

WYOTA Newsletter



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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

WyOTA Members:

There are some pretty exciting things happening in the occupational therapy community within Wyoming. This was evident at the annual WyOTA conference September 20-22 in Lander when over 90 therapists joined together for education, networking and socialization. Sheri Montgomery and Amy Rushforth coordinated a tremendous educational program that included presentations by Penny Moyers, AOTA President; University of North Dakota faculty, Jan Stube and Anne Haskins; Alfred G. Bracciano and Karen Kangas. So many therapists that attended stopped me and raved about the conference program but in addition to the educational offerings the coming together of the therapeutic community was really valuable.

At the conference there was 100% attendance of the University of North Dakota at Casper College students, the future leaders of WyOTA. These students had an infectious excitement for the profession of occupational therapy and we all caught it! This was especially evident at the social sponsored by the University of North Dakota when it was announced that WyOTA would sponsor two students to attend the AOTA – NBCOT Student Conclave, which will occur in November in Pittsburg. Josiah Hadsall, the WyOTA Student Board Member, and Kelsey Berg will receive the sponsorships and in addition several other University of North Dakota at Casper College students will attend. These students will be bringing back a National perspective of valuable information to the other OT and OTA students in Wyoming.

At the Annual Business meeting I discussed my initiative to mentor new leaders in the occupational therapy community in Wyoming. Each WyOTA Board member will mentor at least one other therapist to increase their comfort and competence in leadership roles.

A Bylaws amendment was presented and approved unanimously that will combine the positions of WyOTA Secretary and Treasurer. Heather Lyman, the current Treasurer, will fill this combined position to complete the Treasurers term of office. This change will allow for more efficiency in the membership application process and will eliminate duplication of duties.

The WyOTA Community Advocate Award is presented to someone who is not an occupational therapist for their support of the profession. This year's award was presented to Vicki Spires, Administrator of the Wyoming Board of Occupational Therapy. Mrs. Spires was not able to be in attendance and Amy Rushforth, Board Member accepted the award for her and shared Mrs. Spires written comments. Sheri Montgomery was provided with a service award for her service to the association as President. Sheri Montgomery and Amy Rushforth were presented with thank you gifts for their work putting together a fabulous WyOTA Conference.

Sarah King, OT/L
President of WyOTA

Special Interest Topics:

2007 Conference Pics
WyOTA Happenings
Annual Reports

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Advocate Now!

STOP THE THERAPY CAP DAY

October 31, 2007

Have you used the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process to assure that your patients get the therapy they need? Those exceptions are about to go away...

In **less than 80 days** the therapy caps will return without exceptions if Congress does not act. The current exceptions process expires on December 31, 2007 and Congress is quickly running out of time to take action on essential Medicare provisions. In addition to the return of the therapy cap, without Congressional action occupational therapists will also be subject to a cut in 2008 payments under the Medicare physician fee schedule of nearly 10%. It is paramount that occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, students of occupational therapy and the patients we serve **TAKE ACTION NOW!**

AOTA, along with leading therapy and patient organizations, is hosting a focused advocacy effort to make sure Congress hears the message that the **“caps must be stopped”** and that the **“cuts must be prevented.”** To help ensure that Congress hears this message loud and clear, we need you to participate.

- **Come to Washington, DC for “Stop the Therapy Caps” Advocacy Day on October 31, 2007.**

Contact AOTA’s Federal Affairs Department to RSVP and register Today at fad@aota.org or 1-800-SAY-AOTA.

- **Advocate from “home.” Call the “Stop the Therapy Caps” toll-free call-in line October 29 through November 2.**

Call 866-346-2770 from October 29 to November 2 and be briefed on the key message to share with your Congressional office on the therapy cap and then be patched directly to your Members of Congress.

- **Make your voice heard! Participate by sending emails and letters to Capitol Hill to express the need to pass legislation NOW to stop the therapy caps from returning without exceptions and to prevent the 10% cut in the physician fee schedule.**

To email or to print a letter to send to Congress, please visit AOTA’s Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/aota/home/>.

Additional information

For additional information and the latest updates on the therapy caps and fee schedule updates visit AOTA’s Web site at www.aota.org and AOTA’s Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/aota/home/>.

AOTA, Federal Affairs
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WyOTA Annual Report

September 2006 to September 2007

- **Established the WyOTA Foundation to allow tax deductible contributions to support OT education**
- **Successfully testified in front of Wyoming Senate committee to prevent creation of Athletic Trainer/Occupational Therapy Regulatory Board**
- **Worked with PT Association and Athletic Trainers to include scope of practice in Athletic Trainers Practice Act at state level**
- **Participated in Legislative Pasta Bowl to promote occupational therapy**
- **Participated and presented at the University of North Dakota at Casper College Occupational Therapy Department Occupational Therapy Month Celebration**
- **Attended annual Affiliation of State Association Presidents meeting in St Louis**
- **Continued networking to improve third party reimbursement of OT services**
- **Participation in review of Rules and Regulations for Medicaid and Wyoming Waiver programs**
- **Worked with AOTA to provide input on a bill that was being sponsored by Representative Craig Thomas that would have allowed Athletic Trainers to provide and bill for Lymphodema therapy**
- **Increased member's payment options for Association activities**





OT Students from UND at Casper College with AOTA President Penny Moyers.

coursework as well as working on their graduate scholarly projects and preparing for their second Level II fieldwork three experiences.

Centennial Vision

"We envision that occupational therapy is a powerful, widely recognized, science-driven, and evidence-based profession with a globally connected and diverse workforce meeting society's occupational needs."

UND/CC Occupational Therapy Program

Heather Hanson, MOTS and Lacey Gramstad, MOTS

The 2007-2008 school year has started off with a bang! All three years of UND/CC occupational therapy students just returned from the Annual WyOTA conference in Lander. Every student felt that the experience was very beneficial as it was a great opportunity to be involved in the professional realm of occupational therapy. Thank you to all of the therapists at the conference for expanding our educational experience and generously sharing your time. We would also like to thank WyOTA for making all of this possible!

The Occupational Therapy Club has resumed for the year and the members are already in the stages of planning their April mini-conference and community events for the year. New officers were elected and fundraising efforts have commenced.

The fifteenth class of the Master's of Occupational Therapy Program is well into their second semester of the program. They are adjusting well to the rigorous demands of the program and are beginning to grow into professional level students. The second year students are beginning their fieldwork experiences, as they are now on their first of four Level I fieldworks this year. This semester they are starting to take over the mentor role for the year 1 students and are developing their leadership skills. The year three students just returned from their first Level II fieldworks, and with a fantastic view of what's ahead, are eagerly anticipating their upcoming graduation in May. They are busy completing their last semester of academic



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We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.wyota.org

STUDENT AOTPAC FUNDRAISER

We all know that Occupational Therapists are very creative and we are seeing this in the students attending the UND-Casper College OT program. The OT Club organized a Pumpkin carving contest held October 25th at Casper College. The entry fee help to raise monies for the AOTPAC.

The students heard about the issues facing the profession in regards to the Medicare Cap and wanted to do something about it, so they organized a timely event and challenged the students attending the main campus at UND. What a great idea!

If you are interested in helping the students raise funds for AOTPAC, please contact Josiah Hadsall at jhadsall@medicine.nodak.edu. He will be happy to work with to in making this tax-deductible contribution. The monies raised will be send to AOTPAC for their use in working on behalf of the profession on issues that affect each and every one of us.

Consider supporting the students and make your donation.

**Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association
Executive Board Meeting
September 21, 2007**

The meeting was held in Lander, Wyoming and was called to order at 4:55 pm by Sarah King, President. Board Members present were Janet Pisacka, Vice President, Josiah Hadsell, OT Student Representative, Sheri Montgomery, Past President and Conference Co-chairperson and Amy Rushforth, Conference Co-chairperson. Minutes from the 2006 meeting were not available and will be approved at the next meeting.

Sarah discussed her hope to support Penny Moyer's efforts to promote mentoring of new leaders in the occupational therapy community. Each WyOTA Board Member was asked to mentor members to fill leadership positions in the future.

Open Issues:

Sarah reported the general financial status of the Association including the establishment of an Educational Foundation to support WyOTA educational programming as well as allowing tax-deductible contributions and grants to support OT education.

The Board agreed that it would be wise to propose a bylaws change to Membership to combine the positions of Secretary and Treasurer. This would allow for a more efficient process related to membership and collection of funds. The current Treasurer believes that the duties are not too much for one person and in many respects would be easier. The Secretary position is to be reelected at this conference but instead will remain vacant and Heather Lyman will continue in the combined position for the remainder of the Treasurer's term. Proposed Bylaws changes were reviewed and will be brought to the membership to be approved.

Methods to improve student involvement were discussed the unanimous decision to add a Board position for an occupational therapy assistant student. Josiah reported on his efforts to promote professional membership with UND students and with efforts to involve Casper College Students.

The success of this year's conference was discussed and it was felt that trying to have conference in Casper next year will also allow students to be involved with planning building on their excitement from this year's conference. The need for a conference coordinator in the area will be discussed at the general membership meeting.

The Pasta Bowl was discussed including possible alternative methods to keep Legislators aware of the occupational therapy profession. All agreed we need to keep a legislative presence.

New Business:

AOTA Student Conclave: It was decided that WyOTA will sponsor two students to attend this conclave in Pittsburg, PA. Sponsorship will include conference fee, airfare from Denver, and hotel and ground transportation in Pittsburg. Josiah Hadsell will attend as WyOTA's Student member and an application process will be developed for the additional student. Each applicant must be a member of WyOTA and AOTA.

Sarah reviewed legislative efforts that WyOTA has addressed over the last year including Member responses related to Athletic Trainer's effort to be included in the Wyoming Board of Occupational Therapy, and correspondence related to a Wyoming United States Senator's sponsorship of a bill allowing Athletic Trainers to provide lymphodema therapies. The Associations participation in last year's Legislative Pasta Bowl was discussed.

Sheri reported on Medicaid reimbursement issues related to occupational therapy services. WyOTA will contact Medicaid to set up a task force to discuss these issues. Sarah will contact the Wyoming Speech and Language Therapy Association and the Physical Therapy Association to determine their interest in being included in this process.

Sheri Montgomery, Past President, provided information on an available position on the Wyoming Workman's Compensation Rehabilitation Board.

The agenda for the 2007 General Membership meeting was finalized

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45.

**Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association
Annual Meeting of the Membership
September 22, 2007**

The meeting was held in Lander, Wyoming and was called to order at 12:20 pm by Sarah King, President. Minutes from the 2006 meeting were not available and will be approved at the next meeting.

Sarah discussed her hope to support Penny Moyer's efforts to promote mentoring of new leaders in the occupational therapy community. Each WyOTA Board Member will mentor members to fill leadership positions in the future.

Open Issues:

Representative Assembly Report: Jean Owsley, Representative to AOTA, was not present at the meeting. Sarah gave information about the AOTA representative process and its purpose in the AOTA structure. Members were instructed how to access reports of representative assembly business on the WyOTA Web Site.

Sarah reported the general financial status of the Association including the establishment of an Educational Foundation to support WyOTA educational programming as well as allowing tax-deductible contributions and grants to support OT education.

Leadership Opportunities:

Sheri Montgomery, Past President, provided information on an available position on the Wyoming Workman's Compensation Rehabilitation Board.

Sarah shared that there will be a Board position open for an occupational therapy assistant student. In addition WyOTA needs a Legislative Chairperson, a 2008 Conference Chairperson, and Wyoming's Alternate Representative to AOTA. The roles of each of these positions were discussed.

Wyoming Board of Occupational Therapy Board Members: The duties and application process for Board Members was reviewed.

New Business:

AOTA Student Conclave: It was announced that WyOTA will sponsor two students to attend this conclave in Pittsburg, PA. Sponsorship will include conference fee, airfare from Denver, and hotel and ground transportation in Pittsburg. Josiah Hadsell will attend as WyOTA's Student member and applications were provided for the additional student. Each applicant must be a member of WyOTA and AOTA.

Sarah reviewed legislative efforts that WyOTA has addressed over the last year including Member responses related to Athletic Trainer's effort to be included in the Wyoming Board of Occupational Therapy, and correspondence related to a Wyoming United States Senator's sponsorship of a bill allowing Athletic Trainers to provide lymphedema therapies. The Association's participation in last year's Legislative Pasta Bowl was discussed.

Sheri reported on Medicaid reimbursement issues related to occupational therapy services. WyOTA will contact Medicaid to set up a task force to discuss these issues. Sarah will contact the Wyoming Speech and Language Therapy Association and the Physical Therapy Association to determine their interest in being included in this process. Member's interested in serving on this task force should contact Sarah.

An update on the 2007 WyOTA Conference was provided. There were 90 attendees and four vendors in attendance. The Wyoming Department of Education, Blind/Deaf Project; Rocky Mountain Power; and the Lander Valley Medical Center provided grants. There is an estimated profit of approximately \$10,000.

Proposed Bylaws amendment was presented that would combine the positions of Secretary and Treasurer. The amendment was approved unanimously. Heather Lyman the current Treasurer will fill this combined position to complete the treasurer's term of office.

Recognitions:

The WyOTA Community Advocate Award is presented to someone who is not an occupational therapist for his or her support of the profession. This year's award was presented to Vicki Spires, Administrator of the Wyoming Board of Occupational Therapy. Mrs. Spires was not able to be in attendance and Amy Rushforth, Board Member accepted the award for her and shared Mrs. Spires written comments. Sheri Montgomery was provided with a service award for her service to the association as President. Sheri Montgomery and Amy Rushforth were presented with thank you gifts for their work putting together a fabulous WyOTA Conference.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55

