

# Occupational Therapy Scholarly Symposium 2022



## PELM Research Posters and Doctoral Students Capstone Presentations

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022 | 5:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.  
SANDY AND MARLENE INSALACO HALL  
ROOMS 216, 217, 218



MISERICORDIA  
UNIVERSITY.

*“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking  
and prying with a purpose.”*

~ Zora Neale Hurston

---

*“Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the  
ability to investigate systematically and truly all that  
comes under thy observation in life.”*

~ Marcus Aurelius

---

*“The best research you can do is talk to people”*

~ Terry Pratchett

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SCHOLARLY SYMPOSIUM 2022  
PELM RESEARCH POSTERS &  
DOCTORAL STUDENTS CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 9TH, 2022 | 5:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.**

**SANDY AND MARLENE INSALACO HALL  
ROOMS 216, 217, 218**

---

- 5:00 – 5:05      **Welcome** – Dr. Lori Charney, Chair,  
Occupational Therapy Department
- 5:05 – 5:10      **Words from the VPAA** Dr. David Rehm
- 5:10 – 5:15      **Research Presentation Opening Remarks** –  
Dr. Lalit J. Shah, Professor and  
Research Coordinator, OT Department
- 5:15 – 6:15      **Research Posters first session (Total 6)**
- 6:15 – 6:30      **Break**
- 6:30 – 7:25      **Research Posters second session (Total 5)**
- 5:15 – 7:45      **Concurrent OTD Capstone Presentations**
- 7:25 – 7:30      **Closing remarks** by Dr. Lalit J. Shah

## RESEARCH POSTERS SESSION I: 5:15-6:15 PM

### POSTER # 1

**Title:** Occupational Therapy and Wellness-Based Resources and Programming for Suicide Survivors: A Scoping Review

**Researchers:** Ciara Hathaway, OTS; April Hinkle, OTS; Kenzi Pfeifer, OTS; and Kayla Pogash, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Dawn Evans, OTD, OTR/L

**Reader:** Dr. Joseph Cipriani, Ed.D., OTR/L

**Abstract:** Suicide impacts millions of individuals, including survivors of suicide and survivors of suicide loss; however, there are limited wellness-based resources available to improve the quality of life amongst this at-risk population. A scoping review was conducted on 80 peer reviewed journal articles, in addition to, government websites, international resources, and foundation websites that were non-peer reviewed. At this time, limited research has been conducted related to wellness-based resources for survivors of suicide and survivors of suicide loss, leaving this population with few to no resources to improve their overall quality of life. This disparity in the literature is representative of a gap in occupational therapy practice as well. Further research into wellness-based resources for survivors of suicide and survivors of suicide loss is indicated to further address this gap in knowledge.

### POSTER # 2

**Title:** The Role of Occupational Therapy in the Provision and Use of Service Dogs: A Scoping Review

**Researchers:** Desirae Garnett, OTS; Juliana Hartman, OTS; Christina Jones, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Julia Corsi, OTD, MBA, OTR/L, C-GCM, CSRS, CBIS; Dr. Christine German, OTD, OTR/L, ATP

**Reader:** Dr. Dawn Evans, OTD, OTR/L

**Abstract:** This scoping review assesses the role of occupational therapy in the provision and use of service dogs for promoting independence in clients with disabilities. Research suggests that service dogs improve functional performance, increase independence in occupations, and allow their owners to live more fulfilling lives. Occupational therapists (OTs) have unique expertise in utilizing objects, activities, and environments to enable individuals to do the things they need and want to do. Therefore, OTs have the inherent ability to advise clients on obtaining, training, and using service dogs as assistive technology to achieve these goals. This is an emerging practice area in the field of occupational therapy and more research is needed to determine exactly what the role is and how OTs can be involved in the provision and use of service dogs.

### POSTER # 3 & 4

**Title:** Insights from OT Scholars: Authors and Presenters

**Researchers:** Deidre DeLuca, OTS; Austin Hargraves, OTS; Christina Micholik, OTS; Minke Pheiffer, OTS; Ashley Ryno, OTS; Marekait Schintz, OTS; Jessica Shober, OTS; Lauren Stover, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Grace Fisher, Ed.D., OTR/L

**Reader:** Dr. Cheryl Jayne, OTD, OTR/L

**Abstract:** Objective- This study examined scholarly endeavors within the occupational therapy (OT) profession. OT scholars described factors limiting and promoting scholarly engagement, along with recommendations for achieving academic success.

**Design** - A mixed-method and descriptive quantitative and qualitative online survey was used.

**Setting** - A link to the SurveyMonkey online platform provided survey access.

**Participants** - A total of 280 U.S. OT professionals completed the survey.

**Results** - Respondents said the main reason for their scholarly involvement was to promote contributions to the OT evidence base. Time was seen as the most significant barrier inhibiting scholarship. Respondents expressed the need for support via resource funding and dedicated research time, and noted the need for research mentoring.

**Conclusions and Relevance** - Findings demonstrated the high value OT scholars place on building the profession. OT organizations and professionals are encouraged to disseminate up-to-date research and other scholarly endeavors. This will ultimately enhance the lives of those we serve.

### POSTER # 5

**Title:** Effectiveness of Farm Camp to Improve Coping Skills for Children Experiencing Grief from Traumatic Events or Loss: Qualitative Research Proposal

**Researchers:** Allison R. Aultz, OTS; Catherine E. Davey, OTS; Morgan E. Heap, OTS; Amanda M. Miller, OTS; Sarah E. Taylor, OTS; Megan N. Wsocki, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Jennifer Dessoye, EdD, OTD, OTR/L, CLA, CAS

**Reader:** Dr. Dawn Evans, OTD, OTR/L

**Abstract:** The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the effectiveness of the Lands at Hillside Farms Grief Camp in regards to the development of coping skills and emotional regulation in children who have experienced trauma. The participants and staff from cohort three of five of the study were surveyed via questionnaire to collect the qualitative data analyzed. Upon examining the results, common themes include the influence of contexts on social connectedness and behavior improvement, and the development of coping skills through the use of animal-assisted therapy. In conclusion, this study showed that the camp demonstrated positive impacts on the campers' abilities to cope with prior traumas through the natural and created environments of the farm-based camp.

## POSTER # 6

**Title:** The Impact of Congenital Heart Disease on Executive Functioning and Quality of Life in Young Adults

**Researchers:** Anna Fostik, OTS; Erica Haeefe, OTS; Erin Heslin, OTS; and Jennifer Klobe, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Jennifer Dessoie, EdD, OTD, OTR/L, CLA

**Reader:** Dr. Lalit J Shah Ed. D., OTR/L

**Abstract:** Congenital heart disease (CHD) affects approximately one percent of children born within the United States. Impacting the heart's anatomy and physiology, this condition may cause a multitude of adverse effects. One of the most common is difficulties with executive functioning (EF). This study aimed to better understand how EF deficits impact the quality of life (QOL) and occupational performance of those with CHD. A mixed-methods, correlational design that utilized the Learning, Executive and Attention Functioning (LEAF) Questionnaire, World Health Organization Quality of Life Measure (WHOQOL-BREF), and five original short answer questions was used. Participants were between 18-30 years old and self-identified as having CHD. Results suggested that the EF and QOL of individuals with CHD are impacted. The concerns of those with CHD should be addressed in the treatment and management of this disease, and occupational therapy could provide a significant benefit to these individuals.

## POSTER # 7

**Title:** The effects of international service-learning experiences on students, faculty, and community partners: A scoping review

**Researchers:** Alexandria Cox, OTS; Tesia Craner, OTS; Elizabeth Wooster, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Joseph Cipriani, Ed.D., OTR/L

**Reader:** Dr. Lalit J. Shah, Ed. D. OTR/L

**Abstract:** Occupational therapy (OT) education can include international service learning (ISL). There is limited published literature on the effects of ISL experiences. The purpose of this study was to conduct a scoping review that attempts to answer the question "What is known from the existing literature about the effects of ISL experiences via studies where OT students, faculty, and community partners were included?"

The review yielded 299 articles total, with 17 relevant articles included in this scoping review. Researchers synthesized the results of the scoping review via a descriptive numerical summary and thematic analysis. Quantitative results were organized into a chart that displayed the outcome measures used and the reported findings. Qualitative results were categorized into the following themes: improved awareness of cultural differences; resources and sustainability; development of professional skills; and complexities of personal experiences. Further research is merited, especially on the perspective of the community partner.

## RESEARCH POSTERS SESSION II: 6:30-7:30 PM

### Poster # 8

**Title:** Does Specific Education/Training Play a Role in How Often Sexuality is Addressed by OT Practitioners?

**Researchers:** Kristi Clare, OTS, Allison Lehman, COTA/L, OTS, Emily Lucas, OTS, Jessica Redden, OTS, & Robin Rodeghiero, OTR/L

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Cheryl Jayne, OTD, OTR/L

**Reader:** Dr. Dawn Evans, OTD, OTR/L

**Abstract:** Sexuality is in the OTPF-4 as an ADL. Many OTs don't address sexuality, despite research showing it leads to better patient outcomes, improved quality of life and decrease in mental health illnesses in those with disabilities.

**Objective** - To determine if having specific education/training impacts the frequency OTs address sexuality in practice

**Design** - Quantitative non-experimental study with use of an electronic survey

**Setting** - Google Survey

**Participants** - OTR's and COTA's from the US (n=102)

**Results** - 67 practitioners stated that specific education/training does impact how often they address sexuality. 42 stated they address it rarely in practice despite the majority stating they were comfortable addressing.

**Conclusions and Relevance** - OTs are comfortable addressing sexuality but do not do so in practice. Having extra training in OT schools and on the job may impact how often sexuality is addressed. More research is needed to determine why practitioners are not addressing despite stating they are comfortable.

### POSTER # 9

**Title:** Impact of Expansion of Practice Act for Telehealth due to COVID-19 on Occupational Therapy Practice in Pennsylvania

**Researchers:** Lalit J. Shah Ed. D. OTR/L, Emma Przyhocki, OTS; Kristen Viggiano, OTS; Iman Williams, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Lalit J. Shah Ed. D. OTR/L

**Reader:** Dr. Joseph Cipriani Ed. D. OTR/L

**Abstract:** The COVID-19 pandemic has had a lasting impact on healthcare, including the need to utilize telehealth as a service delivery model to control the spread of COVID-19. In response to the pandemic, Pennsylvania expanded the Practice Act to include reimbursement for telehealth services. The Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association requested exploring the effects of the expansion in the state of Pennsylvania. In addition, the researchers wanted to find out if continuing telehealth services is viable for occupational therapy practice. A survey was developed, validated, and implemented with IRB approval. Data from 21 surveys were included in the analysis however, 11 were completely filled out. In conclusion, findings showed that overall, the use of telehealth services resulted in increased parent/caregiver involvement in sessions, increased practitioner flexibility, increased access to observe clients in their home environment, and decreased risk of exposure. Pennsylvania licensing board may want to continue telehealth as a viable option for service delivery.

## POSTER # 10 & 11

**Title:** Effectiveness of Farm Camp to Improve Coping Skills for Children Experiencing Grief from Traumatic Events or Loss: Quantitative Research Proposal

**Researchers:** Michelle A. Artuso, OTS; Alexa Brown, OTS; Alexandra M. Kopalek, OTS; Timothy Lavelle, OTS; Kelsey R. Shoemaker, OTS; Allison Stallard, OTS; & Jenna Whitman, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Jennifer Dessoye, EdD, OTD, OTR/L, CLA

**Reader:** Dr. Dawn Evans, OTD, OTR/L

**Abstract:** The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the effectiveness of the Lands at Hillside Farms Grief Camp in regard to developing positive coping mechanisms in the children that attended the camp. Following attendance of the camp, the campers, as well as staff members, were surveyed using a questionnaire containing Likert scales to collect quantitative data about their experience. Upon examining the results of the questionnaires, the camp had a maximum effect for the good on the campers. The results also indicated that the camp had a maximum impact on the camper's coping skills for the good. In conclusion, this study showed that the farm-based camp had an overall positive effect on the campers and their coping skills to deal with prior grief and traumas.

## POSTER # 12

**Title:** Implementation of a Handwriting Camp via a Telehealth Service Delivery Model

**Researchers:** Peyton Breinich, OTS; Brigid Dolan, OTS; Rachel Eckert, OTS; Jessica Knisely, OTS; Megan Oldak, OTS; Samantha Sweizer, OTS; Madison Tumini, OTS; Alyssa Yniguez, OTS.

**Research Committee Chair:** Dr. Lori Charney, OTD, OTR/L

**Reader:** Dr. Orley Templeton, OTD, OTR/L

**Abstract:** As the COVID-19 pandemic threatened typical in person occupational therapy (OT) services, telehealth emerged as an instrumental delivery method. A 3-week virtual handwriting camp, using a telehealth delivery model to increase the handwriting functions of 10 students ages 4 through 12 years old, was developed and implemented for community members. This presentation identifies the benefits, barriers and limitations to a virtual OT handwriting program, implemented as a Level I MSOT fieldwork.

## POSTER # 13

**Title:** A Scoping Review of Scholarly Evidence for the SOS® Approach to Feeding

**Researchers:** Alexandra Justi, OTS; Kelly Henriquez, OTS; Kimberly Konnick, OTS; Lauren Lea, OTS; Stephanie Rogers, OTS

**Research Committee Chair:** Cheryl Jane OTD, OTR/L

**Reader:** Orley A. Templeton, OTD, OTR/L, CAS

**Abstract:** Scholarly peer-reviewed evidence on the efficacy of the SOS® Approach to Feeding as a feeding intervention was examined. A search of 36 health science-related databases yielded 1 result that met the inclusion criteria. Researchers found that while the SOS® Approach to Feeding may be effective for certain populations, more scholarly peer reviewed research is needed.

**Objective** -To assess the current scholarly, peer reviewed evidence available regarding the efficacy of the SOS® Approach to Feeding as an intervention.

**Design** - A scoping literature review

**Results** - One research article met inclusion criteria for the study. A level of evidence could not be determined for the article as the methodology used in the article was unclear.

**Conclusions and Relevance** - More peer reviewed scholarly research is needed to support the efficacy of the SOS® Approach to Feeding as an intervention. Occupational therapy practitioners should carefully evaluate its validity before utilizing this approach with certain pediatric populations.

---

## CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS

### JOIN ZOOM MEETING

[HTTPS://MISERICORDIA.ZOOM.US/J/9899981403](https://miser cordia.zoom.us/j/9899981403)

### 5:15-5:45

**Doctoral Candidate** Heather Theysohn

**Capstone Mentor:** Dr. Lori Charney

**Title:** A Survival Guide for School Based OT: A Mentorship Program

The purpose of this mentorship program is to provide occupational therapists transitioning into the role of a school-based occupational therapist, the knowledge and skills required to facilitate this shift in mindset to be able to perform optimally in this new position. The first aim focuses on the mentor mentee relationship and commitment to this mentorship program for its duration. The second aim focuses on the mentee improving their confidence in their ability to identify the correct assessment to administer, administering the assessment, and interpret the assessment scores. The third aim focuses on the mentee improving their confidence in their ability to successfully complete all necessary tasks required to be successful in the school-based setting in an efficient manner. The fourth and final aim focuses on improving the mentee's confidence in their communication skills. Using a pretest and posttest model for outcome measures, mentees reported an overall improvement in confidence in their skills. In addition, when asked if they would participate in a third phase of this mentorship program until the end of the school year, 83% of the participants reported they would like to participate in Phase III if offered. The participant interest, in combination with the achievement of all goals to improve the mentees confidence in skills necessary for the transition to the role of a school based occupational therapist, demonstrates the success of this mentorship program.

**5:45–6:15****Doctoral Candidate** Allison Hubbs**Capstone Mentor:** Dr. Lori Charney**Title:** Interoception Powerhouse

Interoception Powerhouse is an evidenced-based program, designed and implemented to improve individuals' Interoception Awareness. This is an innovative program for individuals with decreased Interoceptive Awareness. Interoception, a sensory component, assists students with their emotional regulation and helps them meet demands from and within their surrounding environments and contexts. Interoception Awareness, a body state, is an important factor in emotional experience. Understanding body signals is critical for accurate emotion identification. Interoception is the foundation for self-regulation. Interoception positively influences the experience and outcomes related to social and emotional learning. The group protocols were designed to engage students in activities of interest to get them more engaged to nurture their interoception needs. The Interoception Powerhouse was developed for the educational setting supporting students in a self-contained autistic support classroom. The Interoception Powerhouse program mission is to teach interoception; assist children to identify body parts, body signals, body actions, and associate feeling and body states to reach optimal self-regulation. Educating staff, caregivers, and students on interoceptive awareness is a creative, innovative method, based on evidence that improves one's interoception awareness. In conclusion, the future goal would be to expand the Interoception Powerhouse across all school settings to improve IA among all students.

**6:15–6:45****Doctoral Candidate** Samantha Kromer**Capstone Mentor:** Dr. Cheryl Jayne**Title:** Independent Living Home Hazard Awareness Program

The purpose of this capstone was to develop a home hazard program called Independent Living Home Hazard Awareness Program (ILHHAP) to improve individuals' home safety. This program includes a screening tool for professional use, occupational therapy evaluation referral form, instruction manual that describes the use, administration, interpretation, and access to videos. The screening tool will be incorporated into the yearly screening process as a method for referral for occupational therapy services and increase awareness of home hazards in the homes. It is anticipated that the program will help to identify residents that will benefit from an occupational therapy evaluation and others that will benefit from the independent living home hazard program. The screening tool was tested with 6 total participants to determine the baseline score range by the mean value of 14 for referral determination. Future research should be conducted on the effectiveness of the screening tool and the home hazard program to determine resident feedback. Identifying struggles and needs for residents as a preventative will increase their ability to continue to age in place.

**6:45–7:15****Doctoral Candidate** Brianne Font**Capstone Mentor:** Dr. Cheryl Jayne**Title:** Ageless Connections: Bridging the Gap Between Generations

Our world is comprised of people from various generations, yet these generations are rarely intermingled in daily life. This capstone project assesses the current literature on intergenerational relationships across the globe including prevalence, perceived effectiveness, structural organization, methodologies, and strengths/barrier of intergenerational programs. Further, it discusses a mixed-method survey-based study and a corresponding intergenerational program design guide and manual based on the conducted research. This project seeks to 1) understand why intergenerational program use is minimal when the history of cultures across the world show that intergenerational relationships were once at the forefront of society and 2) provide a means to make intergenerational programming more common practice in professional and daily life settings.

**7:15–7:45****Doctoral Candidate** Julianne Cariola**Capstone Mentor:** Dr. Cheryl Jayne**Title:** Troubles to Triumphs: An Eating Disorder Program

Eating disorders are the second deadliest mental health disorder with high rates of relapse. Often these individuals lack early accessible treatment options for sustainable recovery. Occupational therapists are particularly positioned to meet this treatment gap through the promotion of healthy occupational participation by understanding the complexity of the relationships between a person, environment, and their overall participation in occupations. Through effective and early treatment, individuals with eating disorders may be able to regain their quality of life and reduce comorbidities. This capstone project aims to 1. Assess the need of individuals with eating disorders through a literature review and completion of research-based needs assessment. 2. Implement this knowledge to create an accessible and feasible occupational therapy-based program with a guided program manual. 3. Increase the knowledge of occupational therapists role with eating disorders.



**MISERICORDIA**  
**UNIVERSITY**

301 Lake Street, Dallas, PA 18612-1090

[www.misericordia.edu](http://www.misericordia.edu)