Reaching out globally, advocating for OT, interprofessional collaboration, and expanding leadership opportunities...our OT students and faculty have been active this year in many arenas. Students and faculty in both the MOT and OTD programs traveled to Ecuador and Kenya, presented at state and national conferences, and provided innovative evidence based programs in the community. We admitted our largest cohort of OTD and Bridge students in 2013, and graduated our first OTD student from Hong Kong in December.

Forty new MOT students representing ten different states and diverse undergraduate majors entered the program in fall 2013. Thirty-nine MOT students will head out to fieldwork in January 2014. This energetic group of students have been active over the past year providing community education programs on falls prevention and backpack awareness, attending AOTA’s Capitol Hill Day, and conducting needs assessments and implementing programs in wide variety of community agencies. The majority of the articles for this newsletter were written by this group of students as part of their Leadership and Management course.

Technology has also been a major focus in our programs over the past year. In both our MOT and OTD courses we continue to utilize new technologies to enhance the learning experience of our students. Two faculty are currently participating in Chatham University’s Technology Fellowship Program and utilizing a variety of new technology tools. Our MOT students had the opportunity to participate in the STAR simulation program and we are working on developing a telehealth program in collaboration with a clinic in Ecuador. Read on to learn more about program innovations and student experiences over the past year!

From the Director
Joyce Salls, OTD, OTR/L, OT program director

In their last academic term, Chatham MOT students participate in a community fieldwork experience in settings that currently do not have occupational therapists on staff. MOT students visit their site and conduct a needs assessment. Following the needs assessment a program plan is created and implemented at each site. This year’s fieldwork sites represent a diverse span of settings from an emergency youth center to an international fieldwork site. A brief description of each fieldwork site and the programs developed by the MOT students follows.

Orion
Orion is a 25 bed personal care home for residents with dementia. MOT students implemented programs which addressed fall prevention, orientation, sensory needs, and meal time improvement. Various activities carried out at Orion included baking, painting pumpkins, fall prevention exercise program, and bringing in a therapy dog.

LIFE program
The LIFE program is a vocational and life-skills program for transition aged youth 18-21 with disabilities.

There are two locations; Wexford and Dormont. At the Wexford location, programming provided by the MOT students focused on teaching job related skills and giving the youth the means to practice these skills independently and with peers. A bin system was organized with various activities including filling out a job application, interview skills, sorting and filing, and alphabetizing. At the Dormont location the focus of programming was on nutrition and exercise and how it affects work performance and stamina. Additionally, a trip to Market Square was planned to work on community integration/mobility for independence.

Bringing OT to the Community
Jordan Baney, OTS; Kate DiMaio, OTS; Stacy Reindel, OTS; Ashley Hoffman, OTS

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Faculty Scholarly Work 2013

Peer-Reviewed Publications


Book Chapters


Peer-Reviewed Presentations


Mattila, A. Integrating Resiliency and Mental Skills Foundations Into Practice. POTA Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, November 9, 2013.


Welcome to our newest faculty member, Amy Mattila

We are pleased to welcome our newest faculty member, Amy Mattila to the Chatham University MOT program. Amy joined the MOT faculty in January 2013. She received her MS in Occupational Therapy from Duquesne University in 2005 and her MBA in Healthcare Administration from the University of Phoenix in 2009. Amy comes to Chatham with over six years of experience as an occupational therapist in the United States Army and has worked with individuals with Combat Operational Stress/Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Amy has a strong interest in mental health and community based practice and has been instrumental in expanding our community based practice sites for Level I fieldwork. Amy is currently teaching our courses in Mental Health and Occupational Performance, Models of Practice, and Environmental Interventions, as well as assisting in a variety of lab courses. When not at Chatham, Amy enjoys spending time with her family, including her adorable two-year-old twin girls!
Capitol Hill Day 2013
Paige Papania, OTS; Morgan Peli, OTS; Jocelyn Seese, OTS; Lacie Wingrove, OTS

We came, we conquered, we shut down the city. Well, that last part is not entirely true. On September 30th, the day before the government shut down, a group of Chatham Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) students traveled to Washington, D.C. for Capitol Hill Day. This event, organized through the American Occupational Therapy Association, gives occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and occupational therapy students from around the country a chance to come to Washington D.C. to advocate for the profession and to communicate to state legislators that occupational therapy is part of the health care solution (aota.org, 2013).

Thirty-three Chatham MOT students and Dr. Joyce Salls attended Capitol Hill Day this year and contributed to the largest turnout of registrants in AOTA history. The day began with a group meeting; all registrants were briefed on key talking points by members of AOTA’s Political Action Committee (AOTPAC), and were given the resources necessary to make the most out of state legislator meetings.

This year’s advocacy day focused on four issues important to occupational therapy: the Medicare Outpatient Therapy Cap, Federal Education Funding Cuts, Occupational Therapy in Mental Health, and the Rehabilitation Improvement Act (to learn more about the different policies visit www.aota.org/Conference-Events/Hill-Day). As students, our goal was to meet with state legislators and/or their staff members, inform them about occupational therapy, why it is important, and why the profession needs political support on those four key issues.

Students who met with congressional staff found the members to be receptive and appreciative of the information presented. Staff members took notes, asked questions, and were genuinely interested in meeting with students and hearing their message.

Overall, the occupational therapy students from Chatham University found the Capitol Hill Day experience to be very successful! We highly recommend that current and future occupational therapy students and practitioners experience Capitol Hill Day. The more voices Washington D.C. hears, the better!

Chatham University’s Bachelor to OTD Bridge Program

Chatham University’s Bridge (Bachelor to OTD) program is an online education program designed for working occupational therapists who are currently practicing with a bachelor’s degree and are interested in earning a post-professional clinical doctorate. Chatham offers two start times each academic year for the Bridge to OTD option: January and August.

The Bridge program consists of three important courses: Academic Writing, Models of Practice in Occupational Therapy, and Introduction to Evidence Based Practice. Each student who successfully completes these three academic courses, designed to bridge the education gap that exists since the entry level degree changed to a master’s level in 2007, then enters the doctoral track the following term with a cohort group which includes master level educated practicing occupational therapists. Together the bridge students and the master level prepared students form a cohort who will graduate together in 16 months earning the post professional OTD.

To date, 12 students have successfully completed the Bridge program and graduated alongside their master level prepared peers. Currently, there are 22 students (12 who began in January and ten who started in September) in the Bridge to OTD program and who are on track to graduate and earn their clinical doctorate within the next 16 months.

Chatham is proud to offer this important program which allows practicing, motivated, engaged occupational therapists who completed their bachelor's entry level degree prior to 2007, who might otherwise not have an option to pursue a clinical doctorate in their chosen profession. For more information please visit www.chatham.edu/otd and follow the Bachelor to OTD option link.
Matt Long, MOT ’11
Bethany Schnipke, OTS; Kayla Vitale, OTS; Andrea Ochadlick, OTS; Kristin Baum, OTS

Matt Long is a 2011 graduate of Chatham University’s Master of Occupational Therapy program. He was kind enough to take time out of his busy schedule to answer a few questions regarding his time spent at Chatham and what his life is like post-graduation. Some of Matt’s greatest accomplishments include traveling around the world, being a student ambassador for the USA in Costa Rica as an exchange student, experience working at the state level to providing funding for home modifications and assistive technology to individuals with disabilities, presenting at a state POTA conference (2013), and finding a lifelong career in OT. Also, in June 2013 Matt married his wife who is also an OT and graduated from the University of Pittsburgh.

Matt is currently working at the Life program at Lutherans SeniorLife. In this position he is responsible for performing home assessments in which he evaluates his clients’ homes for safety, provides adaptive equipment when needed, and makes sure his clients are able to participate in their ADLs in the home as independently as possible.

Prior to working at Lutherans SeniorLife, Matt worked at Valley Care Associations. The purpose of these services is to grant the client’s wish to stay in his or her home. While there, Matt worked under a state grant to provide home modifications and assistive technology to clients. Out of the five grantees working, he was the only OT grantee and his official title was “Home Modification Construction Officer.” The other individuals working with him were contractors and building code officers. He worked in two different counties with people of all ages and diagnoses. During his time there, Matt made the clients’ homes accessible by building adaptations such as ramps and accessible bathrooms.

Prior to graduate school, Matt was a construction worker. His time as a construction worker allowed him to become skilled with his hands, which benefitted him when he chose his career in OT. Matt shadowed a hand therapist and completed 90 volunteer hours in work hardening instead of the required 20 because he so greatly enjoyed his time shadowing. The thing Matt loves the most about OT is the wide range of possibilities it has to offer. Through all of his experiences, Matt found he was able to use all that he has learned and then apply it to his current job in home modifications.

Matt found his experience in the Chatham MOT program prepared him well for his career, and touched upon every important topic. Matt stated, “Chatham is fast paced in nature and prepares students for the demands and challenges of the work environment. It has taught me to be flexible and think outside the box. It also teaches us that if you are really interested in something then go for it. OT allows you to wear lots of different hats, which is why I love it. It’s not “cookie cutter” like other disciplines. It’s great to have the satisfaction of helping people get back to what they need, want, and have to do. Our teachers at Chatham are also outstanding, and well known. They are great resources, more than willing to lend a helping hand, and will help you achieve anything. I actually still keep in contact with most of them, to be honest, and if it wasn’t for our professor, Cathy Dolhi, I would never have gotten my job in home modifications.”

Matt’s future plans include owning his own home modification consultation business and getting involved in occupational therapy academia. Life outside of OT, Matt would like to buy a house and have a few dogs. Overall, Matt fell in love with OT because of its holistic view. His charismatic outlook and passion for OT confirms why many of us joined this profession and the Chatham MOT community.
OT: Preventing Falls and Doctor Calls!
Lauren Billotte, OTS; Brittany Farelli, OTS; Justine Monticue, OTS; Colleen Kiss, OTS

On September 11, 2013, second year students from the Chatham MOT program participated in Falls Prevention Day and Backpack Awareness Day to provide education to various populations throughout the community. Falls Prevention Day included education of the elderly population on ways to be safe in their home environments and to prevent falls at Masonic Village and Locust Grove Senior Care Center. Backpack Awareness Day focused on instructing students on how to safely wear their backpacks at the Ellis School for Girls and St. Bonaventure Catholic Grade School. The student presenters educated the two populations while increasing awareness of potential OT services in their settings.

Falls Prevention
The population at Masonic Village included well-elderly living in an assisted living facility in Sewickley, PA. Ten students prepared an educational and interactive presentation, “Staying Active & Falls Free with Occupational Therapy,” courtesy of the American Occupational Therapy Association website. Goals of the presentation included recognizing that most falls among older adults result from interacting risk factors, describing how OT practitioners can help prevent falls, and identifying strategies and resources that can reduce the risk for falls. In addition, students showed the group of well-elderly exercises to build strength and balance and prepared a version of “Falls Prevention Jeopardy.” The attendees enjoyed the presentation and participating in the game.

The second Falls Prevention Group consisted of ten students who visited Grove Senior Living Center in West Mifflin, PA. Approximately thirty residents from the assisted living and nursing home facilities attended the presentation. After providing the residents with an overview of OT, students transitioned to the first interactive game. A series of virtual pictures with possible hazards such as magazines, water, pets, and cluttered furniture were projected onto the front wall. Residents were given the opportunity to identify the hazards in each picture and to discuss why that particular hazard could be dangerous and cause a fall. Students then role played three potentially dangerous scenarios and discussed how each could have been made safer. Students then played a true/false game where residents were able to shout out their answers. One of the MOT students talked about the myths and truths related to exercising into older age. The session concluded with seated chair/wheelchair exercises – a great way to end the presentation!

Backpack Awareness Day
At St. Bonaventure Catholic Grade School, the MOT students engaged twenty 3rd graders in Backpack Awareness Day. The presentation offered tips on how to carry backpacks properly to prevent back pain and/or potential chronic back issues. The children learned about OT and how it can be beneficial to all populations in multiple settings, including schools! The MOT students presented a humorous skit to 30 fourth grade students to promote Backpack Awareness Day. Nine MOT students performed a skit demonstrating different backpack carrying techniques while the children corrected the improper methods. The students then split up into three stations; a weighing station, an obstacle course, and a “fix your backpack” station. The information gained from the weighting station was used to inform the students, along with their parents, of the weight their backpack should not exceed. The student’s favorite station was the obstacle course where they split into two teams and crab-walked to various items scattered on the floor and then raced back to pack their backpack using the techniques they learned. Lastly, the students had the opportunity to rearrange their backpacks with help from the MOT students.

In addition to St. Bonaventure Catholic Grade School, Chatham MOT students visited The Ellis School to promote Backpack Awareness Day. Nine MOT students presented a humorous skit to 30 fourth grade students to demonstrate proper backpack-wearing techniques. The class was then split into three stations: one to create and color a sticker to put on their backpacks, one to weigh their backpacks, and one to guess weights of various backpacks. At the weighing station, the girls weighed themselves and their backpacks to reach the “10% rule” of their backpack weighing 10% or under their body weight. At the guessing station, the girls held up three different backpacks and made guesses regarding the weight of each backpack. At the end of the stations, the girls participated in a “Packing Your Backpack” Relay. Students raced to one side of the gym and each member of the team had to place one item into a backpack correctly to safely pack the bag. Winners of the relay and of the guessing station received small prizes. The girls and MOT students had a great experience and the girls were able to effectively communicate with each other and the MOT students regarding tips to safely wear their backpacks.

During the final academic term of the MOT program, students had the opportunity to practice what they learned to help make a difference in the community. Whether they focused on Backpack Day or Falls Prevention Day, both students and community participants valued the experience and were able to positively impact the health and wellness of various populations in the community.
On November 14, 2013 the Chatham Master of Occupational Therapy program presented its annual Open House event at Chatham Eastside to over 80 attendees. This year’s theme was “Health, Wellness & the Pursuit of Occupation.” The event showcased how occupational therapists promote healthy strategies to facilitate occupational performance across the lifespan. The nine interactive stations included:

**Technology for Healthy Living**
The goal of the Technology for Healthy Living station was to demonstrate a wide variety of assistive technology and resources that individuals could use to live a healthy life. Handouts of iPad, iPhone and Android apps related to healthy living were provided for visitors interested in mobile and tablet technology. Various apps from the handouts were demonstrated on an iPhone and iPad. Individuals that wanted to actively participate at the station could play Wii games that focused on fitness, such as WiiFit, WiiActive, Zumba, Just Dance and Wii Sports. Assistive gloves can strengthen weak grasp and were demonstrated on the Wii remote, along with lifting weights. A simulated bedroom was set up for participants interested in learning about assistive technology that could be implemented in a home environment. Visitors could experience or watch a demonstration of an automatic medication dispenser and a vibrating smoke detector. Another item that was demonstrated was a CCTV which is useful for individuals with low vision. Participants who had expressed interest in accessing assistive technology were provided with brochures and other community resources.

**How do you “Occu-Pie” Your Time?**
This station engaged attendees in an activity aimed at helping them identify occupational imbalances within their daily lives. Participants were given a handout that described the areas of occupation and a blank “pie of life” to fill in personal daily activities. Attendees divided their “pie” into the various areas of occupation that applied to their own daily lives. The OT students discussed ways to incorporate occupational balance into daily life and how to choose positive coping strategies for the stress that arises from occupational imbalance.

**Planting Seeds for Occupational Needs**
Participation in gardening as an occupation and resources for healthy eating were highlighted at this station. Healthy eating and gardening were explored throughout the life span by incorporating age appropriate activities and information for participants. The children’s section included information on sensory gardens, fun and healthy snack ideas, and included a planting activity and a sensory pumpkin. The adult and elderly sections focused on cost effective ways to eat healthy, when to plant a garden, and ways to adapt gardening so people of all abilities are able to participate. Handouts were given to participants which included a link to our Pinterest site.

**Caring for Caregivers**
Visitors learned techniques to identify areas of caregiver strain, coping strategies, stress reducing techniques, and community resources for caregivers. Phillips App Smartphone technology was incorporated to assist with care planning for aging parents. Pandora Radio relaxation stations were playing, including “Liquid Mind” and “Soothing Sounds” to give the participants examples of music that could be used to reduce stress. The Modified Caregiver Strain Index was available for the participants to take to determine if a more extensive assessment was needed to measure caregiver strain. Participants had the opportunity to make homemade rice heating pads with lavender oil to reduce body tension. A worksheet was provided with community resources, online websites, tips, and a take home survey on common stressors.

**Wellness in the Workplace**
The simulated work environment educated visitors on economical solutions to promote wellness and productivity in the workplace by utilizing principles of ergonomics, proper body mechanics, and stress management.
techniques. Attendees could discuss their personal workstation with the OT students and then sit at a desk simulation to assess and remediate concerns. Proper lifting and carrying techniques to reduce back strain were demonstrated and various workstation heights were explained. Attendees learned how to make inexpensive stress balls with balloons and flour or rice to reduce anxiety throughout the day. Visitors were also provided a handout with information on ergonomics, body mechanics, stress management and wellness tips.

Development: Taking Play Back to the Basics
The Development station provided information related to typical developmental milestones that occur from birth to 18 years of age. The station had four age group tables in which participants had the opportunity to play with toys, ask questions, and test their knowledge on child development. The activities allowed participants to learn how to utilize a variety of common objects and games to encourage the progression of developmental skills. Participants also learned how to identify the developmental skills that are addressed in a variety of common toys available for children. A developmental chart, activity lists by age group, and references were provided to participants.

Mindful Movement: Yoga throughout the Lifespan
Evidence has shown that practicing yoga has beneficial effects, and can be incorporated into OT practice. Upon entering the station, participants visited a table with books, articles, and handouts related to different types of yoga and its benefit on the human body. After talking with the OT students about how yoga is being utilized in OT practice, participants were encouraged to complete yoga poses with the students and to think of ways for the poses to be done in seated positions for people with varying levels of abilities. Lastly, the participants explored a yoga relaxation table, which included rice bags, calming scents, and showed how yoga can be used for deep relaxation. Many participants had practiced yoga in the past and were very interested to learn about its healthful effects and connection to occupational therapy.

Healthy People 2020: Sleep On It
Visitors at this station gained an understanding of how sleep health is incorporated in Healthy People 2020, a government organization that provides national objectives for improving the health of all Americans. Another goal for this station was to demonstrate how occupational therapy plays a role in sleep health. OT students created a sleep screen questionnaire that visitors could complete to help identify current sleep habits and routines. After identifying potential sleep issues, participants were shown an ideal bedroom setup to promote better sleep habits. An ideal setup included soft lighting, no TV or computer and lavender for relaxation. Each visitor was given a tip sheet outlining the importance of sleep on health and well-being. The handout also listed free tablet and phone sleep aid apps such as “Sleep Well”, “Sleep Sounds” and “Lullabyes.”

Simple Solutions for Aging in Place
The ultimate goal of the Simple Solutions to Aging in Place station was to introduce adaptive solutions for the aging population to use at home to facilitate aging in place. Participants learned how to minimize safety hazards and concerns within the home, became familiar with adaptive equipment and practiced using it, and learned how to make simple “do it yourself” adaptive equipment such as built up handles. Different adaptive equipment items were set up in the department’s OT apartment bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen. Participants had the opportunity to learn about and utilize the equipment in each room. Some adaptive equipment at the station included built-up utensils, one handed cutting board, finger peeler, rocker knife, sock aid, dressing stick, button hook, reacher, removable head shower, raised toilet seat, tub bench, long handled comb and sponge, and a bathing mitt.
On November 7, 2013 we had the opportunity to attend the 2nd Annual Leadership Development Workshop hosted by the Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association (POTA) as part of the annual conference. Fifteen students from all over the state of Pennsylvania attended this workshop. Several Chatham students, Hillary Balsega, Brittany Becka, Duranna Kurtz and Lillian Gritter, each with a unique history of leadership, attended the workshop with the intention of discovering new avenues for leadership in the field of Occupational Therapy (OT) as soon-to-be entry-level practitioners. The workshop was led by a dynamic and engaging group of POTA leaders including Stephen Kern, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Malachy Clancy, MOT, OTR/L, Kerri Recker, MOT, OTR/L, Susan Santalucia, MS, OTR/L, and Ann Stuart, OTD, OTR/L. The workshop leaders are part of the POTA Leadership Development Committee. Together, the team demonstrated the need for a new generation of OT leaders by addressing the existing age gap in leadership that currently exists. Dr. Kern explained that in order to become successful leaders, we must acknowledge our own leadership strengths, become effective decision makers and take advantage of leadership opportunities as they arise.

Prior to attending the conference, each workshop participant was asked to complete the StrengthFinders 2.0 assessment. This assessment provides the respondent with his or her top five strengths related to leadership. These leadership qualities, often reflected in personality traits, help us to understand what motivates our behaviors as well as ways to capitalize on each strength. In the workshop the attendees learned the importance of “leaning in” to take opportunities. Dr. Kern reinforced that we should not let opportunities pass us by because we “no longer have the luxury of time due to exponential advances in technology.” There is always something to learn, and unless we challenge ourselves to do new things, we may never achieve greatness in our professional lives. Part of participating in this workshop involved the attendees connecting with a mentor from the POTA Board of Directors and contributing to a year-long project, each related to a different practice area. These mentorship projects allow the students to build relationships on a personal level with current POTA leaders. Taking advantage of the mentor’s previously established network of connections, these students and emerging entry-level practitioners can begin to build their own network of support as they venture into their professional careers.

Hillary and Brittany will be teaming up with Dr. Cathy Dolhi, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA to promote the Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee (POTPAC). This project will work to increase awareness of the need to support the candidacy of select individuals seeking legislative office through donations to support occupational therapy practice. Hillary will also be working with district II executive officers, Amy Mattila, MOT, OTR/L and Lynn Huber, OTD, OTR/L with planning and attending district II continuing education events as well as involvement with other processes within the state and district level.

Dr. Mary Muhlenhaupt, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA, will be mentoring Duranna along with Mariah Chew, an occupational therapy student from the University of Pittsburgh. They will be working in a year long project to increase social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and more. Engaging in social media is critical for POTA to maintain connections in our technology driven world. Lillian, along with Dan Fichter from University of the Sciences, will be working with Sharon Glover on a two-fold project related to the Commission of Practice. The first part of this project involves the development and implementation of a mentorship program to connect new graduates with seasoned practitioners. The second part of the project involves using POTA to highlight the work of OTs in Pennsylvania, with the goal of enhancing existing POTA membership as well as encouraging new members to join.

We are very eager to begin our student leadership projects with POTA, and will continue to use the information learned from the workshop to develop our leadership skills for the future. The workshop and associated year long projects will provide us with a great opportunity to “lean in” to larger commitments and to become more involved in leadership roles as our careers as occupational therapists continue to develop. In order to continue involvement in leadership, a new group of students will be given the opportunity to attend the Student Leadership Workshop at the annual POTA conference next year.
OT in the Community, Continued from page 1

St. Bonaventure Preschool- Glenshaw

Saint Bonaventure is a catholic preschool for typical children. MOT students worked with a pre-kindergarten class. A need was found for fine motor activities focusing on hand strengthening and scissor skills. Other activities implemented by MOT students included direction following, self-regulation, body awareness, dressing skills with winter coats, and zipper skills with book bags.

Hill House

The Hill House Senior Center serves community members over the age of 60 and provides services including a meal delivery program, and daily activities (such as meals, bingo, exercise classes, and educational classes). A needs assessment revealed that the seniors were lacking in technology skills which have become a greater part of their lives. Chatham MOT students implemented a technology program to provide training for basic computer skills, setting up e-mail accounts, printing, and various other skills to enhance the consumers’ ability to communicate with others, enjoy leisure activities, and manage daily activities such as finances and meal preparation.

W. Allegheny High School

West Allegheny High School's learning support class serves students with a variety of intellectual disabilities. Interviews and surveys completed by staff and students revealed a need for life skills training that will benefit students after graduation. Chatham MOT students implemented programming for organizational skills, interview and job skills, and everyday life skills. Students created senior checklists, resumes, and financial plans. A mentor program was also created allowing the students to help with a high school orientation for 8th graders in learning support which provides the opportunity for them to act as mentors and engage in social participation.

FamilyLinks Plum Shelter

FamilyLinks Plum Shelter is an emergency youth shelter serving 13-18 year old males in the greater Pittsburgh area. The average stay at the shelter is 30 days, making this a rather transient population. The program plan for FamilyLinks included multiple standalone sessions regarding college planning, finances, and job searching. Chatham MOT students also piloted a special session in which the boys were given the opportunity to share something of significance in their lives such as a meaningful song, a piece of artwork, a picture, or a personal talent. The overall goal was to leave FamilyLinks staff with a portfolio of sessions which can be tailored to the various needs of homeless youth in the city.

Veterans Place- Transitional Housing Veterans Place-Day Program

Veterans Place is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of this region’s homeless veterans. They work in partnership with the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System and other organizations to facilitate Veterans’ transition from Homeless to Home, becoming engaged, valuable citizens who contribute to their communities. MOT students at the day program implemented programming for resume writing, housing options, and leisure activities such as a combined pet care and therapy session with homeless dogs. Patriotic decorations and memorabilia were added around the facility to make the environment more visually appealing.

The transitional housing branch of Veteran’s Place offers temporary housing veterans can utilize while they are looking for more permanent arrangements. MOT students conducted group sessions to increase social participation and work on practical life skills such as cooking, resume writing, and exploration of volunteer opportunities. The program included asking individuals to mentor their peers in areas which they have prior experience or knowledge, with hopes of ultimately fostering community and social participation for residents of Veteran’s Place.

CRECER

CRECER is a free occupational therapy clinic located in Ibarra, Ecuador. The clinic is run by an American OT and Ecuadorian volunteers who manage administrative, scheduling, and other tasks. The clinic is open to adults and pediatric clients with various diagnoses such as cerebral palsy, autism, TBI, down syndrome, etc. Projects have been completed remotely and include a newsletter for stakeholders and interested parties, documentation forms to be used at the clinic, and a diagnosis resource binder with Spanish resources to be used by parents visiting the clinic. OT students have also collaboratively worked with OT students from other universities to explore funding for telehealth.

The Howard Levin Clubhouse

The clubhouse model is a worldwide model which provides a community-based center for adults with mental illness. At the Howard Levin Clubhouse, members engage in tasks which help to build their strengths, abilities, self-confidence, social skills, and vocational skills. Members play a crucial role in keeping the clubhouse running and are responsible for completing all tasks within the work-ordered day. The program plan implemented by the MOT students focused on achieving occupational balance and increasing recognition to motivate clubhouse members to participate. In addition, the students implemented a vocational skills program including interview skills, job search skills and professional behavior. The students also organized a job fair to provide clubhouse members with further information about employment opportunities and expectations.
Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC)

The overall focus of the MOT students was to provide Temple Emanuel ECDC with programs that can enhance their ability to incorporate developmentally appropriate practice in their center and curriculum. This was done by providing the teachers and students with four different program opportunities. The first program promoted the use of adult directed play during gross motor activities to enhance two-year-olds’ proprioception and gross motor skills. The second program was focused on bullying prevention and friendship promotion in the four to five year old classroom. The final two programs included a comprehensive developmental checklist for the two-year-old and transition classrooms. These developmental checklists will serve as guidelines for future curriculum as well as enable the teachers and staff to quickly screen a child’s development.

Easter Seals Adult Day Services

The Easter Seals day service program serves adults over the age of 65 and adults with disabilities over the age of 55. A typical day includes breakfast and lunch, exercises, a daily lesson taught by the consumers, self-selected activities, and meaningful activities implemented by staff members. Some activities provided include baking and craft projects, jigsaw puzzles, and crossword puzzles. The MOT students implemented programs targeted at both staff members and consumers. For staff members, the MOT students created a presentation on recognizing elder abuse and addressing the types and signs of abuse. A fall prevention program was also implemented which was targeted to both staff and consumers. In addition, students helped consumers to create a memory box. For their final project, they helped consumers plan a thanksgiving dinner to be held at the facility. This included creating a budget, planning the menu, and cooking the meal.

Chartiers Center - Dormont

Chartiers is committed to providing compassionate support to community members with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Chartiers provides many services including: employment training, making crafts to sell at craft shows, cooking activities, exercise classes, and games. Based upon the needs assessment, students discovered that all clients have a common goal of community integration and socialization. The MOT students implemented a community outing program that addressed this goal by taking clients out to dine at local restaurants. The program develops many skills to prepare the clients to successfully engage within the community including: social etiquette, street safety, money management, appropriate hygiene, and community integration.

Holy Family Manor

Holy Family Manor is a faith based and community oriented personal care home located in Ross Township, PA run by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. MOT students implemented a program to increase the awareness, knowledge, and understanding of Alzheimer’s and Dementia to the staff, residents, Sisters, and family members. An Interest Checklist was completed for each resident on the Memory Impairment Unit. This information can be used as a reference for staff to engage the residents in conversation or as a calming strategy by discussing important life events. The MOT students also worked on a scrapbooking activity for the residents so they may have another item to add to their sensory room. Information sessions geared toward all members of the manor including family were also provided by the MOT students. These sessions included a guest speaker from the Greater Pennsylvania Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association who gave a presentation about Alzheimer’s and Dementia as well as a session devoted to sundowning.

Community fieldwork sites provide students the opportunity to work with a wide variety of populations. By working in sites without an occupational therapist on staff, MOT students are able to advocate for OT by applying their knowledge and skills to each setting and creating meaningful, client-centered program plans which will likely be carried out by the organizations for years to come.
In August, the director of Chatham University’s occupational therapy programs, Dr. Joyce Salls, and a group of eager MOT students embarked on a 10-day journey to Ibarra, Ecuador. This was Dr. Salls’ second trip with students to Ibarra to work with Elaine Keane, an occupational therapist and owner of CRECER, a nonprofit organization providing free occupational therapy services. During the experience, Ms. Keane also gave Dr. Salls and students the opportunity to volunteer at several locations where she has established relationships during her time in Ecuador.

Ms. Keane opened the CRECER free clinic in 2013, which is a center of rehabilitation with a mission of promoting health care services to an underserved region of Ecuador through education, treatment, and research. The name ‘CRECER’ (meaning “to grow” in Spanish) is an acronym for Centro de Rehabilitacion, Educacion, Capacitacion, Estudios y Recursos (English translation: Center for Rehabilitation, Education, Training, Studies and Resources). CRECER offers free occupational therapy services to anyone who needs it. Currently, clients range from children with a variety of diagnoses, to adults with traumatic brain injury. From June 1 to August 15, 2013, Ms. Keane provided 234 treatment sessions at CRECER, as well as an additional 154 treatments for other organizations within the community. In this group, parents within the community shared their experiences of being a caregiver of a child with special needs, and how they have responded to people who don’t understand the needs of these caregivers. One of the students, Lillian Gritter, had the following to say about her experience: “When working in the United States, it’s easy to criticize social supports for being ‘not good enough’. These women reminded us to be conscientiously grateful for all of the resources that we have at our fingertips and that there is a great need for establishing avenues of support for families that have children who are otherwise left to fend for themselves.”

This international fieldwork experience in Ecuador gives students the ability to immerse themselves into another culture while practicing their occupational therapy skills. As expressed by Dr. Salls, a benefit of the Ecuador experience is that students learn within intercultural contexts different from their own country. She says, “students are given the opportunity to challenge themselves, take risks, and use critical thinking skills and creativity to problem solve in a variety of settings. I think they come back more confident about their skill set and their readiness for Level II fieldwork.”

The students who participated in the trip to Ecuador report that it had a positive effect on both their personal and professional development. One student, Jessica Jaggers, had the following to say about her experience: “It’s crazy how you can care about people so quickly and want only good things for them. Their stories touch you and when you leave, you take them with you. Having CRECER be a staple in the community is something every service team works towards, for when the team leaves, CRECER will remain and continue the work.”

The Chatham MOT program plans to continue offering the Global Health Perspectives course in Ecuador to future students. International fieldwork experiences align well with Chatham University’s mission to “…prepare its students on campus and around the world, to excel in their professions and to be engaged, environmentally responsible, globally conscious, life-long learners.” It also supports AOTA’s centennial vision of occupational therapy as, “…a profession with a globally connected and diverse workforce meeting society’s occupational needs.”
USA and Kenya OT Connections: Global Health Perspectives Course
Mayowa Enoma, OTS; Jessica Jaggers, OTS; Erica Menhart, OTS; Katie Sisley, OTS

From late June to mid July 2013, a group of five students from Chatham University’s Master of Occupational Therapy Class of 2013, two doctoral students, and Dr. Ingrid Provident, assistant professor in Chatham’s doctoral program, visited Kenya as part of an elective Global Health Perspectives course. This trip was aligned with AOTA’s centennial vision of a globally connected workforce, Chatham’s vision of “Big Thinking for a Big World,” and the personal development and lifelong learning interests of the individuals who traveled together. The occupational therapy (OT) students worked at a children’s home, Hekima Place, where they assisted the staff by providing community services on the “Shamba,” or farm, provided homework help and developed play activities with the girls, and contributed hours and talents in the kitchen to support the cooks. The students performed a needs assessment for Hekima place, which identified both psychosocial and educational support needs for the girls who reside there. While at Hekima place, the students had the opportunity to embrace the celebrations of the African community as well, including birthday celebrations with much singing and dancing and attendance at weekly church services.

In addition to the experiences at Hekima Place, the occupational therapy students also had the opportunity to work alongside Kenyan OT, PT and speech therapy professionals in the slums of Nairobi, where families living in poverty walked their family members to a small building to receive therapy services. Students provided consultant services in two local schools, Good Hope School and Tiana Integrative Center. These schools currently do not provide occupational therapy services but provide services to children with and without disabilities.

In Kenya, occupational therapy services are primarily delivered from a medical model approach and therapists are typically not found in the other areas of practice. Entry level OT education in Kenya consists of a 3-year diploma program that leads to certification. Those who complete the diploma program must often volunteer before finding a paid position. There is currently only one university that offers a program in occupational therapy in Kenya. There is however a recently developed online bachelors program. The first graduates of this online program will complete their degree in 2014.

This is the second time that Dr. Provident has led a team to Africa and she hopes to continue the trip in the upcoming years. We talked to Dr. Provident regarding the challenges and rewards from the global health perspectives trip and how the team incorporated occupational therapy into many of their activities in order to serve the individuals in Kenya.

What did you find to be the greatest learning experience during the trip?

The greatest learning experience during the trip was assisting the OT and PT and working alongside them in the Slums. We provided positioning and handling and instruction to the parents for children with severe disabilities. When the half hour session was over the caretaker of the child wanted more and thanked us for our time and efforts. The appreciation for our skill was overwhelming.

What was the most challenging aspect of the trip?

The most challenging aspect for me was the need to rely on others for transportation. We were located in Kisserian Kenya, about an hour from Nairobi where most of the OT’s that we had meetings with were located. Coordinating safe and reliable transportation with a driver and communicating with ever changing plans was the most difficult.

How did you establish the OT relationship between Kenya and the United States? What were the challenges/success you have encountered when it came to establishing an OT relationship?

The primary relationship was established through Kate Fletcher and me through mutual colleagues a few years earlier. Kate is the founder of Hekima Place but was from Pittsburgh prior to moving to Kenya Africa, where she now lives and runs the Girls home where we stayed. The major challenge was effectively anticipating the needs of the girls prior to our trip and adequately explaining the role of occupational therapy as a potential service for the girls at Hekima place rather than having OT just be seen as a hospital based profession.

How do you intend to accomplish the goals of establishing an OT presence at Hekima place, recruiting Kenyan OTD students to promote continued Professional Development, and establishing a shared dialogue between therapists from the US and Africa?

The hope is that Chatham University can sponsor a Kenyan OT in the online OTD Program and that the sponsored OT would provide services to Hekima Place in exchange for their education. Their role at Hekima Place would be facilitated by their work in the OTD evidence based capstone sequence and guided by working with the OT faculty here at Chatham University.
Chatham University’s Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program is part of a larger effort for Chatham’s graduate students studying health professions to interact on a professional level. The curriculum serves to prepare students for future multidisciplinary collaboration and patient care. This interprofessional education (IPE) curriculum is comprised of four events based on the competency domains of the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC). Competencies covered include: Values and Ethics for Interprofessional Practice, Roles and Responsibilities for Collaborative Practice, Interprofessional Communication, and Interprofessional Teamwork and Team-based Care.

In Chatham’s IPE curriculum, five disciplines are represented, including students from the occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant, nursing, and counseling psychology programs. IPE groups are randomly assigned and are comprised of one or two students from each discipline as well as a faculty mentor. Each program has at least one faculty representative who serves as a mentor for IPE groups. These faculty members make up Chatham’s IPE “Task Force.” In addition to serving as group mentors, these faculty members are active in the planning of IPE events, designing and modifying curriculum, and remaining current in IPE research through evidence-based practice. Assistant Professor Jodi Schreiber, M.S, OTR/L serves as the faculty mentor representing the MOT program.

Changes have been made to the IPE curriculum for the 2013-2015 cohorts. The sequence of events has been altered to better provide participants with the opportunities to understand and practice their interprofessional skills (See Table A for IPE curriculum schedules). Chatham’s MOT Class of 2014 has completed two of the four IPE curriculum events thus far. In the fall term of 2012, IPE groups participated in an opening event featuring a guest speaker with a focus on the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication. Later in the fall term, IPE groups met individually to review a case study and discuss how each discipline would contribute to treatment of the client. Participants gained an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each discipline in a complex case study example. In the spring term of 2013, each IPE group planned a service learning activity to be completed as a team, with a focus on effective teamwork. Groups were able to choose their own service learning activities, and reached a wide variety of community needs. Examples of these service learning activities included writing letters to soldiers overseas, participating in various 5K races to support various charities, volunteering at a church soup kitchen, preparing hygiene bags to be passed out to individuals in need, as well as organizing and stocking a church food pantry that serves the homeless. In the fall 2013 and spring 2014 terms, IPE groups will participate in online discussions focused on effective communication skills for working in patient-care teams, and professional values and ethics for interprofessional practice. Upon completion of all four events, participants will receive a certificate acknowledging their competency in interprofessional practice.

Chatham’s MOT program has incorporated additional interprofessional learning opportunities into the academic curriculum. In the spring term of 2013, occupational therapy (OT) students were paired with physical therapy (PT) students to review and discuss a pediatric case study. Through this experience, students gained information about other disciplines’ roles and responsibilities in working with a pediatric client, as well as planning an intervention session for OT and PT co-treatment. Additionally, in the fall of 2013, OT students were grouped with physician assistant (PA) students for a teaching exchange opportunity. In the first half of the exchange, PA students taught OT students proper techniques and tips when taking basic vital signs, including pulse, heart rate, respirations, and blood pressure. For the second part of the teaching exchange, OT students taught PA students proper technique for a stand-pivot transfer to a chair or examination table, as well as techniques for manipulating wheelchairs, such as locking brakes and removing arm or leg rests for safe transfers.

Chatham University’s IPE curriculum, as well as those at other colleges and universities, are beneficial to all participants, as well as future clients. Participants gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of various health-care professionals, as well as skills necessary for effective interprofessional communication and teamwork for patient care. First year PT student Jennifer Kerr stated, “The first IPE event was interesting because we were able to learn about a firsthand experience of people from different professional backgrounds working together toward a common goal.” Current research shows that patient-centered care teams are effective in achieving safe, effective, efficient, personalized, timely, and equitable patient care, which can begin with a basic knowledge gained from IPE curriculums such as the one at Chatham University.

### Table A: Chatham University IPE Curriculum for 2012-2014 and 2013-2015 cohorts

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<th>2012-2014 IPE Curriculum</th>
<th>2013-2015 IPE Curriculum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall, Year 1</strong></td>
<td>Opening event, case study discussing roles and responsibilities of disciplines</td>
<td>Opening event, team communication discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spring, Year 1</strong></td>
<td>Service learning activity</td>
<td>Case study discussing roles and responsibilities of disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall, Year 2</strong></td>
<td>Professional values and ethics (online discussion)</td>
<td>Communication skills for working in teams (online discussion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring, Year 2</strong></td>
<td>Communication skills for working in teams (online discussion)</td>
<td>Professional values and ethics (online discussion)</td>
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This year, the second year Master of Occupational Therapy students participated in a unique opportunity through the West Penn Allegheny Nursing School’s simulated clinical unit called the Simulation, Teaching, and Academic Research (STAR) center. STAR has sixteen total patient rooms including an ambulance facility, birthing suite, neonatal intensive care suite, nurse’s station, and simulation rooms that provide realistic healthcare settings. The STAR program includes 3G SimMan mannequins that breathe, cough, wheeze, and speak. They also have a blood pressure, heart rate, and pulse. These mannequins are used to help train nurses, medical residents, practicing clinicians, researchers, emergency medical technicians, and other healthcare professionals. The STAR center offers unique hands-on learning experiences for students. It allows students to practice their skills and techniques in a controlled, simulated environment before they are asked to perform these skills with patients.

Prior to the occupational therapy students attending the STAR center, two of the occupational therapy professors, Jodi Schreiber and Amy Mattila, were required to attend multiple training sessions. The professors were trained on how to correctly operate and control the SimMan mannequins, along with the rules and regulations of the STAR center. The students were briefed on the regulations of the STAR center, and were asked to review the occupational therapy literature and practice techniques used in an intensive care unit (ICU) environment. Students were divided into treatment teams of four occupational therapy students.

When the students arrived at the STAR center, they were first taken into the mannequin (patient) room. The professors oriented them to the equipment and how the simulation would work. The students were then given fifteen minutes to complete a chart review on the hypothetical client. The chart read just as it would in a typical intensive care unit; sections included past medical history, reports, orders, social worker notes, and physician notes. The student treatment teams collaborated to develop a brief evaluation/intervention session for the client and were given about twenty minutes to perform the session with the client. The professors were able to observe the sessions through a one-way mirror, and were in full control of the SimMan’s vital signs, voice, and any other symptoms. For example, the professors could have the SimMan groan in discomfort if a student therapist extended his arm too far, and increase his heart rate to an emergency state to see if the student therapists responded appropriately. After, the students were provided with immediate feedback and were able to discuss the pros and cons of the session with the professors. The simulation offered a unique and beneficial learning opportunity for the students to have a hands on experience using the skills learned throughout the curriculum.

After the debriefing, the students reflected on their experience and provided feedback about the STAR program. Overall, students reported that the SimMan experience was a great addition to the occupational therapy curriculum! For those who have never been exposed to an intensive care unit setting, it was a great way to gain experience in a controlled environment.

One student reported, “I felt that the SimMan experience was a great learning opportunity! It allowed me to practice my skills in a real life ICU situation, without the risk.” The Chatham MOT program plans to continue incorporating the SimMan and STAR center activities in their curriculum with future MOT students.

STAR Simulation: Preparing for our Future!
Ally Monheim, OTS; Rosalia Friess, OTS; Lindsay Bardo, OTS; Lindsey Smith, OTS