



Washington University in St. Louis

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Occupational Therapy

Spring 2015

O.T. Link

Remembering David B. Gray, PhD

and his contributions
to community participation



O.T. Link Contents

Also in this issue

- 2 From the Director
- 3 Program news
- 18 Continuing education
- 19 Class notes
- 20 Student happenings

4 Remembering Dr. Gray
Celebrating the life and work of David B. Gray, PhD

12 Developing a fall prevention website
Online resource helps prevent injury, saves lives

14 Parenting with disabilities
Empowering parents with disabilities throughout the St. Louis community

16 A place to call home
Bridging the biomedical and sociocultural needs of the homeless



Relaxation Station

As part of the Health Promotion, Participation and Wellness for Persons with Chronic Disease class, students participated in the Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) Activity Fair at the Jewish Community Center on November 20. Students prepared brochures and materials on a variety of topics to help older adults “stay active.” Zemy Amini, OTD/S’16, shares information about relaxation techniques at her booth.



Official publication of the Program in Occupational Therapy at Washington University School of Medicine

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Wolf, Smallfield, and Schwartz to receive awards

Timothy Wolf, OTD '07, MSCI, OTR/L, and **Stacy Smallfield**, DrOT, MSOT '96, OTR/L, BCG, will receive the American Occupational Therapy Association's Roster of Fellows Award at the AOTA's 95th



Timothy Wolf

Annual Conference & Exposition in Nashville, Tenn. The purpose of the Roster of Fellows is to recognize occupational therapists who have made a significant contribution to the continuing education and professional development of members of the Association through their special skills and knowledge in therapeutic practice, education and/or research. Wolf is being acknowledged for *Clinical Research, Continuing Education and Student Mentoring*. Smallfield is being acknowledged for *Excellence: Gerontology Leadership and Evidence-Based Practice*.

Program alumna **Jaclyn Schwartz**, MSOT '10, OTR/L, will receive AOTA's 2015 Gary Kielhofner Emerging Leader Award. The award recognizes an occupational therapy practitioner (clinician, educator or researcher) who has demonstrated emerging leadership and/or extraordinary service early in his or her occupational therapy career.



ASHT Hand Therapy Review Course

Washington University School of Medicine is hosting the 2015 American Society of Hand Therapists (ASHT) Comprehensive Survey of Hand Therapy Review Course on April 10-12. Instructors **Nora Barrett**, MSOT '97, OTR/L, CHT, **Vicki Kaskutas**, OTD '08, MHS, OTR/L, FAOTA, (pictured) and **Rhonda Powell**, OTD, OTR/L, CHT, are Program alumna.

To register, please visit : <https://www.asht.org/events/register/1107>

From the Director



“Over the years, David has made a huge impact on our Program, our profession, and the disability movement around the world. He has supported the growth of so many of our faculty, students and alumni, and his work has challenged so many ideas of disability.”

As you can see, we have a new, expanded magazine format for *O.T. Link* to better inform you of all the research, community practice, alumni and current student news of the Program in Occupational Therapy. Originally, we had planned this first issue to announce the retirement and symposium in May of one of our most esteemed and respected colleagues, **David B. Gray, PhD**.

This extraordinary man, who worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people with disabilities, died Feb.12 of an apparent heart attack at 71. Over the years, David has made a huge impact on our Program, our profession, and the disability movement around the world. He has supported the growth of so many of our faculty, students and alumni, and his work has challenged so many ideas of disability.

David has touched countless lives, and made an impact beyond measure for so many people. It has been an absolute privilege to be a part of his journey for the past 20 years and to watch his story unfold. We are deeply saddened by his passing, but know that his legacy of true change and meaningful participation among persons with disabilities will live on, as evidenced by the team of professionals he has helped send into the field, and who will continue to have an impact on communities throughout the world. The article on page 4 captures the highlights of his incredible life and career, and I personally invite you to join us on May 22 for his memorial symposium (details on page 11) to remember and honor David and his many accomplishments.

Like David, faculty member **Vicki Kaskutas**, OTD '08, MHS, OTR/L, FAOTA, focuses her research on enhancing public health. Specifically, she works toward improving worker health and safety through the study and prevention of occupational risk factors for injury and illness. Her development of a fall prevention website (page 12) for construction workers has become a valuable resource for national safety boards, agencies and trade organizations.

Empowering and improving the lives of people is the mission of our Community Practice team. With David's mentorship, clinician and alumna, **Carla Walker**, OTD '14, OTR/L, helped develop our new parenting with disabilities program (page 14) in partnership with Paraquad, Inc. to enable parents to meet their goals for family participation, regardless of the age or stage of their child.

As our profession expands its biomedical view of health to include sociocultural, community and population perspectives as well, alumni **Adam Pearson**, OTD '11, OTR/L, is bridging the biomedical and sociocultural needs of the homeless here in our St. Louis community (page 16).

David's untimely passing reminds us all how each of us can make a difference in the community in which we live through our work and the people we serve. I am always so proud of what you do and how you represent our wonderful profession. I look forward to seeing many of you at the AOTA alumni reception and at other events this spring (back cover), and to hearing from you through our website, social media channels, and by email.

Carolyn Baum

Carolyn M. Baum, PhD, OTR, FAOTA

Professor of Occupational Therapy, Neurology and Social Work
Elias Michael Executive Director,
Program in Occupational Therapy



Students visit the Human Performance Laboratory, learn about assistive technology

A group of students from Word of Life Lutheran School in St. Louis, Mo., visited the Human Performance Lab in November to learn more about how assistive technology can help kids with disabilities increase participation. **Jack Engsborg**, PhD, offered words of encouragement to the students, who were developing their own adaptive devices for kids with disabilities to better use a stylus for mobile devices. The students vetted their ideas with Engsborg and his lab, who demonstrated how small modifications can make a difference. The visit ended with a “think tank” discussion of the pros and cons of the proposed devices and what might be the most beneficial for client.

New dual degree MSOT/MPH program to begin Fall 2015

The health-care professions are adapting, changing and evolving through evidence-based practice, research and technological innovations, and policy reform. In recent years, that adaptation has included broadening the clinical scope to include not only a biomedical view of health, but sociocultural, community and population perspectives as well. There is a significant need locally, nationally and internationally for health-care professionals to be trained to address issues of prevention, participation, everyday functional performance, habilitation and quality of life in persons with chronic disease, disability or sociocultural disadvantage.

The Program in Occupational Therapy and the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis have responded to this need and paradigm shift by developing a dual degree program. The Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT)/Master of Public Health (MPH) degree will give students a unique

combination of skills and knowledge to benefit communities and populations, and will create new pathways of research, practice and health programming. Graduates will be prepared to work in a diverse array of settings including community agencies, government institutions and nonprofit organizations, and assume leadership roles in public policy, urban planning and advocacy.

“Persons trained in public health alone have limited exposure to biomedical knowledge and less focus on performance of daily life tasks. In contrast, practitioners trained solely as occupational therapists often lack sufficient community and population focus to extend their reach beyond acute care and rehabilitation settings,” says Associate Director of Professional Programs **Steve Taff**, PhD, OTR/L. “We feel that the MSOT/MPH degree offers the training required to equip new practitioners with a paradigm-spanning skill set that is needed in a new health-care landscape.”

Remembering *Dr. Gray:*

BY KARA OVERTON

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND WORK OF DAVID B. GRAY, PHD

Author's Note:

Initially, I sat down with David B. Gray, PhD, professor of occupational therapy and neurology, to discuss his career and accomplishments as part of our preparations for his upcoming retirement symposium, which was scheduled for the end of this semester. On February 12, however, he passed away unexpectedly. What began as a celebration of a brilliant career coming to an end has now evolved into a tribute to his life and work.

When talking about barriers and measures of participation for persons with disabilities, David B. Gray, PhD, was an expert. A lifelong learner and advocate for the disability community, Gray's work involved asking questions, gaining an understanding within the communities he served, building coalitions and collaborations, transferring knowledge, and advancing the cause forward. His career spanned more than four decades and included countless accolades, honors

and accomplishments. Those who knew him best admired his vision, his sense of determination, his love for his family, the mischievous spark he brought to the room, and the pursuit of excellence he inspired within others.

Throughout the course of our conversation, two main themes emerged from his reflection over his life and career. "When it's all said and done, life has been about figuring out how to overcome obstacles, get good at something and then transition onto the next thing," Gray said. "Just when you learn to navigate the hard stuff and begin to get comfortable, you transition into a new period that brings new challenges and adventures." And through it all, he added, people influence your path along the way. "There's a saying that says it's not what you know but who you know, and I really believe that," Gray said.





David with his father, Fred Gray, who was a Captain in the U.S. Army. Captain Gray served as a surgeon in the 166th General Hospital from 1940-1945. This picture captures the first time Fred met his son, as he was serving overseas, when David was born in 1944.

The road to excellence

Born the second of four children, Gray grew up in a tight-knit family in Western Michigan. His mother was a medical social worker, and his father was a physician who hoped to pass his private practice on to one of his children. Always a bit of a rebel and independent thinker, Gray had other ideas. Following high school graduation, he chose to attend Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, where he received a very abrupt wake-up call right from the start. “The outstanding success story from my time in undergrad is that I made it out alive,” laughed Gray. “My first paper came back with a note on it that read, ‘D – and that is a gift – see me.’” That moment captures the overall sentiment and paints a picture of his experience in undergrad. “Lawrence was a really tough school,” Gray said. “It was the first time in life that I had to really work at something to be successful, but it was those habits and routines that developed as a result of the hard work that would later serve me well amid the challenges that would follow in my life.” While at Lawrence, Gray met his wife, Margy. “I was the last to show up for a

class one morning, and there was only one seat left, which happened to be between a beautiful blond and a beautiful red head. Tough spot,” he quipped with a wink and a smile. A few casual exchanges with the “beautiful red head” turned into more; Margy and Gray dated throughout their time at Lawrence and married following graduation.

After completing his bachelor of science degree in psychology, Gray moved on to pursue his master’s degree in experimental psychology at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. In contrast to the rigorous and academically challenging curriculum present at Lawrence, Gray found Western Michigan to be much less demanding. Shortly after beginning the program, Gray and his wife welcomed their first child, David, in the fall of 1967. Two years later, their daughter Elizabeth was born. Upon completing his master’s degree in 1970, Gray opted to leave his role as an instructor of psychology at Seton Hall College so that he could pursue his doctorate degree as a full-time student at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

David married the “beautiful red head,” Margy, on March 18, 1967 in her hometown of Faribault, Minn.

“I was the last to show up for a class one morning, and there was only one seat left, which happened to be between a beautiful blond and a beautiful red head. Tough spot,” he quipped with a wink and a smile.



Pursuing the PhD: the road less traveled

Upon entering the PhD program in psychology and behavior genetics at the University of Minnesota, Gray again found himself facing academic rigor. The program was fiercely competitive – accepting only four students per year – and was ranked the top program of its kind in the country. While the program itself was known for excellence, Gray made personal connections while there that would later transform his life. In particular, he met Travis Thompson and Sheldon Reed, PhD. Thompson was his primary advisor and Reed was the director of the Charles Fremont Dight Institute for the Promotion of Human Genetics at the university. Both men pushed Gray to excel during his time in the program, and later became lifelong friends and colleagues.

After a challenging four years, Gray earned his PhD in 1974, and accepted a role as the Director of Behavior Modification at the Mental Retardation Center of the New York Medical College in Valhalla. Shortly after moving his family to the East coast, Gray and his wife welcomed their third child, Polly in 1975. Even as the Grays settled into their new home, they began to consider moving back to the Midwest. In 1976, Gray accepted a position at the Rochester Social Adaptation Center in Rochester, Minnesota, and they returned to raise their young children near their own families.

Margy and David at his graduation ceremony in 1974, following completion of his PhD program in psychology and behavior genetics at the University of Minnesota.

The Gray family poses for a family photo in the spring of 1976, shortly after moving back to Minnesota. From left, Margy holds Polly, David Jr., Elizabeth, and David.

The detour and defining moment of 1976

Initially, upon moving back to Minnesota, the Grays rented a house while waiting for theirs to be built. Once their new home was near completion, they moved in and worked on it themselves to reduce costs. On a rainy day in July of 1976, Gray’s life was forever transformed. The contractor had neglected to cover a portion of the roof that was being worked on, and rain was dripping through the ceiling. Gray went up to cover the hole, and in the process of coming back down, he slipped, fell and broke his neck. The accident left him paralyzed and drastically changed the course of the life that he and Margy had planned for themselves.

Following the accident, Gray spent an entire year in inpatient rehabilitation, undergoing numerous procedures and countless therapy sessions. For 365 days, he was thrust into ongoing medical treatment that was filled with discomfort, pain and constant trials. It was his first experience being on the receiving end of the health-care spectrum, and one that was forever etched into his mind. People began to treat him differently and many fell out of his life altogether. “That type of situation is hard for people to process,” Gray shared. “Many people just don’t know how to respond to a change that significant. While there were several people who stepped out of my life, there were many others who stepped up in very impactful ways. Dr. Reed, one of my PhD mentors

from the University of Minnesota, sent my family \$100 a month for three years following my accident. It was such an incredible act of generosity, and a gesture I will always appreciate. Others visited regularly, throughout my stay in the Mayo Rehabilitation Unit and also after I returned home the following year.”

When Gray returned to work the following year, he faced new challenges in his profession. He moved into a role as the director of research at the Rochester State Hospital, but Gray noted that he was treated very differently than prior to the accident. Travis Thompson, his friend and colleague from his time at the University of Minnesota, stood by his side during this incredible time of transition. Upon learning of Gray’s predicament and unhappiness with his work, Thompson, who worked for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Washington, D.C., notified him about an opening at the NIH. Shortly thereafter, following a series of successful interviews and significant discussion with Margy, Gray and his family moved to D.C. and he accepted a role in the Office of Scientific Review of the National Institute for Child and Human Health Development (NICHD) within the NIH. It was a limited-time position, intended to last for only a year, but it was a new beginning for Gray and his family.





When President Bush signed the American Disabilities Act into law in 1990, it was Gray's colleagues Evan Kemp (left) and Justin Dart (right) who sat on either side of him in the historic photo commemorating the occasion. Gray was in attendance to witness the signing.

Full speed ahead: Leading the way in Washington, D.C.

Gray described the NIH as a highly complex and efficient government operation with an extensive set of rules and policies. Within his year there, he met several people who helped him navigate the NIH and mentored him along the way. "They have a highly systematic way of reviewing the applications for funding and awarding the research money," Gray said. "Once you learn the system, it's incredibly impressive to watch." It was an environment that Gray appreciated, and he quickly adapted to the culture and took advantage of the opportunities available. Following his first year there, and the completion of the project, he moved into a permanent role as a health scientist administrator within the human learning and behavior branch of the NICHD. During his time there, he helped develop a scientific learning disabilities program that experienced significant growth and increased grant funding from \$800,000 to several million dollars in a four-year period.

Within those four years, Gray became very active in the disability movement that was underway. He formed powerful connections with people who were at the heart of the movement in the hub of our nation's capital and emerged as an insightful voice, advocating for the civil

rights of people with a disability. Through his networking and advocacy initiatives, he became good friends with Justin Dart and Evan Kemp, who were both proponents of the disability movement. "It was an amazing time to be in D.C., and to be a part of what was happening in the world around us," Gray said. "Regardless of how you get around in society, whether you roll along the sidewalks in a chair or otherwise, you have a right to be heard and treated equally."

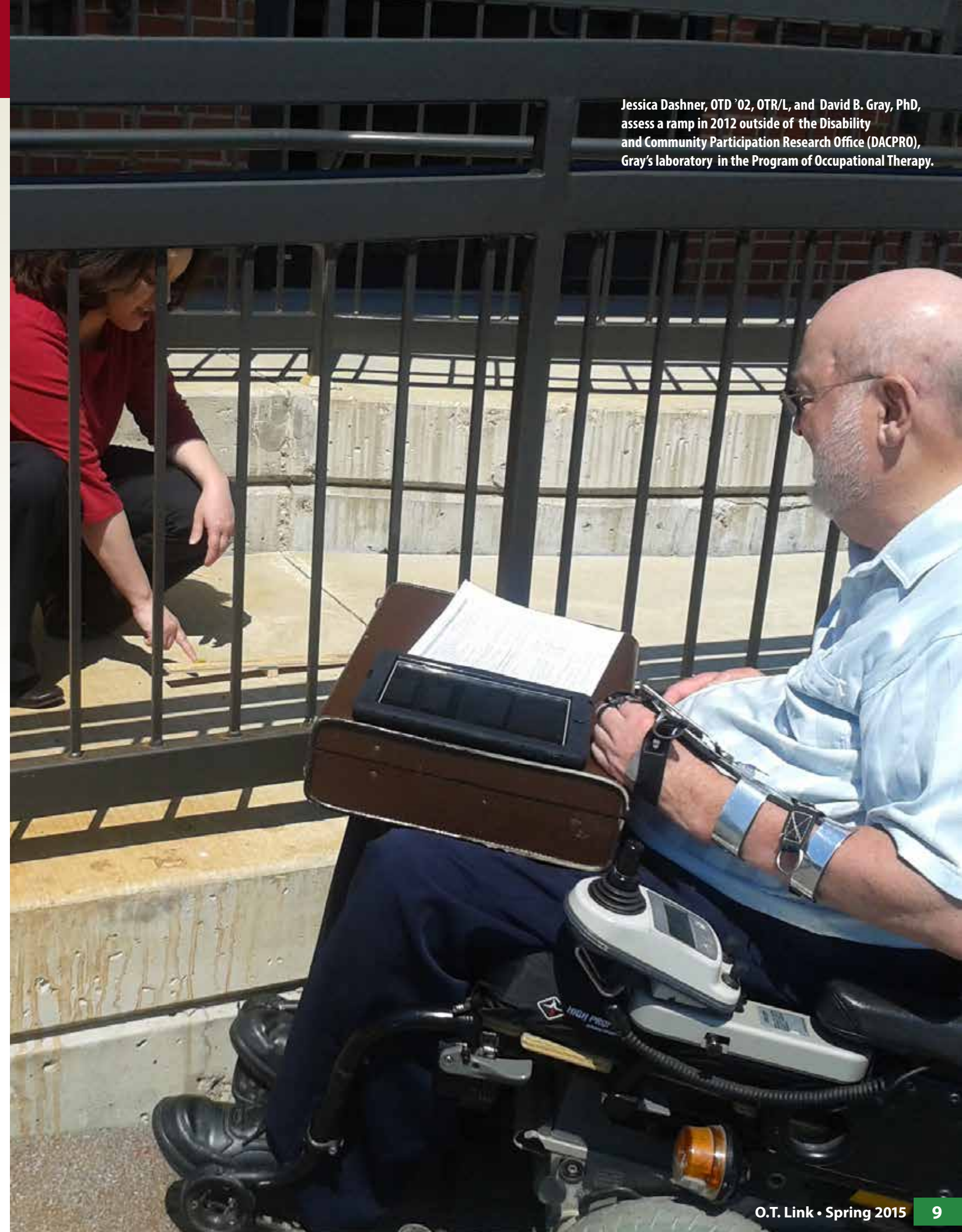
Following recommendations by Senate and House members, advocacy by former directors, and concerted efforts by leaders of the disability community, Gray was recommended for a presidential appointment by former President Ronald Reagan in 1986. He soon accepted the role of Director of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) for the U.S. Department of Education.

While Gray's transition to the NIH was seamless and natural, his move to NIDRR was quite the opposite. The U.S. Department of Education had a completely different process than anything that was in place at the NIH, and the funding was granted in a much less systematic way. "It was no secret within the NIH that the

department of education operated very differently. I had been cautioned before accepting the appointment that NIDRR was quite different, and was beginning to have doubts about the move, but I went ahead with it," Gray said. He laughed and affirmed the decision with his characteristic wit, "I mean, it was a presidential appointment; how do you turn that down?"

Once he immersed himself in the role, he discovered that his concerns were warranted. It was challenging, stressful work, and one of the most difficult roles he held during his career, although it only lasted a year. "Of all of my experiences, my time at NIDRR is one of the things I'm most proud of. It was by far the hardest; I was working nonstop day and night, but I did it and I pushed myself to succeed," he said. A year later, he transferred back to the NIH after accepting positions in the mental retardation and developmental disabilities and the human learning and behavior divisions.

At that point, a need arose for the development of a new organization that would be devoted to the advancement of research in medical rehabilitation, separate from anything the NIH or NIDRR were doing. In 1991, the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research



Jessica Dashner, OTD '02, OTR/L, and David B. Gray, PhD, assess a ramp in 2012 outside of the Disability and Community Participation Research Office (DACPRO), Gray's laboratory in the Program of Occupational Therapy.



The CHEC team in 2002 busy at work making sure the sidewalk is the correct width: (left to right) Jessica Dashner, OTD '02, OTR/L, Polly (Gray) Payne, David B. Gray, PhD, and Kerri Morgan, MSOT '98, OTR/L.

(NCMRR) was created, and Gray was named acting deputy director of the initiative. The NCMRR was tasked with fostering the development of scientific knowledge needed to enhance the health, productivity, independence and quality of life of people with physical disabilities. Gray was instrumental in overseeing the organization's operations and helped select the board members for the group. One of those board members was **Carolyn Baum, PhD, OTR, FAOTA**, Elias Michael Executive Director of the Program in Occupational Therapy at Washington University. For four years, Baum and Gray worked together on the NCMRR, advocating for the disability community. Eventually, after several attempts, Baum recruited Gray to the Program in Occupational Therapy. "I kept telling him that he could do great things with our Program," shares Baum, "and that when he was ready to quit being a bureaucrat, he should come to St. Louis. I knew he could truly make a difference by combining his expertise with ours in the occupational therapy world, and that together, we could change lives."

The move to St. Louis

Gray came to the Program in 1995. "It took me a while to figure out what I wanted to focus on," Gray said. "I had spent many, many years reviewing research proposals and requests for grants and funding,

but had never actually written my own." He discovered his niche when he began to focus his work on mobility impaired individuals and the environmental support and factors that impact participation. He received numerous grants from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), NCMRR and NIDRR for his work, and completely revolutionized the science behind occupational therapy by introducing a focus on outcome measures. In 2004, his research team developed the Community Health Environment Checklist, or CHEC, as an assessment tool to measure whether or not a location was truly usable to persons with a specific impairment. Developed around the ADA accessibility guidelines, the list enables occupational therapists and students to objectively assess locations based upon the priorities of people with mobility, visual or hearing impairments. The CHEC has been used to create online maps that provide information about the usability of community sites to people with disabilities, and has become a tool utilized by students and professionals throughout the country. CHEC maps can be located at www.checpoints.com.

In 2005, Gray was instrumental in securing funding through the Missouri Foundation for Health for the development of the Health and Wellness Center at Parquad. As a fully accessible gym in the St. Louis area, the center serves as a resource to eliminate barriers and help promote overall

physical health and emotional wellness for persons with a disability. "David Gray was a phenomenal scientist and was largely responsible for helping our Program and community advance forward in truly significant ways," Baum says. "His work has made a lasting impact, and we owe him a tremendous sense of gratitude for all that he's done for us."

Gray has also impacted lives outside of the research lab. As a teacher, mentor, and friend, Gray made a difference in the lives and professional development of countless students. **Carla Walker, OTD '14, OTR/L**, had the opportunity to work alongside Gray in a variety of capacities, and credits him with helping channel her professional course and development. "I appreciated Dr. Gray's unwavering focus on what is needed rather than what is easy. He was a visionary who led our team to make a difference through programs and research that have improved the lives of the disability community on a local, national and international level."

Kerri Morgan, MSOT '98, OTR/L, agrees. "Dr. Gray influenced minds, policy, programs and rehabilitation processes through his leadership, science and advocacy for disability. He was a big thinker and conceptualized research ideas that were usually way ahead of his time." Like Walker, Morgan also credits Gray for the impact he had not only on the disability community itself, but on her personally.

"I selected him as my master's mentor not because he had a disability, but because I had an interest in his work and ideas. He ended up serving as more than just my master's advisor, but ended up mentoring me in living life successfully with a disability."

While his time in Washington, D.C. gave Gray some of the most memorable moments of his career, his time at Washington University certainly offered some of its most rewarding experiences. Gray touched countless lives and made an impact beyond measure for so many people, including former students, colleagues and persons with a disability and their family members. The Program in Occupational Therapy will certainly not be the same without him, but it, along with the communities it serves, will be better because of him. "Dr. Gray built a team of professionals and sent accomplished students into the field for many years. They will continue to have an impact on communities throughout the world," says Walker. "His legacy is true change and opportunity for meaningful participation among persons with disabilities."



"When it's all said and done, life has been about figuring out how to overcome obstacles, get good at something, and then transition onto the next thing. Just when you learn to navigate the hard stuff and begin to get comfortable, you transition into a new period that brings new challenges and adventures."

— David B. Gray, PhD

David B. Gray, PhD Memorial Symposium Friday, May 22, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. Washington University School of Medicine

As a way to honor his work and countless contributions to the disability community throughout his career, the Program in Occupational Therapy will hold a memorial symposium for Dr. David B. Gray on Friday, May 22, 2015, at 2:00 p.m. The symposium will take place on the School of Medicine campus. It will feature addresses by people who have been influential in Gray's life, and he in theirs, as they discuss his contributions to community participation. The agenda will also include time to allow participants to share special memories and comments about their interactions and experiences with Dr. Gray. The symposium is open to anyone who would like to attend; however, RSVPs will be required. We are currently exploring options for people to participate in the symposium remotely. If you cannot attend the event in person, but would like to participate virtually, please contact Kara Overton using the contact information listed below.

Additionally, a separate memorial event will be planned by the Gray family in coordination with the symposium. The family's memorial will take place on Thursday, May 21, at 4:00 p.m. at Graham Chapel, located on the Washington University Danforth Campus. This event is open to the public; RSVPs are not required.

As part of this tribute, the Program has contracted with a professional memoir writer to publish Dr. Gray's story, which is expected to be unveiled at the memorial symposium. One copy will reside in the Program's lending library, so that it will be available to faculty, staff and students. Letters, memories and tributes shared by colleagues, friends and former students will be woven into the book's narrative.

To submit a story for the book, for more information regarding the details of the memorial events, or to RSVP for the symposium, please contact Kara Overton at 314-286-1613 or overtonk@wusm.wustl.edu. When submitting your RSVP, please specify if you'll be attending in person, or remotely, and if in person, how many people will be attending with you.

The Washington University flag was lowered to half-staff Feb. 18-20, 2015, in memory of Gray.

Developing a fall prevention website

BY MICHELE BERHORST

Vicki Kaskutas, OTD '08, MHS, OTR/L, FAOTA, listens to the concerns of a construction worker during a fall prevention seminar held at the local carpenters union.

Online resource helps prevent injury, saves lives

Falls from heights are the top cause of construction fatalities and account for one-third of on-the-job injury deaths in the industry.

For Vicki Kaskutas, OTD '08, MHS, OTR/L, FAOTA, improving worker health and safety through the study and prevention of occupational risk factors for injury and illness has been the focus of her research for the past ten years. As a member of the collaboration between the Department of Medicine's and Program in Occupational Therapy's Occupational Health and Safety Laboratory, she studies the epidemiology of work-related injuries and illnesses in a broad range of work groups and the interventions needed to prevent and improve overall health in working populations.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) – the federal agency that provides oversight for health

and safety legislation – changed its residential fall protection requirements in 2010. The resulting guidance document published featured pictures, but not the device names or identifying information to help construction professionals find the device. Knowing quick access to the missing information could prevent injury and potentially save lives, Kaskutas applied for and received a grant from the Center for Construction Research and Training through the National Institute of Occupational Safety to develop a website to provide the information.

Launched in October 2014, the Fall Protection Resource for New Home Construction website (ot.wustl.edu/fptech/homepage.htm) demonstrates 148 fall prevention devices. It includes conventional methods of fall protection such as guardrails, personal fall arrest systems and safety nets, as well as other equipment including scaffolds, lifts, hole covers and ladder accessories that can

improve safety when working at heights. The website build team included Nina Smock, Stephanie Wise, OTD/S '15, and Educational Technology Coordinator Ping Lieser, PhD, who was instrumental in the programming and design. The website, the result of 12 months of research and collaborations with 26 manufacturers across the country, was quickly disseminated electronically through many federal governmental agencies, trade organizations, and unions.

“The agencies that funded the project, the Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR), and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), posted the link to its websites. Jim Maddux, OSHA's Directorate of Construction, included the link in its bi-monthly newsletter, QuickTakes,” Kaskutas says. “He also sent it to every OSHA education center, field office, and employee with a role in construction. In addition, he helped us to reach several

“This industry is one of the most dangerous in the U.S., and has seen an increase in fatalities due to falls over time, in contrast to the general decline in workplace fatalities seen in most other industries.”

– Bradley Evanoff, MD, MPH


trade organizations, including the Associated Builders and Contractors, Association of General Contractors, and the American Society of Safety Engineers. The St. Louis Carpenters' Union published an article about the website in their quarterly magazine, which is sent to 27,000 members in Kansas, Mo., and southeastern Illinois.”

In the first three months, the Fall Protection website had more than 22,500 unique page views. Kaskutas also developed a survey for site visitors to complete to help measure effectiveness and plan for future updates. “We are seeking additional funding to keep the website up-to-date and sustain long-term operation. New devices are being developed every day—vendor links need updating, new videos are available, and prices change. We are working on a print version of the website in English and Spanish—and we would love to have a Spanish version of the website one day.” Kaskutas says.

Falls account for **24%** of construction worker lost time, work injuries and most construction fatalities

33% of all construction fatalities

64% of residential construction fatalities



Source: The Bureau of Labor Statistics

Kaskutas' dedication to occupational health and safety began when her grandfather, a coal miner in Illinois, was killed on the job. Throughout her 35-year OT career, she has worked in a variety of acute and outpatient settings with individuals with work-related injuries and illnesses and musculoskeletal disorders that affect ability to work. She came to Washington University in 1997 as a clinician and student. Kaskutas joined the Program as an instructor in 2001, and in 2008, earned her doctorate in occupational therapy. It was during that time she joined Bradley Evanoff, MD, MPH, and Anne Marie Dale, PhD, OTR/L, in researching post-offer screening and risk factors for construction workers with carpal tunnel syndrome. The research team worked with the local Carpenters' Union on the project. During their conversations, the carpenters stressed how much they wanted and needed fall prevention training with the team. Since then, Kaskutas has been the co-investigator on several grants focusing on fall prevention and technology in residential construction.

“Starting with her first project, Dr. Kaskutas established close working relationships with the union leadership and training program instructors enabling our team to gather formative data, conduct a gap analysis of existing training, and develop a new fall prevention curriculum,” says Evanoff. “She also led the development of a new fall safety audit that could be used by carpenters to assess the safety of their worksites; this tool served as a major outcome measure in our subsequent studies.”

Kaskutas has also become a leader and fall prevention advocate in the construction industry. She was appointed to National Occupational Research Agenda's

Construction Sector Council and championed the National Campaign to Prevent Construction Falls (www.stopconstructionfalls.com). Last year, she received the American Occupational Therapy Association's Roster of Fellows Award as a “Leader in Work Injury Prevention and Research.”

Looking ahead, Kaskutas sees policy changes like this as opportunities for public health researchers and clinicians. “This project demonstrates the important role in provision of resources that public health professionals can play. Our Washington University team quickly responded to fulfill a need that was created by a federal policy change—in this case, construction worksite safety through OSHA's change in standards. It could just as easily have been new practice guidelines, state laws or employment policies that could have presented the opportunity. Providing resources and guidance to help people navigate these new policies is an important role in public health that occupational therapists can fill.”

“The Fall Protection Resource for New Home Construction website is the most comprehensive resource of its type in the nation. I hope home builders will use the information on fall protection methods and equipment to save their workers' lives.”

– Jim Maddux, Directorate of Construction, OSHA



Visit the Fall Prevention Website at
ot.wustl.edu/fptech/homepage.htm

Parenting with disabilities

BY KARA OVERTON



Jackie Henderson and her 3-year-old son, Chase, demonstrate a piece of adaptive equipment as Carla Walker, OTD '14, OTR/L, (right) looks on. The harness is designed for use by parents in a wheelchair so that they can safely and securely allow the child to ride in his or her lap when out and about in the community.

Carla Walker, OTD '14, OTR/L, has a vision and a plan for her career, but it doesn't stop there. Her vision is one that will bring about change and provide foundational support services to parents with disabilities in the St. Louis community. What started out as a project for her OTD work in 2011 has grown into a full-blown passion and is about to take flight through the Program's Community Practice.

Walker is a clinician in Community Practice who has spent the majority of her career helping clients with disabilities overcome barriers so they can live their lives meaningfully and do the things they want and need to do. Since she came to the Program in 2011, much of this work has been in the seating, mobility, and assistive technology (AT) clinic, as well as in the Occupational Performance Center (OPC). Prior to her time at the Program in Occupational Therapy (WUOT), she served as the Director of Assistive Technology at Paraquid, where she specialized in AT for nine years. "Through the course of my work, I've begun to see a need emerge within our community," shares Walker. "Some parents with disabilities may benefit from adaptive strategies to complete tasks such as bathing, feeding, dressing,

carrying and lifting their children. Assisting parents to find an alternative approach that meets their needs for baby care and/or childcare tasks is perfectly in line with our client-centered skill set as occupational therapists."

Walker first began to realize the need when she was still working at Paraquid and was serving as a project manager on the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) funded grant, "Assistive Technology in the Community" under WUOT faculty member David B. Gray, PhD. Gray approached her about helping a family in the community who had reached out to him. As a parent with a disability, Gray would often receive requests for support, assistance, and advice from parents in the community when they would learn

of his connection to Through the Looking Glass (TLG), a national organization funded by NIDRR. Based in Berkeley, Calif., TLG connects families with disabilities throughout the country. Although they provide OT interventions for families locally, they cannot directly provide services to families in St. Louis. Additionally, since 2006, Paraquid has offered the Family Participation Program (FPP) as a support group for parents with physical disabilities who have children 12 years of age and younger, but with its group approach, does not provide individualized problem solving or clinical intervention.

"Over the years, Dr. Gray would continue to send me any requests that he received, and I continued to address them," says Walker. "When I decided to transition to WUOT in 2011 to pursue my doctorate degree, this unmet need in our community became my focus and the foundation of my work."



“Within Community Practice, our vision is to *impact, empower* and *improve* the lives of everyone we serve,” says Nellis. “We accomplish that by providing clinical interventions that are evidence-based and relevant to our clients and the community.”

— Pat Nellis, MBA, OTR/L

With Gray as her mentor and funded by a local grant from the Community University Health Research Partnership (CUHRP), Walker began to gather data and collect responses from parents in the community who had disabilities and children at home. The results began to uncover a variety of needs reported by the participants, including requests for help identifying adaptive baby gear and equipment, locating resources in the community, and finding advocacy in the court system. "We asked participants to identify and score those parenting tasks that are most important to them, as well as those that are the most difficult to perform," shares Walker. Through this process, they identified many needs that are not currently met in our community, but can and should be, says Walker, who presented the findings to Pat Nellis, manager of Community Practice.

"Within Community Practice, our vision is to impact, empower and improve the lives of everyone we serve," says Nellis. "We accomplish that by providing clinical interventions that are evidence-based and relevant to our clients and the community. When Carla presented her information, it became clear that this is a need we can help fill by offering individualized, clinical services to parents with a disability through Community Practice. Carla's expertise in this area will be a tremendous help to clients who are in need of this type of support."

As is typically the case with occupational therapy, the exact services will vary depending upon the client's individual needs. Regardless of the age or stage of the child, however, Walker shares that she is ready and available to help empower parents to meet their goals for family participation. "Every stage of childhood brings about change and opens up numerous opportunities for the family to manage and address," she

says. "For families who are just embarking on the parenting journey, I can assist with the planning efforts throughout the pregnancy or adoption by making recommendations for baby gear, helping create birth plans in the hospital, or visiting the home to make sure it's functional for both the baby and parent." As children grow and develop, new challenges and barriers for the parent may also arise. "For parents with mobility limitations, finding ways to manage the environment and keep children safe may be an area of focus, especially during the toddler years. Or, if the school environment is not as accessible as it should be and a parent is having difficulty participating in school activities, that's a way that I can help," she adds. "This program is about empowering parents with a disability to have the confidence, knowledge and skills they need to be the type of parent they want to be."

Marketing efforts are underway to begin promoting this new service offered through Community Practice. Interested families can contact the practice directly to schedule an appointment, or they may be referred for services by an area health care provider via the Community Practice website. "This is my dream come true," says Walker. "I am so thrilled to have the opportunity to launch a program that has a true need in the community and that connects research and practice. Thanks to Dr. Gray's connections to TLG, I was able to complete part of

Through the Parents With Disabilities Program, we can:

- assist with pregnancy planning, in both natural births and adoptions
- schedule home visits to evaluate the spaces and equipment for baby care/childcare ease
- provide advocacy when developing birth plans, making arrangements with health care providers, or during court proceedings
- manage wheelchair adjustments needed during pregnancy
- complete performance evaluations for skill development or use in legal matters
- provide ergonomic techniques for protecting the parent's body during baby care tasks
- suggest resources on how to manage attendant or family support in parenting
- evaluate school accessibility
- perform developmental follow-ups as the child grows
- lend resources and adaptive equipment for clients to try before they buy

During a home visit, we can make recommendations for:

- assistive technology and adaptive baby care equipment needs
- seating and mobility health and comfort during pregnancy as a result of body changes and weight fluctuations
- best practices in feeding, transporting, diapering, and bathing kids

my apprenticeship at TLG, learning best practices from one of the nation's leading experts in the field and occupational therapist, Judi Rogers. WUOT has provided me with the structure and format to truly become knowledgeable in a particular focus area, so that now, we can develop what I hope will be a truly viable program for the community."

“This program is about empowering parents with a disability to have the *confidence, knowledge* and *skills* they need to be the type of parent they want to be.” — Carla Walker, OTD '14, OTR/L

A place to call home

Bridging the biomedical and sociocultural needs of the homeless

BY MICHELE BERHORST



Adam Pearson, OTD '11, OTR/L, visits with Donald Hamilton in his apartment.

After being chronically homeless for years, Donald Hamilton is happy to call the Garfield Place Apartments Safe Haven home.

“Out there on your own, it’s bad. I’ve been in poverty housing, went from shelter to shelter and have been out on the street. I’ve spent the last 30 years on disability and I’m in constant pain every day. I finally got tired of not having the things I really wanted and I decided to find my way back,” Hamilton says.

Once a successful welder, Hamilton’s health quickly declined after a second floor porch fell in on him. “I broke everything and was in a wheelchair for two years. At one point, my healthcare providers told me I would never walk again. It took a lot of therapy but eventually I was able to walk—but I couldn’t work.”

Hamilton found his way to Peter and Paul Community Services, a nonprofit human services agency in St. Louis, Mo., that provides housing and supportive services to those who are chronically homeless. Their newest program, the Safe Haven, is designed to reach people like Hamilton and provide them with supportive services. Garfield Place Apartments provides supportive housing for clients and participants of the Safe Haven program. WUOT alumni **Adam Pearson, OTD '11, OTR/L**, program director of the Safe Haven Program and site manager for Garfield Place Apartments, helped develop an application process for residents.

“We created an assessment that gauges an individual’s need for housing. We asked about their past history in housing, if they were able to pay their rent, whether they needed additional assistance with medications, and if there had been a history of altercations with previous landlords or other tenants. If there were such issues in the past, we gave them priority,” Pearson explains. “The reasoning was we wanted to make sure our program truly serves those with the greatest need. If someone applied who was fairly stable and infrequently homeless, they may not need our services as much as someone with a mental illness or other chronic health conditions does.”

Formerly the Garfield School, the facility has rented out all of its 25 one-bedroom apartments available for lease since opening its doors in October. Each resident receives assistance with his or her rent in the form of Shelter Plus Care vouchers. The state-funded program provides alternate revenue



for Garfield Place Apartments, which has a \$650,000 yearly operating budget (approximately \$26,000 per person). Now that all the units are occupied, Pearson is focusing his attention on how to improve the activities of daily life for the residents and engage them in the community.

“Our residents are taking inventory of their skills sets and are figuring out what their individual goals and capabilities are. Once we have established what those are, we can plug people into the community and volunteer opportunities that give them meaning,” Pearson says. “One thing

Those who
are chronically
homeless have
an average
lifespan of

42
— TO —
52
YEARS OF AGE

I learned during the development of this project is the importance of community engagement and support. We spoke with four different neighborhood associations and made presentations to the members to help them understand we provide permanent housing. All our residents sign one-year leases. The fewer people there are on the streets, the better the community can be as a whole. My goal is to have our residents be present at the neighborhood association meetings around the area so they can be a part of the conversation on how we can make our community stronger together.”

Pearson was originally drawn to occupational therapy because of his interest in human function and achievement. “For me, I have always enjoyed helping people achieve small goals. Originally, I wanted

to work in a pediatric setting. However, the more exposure I had with low income and homeless populations made me realize these were individuals with mental illness, spinal cord injury, stroke—health conditions that OTs typically work with. However, the added burden they face of not having income or shelter makes their conditions exponentially worse.

A statistic I find startling is those who are chronically homeless have an average lifespan of 42 to 52 years of age. The average lifespan of the general population is around 78. According to the literature and best practices, if we can provide stable, supportive housing, we can increase somebody’s lifespan and make life more meaningful for them,” Pearson says.

That has certainly been the case for Hamilton.

“I want to be more than just a resident here. I can’t weld anymore, but I can help out with gardening, sweeping floors, whatever needs to be done around the building. I also visit the shelter I was at before and encourage other homeless people not to give up. I want to let them know they are not forgotten and they can get to where I am. I’m ready to give back to the community. You can’t live unless you give,” Hamilton says.

Pearson credits the Program’s faculty, staff and his classmates for teaching him how much occupational therapy can offer the community at large. “The world is a big place and there are so many people who could use the services of OT and not just in the traditional sense. Being a part of a transdisciplinary team that surrounds the individual with services so they can accomplish their goals is very rewarding. Traditional OT is just a small part of what we can do as practitioners. The big part is if we can help with issues like homelessness, then everyone’s participation in the community improves,” Pearson says.

Supporting students through scholarships

Savannah Sisk, OTD/S '16, knew for a long time that she wanted to enter a profession where she could work to empower people to reach their full potential.



Savannah Sisk

Her sister has a cognitive disability, is hard of hearing, and struggles with self-regulation. Savannah learned much from her sister about what it means to be marginalized and subjected to lower expectations. Her experiences growing up shaped Savannah into a compassionate person with a strong passion for social justice, and she felt that occupational therapy will help her achieve her goals.

"I am so grateful to have been chosen as a scholarship recipient. The scholarship support made the difference in my decision to attend the Washington University Program in Occupational Therapy. It actually made the program one of the most affordable options I had. I feel blessed to have the chance to attend such a well-respected university with the added relief of a lessened financial burden. Hopefully, one day I will be in the position of being able to pay it forward!" says Sisk.

Please help support future occupational therapists with a donation to the Program in Occupational Therapy Scholarship Fund. A gift to the Program fills an immediate need by lessening the debt burden on our students, allowing them to focus on their education and training. Donations also may be made in honor or in memory of an individual. Checks should be payable to Washington University and mailed to:

The Program in Occupational Therapy
Washington University School of Medicine
4444 Forest Park Ave., CB 8505
St. Louis, MO 63108-2212
Give online at through our website at ot.wustl.edu/alumni

Below are the Class Notes we received in 2014.

1985

Carla Cay (Niemeyer) Williams, BSOT

Cay has published a book with colleague Marci Laurel, CCC, SLP, titled, "Our Hearts' Desire: For Parents Navigating the Journey of Sensory Processing Challenges." She is the Director of KidPower Therapy Associates in Albuquerque, N.M.

1988

Vicki Corich, BSOT

Corich has worked as a school-based therapist for the past 10 years in the Atlanta, Ga., area. She has also held a variety of positions, mostly school-based, all over the country and in Europe. Corich has continued her education with graphic and web design classes. She has incorporated those skills into her OT practice and is now able to create products for her students.

1996

Katy Tidd Sullivan, MSOT

Sullivan is currently in private practice in London, Ontario, Canada, and would love to catch up with her classmates.

2000

Jennifer (Topolewski) Houck, MSOT

Houck just celebrated one year of marriage, and the good news of clean scans after undergoing major surgery for pancreatic cancer. She says she is loving life and enjoying every day!

2009

Lauren Budreau, MSOT

Budreau married Kris Weigle on June 6, 2009. The couple welcomed their daughter, Lillian Marie, on June 1, 2011, and their son, Wesley Walker, on April 22, 2013. Budreau began her OT career at Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital in Wheaton, Ill., before moving to Indiana. There, she had a short stint in a SNF setting before working in acute care for a year and a half. Budreau began working at Lafayette Regional Rehabilitation Hospital in October 2013.

2010

Leslie Addison, OTD

Addison has created an app available in the Apple store titled, "TherapyWhiz." The purpose of the app is to provide therapists and students with a quick reference for frequently used therapy norms and diagnoses, and provide some basic therapeutic ideas. The app focuses on hand therapy, but neuro and peds apps are being developed.

2012

Quinn Tyminski, MSOT

Tyminski, has been working at the Labre Center, part of Peter and Paul Community Services in St. Louis, Mo. The Labre Center is a transitional housing facility for clients who have been homeless and have been diagnosed with an Axis I mental health disorder. Tyminski, is on the adjunct faculty at the Saint Louis University OT program. Additionally, she has been speaking about mental health OT to numerous St. Louis OT schools.

2013

Justin and Chelsea (Hejnal) Jones, MSOT

Justin and Chelsea married in May 2014 in Farmington, Mo. Fellow classmate Kari Burch, OTD '14, was a bridesmaid. Both Justin and Chelsea are employed in Jonesboro, Ark., at NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital as acute care therapists.

Share Your News!

Are you a Program alum with news to share? Or do you want to learn what your fellow alumni are up to these days? If you would like to submit Class Notes or update your contact information, visit ot.wustl.edu/alumni and click the arrow button to use the online form. Class Notes can include career advancements, relocations, awards and honors, marriage or birth announcements and more. We want to stay connected to you, so please submit your Class Notes today!

2015 Continuing Education Schedule

Friday, June 5

Assessments for Executive Dysfunction following stroke and other mild neurological injuries

Timothy Wolf, OTD, MSCI, OTR/L

Friday, June 12

Where it's AT: Assistive Technology in 2015

Sue Tucker, OTD, OTR/L

Friday, October 16

Upper extremity stroke rehabilitation: A framework for implementing task-specific training into clinical practice

Rebecca Birkenmeier, OTD, OTR/L

Kimberly Waddell, MS, OTR/L

Friday, October 23

Navigating low vision and driving challenges in aging adults

Peggy Barco, OTD, OTR/L, SCDCM

Monica Perlmutter, OTD, OTR/L, SCLV

The Program in Occupational Therapy at Washington University in St. Louis is an AOTA Approved Provider of continuing education. The assignment of AOTA CEUs does not imply endorsement of specific course content, products, or clinical procedures by AOTA.



Evidenced by our commitment to excellence through research, innovation and extraordinary clinical care, the Program in Occupational Therapy promotes an atmosphere of lifelong learning for students, team members, clients, and community providers. As one of the leading occupational therapy programs in the country, our faculty and team members are dedicated to staying abreast of the latest developments and advances in occupational therapy and the science behind it, and are committed to sharing their expertise and experience with others through the continuing education program.

Our professional programming brings together learning across multiple disciplines to help participants strengthen their toolbox, as well as equips them to best care for clients and families amid a constantly evolving health-care landscape.

Student happenings



Students were on hand Oct. 25 to visit with area families at the "not-so-scary" Halloween event sponsored by WUOT.



Second-year students present in the Sensorimotor Interventions Evidence-Review Poster Session on Dec. 2.



More than 60 WUOT students attended the 2014 AOTA/NBCOT National Student Conclave held in St. Louis, Mo., in November.



Students participated in the annual gingerbread contest on Dec. 3.



For the second-year Integrated Curriculum Experience (ICE), students worked with "standard patient" actors to recreate occupational therapy interviews, assessments, and interventions with a client on Dec. 10.



Case Based Learning

Second-year students in the Case Based Learning II class practiced administering assessments and transfers with actual clients in a hands-on learning experience. Kelly Taylor, OTD/S '16, prepares a client for a safe transfer using a gait belt.

Washington University School of Medicine
Program in Occupational Therapy
4444 Forest Park Ave., CB 8505
St. Louis, MO 63108-2212

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Occupational Therapy



Tweets we love
@WUSTLOT

"Love that #occupationaltherapy is represented at #GSA14! @karenAOTA & @WUSTLOT's Molly Murphy promoting OT."
- AOTAEvents @AOTAEvents

Upcoming events



April 16 - 18, 2015

**AOTA 95th Annual
Conference & Expo**

Nashville, TN
Music City Center - Booth #1023

*You are invited to the WUOT Alumni
Reception on April 18 from 7:30 - 10:00 p.m.
in the Broadway AB Ballroom on the
second floor of the Omni Nashville Hotel.
RSVP to wuotinfo@wusm.wustl.edu
or (800) 279-3229 by **April 6.***



April 24, 2015

OT Scholarship Day

Eric P. Newman Educational Center
(EPNEC)
320 S. Euclid Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63110

*Please register online by **April 10** at
<http://bit.ly/otsd2015>*



May 15, 2015

Commencement

May 22, 2015

**Memorial Symposium
for David B. Gray, PhD**

Details on page 11.

The Program in Occupational Therapy is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-3449. ACOTE's telephone number, c/o AOTA, is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is www.acoteonline.org.