

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

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REFUGEE WOMEN'S GROUP

Yda Smith recently received a grant from American Express Center for Community Development to conduct a group for Somali Bantu refugee women at Hartland Apartments over the next year.

The purpose of the group, titled Somali Bantu Women's Literacy and Civic Action Group, is to help them identify issues they are encountering while adapting to life in Salt Lake City and to help

them identify ways they can help their families live full and meaningful lives. The group is also designed to promote English language skills using a critical pedagogy approach in which the participants help decide what language skills are most needed at the time.

This project is in collaboration with a larger project at Hartland Apartments through University Neighborhood Partners.

FIFTH OT CLASS GRADUATING!

- The University of Utah will graduate its fifth class of occupational therapists
May 4, 2006*



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DR. WRIGHT CERTIFIED AS LOW VISION SPECIALIST



As our population ages, diseases such as macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy cause vision loss for an increasing number of individuals. AOTA is actively involved in partnering with ophthalmologists, optometrists, and others to improve services offered in this area. The treatment of persons with Low Vision is an expanding practice area for occupational therapists.

The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) is an international membership organization that supports professionals who work in all phases of education and rehabilitation of the blind and visually impaired. Founded in 1984, it now has over 4,000 members. The Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professional

(ACVREP) is the certifying body of AER. One of the levels of certification they offer is the Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT).

The CLVT for an occupational therapist requires advanced study and an examination. The CLVT trains persons with low vision in the use of low vision devices as well as adaptive techniques to improve functioning. They also make recommendations for environmental modifications.

Dr. JoAnne Wright became certified this February. She states, "With my experience in gerontology, this is a natural fit to broaden my expertise with this population. It is also interesting and fun to explore some of the newer areas of occupational therapy practice and share it with the students."

ADULTS WITH
LOW VISION
HAVE DIFFICULTY
MAINTAINING
THEIR
INDEPENDENCE

OT'S CAN HELP!

STUDENT NEWS

Class of 2006 will be graduating May 4, 2006. They are currently finishing their last Level II Clinical Affiliation around the state, with a few students out of state.

Class of 2007 completed their pediatric semester this fall and are finishing their adult semester in April. There are

Level I fieldwork placements associated with both semesters, and this summer these students will begin their first Level II

Class of 2008 students are finishing their neuroanatomy course work as well as learning about group work, psychosocial issues, and developing cultural competence.

ALUMNI EVENT PLANNED APRIL 8, 2006



Be sure to mark your calendars for our first alumni event scheduled for April 8, 2006 .

Our graduating Class of 2006 will join alumni from the four previous classes at 5 pm for a social hour fol-

lowed by dinner. The theme is "Come Back without your Books!"

The event will be held at 520 Wakara in the newly renamed Ezekial R. and Edna Watis Dumke Health Professionals Education Building. Come see the remodeling, catch up with former classmates, see old photos , and share the enthusiasm of being OT's!

DR. DUNN INVOLVED WITH ULEND GRANT

Dr. Louise Dunn, our pediatric faculty member, represents the Division of Occupational Therapy on the Utah Leadership and Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (ULEND) Grant. This grant is funded through the Children with Special Health Needs Division of the Maternal and Child Health Department. ULEND is an interdisciplinary collaboration between Utah State University and the University of Utah. Dr. Judith Holt, Utah State University, and Dr. Lisa Samson-Feng, University of Utah, are the principal investigators for this grant. The ULEND program is regional and trainees currently come from Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho.

The purpose of ULEND is to expand the leadership and advocacy skills of Utah health and educational professionals who provide services to children with special health care needs and their families. Trainees are recruited yearly from 11 disciplines (e.g., pediatrics, dentistry, audiology, occupational therapy, special education, psychology) and from parent support and advocacy groups. A series of didactic, experiential, and leadership activities are

designed by the ULEND faculty to further understanding and to develop skills for advocacy, leadership, programmatic development, and clinical issues for children with special health care needs and their families.

Each year, we seek interested occupational therapists who want to further develop their leadership and advocacy skills to participate in ULEND. Participation as a ULEND trainee involves a time commitment of 4 to 6 hours twice a month for meetings, time spent doing clinical visits, and time spent completing a leadership project. Each ULEND trainee receives a monthly stipend and many opportunities to network with interdisciplinary leaders from several disciplines.

We are recruiting trainees for the 2006-2007 year pending renewal of the ULEND grant application. Please contact Dr. Louise Dunn by voicemail at 801-575-9356 or by email at louise.dunn@health.utah.edu if you would like to learn more about the



LOOKING FOR
OT'S WHO SERVE
SPECIAL NEEDS
CHILDREN AND
THEIR FAMILIES
FOR ULEND
PROGRAM

ADJUNCT FACULTY ADD SO MUCH!

It takes a village to train an OT!

Our faculty have expertise not only in teaching, but also experiences from many different practice settings. But as diverse as the field of occupational therapy is, we are always looking for contributions from practicing clinicians to contribute to our curriculum.

This semester, Greg Wooten (class of 2002) is teaching our Occupational Performance and Psychosocial Issues class for first year students. Nikki Conrad returns for her third

year teaching Seminar IV in the adult semester. She and the students practice wheelchair mobility at right.

Do you have expertise you would like to share with our students? Would you like to experiment with teaching by working as a TA this summer or fall? Contact Dr. JoAnne Wright at Joanne.wright@health.utah.edu.





Dumke Health Professions Education
Building
520 Wakara Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84108

Phone: 801-585-9135

Fax: 801-585-1001

Email: occupational.therapy@hsc.utah.edu

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.HEALTH.UTAH.EDU/OCTH

EDUCATING OUR FUTURE
COLLEAGUES

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF A NETWORKING GROUP?

Today's health care climate has changed the way occupational therapists interact with each other to support and mentor continuing clinical excellence. More practitioners are involved in interdisciplinary teams which promote collaborative patient care but may decrease the collaborative links with other occupational therapists. There are fewer large departments with seasoned occupational therapists to mentor novice therapists. Frequently, professionals from different disciplines supervise occupational therapists, especially in community settings. An occupational therapist in his or her first leadership role may have limited resources to call on. All of these realities diminish our opportunities for collaboration and support.

The faculty at the University of Utah are interested in exploring the formation of networking groups to support therapists, encourage networking and collaboration in research and practice issues, and to encourage and support best occupational therapy practice in Utah. Our tentative plan would be to have an introductory meeting to see what people want and need to support their professional growth and to identify which collaborative groups may be formed.

Some suggested ideas for networking groups include:

- Developing strategies to stay occupationally based in today's health care arena
- Reviewing emerging evidence to support best practice
- Promoting leadership and management skills
- Solving interdisciplinary dilemma and promoting synergy
- Building an effective student program
- Creating research collaborations between therapists and academicians

If you are a novice looking for support or an experienced occupational therapist ready and willing to share you expertise, email your ideas to

pollie.price@hsc.utah.edu

nancy.johns@hsc.utah.edu

