, MOT, OTRL

Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI

Nominated by: Aly Schwartz

Loral Wolery, OTRL

Mary Free Bed Sparrow Day Rehabilitation East Lansing, MI

Nominated by: Taylor Kehren

Takashi Okada, MS, OTRL

Mary Free Bed at Sparrow Day Rehabilitation, East Lansing

Nominated by: Taylor Kehren

Kelly Stachyra, MOT, OTRL, CBIS & Amy Rossi, OTRL

Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital, Wheaton, IL

Nominated by: Kelsey East

Kevin Lang, MS, OTRL

Corewell Health: Butterworth Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI

Nominated by: Anna Griesbach

Angela Slusser, MOTRL, CPST, NTMTC

Sparrow Hospital-Pediatric Rehabilitation, Lansing, MI

Nominated by: Kate Vande Vegte

Erin Kennedy, OTRL

Henry Ford Macomb Hospital, Clinton Township, MI

Nominated by: Danielle Daoud

Peggy Ann McCourry, MS, OTRL

Sensory Systems Clinic West, Wayland, MI

Nominated by: Rachel Boven

Madison Lull, OTD, OTRL

Heritage Community of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, MI

Nominated by: Kimberly Ortiz

Marie Bell, MS, OTRL

Rise Therapy & Wellness, Richland, MI

Nominated by: Madison Charlton

Danielle Anshus, MS, OTRL

Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN

Nominated by: Amanda Fox

Jenna Holwerda, OTRL

Corewell Health, Niles, MI

Nominated by Katie Schmidt

Kelsey King, OTRL

Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, MI

Nominated by: Emma McCleary



December 2022 Fieldwork Student Winner
Emily Fabrizio



December 2022 SPEAR Winner
Katie Schmidt

In Loving Memory of WMU Alumni...



Mary Louis Rooney (1926-2022) passed away on August, 27, 2022. Mary was a graduate from WMU's OT program and a past member of AOTA. Her love of our country prompted her to enter the United States Navy as an Ensign in the Medical Service Corps. She eventually reached the rank of commander. She loved working with all service personnel, especially the Vietnam War casualties and her teaching position on the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.



Mary Amelia Vodopic (1922-2022) passed away on October 8, 2022, at the impressive age of 100. In 1943, Mary joined the US Navy where she served for nearly 3 years before receiving honorable discharge due to the ending of the war. Shortly after the war, Mary enrolled at the Western Michigan College (now University) OT program. Following graduation in 1947, Mary joined the Women Medical Specialist Corps of the US Army to serve as an OT. Upon the development of the United States Air Force, Mary helped establish OT clinics at military medical centers and touched many lives.