

Alumni Spotlight: An Interview with Jeff McMenemy

How did you become interested in OT?

During a Health Occupations class in high school, we had two OT students from UND as guest speakers. They got me interested, and I followed up with visiting the OT department at the rehab in Grand Forks. I continued on from there.

Describe your experiences with your education at the UND OT program. Any stand-out moments?

I liked the cadaver lab with a lot of fun experiences in the lab. I also recall learning a lot during my Community class in which I was assigned a client from the Grand Forks Mission. I spent some time at the Mission and often found myself giving him rides around town paying off his debts to less than upstanding citizens of Grand Forks. It was quite colorful. In looking back at my education, I was able to jump into practicing as an OT with confidence right out of school. The learning has continued throughout my career, and I am proud to have attended UND.

How did you come to practice in your current site and setting?

Well, that's a long story, but my wife and I decided to branch out on our own about 11 years ago. I decided that I was not interested in working for a large corporation in which I could not follow my own direction in the field of Occupational Therapy. The influence of my profession was quite limited back then in our community, and I wanted more. I saw a lot of opportunity but was unsure how to handle it. I was not content with the status of Occupational Therapy in my area. OT had a lot more to offer. This past December we opened our third clinic here in Wyoming. I am holding the CEO position of my company, named Teton Therapy, which provides PT and OT services in Riverton, Lander and Dubois, Wyo. I am responsible for the growth and viability of the company while spreading health to as many people as possible.

What do you most enjoy about being an OT?

I like the platform OT has provided me to help an unlimited number of people. Early in my career, I could only help my caseload of patients. Now, as our company grows, I feel like I am helping a growing number of people. Not just our patients but also employees, physicians, other people we do business with, therapy schools who we have affiliation agreements with, the commerce we support locally, case workers, and on and on. My OT education has provided me with so much opportunity that I will never retire. Why would I want to? Why would anyone want to retire if they like what they are doing?

Anything else to add?

I think OTs should never put self-imposed limits on the profession. As OTs, we have amazing creativity and skills that



society needs. I think at times we see our roles somewhat limited to conventional ways and environments of practicing. I would like to challenge my fellow OTs to step it up in supporting our profession by doing something new or different. Think outside the box, and grow this profession into as many areas as possible.

Accreditation complete

The UND OT Department, after a successful site visit Oct. 31 through Nov. 2, 2011, was awarded a 10-year accreditation for both the Grand Forks and Casper sites. The Department was identified with eight major strengths, one recommendation for enhancement, and no areas of non-compliance. The sole recommendation related to faculty work-loads due to research and scholarship expectations and the mirror program demands of the Casper satellite.

Strengths noted were:

- Administrators' "knowledge and valuing of occupational therapy in recognizing the importance of improving interdisciplinary collaboration, and in support of delivery of the program at multiple sites"
- Program chair's "leadership in facilitating the development of an innovative curriculum design that optimally guides course design and sequencing, resulting in students who express a confident knowledge of the curricular threads"
- "Academic fieldwork coordinator is applauded for her creativity and innovation in designing educational materials for fieldwork educators."
- Faculty's "consistent and extraordinary dedication in fostering the development of excellent occupational therapists through creative course design, course delivery, and student advisement practices"
- Support staff's "organization and management on behalf of the occupational therapy program and students"
- Fieldwork educators' and employers' "investment and strong commitment to the program"
- "Students are positive representatives of the university, the program and the profession. They were noted for their initiative for independent learning, professionalism, and enthusiasm for occupation-based practice by the fieldwork educators and employers."
- "The program is commended for being a leader within the University of North Dakota by delivering excellent program content at the Grand Forks location and the satellite location in Casper, Wyoming. Specifically, faculty dedication, coordination, and vigilance ensure that all students are exceptionally prepared for entry-level practice by working diligently to deliver one uniform curriculum to two separate locations."

Chair's Letter

Happy Spring from Grand Forks! The weather up here has been beautiful and, as many of you are experiencing, unseasonably warm. We have had a busy few months in the department since the last issue, and we are excited to share with you what we have been doing.

In October, the Grand Forks and Casper sites had our ACOTE accreditation on-site visits, and we are pleased to have been granted a full 10-year accreditation. We were also pleased to be represented by an outstanding group of current students, alumni, employers and field educators. The support we receive is essential to making our program successful!

In December, we were pleased to welcome Dr. Sarah Nielsen to the faculty, and you can learn more about her in the Faculty Spotlight in this issue.

In February, we selected our new Grand Forks and Casper



incoming classes, and they will begin their educational journey in May, as we also graduate the Year IIIs at both sites and welcome them into the profession as colleagues.

We are also happy to be hosting an alumni reunion at the AOTA this year, and hope to see those of you attending the conference to catch up. The event will be Friday, April 27, from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the JW Marriott Room 209, 10 South West Street, Indianapolis. Please join us!

In the coming weeks, you will be receiving a letter from the UND Alumni Association about the Every Dollar Counts campaign. This campaign aims to create a scholarship endowment for students in the OT department. A donor has kindly agreed to provide up to \$10,000 in matching gifts, so you can double the power of your gift. We would greatly appreciate donations to help support the education of our OT students.

Warm regards,

Janet Jedlicka
Chair and Associate Professor
Occupational Therapy

Motivational Interviewing

On Friday, Feb. 3, the OT Department hosted its annual OT Recognition Luncheon and Workshop. This year's workshop presenter was Gretchen Prohofsky, MOT, OTR/L, manager of allied health in Inpatient Mental Health at Regions Hospital in St. Paul, Minn. Prohofsky has worked at Regions Hospital for 19 years providing occupational therapy services on the inpatient mental health clients. She graduated from UND in 2011 with a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy and was asked to present on the benefits of motivational interviewing as a client-centered technique in treatment.



As Prohofsky explains, "Motivational interviewing (MI) is beneficial for all clients that would utilize our services. The goal of MI is to gently guide our clients to seek positive choices, restore hope and to improve their quality of living. MI has a varied skill set for clinicians to utilize in order to empower our clients to reach their full potential. MI can be used in any setting for OT, as it works beautifully with goal setting."

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is "a client-centered, directive method for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence." Miller & Rollnick (2002).

Utilizing empathic listening skills are absolutely crucial to motivational interviewing.

Many of the MI skills are common sense. Attitudes that are related to the spirit of MI:

1. Curiosity: "Tell me more about how that feels for you."
2. Partnership: Think of a figure skating pair. A clinician is guiding the client toward finding the best solution.
3. Acceptance: Being open to each individual's unique values, attributes, perceptions and experiences.

One of the most basic tools we can use with our clients is to use open-ended questions. "What" and "how" questions are effective versus "why" questions that may provoke defensiveness.

If a person can answer in one word (yes, no, or a number), the question is not open-ended. The goal of MI is to request a story, not an answer. We are search for meaning, not just facts. Behavior changes will not stick if the client isn't able to make it their own. The client needs to be the source of the solution. We need to help them find the solution; we cannot fix the problem for them.

Save the Date

UND Casper OT Conference

Saturday April 14, 2012

9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Casper College, Science Complex

Positive Interactions in Difficult Situations

Sue Morrison, MSOT, OTR/L

Morrison will focus on facilitating therapeutic approaches with children who can be difficult to work with due to aggression, physically acting out, withdrawing or being combative.

Constraint Induced Movement Therapy

Jane Loscheider, MOT, OTR/L, ATP, CLT

Loscheider will discuss constraint induced movement therapy (CIMT), which is a contemporary motor approach used to facilitate return of function in an extremity affected by a neurological condition. The presentation will address the history of CIMT, current research protocols, and practical approaches to implementation in both outpatient and inpatient therapies. Participants will leave with the tools necessary to build their own program for their practice area.

UND OT Alumni and Friends Reunion

April 27, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

JW Marriott, Indianapolis

RSVP: kristen.peterson@med.und.edu, (701) 777-4305

Demonstration lab comes to Casper

The Student Occupational Therapy Association from the UND at Casper College and the Casper College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program, have entered a partnership with the University of Wyoming–Wyoming Institute for Disabilities Assistive Technology Resources (WATR) program to host a demonstration lab for assistive technology devices for the central and northeast region of the state.

The lab is open six hours a week at the University of Wyoming-Outreach Center on Poplar Street in Casper, Wyoming during the spring semester. Displays rotate every six weeks. The themes for spring are augmentative communication devices, iPad and Apps, and technology for low vision. A range of devices representing low, mid, and high technology will be available for demonstration during lab hours. Professional staff from WATR trains the students in the use of the devices.

The lab provides the students an opportunity to explore assistive technologies they might not have the opportunity to see within the OT curriculum, and provides them with experience in demonstrating the device to people with disabilities who may need a device to participate in valued life activities. The goal of the demonstration lab is to assist people make an informed decision about using or purchasing the same or similar assistive technology products.

Awards

Awards were recently distributed at the OT Recognition Luncheon and Workshop in Grand Forks. They acknowledge special efforts noted in students, staff or faculty. Each class member votes for students of their own class they feel are most deserving of awards, which include: scholarship, leadership, service and character. In addition, they vote for a staff/faculty award, which recognizes the person who has made an impact on student success in the OT program.

The scholarship award is for academic and professional achievements. The leadership award is for teamwork, empowerment of others and effective leading ability. The service award is given to an individual who has demonstrated exceptional service to communities and populations. Finally, the character award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated integrity, support, professionalism and humor.

1st Year

Character Award: Gina Czmowski

Leadership Award: Kara Maatz

Scholarship Award: Brien Buckentine

Service Award: Chelsey Jones

Staff/Faculty Award: Dr. Mandy Meyer

2nd Year

Character Award: Jason Zacharias

Leadership Award: Myrtyce Remus

Scholarship Award: Rebecca Polansky

Service Award: Kelsey Hoffman and Brianna Woodard

Staff/Faculty Award: Jacque Jones

3rd Year

Staff/Faculty Award: Dr. LaVonne Fox

Faculty Spotlight: Sarah Nielsen



The UND Occupational Therapy Department is very pleased to introduce the newest faculty member to alumni and friends! Sarah Nielsen, PhD, OTR/L, joined the Department in December 2011 and is currently teaching OT 433: OT Leadership; OT 430: Psychosocial Aspects of OT with Children, Adolescents and Young Adults; and OT 200 (online): Introduction to Occupational Therapy. Prior to coming to UND as a full-time faculty member, Dr.

Nielsen worked at the Trinity Child Adolescent Partial Hospitalization Program in Minot, N.D., where she was responsible for program development, occupational therapy evaluation, intervention and school transition planning. She is widely credited for establishing a strong role for occupational therapy in the Program.

Nielsen is hardly a stranger to the OT Department. Despite the distance between Minot and Grand Forks, she has been teaching OT classes for the past three years—a section of OT 430 via videoconference technology and OT 200 (online version)—and serving as a fieldwork educator for both Level I and II placements for UND occupational therapy students.

Nielsen earned a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy from UND, a master's degree in health care management from the University of Mary, and most recently, her Doctorate in Education from North Dakota State University (May 2011). Nielsen's dissertation work focused on understanding psychosocial strategies used by school-based occupational therapists. She is an active member of the American Occupational Therapy Association, currently serves on the Roster of Accreditation Evaluators and is active in the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association, where she serves as the Vice President of Legislation and Practice.

Casper campus opens Room 202

The UND at Casper College Master's in Occupational Therapy Program was the recipient of an incredible gift of classroom space, storage, mini-conference room, adjunct office and ADL lab from Casper College. The space, Room 202, is within the same Life Sciences building on campus, and it has already become a favorite study and projects "hang out" for students. Of course, before the first classes could be held in Room 202 several modifications to the space were needed to make it "occupational therapy program" ready. The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the Department of Occupational Therapy channeled resources to accomplish the redesign of the room, updating of equipment, furnishings and technology that complete the teaching and learning space. An open house held during the late fall semester gave OT students and faculty the opportunity to personally thank the Casper College administration and staff who helped the renovation project succeed. However, we would like the opportunity to thank Casper College again for the partnership and commitment that the institution demonstrates in educating and training occupational therapy professionals.



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Parting Shot



The OT Department in Grand Forks celebrated National Wear Red Day by participating in a photo contest sponsored by UND's Work Well program.