



School of Education
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

OT Matters

SUMMER 2016

News for alumni and friends of the Occupational Therapy Program

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Brittany Travers
*examining motor,
brain development
in children
with autism*

Occupational Therapy Program

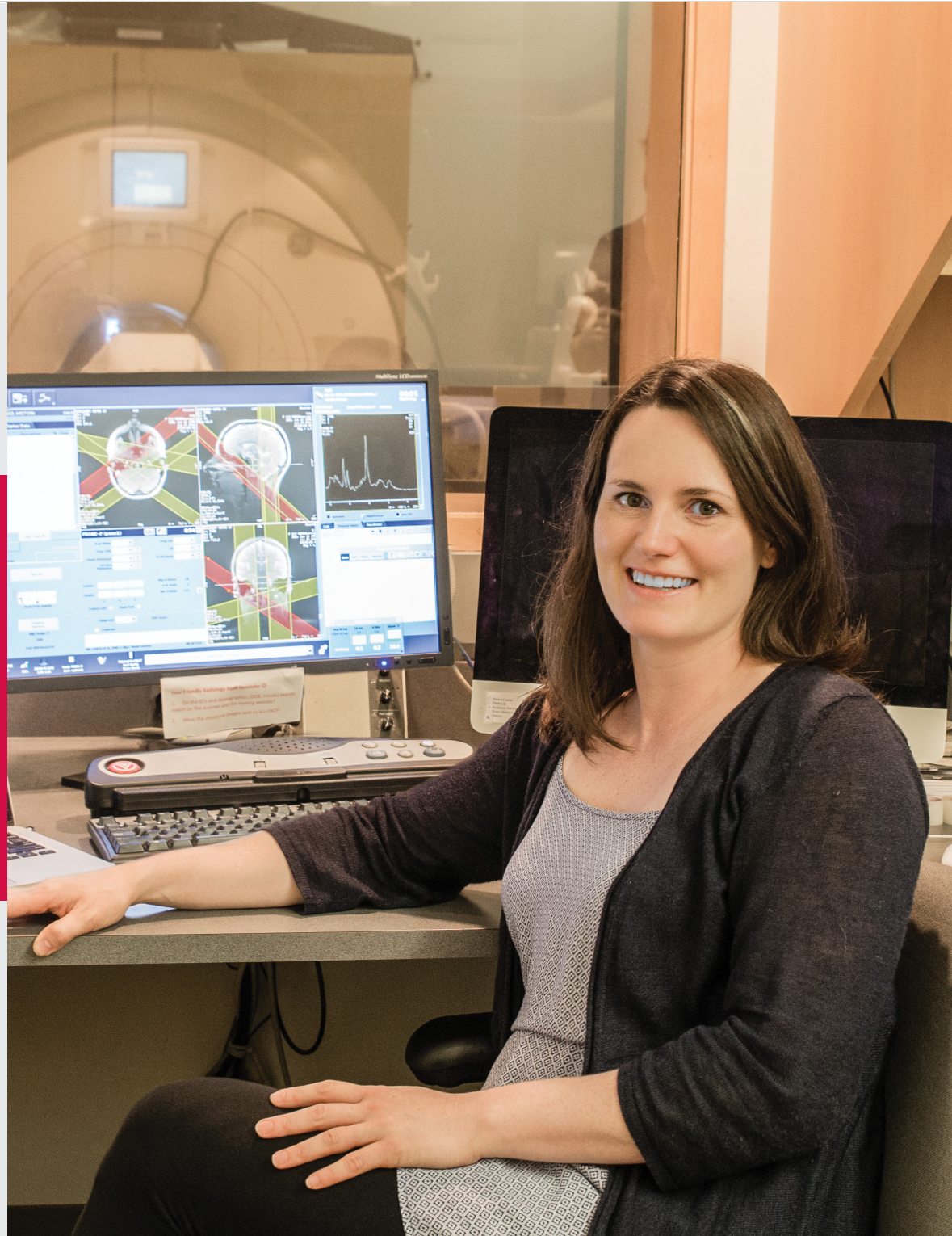
School of Education | UW-Madison
2120 Medical Sciences Center
1300 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706-1639

PHONE: 608-262-2936

EMAIL: otoffice@education.wisc.edu



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Travers on leading edge of research involving motor, brain development in children with autism

Ask UW–Madison’s Brittany Travers how she became interested in studying children with autism, and she explains how a family history of Alzheimer’s disease piqued her desire to better understand the brain — and how one thinks, feels and learns.

“Then I had opportunities to work with people with autism at the opposite end of the life span,” says Travers, an assistant professor with the Department of Kinesiology’s Occupational Therapy Program. “I started to notice slight differences in the way people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) moved, and I was drawn to this atypical motion.”

She adds: “I really just got hooked and wanted to better understand ASD and this synthesis of brain development, learning and motor skills.”

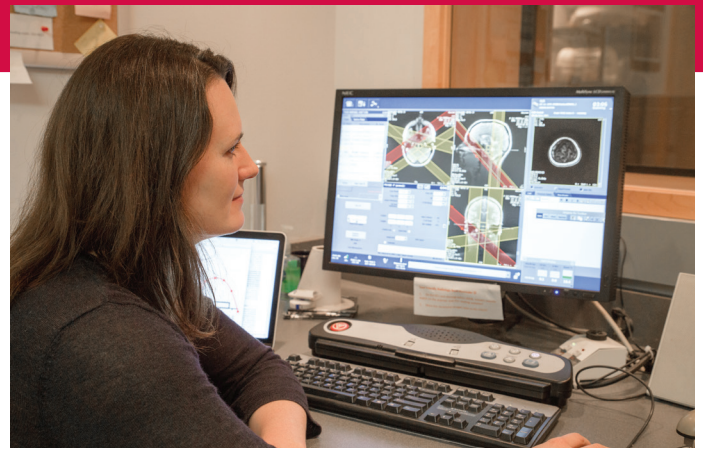
Today, Travers heads the Motor and Brain Development Lab within the university’s Waisman Center, where she is involved with more than a half-dozen research initiatives exploring various aspects of motor and brain development in children with autism. Many of these projects include collaborators from across the UW–Madison campus, and often utilize the latest brain imaging technologies.

Travers’ work is so highly regarded that in May she received a prestigious Young Investigator Award from the International Society for Autism Research.

One of the research projects Travers is working on examines whether video game-based balance training can lead to improvements in motor ability and ASD symptoms.

“I’m really intrigued by the neuroplasticity piece right now,” says Travers.

Neuroplasticity describes the brain’s ability to change during the course of one’s life. Travers notes that as little as 10



Brittany Travers leads the Motor and Brain Development Lab within UW–Madison’s Waisman Center.

years ago, many in the scientific community believed that the brain developed during a critical period in early childhood — and then remained relatively unchangeable. But more recently, researchers have shown that many aspects of the brain remain changeable — or plastic — even as one ages.

“This is very exciting,” says Travers. “We now know we can grow new neurons and that our brains are always making new connections, which make behavioral and cognitive change possible.”

Travers adds that such findings make sense to occupational therapists, who have been demonstrating for decades that such change is possible through their work with patients.

One of Travers’ current neuroplasticity studies involves bringing children ages 6 to 17 to her lab three days per week, for six weeks. During these visits, participants train on a balance board connected to the Nintendo Wii video game system and a Kinect camera.

Travers explains that in typically developing people, research has indicated that balance training may enhance white matter in

the brain. She’s attempting to find out if such balance work with videogames might help people with their ASD symptoms.

Travers starts this study by measuring participants’ IQ, and assessing autism symptoms such as social communications skills and repetitive behaviors. She also tests each child’s ability to dress himself and uses the Wii to track balance and stability. At the end of the six weeks, Travers’ team repeats the assessments to calculate change and also takes brain scans to look for structural transformations in the

“People with autism have so many gifts that are underutilized in our society. My goal is to find neuroscience-based, therapeutic interventions that can help people with autism reach their full potential.”

— Brittany Travers



brain. Approximately 30 participants have completed this study, but Travers and her team are still looking for more children and adolescents who might be interested in participating.

Travers stresses that while the research is promising and worth pursuing further, no video game or other balance training has yet been rigorously shown to improve autism symptoms.

A sampling of additional projects Travers is involved with include:

Imaging the Brainstem in Autism

In April, Travers received a Hartwell Individual Biomedical Research Award for a project that will utilize MRI scans produced by UW–Madison imaging experts Andrew L. Alexander, Beth Meyerand and Brendon Nacewicz. The researchers hope to find correlations between MRI brainstem measures, and motor and behavioral assessments, to better understand the role of the brainstem in autism.

Learning and Decision Making in Autism and Typical Development

Also in 2016, Travers and Ari Rosenberg from the UW School of Medicine and Public Health received funding from the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research for a project that will utilize MRI scans, computer assessments and computer game play to assess differences in learning profiles among individuals with autism and with typical development.

Mobile Device Use in OT Clinical Practice

Travers and Debbie Bebeau, a clinical instructor and fieldwork coordinator with UW–Madison's OT Program, are conducting a survey study to establish how professionals in the occupational therapy field utilize tablets and other mobile devices in clinical practice. (To take the survey, visit: <https://kinesiology.education.wisc.edu/ot/about>)

Travers explains that while much of her research is in its early stages, it's her long-term goal to find interventions that occupational therapists can use in their work to help people with ASD.

"People with autism have so many gifts that are underutilized in our society," says Travers. "My goal is to find neuroscience-based, therapeutic interventions that can help people with autism reach their full potential."



Letter from the Director

Welcome to the eighth edition of "OT Matters." Our title resonates with happenings in our broader culture and world. The movement to build an equitable and just society is challenging the OT Program to identify new avenues of inclusion and new ways of teaching that meet the needs of students from a wide variety of backgrounds.

We are being challenged by shifting paradigms in public education and significant changes in the way that education is financed, governed and delivered to students. As occupational therapists our expertise in adapting to life changes serves us well. Our program remains strong due to the adaptability, strengths and growing diversity of our students, faculty and alumni, their willingness to push the Program to grow in new directions and their commitment to the profession.

In this newsletter you will read about the current work and accomplishments of people who matter to the OT Program — the alumni, preceptors, friends, students and faculty who contribute in so many ways. Visit our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/UWMadisonOT/](https://www.facebook.com/UWMadisonOT/)) for additional photos and news.

Perhaps like me, when asked about your work, you often hear the story of a friend or family member who has benefitted from the skills of an occupational therapist. OT matters to the lives of people of diverse ages, abilities, ethnicities, and cultures who depend on our profession to overcome health or educational challenges.

There is a sense of pride in knowing that many of you providing valued OT services are former students trained at UW–Madison. These are exciting and challenging times. Your support of the program continues to be critical to our success. We hope to see you in Madison, at WOTA or at the next AOTA Alumni Party in Philadelphia.

On, Wisconsin!

— **Ruth Benedict**



UW–Madison's OT Program ranked among best in nation

UW–Madison's Occupational Therapy program is rated among the very best in the country according to U.S. News & World Report's annual graduate school rankings released in March 2016.

The UW–Madison program is ranked 14th, as voted on by program directors and faculty in health disciplines. Among Big Ten Conference peers, only Ohio State (No. 12) ranked higher.

For the third consecutive year, UW–Madison's School of Education is rated No. 1 among public institutions, and No. 4 overall, according to U.S. News' "2017 Best Education Schools" index. UW–Madison's Occupational Therapy program is housed within the School of Education's Department of Kinesiology.

Farrar-Edwards receives Vilas award

Extraordinary members of the UW–Madison faculty were honored this past spring with awards supported by the estate of professor, Senator and Regent William F. Vilas (1840–1908).

And among those receiving recognition include Dorothy Farrar-Edwards, a professor of occupational therapy with the Department of Kinesiology. Farrar-Edwards was named a Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor, which identifies distinguished scholarship as well as standout efforts in teaching and service. This professorship provides flexible funding over five years that Farrar-Edwards will use to bolster her research on health disparities and equity, especially as this relates to the impact of stroke and Alzheimer's disease in underrepresented groups.

"The Vilas award was a terrific honor and a validation from my peers of the work I've been doing," she says.

Meanwhile, Farrar-Edwards' term as chair of the Department of Kinesiology comes to a close at the end of the 2015–16 academic year. She served in that role for back-to-back three-year terms. Farrar-Edwards this spring also wrapped up a three-year term on the University Committee, which is the executive committee of UW–Madison's faculty senate. She also was a member of the UW System's Tenure Task Force, which was appointed to recommend new Board of Regents policies regarding tenure.

"I loved being department chair and being so closely involved with faculty governance, but I'm also very excited to get more involved again in my research projects," she says.

Bebeau helping vision future Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education

Debbie Bebeau, a clinical assistant professor and academic fieldwork coordinator with the Occupational Therapy Program, is playing a key role in planning for a future Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education (CIPE) at UW–Madison.

The idea behind CIPE is to better help health-related programs across campus develop synergistic and interprofessional activities to enhance education and meet accreditation standards. The center would also serve as a hub that fosters collaborative partnerships, shares best practices, and prepares students from a range of fields to care for their patients in effective, team-based settings.

Along these lines, Bebeau each spring and fall helps students from the OT Program work with their counterparts in the School of Nursing to conduct healthcare simulations across a variety of settings. The idea is to help the students better understand and appreciate the interprofessional dynamics within and between OT and nursing.

"It's a valuable experience in that it lets students hear perspectives and reflect on experiences they may not typically have when working with students from their own cohort," says Bebeau. "This allows students to get practice working with an interdisciplinary team and to think about health care in a more comprehensive way."

As a member of the executive committee of this future center, Bebeau and colleagues from health professions across UW–Madison spent parts of the 2014–15 academic year conducting a campus-wide inventory of interprofessional education (IPE) course offerings and activities to help inform future program development and provide data for accreditation processes.

In addition to the Occupational Therapy Program, campus units taking the lead on making this center a reality include the: School of Pharmacy; School of Medicine and Public Health; School of Veterinary Medication; and School of Nursing.



Debbie Bebeau (right) collaborates with colleagues at the School of Nursing.





Third grade teacher Dan Heinemann (left) and Principal Sarah Larson (purple shirt) are the project leads for the 'Active Classroom Engagement' initiative that will begin in the 2016-17 school year. (Madison Metropolitan School District Photo)

Larson helps secure funding for 'Active Classroom Engagement'

Elizabeth Larson played a leading role in landing a grant for Madison's Elvehjem Elementary School titled, "Active Classroom Engagement (ACE)." This project — which is being supported by a \$25,000 grant from the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools — is designed to create movement-permissive classrooms to accommodate students' natural need to be more active.

This initiative, which will begin in the 2016-17 school year, will include six third- through sixth-grade classroom teacher volunteers who will be instructing about 120 students. The project leads at Elvehjem Elementary School are third grade teacher Dan Heinemann and Principal Sarah Larson.

Students will be provided individually fitted standing desks, with stools and anti-fatigue mats. They will also participate in daily three- to five-minute, teacher-led movement breaks. Research suggests that movement-permissive classrooms have positive effects on students' engagement and on-task behaviors. Data will be collected at baseline, mid-year and end of year to assess the impact of the ACE project.

Elizabeth Larson is an award-winning associate professor of occupational therapy at UW-Madison.

She also is involved in an exciting project that's designed to aid caregivers. Research indicates that caregivers of autistic children, who often face a lack of support and a range of daily obstacles, are the most stressed among those who care for kids with disabilities.

In an effort to help these caregivers improve their wellbeing, Larson and her research teams have developed a program, "5Minutes4Myself (5M4M)," that includes interactive coaching and a smartphone-based app that provides mindfulness podcasts, goal tracking and other habit-building features. Larson worked closely with caregiving parents and with Branch2, a Madison-based

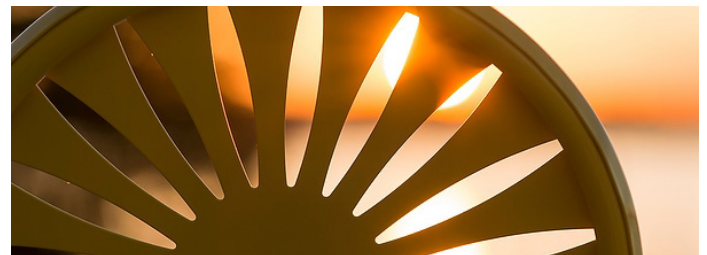
startup, to design the app to fit the lifestyles of those engaged in time-intense caregiving. For more information, contact Larson via email at elizabeth.larson@wisc.edu.

Choi, Gunn earn Ph.D. in occupational science

Two students recently completed their doctoral work in occupational science at UW-Madison under the mentorship of Occupational Therapy faculty members.

Yejin Choi, mentored by Associate Professor Elizabeth Larson, successfully defended her dissertation titled, "Perceived Lifestyle Balance in College Students."

Professor Dorothy Farrar-Edwards mentored Wade Gunn in his study, "African American Perceptions of Memory Loss: Investigating Social Cognitive Barriers and Facilitators to Early Detection of Mild Cognitive Impairment using a Mixed Methods Approach."



SAVE THE DATE

Sept. 14-15, 2018

UW-Madison's Occupational Therapy Program will be celebrating its 75th year in 2018. Plan to come back for the special events we have planned for Friday and Saturday, Sept. 14 and 15.

Your help can make this celebration event better:

- Share photos and stories of your time at UW-Madison for a memory book/slideshow. Email pictures to: elizabeth.larson@wisc.edu
- Volunteer on one of the planning committees. We would like alumni still in Wisconsin and those farther away to ensure the event is meaningful for all. If you can help, email: elizabeth.larson@wisc.edu
- Spread the word about the event via your social media accounts.

We look forward to celebrating this milestone with as many Badgers as possible! Please contact your classmates and join and like us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/UWMadisonOT/>) to spread the word among the OT Badger nation.

Watch your mailbox or visit www.kinesiology.education.wisc.edu/ot for more details as they become available.

OT Faculty Publications

Karla Ausderau, Ph.D., OTR/L

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Song J, Nair V, Young BM, Walton L, Nigogosyan Z, Remsik AB, Tyler ME, **Edwards DF**, Caldera K, Sattin JA, Williams JC, Prabhakaran V. DTI Measures Track and Predict Motor Function Outcomes in Stroke Rehabilitation Utilizing BCI Technology. *Frontiers in Neuroscience* . (In Press).

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Kristen Pickett, Ph.D.

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Li K-y, Su W-s, Fu H-w, **Pickett KA** (2015) Kinesthetic deficit in children with developmental coordination disorder. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*. 38. 125-133.



Prepare for a leadership role with online Doctor of Occupational Therapy program

Sharon Gartland loved school, describing herself as “a bit of a nerd.” She already had bachelor’s and master’s degrees in occupational therapy and wanted to prepare herself for new leadership opportunities with a doctorate. It was a tough decision to make at her stage of life, with a fulltime job, a large family, and college expenses for her kids. But Gartland took the plunge and enrolled in an online doctoral program at St. Catherine University.

She’s so glad she did.

Upon receiving her degree, Gartland has been promoted, earned a pay raise, and now is the director of UW–Madison’s new post-professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree program, whose first cohort of students will enroll in fall 2016. The flexible online format will allow occupational therapy professionals to continue working while pursuing their degree part-time over the course of nine semesters.

As a clinical instructor at UW–Madison for the past 10 years, Gartland has seen a growing need for doctoral-level faculty members and researchers in occupational therapy.

“Getting a doctorate puts occupational therapists in the running for leadership roles,” she says. “I would recommend it for those who desire to keep moving forward in their career, whether that looks like clinical expertise, administrative responsibilities, teaching opportunities, or research participation.”

UW–Madison’s Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree program is completely online except for an initial orientation and final capstone project presentation. It offers coursework in leadership theories and models, administrative tools and techniques, teaching methods, and applied research methods. Students can focus on their own goals while learning to function in a variety of career settings.

Gartland encourages practicing occupational therapists to take a chance with a doctoral program, as she did.


“There is almost never a good time to add things to your plate,” she says. “In my experience, however, it’s worth it so you can benefit from the enhanced opportunities sooner rather than later.”

For more information about the online Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree program email otd.admissions@education.wisc.edu or visit: <http://kinesiology.education.wisc.edu/otd/>



“Getting a doctorate puts occupational therapists in the running for leadership roles.”

– Sharon Gartland



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After successful career at Saint Louis University, Barney helping prisoners reintegrate into society



UW-Madison alumna Karen Barney recently retired from Saint Louis University, but that doesn't mean her efforts to help others are coming to a close.

Barney plans to continue working to implement a model at Saint Louis University that helps prisoners reintegrate into society.

"The evidence shows that with every degree a prisoner earns, there is less recidivism," says Barney, who earned both a bachelor's degree (1965) in occupational therapy and master's (1982) in higher education administration from UW-Madison. "We now need to study whether education improves their quality of life, and we think it does."

Barney, who spent 21 years as a faculty member with Saint Louis University's Department of Occupational Health/Occupational Therapy, considers occupational therapy to be the quality

of life discipline and wants to do more than just help educate the prisoners.

"The tragedy for prisoners is that they return to society unprepared," she says.

In the current Saint Louis University program model, which was presented to the White House Inter Agency Council in June, Barney and her colleagues are using the OT model to conduct baseline assessments, including four areas of literacy: reading; math; health; and occupational, which includes meaningful activities of life.

The program includes individual vision plans, pre-release coaching, small groups, and regular follow-up meetings with support staff who help the former inmates settle into life. The government has asked for a proposal to expand the program to prisons in all 50 states.

Barney reports she is still a Badger at heart.

"I loved the UW-Madison program," she says. "This work is truly a privilege. I'm very blessed to be in this time and this place. I believe I was supposed to be doing this."

2016 Thompson Memorial Lecture

Western Ontario's Rudman to deliver keynote

The Occupational Therapy Program's annual Caroline Goss Thompson Memorial Lecture and Reception will be held from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery Building on Thursday, Sept. 15. Please join us for this special event.

Debbie Laliberte Rudman, an associate professor with the University of Western Ontario's School of Occupational Therapy, will deliver the keynote talk. Her presentation is titled, "Addressing occupation as situated: Potential contributions of transformative occupation-focused scholarship and practice."

Preceptor of the Year

During the Thompson Memorial Lecture and Reception, UW-Madison's OT Program each year recognizes a person, or a group of people, who excel at instructing and supervising UW-Madison OT students during their field experiences.

In 2016, the Preceptor of the Year award is going to the talented and dedicated team of occupational therapists with the Madison Metropolitan School District: Sandra Bongard, Kerry Gloss, Shana Greane, Amy O'Connor, Theresa Schuster, Suzette Raes and Thia Triggs. All are alumnae of UW-Madison's Occupational Therapy Program.

Together, these accomplished occupational therapists have a combined experience of nearly 110 years working as OTs with the Madison Schools.

"Our team in the Madison Schools values the importance of mentoring new therapists," says Gloss. "They are the future of OT."

These healthcare professionals explain that they believe in mentoring OTs through clinical education because they remember learning so much from their clinical mentors and retain strong memories of those experiences. They say that they want student OTs to have access to clinical education like they had, and want to pay it forward.

"I am motivated by students through their inquiry, their energy and their reflections on what they observe," says Gloss. "It inspires me to check the research, to have thoughtful discussions and to improve my practice."



Pictured left-to-right are Madison Schools occupational therapists Theresa Schuster, Kerry Gloss, Thia Triggs, Suzette Raes, Sandra Bongard, Shana Greane and Amy O'Connor.



Outreach and service

The Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) at UW–Madison provided community service to the Madison area through its continued partnerships with the Badger Childhood Cancer Network (BCCN) and Avalon Assisted Living. Each month, SOTA members play games and create art projects with children while parents of BCCN lead a support group. Play and leisure is imperative for all children, especially those whose lives are affected by cancer. At Avalon Assisted Living, students help run a monthly balance exercise class for older adults.

Additionally, SOTA members participated in a variety of other events, including the: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) walk with social work students; National Multiple Sclerosis Society walk; Polar Plunge for Special Olympics; and the English Tea Event at The Madison Senior Center.

In April, students took part in Family Night at the Madison Children's Museum with teen parents and their families. OT students provided information on child development and care.

AOTA Annual Conference

Both students and faculty of UW–Madison's Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) program took a road trip to Chicago for the annual American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) conference in April. This was one of the largest gatherings of OT practitioners and students in the world, with approximately 10,000 in attendance. Students presented posters at the conference on a variety of topics including: stress and adolescent pregnancy; sensory integration on motor outcomes in autism spectrum disorder; and group vs. individual exercise interventions for Parkinson disease.

Students also attended the 2015 Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Association Conference in nearby Fitchburg, Wis.

Student news ticker

Throughout the year, students participated in a range of interprofessional health events on topics including chronic conditions, pain management, mental health, and general patient

Student Spotlight



Sabrina Hilton

UW–Madison's Sabrina Hilton earlier this year was able to meet U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin during fieldwork practicum work in Washington, D.C. The MSOT program requires students to complete two, three-month clinical rotations practicing in the field of OT. But Hilton elected to have a third fieldwork experience before starting her occupational therapy career, and worked for the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) in Bethesda, Maryland, as a member of AOTA's Federal Affairs team. In this position, Hilton advocated for the OT profession and was able to work with those in Congress and other federal agencies to include occupational therapy considerations into current legislation.

care. These events provided an opportunity for MSOT students to interact with students from other health disciplines and collaborate on case studies.

In September, students attended the Caroline Thompson Memorial Lecture with AOTA President Ginny Stoffel. Before the lecture, MSOT students were invited to a private discussion with Stoffel.

In March, occupational therapy and physical therapy students from UW Madison held a rehabilitation job fair where they were able to connect with local healthcare business employers from different settings.

The MSOT class of 2016 graduated on May 14 at Camp Randall Stadium. Following the ceremony, SOTA held a celebration banquet on campus. And the incoming MSOT class of 2018 was welcomed at an orientation on June 3, 2016 at Union South.

2016–17 OT STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Mildred Averill Scholarship

Rachel Massart

Jean Chapman Kiernat Scholarship

Adeola (Toni) Solaru

Elizabeth Roughton Travel Award

Karina Lathrop, Samantha Evander Elmore and Kathleen Kubisiak

Caroline G. Thompson Scholarship Fund

Brittany St. John and Karina Lathrop

Caroline G. Thompson Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowships

Pin-Kuei (Cara) Chen and I-Chen Chen

Lucile Schreiber and Wendel A. Witkay Scholarship Fund

Carl Oliver, Katherine Crider, Courtney Engel, Robyn Geist, April LaGrave and Caitlin Rhoten

Amelia Doyon Scholarship

Sarah Cook and Brittany Ewert

Linda Anderson Memorial

Sophie Goloff



MSOT students present during a research poster session May 10.

Alumni Updates

Janice Erickson Evans — BS 1956

Janice continued her education at UW-Whitewater and she worked in the field of special education for 16 years until retiring in 2000. She says she enjoyed all the art courses that she took as an undergrad in OT but feels that OT and PT should be combined as one profession.

Ethel Erickson Radmer — BS 1957

Ethel's home base is in Cary, North Carolina. She recently had her seventh book published, "Now is Enough/Nu ar det Nog: A Trip to Sweden with Three of My Grandsons." Ethel reports that she travels a lot to conferences, to see friends and family, and to see new places.

Eddie Rabas Raether — BS 1966

After practicing OT and teaching at a community college, Edie became a psychotherapist, a talk show host with affiliates of ABC and an international motivational keynote speaker and corporate trainer, which she continues to do. Only the topic changes! In the last 12 years, Edie has written 12 books (one is a bestseller in China) and 15 anthologies. The books vary from intuition, influence, winning, bullying and more, to her greatest passion — which is a children's empowering character-building program that transforms potential into possibilities. Edie says that "I Believe I Can Fly!" promises to change the way the world thinks, one child at a time. Her next book is, "Trust No One, Love Everyone. (Lessons from my life.)" Edie also is a hypnotherapist and brain trainer, and is in communications with the Carolina Panthers pro football team. She also applies mind/body techniques for the purpose of healing. Edie adds that she would appreciate connecting with some of her former classmates and will be in Madison in September.

Mary Lynn Schneider — BS 1973

Mary recently had a paper published in the journal *Child Development* titled, "Sensory Processing in Rhesus Monkeys: Developmental Continuity, Prenatal Treatment, and Genetic Influences."

Patricia Bergs Bowen — BS 1974

Patricia retired in 2011 after 34 years with the Wausau School District. She worked four years at Wausau Hospital prior to that. She reports that she is enjoying retirement with volunteer work, outdoor opportunities, travel and short-term OT subbing.

Judy Hill — BS 1975

Judy is in her 39th year at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago as an OT intern, staff OT, senior staff OT, OT supervisor, director of OT, administrative director, referral development director, manager of bed assignment and financial clearance. Judy recently transitioned to a project analyzing financial denials as they impact patient access to rehabilitation services. She also is an instructor in the Feinberg School of Medicine Department of PM&R. In her off-work time, Judy reports that she enjoys travel, camping, natural history, reading, her two Siberian huskies and cat.

Ann Marie Lindberg — BS 1975

Ann Marie has been living and working in Greensboro, N.C., since 1993 in the school system and in early intervention, winnowing down to just early intervention for the past four years with a specialty in feeding disorders. In 2001–02 she worked in Ireland and in 2013–14 worked and lived on the Navajo Reservation in northern Arizona. Both of these experiences, she reports, were extremely gratifying.

Mary McCutcheon — BS 1975

Mary recently retired from the Oshkosh (Wis.) School District to build her private practice in Feldenkrais.

Maureen Schroeder Engh — BS 1976

Maureen retired after working for many years as an OT both in the United States and Norway, where she currently lives. Maureen reports that the most fun she had was working in home health in Boise, Idaho. She still has contact with the patient population by volunteering weekly at a local hospital through the Red Cross. She reports that she is one of four ladies in charge of the bookmobile, and it's very rewarding.

Sheila Tayrose — BS 1976

Sheila has been in private practice since 1991. She now has five granddaughters and is a caretaker for her father and uncle. Sheila has started to work part time and also teaches an exercise class to 'typical' seniors. As a mental health measure, Sheila reports that she rides her bicycle (a lot) and has started to visit national parks. She recently got back from Glacier and highly recommends it.

Mary Quandahl Frear — BS 1977

Mary reports that she is retired.

Mary Jo Rajek — BS 1979

Mary Jo helped develop and teach Health South's national education program on adult neuro-vision, which covered adult neurological vision assessment and rehabilitation (2012–16). She has worked collaboratively with a neuro-behavioral optometrists in Virginia to develop OT vision-related services in rehab, as well as conduct OT related educational workshops on vision assessment and treatment. She previously served as the consultative OT for UVA's Brain Injury and Sports Concussion Clinic, performing vision screenings, treatment and facilitating referrals. Mary Jo also is an MS certified specialist and has been the primary consulting OT for UVA's James Q. Miller Comprehensive MS Care Clinic. Mary is an instructor of several national MS Society patient education programs, and has been a frequent speaker at multi-state MS-related educational programs. Mary Jo has recently relocated back to Madison and will be working part-time as a program consultant for Can Do MS. She reports that she is excited about returning to the Madison area and looks forward to re-connecting and networking with rehab professionals and the UW/MATC academic communities.

Lynn Chassee — BS 1988

One year short of 40 years in the field of occupational therapy, first as a COTA, then as an OTR, Lynn retired to spend more time relaxing with family and friends. She reports that she can do whatever she wants, whenever she wants, and is busy doing just that. Since retiring, Lynn has been to Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar and Las Vegas. She plans on continuing her travels and spending time with her grandchildren.

Lisa Konrady Peirson — BS 1988

Since graduation, Lisa has worked as an Industrial OT in the St. Paul, Minn., area. Currently, she works for Minnesota Occupational Health. This is her third company to work for and fourth facility she is creating from scratch. Lisa continues to love her job with the variations of clients and on-site ventures she gets to go on everyday. Lisa has worked primarily in a warehouse-type setting for her client's needs. She also had the privilege to develop an on-site program for Delta Airlines, which went national to other hubs. Lisa reports that she feels very fortunate to have gone through the OT program as she did as an undergraduate — the more in-depth training and education really prepared her for the real world experiences. She says the



professors, specifically Nancy McCracken and Bob Christiansen, helped her to develop her skills as an Industrial OTR, which really started to take off at that time in the Twin Cities.

Christine M. Sykstus — BS 1989

Christine is married and living in Batavia, Ill., with her husband and three daughters ages 22, 21, 18. She currently is a rehab supervisor for a home health company.

Kelly Jo Duprey — BS 1993

Kelly Jo went on to earn a master's of science in counseling at Denver Seminary. She is currently practicing as a licensed professional counselor in southern Wisconsin.

Linda Hofstetter — BS 1993

Linda has been a regional manager for Select Rehabilitation for the past 10 years.

Laura Flood — BS 1994

Laura recently retired from the Oregon (Wis.) School District as an occupational therapist, working most recently with preschool children through sixth graders. She worked the past 18 years in school districts, with a great love of working with students with autism. As part of a team effort, she recently received an award from Dane County Community Partnerships for her team's work on coordinated care for a child with mental health needs. Laura plans to spend time with grandchildren, provide care for her elderly mother, as well as travel when time allows.

Jeffrey Kundert — BS 2001

Jeffrey is working in wellness and fitness. He reports using therapeutic intent in all client-centered activities to restore health, wellness and fitness in disabled, elderly and abled clients. He is relying on the incredible restorative power of the body to heal with the help of nutrition and directed physical activity. He sends his best wishes to all and notes he's worked with a thousand clients one-on-one and spoken to thousands at seminars in hospitals, corporations, etc. He adds that he received a great foundational education at UW-Madison.

Jennifer Schmidt — BS 2001

Jennifer has been serving as the clinical manager of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago's Center for Pain Management since February 2015. Jennifer has spent most of her career at RIC, previously in the role of allied health manager of the inpatient pediatric unit.

Sarah Clemons Wagner — BS 2001

Sarah reports that she is working in the field that she loves. She has been working as an OT at St. Mary's Hospital in inpatient psychiatry for the past four years, after many years in community mental health positions. Sarah is presenting at this year's WOTA conference in October 2016 on, "Clinical Observations of and Treatment Recommendations for Individuals with Personality Disorders." She adds that she is honored to be a member of this profession and is so grateful to her friends, classmates and professors at UW-Madison for the exceptional learning environment.

Jillian Taxman — BS 2005

Jill has been working at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center since her graduation. Over the past several years, she has transitioned from working full-time in inpatient physical rehab to a wellness program focusing on preventive care, chronic disease management and weight loss. This program was originally started by Nancy Wilke, another UW-Madison OT graduate (1977) as an

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Class of 1966 50-year reunion

UW-Madison Occupational Therapy alumnae Claire (Nakanishi) Seki and Toni (Schuster) Walski are organizing a 50-Year Reunion for Friday, Sept. 16 and Saturday, Sept. 17. There's also an option for attending the annual Caroline Thompson Memorial Lecture on Thursday, Sept. 15.

To date, seven members of the class have committed to return to Madison for the event.

To learn more — or relay contact information for other graduates — call Toni at 608-838-3621 or e-mail at walskifamily@mailbag.com.

extension of cardiac rehabilitation programming. This wellness program also includes Tai Chi, biofeedback and lifestyle coaching focusing on improved health. Jill says the clinic provides individual counseling and supportive group opportunities for veterans at the hospital and in the community. Our large group, WAMM (Walk a Mile or More) is a program named by the veterans themselves. Over 40 veterans get together to walk and talk three times per week for one hour. The group has averaged a 9 percent weight loss, Jill reports. She says she recently returned from a trip to Camp American Legion where 30 veterans fled the big city to Lake Tomahawk, Wis., for a week of boating, fishing, walking, camp fires and camaraderie. As OTs, Jill reports, "we are fortunate as we often have the opportunity to work in such rewarding areas of practice. I am happy to have found a niche in a growing area of the OT world, health, wellness and preventive care."

Laura Lauck — MS 2014

Laura has been working at a pediatric clinic in New York City for the past year, and loves it. She has been lucky enough to take multiple continuing education courses already, but the coursework she's most excited about is all the courses within the Handwriting Without Tears model. Laura is currently en route to becoming a certified handwriting specialist through Handwriting Without Tears. She has been able to train the additional staff on this multi-sensory model of handwriting, and the entire clinic has adopted it.

Ismail Umer — MS 2015

Ismail is continuing in the Madison area, working at a place called CI Pediatric Therapy Centers. It's great to still be in the area and maintain connections to the campus and staff, he reports.

Sabrina Hilton — MS 2016

Sabrina was chosen to be a 2017 Emerging Leader for the American Occupational Therapy Association. The program provides leadership training and mentorship as well as service learning opportunities that address the strategic priorities of the organization.



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Barbara L. Kornblau | BS, 1977
Occupational Therapy