

FROM THE CHAIR

Happy late winter from the frozen tundra of North Dakota,

At the start of the new semester, I am reminded of the many things for which I am grateful. This past year, life has started to return to normal following the pandemic. We are back in class in-person and while masks are no longer mandated, it is nice to see people being cautious and wearing them. It is nice to see people's faces and their smiles. It has also been wonderful to be able to teach our OTD curriculum in the way it is meant to be taught!

UND OT faculty continue to work hard to bring outstanding doctoral education to our students. This past year Dr. Andrea Young and Dr. Wanda Lauer were selected for the Academic Leadership Program through the American Occupational Therapy Association. Dr. Sarah Nielsen was also selected for a Mid-Career Institute through the American Medical Association. The department has had a strong showing at conferences at both the regional and national level, as well as through articles and book chapters. Our faculty are strong, creative, leaders!

Over the past year, we started an Early Assurance Program for seniors in high school who are interested in occupational therapy. If a graduate has a 3.75 GPA or higher, applies to UND as a pre-OT major, completes the early assurance application, and meets criteria established in the program, they will have a guaranteed spot when they complete their prerequisites. We are excited to welcome our first round of early applicants this fall.

Last summer, we piloted a new pre-orientation program for our incoming students, *PACE: Preparing for Academic success, Connections, and Excellence*. It can be intimidating to start a clinical doctorate program, and the required habits of time management, studying, and balancing the demands of multiple roles can be overwhelming. The goals of the PACE program are to connect students with each other and faculty, provide information about resources at UND to support academics, and provide strategies for how to study and organize for learning! It was a fun two-day event and the feedback from the students was wonderful! Planning for this summer's program is already underway.

In other news, research suggests that mindfulness is a great strategy for centering and balancing the stress of being in a healthcare profession. To that end, we were able to offer a mindfulness-based elective to our students in Grand Forks this year. Feedback from students has been positive, and we are exploring ways to offer the same opportunity to our Casper cohort.



It has been an honor to work with a wonderful group of people over the past 20 years. I have enjoyed each year as the program has developed and grown! The faculty are some of the best humans I have had the privilege to work with during my career. The students and our alumni bring great opportunities to the people they serve and our profession.

So, 2023 is also bringing a life transition for me; I have decided to retire at the end of this academic year. I was fortunate to begin my career here at UND, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work here as my career comes to a close. Occupational Therapy has brought me amazing opportunities and I am ready for the next phase in my life. I am looking forward to new adventures and experiences and I hope to continue to serve the profession and program in different capacities.

Thank you all for being my colleagues, friends, and mentors. I am truly grateful!

Best,

Janet Jedlicka, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA
Chair and Professor
Department of Occupational Therapy



TIM TEBOW NIGHT TO SHINE

Casper Year 2 students and faculty volunteered for the Wyoming Tim Tebow Night to Shine event in February. Night to Shine hosts individuals with disabilities ages 14 and up through the full prom experience: red carpets, hair and makeup stations, photos, dancing, respite rooms for caregivers, and other features based on the local hosting venue.



INCLUSIVE PLAY

Grand Forks Year 2 students spent a Saturday in February learning how to switch adapt toys for children with a disability to promote inclusive play. Sarah Lovelace (right), UND Alumnus, joined Grand Forks faculty to promote assistive technology.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MEGAN KLEIN, MOT

Megan Klein is a 2020 graduate of the UND School of Medicine & Health Sciences Master of Occupational Therapy program in Casper, Wyo. We caught up with her recently to see how her practice is going and what she's been up to since she jumped into the world of professional OT.



How did you become interested in OT?

I always knew I wanted to be in healthcare and have hands-on interactions with my clients. I did some shadowing with relatives who work in the rehabilitation world, and I loved how diverse occupational therapy was and is!

Where are you practicing now, and how did you come to that setting?

I am working full time in home health in the Chicagoland suburbs. I have always had a desire to work in home health because of the flexibility the setting provides. I love helping people become independent in their own environment.

I also started my own private practice in September 2022, specializing in women's pelvic health and wellness - I provide telehealth and in-

home visits to women in northwest Indiana and western North Dakota (with plans to expand). After starting my career at a neurological rehabilitation hospital, I fell in love with pelvic floor dysfunction treatment while spending lots of time on the spinal cord injury unit. I started exploring more populations that were in need of pelvic floor rehabilitation and found that my niche is providing care for pregnant and postpartum women, though I also see women who have not had children and/or are seeking general wellness.

What do you love most about the profession?

The diversity! As an OT, you can work in so many different settings and with a wide variety of populations. That feeling on the day of graduation? Knowing I had accomplished my goal of completing the program to become an OT was absolutely priceless. Now that I've found my niche, I am so passionate about my target population which makes going to work every day so fun!

What else are you doing?

With a private practice in such a specialized area, I am constantly taking continuing education courses or seeking new certifications. I'm working on growing my business and truly learning the "business" side of healthcare along the way. I'm also staying active - I still play in basketball and volleyball leagues weekly, and I make time to travel!

HELP US CELEBRATE 30 YEARS



The Wyoming program is celebrating 30 years!

Wyoming alumni, please send your updates and photos to Breann Lamborn at

breann.lamborn@UND.edu

We look forward to showcasing Wyoming alumni in the fall newsletter.



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UND ESTABLISHES COTAD CHAPTER

When the OTD Class of 2024 began their journey at UND in the fall of 2021, they had an interest in creating a diversity, equity, and inclusion committee. Ann Landreville, a Grand Forks based OTD student, spearheaded this effort, which became the initial spark that led to the establishment of UND's chapter of the Coalition for Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) in the fall of 2022. COTAD is a national organization founded in 2014 with a focus on promoting justice, equity, diversity, inclusion (JEDI), anti-racism, and anti-oppression in the occupational therapy profession. COTAD chapters are student led groups within occupational therapy education programs that work at a local level to learn about and address these important issues.

At UND, COTAD members established broad goals to increase local exposure and growth of diversity in the OT profession, and to continue their own personal development of cultural humility and self-awareness. In only a few months of organizing, COTAD members have reflected together and engaged in thoughtful discussions, have participated in LGBTQ+ Ally Training, and have learned culturally sensitive methods from multidisciplinary professionals for working with diverse groups. COTAD members also distribute a monthly list



to Grand Forks and Casper OT students and staff on JEDI events happening in our two communities.

COTAD meets monthly on Thursdays over the lunch hour (11 a.m. MST/12 p.m. CST). Students meet in person at their respective campuses and merge over videoconference. Involvement in COTAD is an excellent opportunity for students to enhance their cultural humility and leadership skills. For more information about COTAD, please contact Ann Landreville (ann.landreville@UND.edu) or COTAD faculty advisor Dr. Karrianna Iseminger (karrianna.iseminger@UND.edu).