



Board Meeting February 8, 2024

In attendance:

Stephanie Lancaster: President	Brandy McCarter - Secretary
Kelsey Vaughn: Treasurer	Elise Foust: Advocacy
Tamara Calhoun: DEI Committee	Morgan Webb: Marketing Chair
Cindy Poole: Membership	Audrey Owens: Continuing Education Committee
Robert Mullaney: East District	Irene Leonidas: LMU
Bhumika Patel: SE District	Logan Herndon: Mentorship Committee
Akosua Odei: Student Rep, UTHSC	Jennifer Crowder: NE District
Jennifer Henderson: Student Involvement Comm.	Claire Herring: West District
Sandy Dicks: Rural West District	Gigi Jordan: Middle District
Kimberly Jessee: NE District	Martin Davis: SE District
Kristen Hocklander: Student Rep, Belmont	Kate Henderson: Student Rep, UTC
Jerika Emert: Student Rep, Milligan	

Meeting Minutes

Role Call by Brandy McCarter, Secretary

- Motion to approve January Meeting Minutes
To accept-
To second-

New Business by Stephanie Lancaster, President

- Trialing a new system for keeping up with monthly meeting agendas and drafts of minutes from meetings: both can be accessed via this link -
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ScmPM5i2eddL0GJGLHkyGOzuBLo0wZuVLfj6_oBjLzw/edit?usp=sharing
- I will continue to send out the agenda early in the week during the week of our monthly meeting but it will be in the form of a link instead of a document attachment. The link will be to a folder where last month's minutes are housed for proofing before we vote to finalize and the current month's agenda will be for your reference. Note that the Zoom link and the link to the Board Meeting Resources folder will not change from month to month and will always be listed at the very top of the agenda for that month's Board meeting.
- Would Board members like me to send out calendar invitations for meetings?
- Forward momentum with the ASAP Management Co. process! Working towards "economy of scale" as we move into sharing resources in this way. The timeline is approximately 6-8 weeks.
- Student Board members - you may use the following code to renew your membership for free in 2024: programrep24
- Note that the commitment is to attend at least 75% (9 of 12) of meetings per year and for any that have to be missed, send a representative with a report and/or email your report before the meeting to president@tnota.org
- Do not share this code with anyone else.
- If you have problems using this code, email me!
- Refresher on how to access Board-only materials - must be logged in under your own account on the TNOTA website and then go to About Us >> TNOTA Executive Board >> Executive Board Access.
- Standardized Zoom login: Participants may log in to the TNOTA Zoom Room for all meetings and events at any time using this link:
<https://zoom.us/j/9762734821?pwd=U0ROZmszVDcrSSSt3ai9XVWJHcGxwdz09>
- Passcode: tnota (all lower case!)

TNOTA Conference Report- Valery Hanks, Vice President

- We have a solid committee (thanks to the Communications Committee for help with that). First meeting is scheduled for the third week of Feb. Working on reaching out to local hotels to get a block of rooms at reduced pricing. More to

come on that. If you have connections with anyone that might be interested in sponsoring, send them our way.

Treasury Report- Kelsey Vaughn, Treasurer

- Baby Boy Vaughn born on Jan. 22
- Income: \$6,422.48
- Expenses: \$5,048.44
- Highest Income: Member Dues
- Highest Expense: Legal & Professional Fees
- Net Income: \$1,374.04
- YTD Net Income: \$1,374.04

Membership Report- Cindy Poole

- 1st year OT: 31 (-11 from 2023)
- 1st year OTA: 7 (-11 from 2023)
- OT: 357: (+15 from 2023)
- OTA: 81 (-4 from 2023)
- Retired: 2 (no change from 2023)
- Student: 367 (-50 from 2023)
- 48 people renewed their membership and 16 joined in January. 26 people let their membership lapse and 4 rejoined.
- At this time last year, we had 911 active members compared to 856 active members as of 1/31/2024. This represents a loss of 55 members or a 6% reduction in overall membership numbers from last year. This reduction of 55 members is concentrated in the reduction of student memberships.

Legislative Report- Susan McDonald - unable to attend, sent in report / Courtney Atnip, Lobbyist

- Medicare Home Health Accessibility Act introduced in the 118th Congress: On January 30, Representatives Lloyd Smucker (R-PA), Lloyd Doggett (D – TX), John Joyce, MD (R -PA), and Paul Tonko (D – NY) introduced the Medicare Home Health Accessibility Act (H.R. 7148) which would establish OT as a qualifying Medicare home health benefit. Passage of the bill would mean that the need for occupational therapy would allow a beneficiary to receive home health care services without also having to receive nursing, physical therapy or speech therapy service now required under current Medicare policy. *More information here:*
- <https://www.aota.org/advocacy/advocacy-news/2024/medicare-home-health-accessibility-act-introduced-118-congress>

- Introduction of the REDUCE Act: The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), and APTA Private Practice, applaud new legislation that would lower administrative costs for therapy providers to help mitigate continued payment cuts. Introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Reps. Don Davis, D- N.C., and Lloyd Smucker, R-Pa., as the Remove Duplicative Unnecessary Clerical Exchanges Act, or the REDUCE Act (bill number pending), this bipartisan legislation would streamline the current plan of care certification requirement under Medicare Part B to reduce administrative burden and paperwork for occupational and physical therapists. “This legislation would help relieve some of the pressure currently faced by occupational therapy practitioners in private practice, who have seen year-over-year cuts while operating costs increase. The need to track down a physician's signature when a patient has already been referred to occupational therapy potentially delays care and adds unnecessary administrative costs that have nothing to do with the quality of care,” said AOTA President Alyson Stover, MOT, JD, OTR/L, BCP.
- *More information here:*
- <https://www.aota.org/advocacy/advocacy-news/2024/therapy-groups-applaud-introduction-of-reduce-act>
- Congress Failed to Stop Payment Cuts for Occupational Therapy: Effective January 1, 2024, the overall payment rates for outpatient occupational therapy services under Medicare were reduced by an estimated 3.1% compared to 2023 payments. This decrease follows several years of cuts related to structural issues with the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS). While these cuts are specific to outpatient Medicare therapy payments, many other payors base their payment rates on the MPFS. Despite efforts by AOTA, Congress allowed the cuts to go into effect on January 1. They again failed to act last week when they passed a bill to fund the federal government through March 8. This bill included some crucial Medicare provisions but did not include a fix for MPFS payment cuts.
- Congress is unlikely to act to reduce the MPFS cuts until March when government funding runs out again. It is rumored that if they take action, any fix will not be applied retroactively to January 1 with increases only applied when moving forward. Congress must hear from healthcare providers if they are going to prioritize any long-term fix or even a short-term adjustment. Please write to Congress today and tell them they must stop these ongoing cuts.

- *More information here:*
<https://www.aota.org/advocacy/advocacy-news/2024/congress-fails-to-stop-2024-medicare-cuts>
- WHAT CAN YOU DO? Here is a direct link to Contact Congress and ask them to prevent Medicare Cuts to Occupational Therapy (I did it earlier this month and it was very easy! I also got responses back from 1 of 2 of my Representatives and my Senator.) <https://www.votervoice.net/AOTA/Campaigns/109385/Respond>

Advocacy Report- Elise Foust

- We are working toward establishing advocacy goals based upon responses from the member survey. We are hoping to plan an advocacy CE event in April for OT month! Members requested this based upon the survey. Planning an advocacy committee meeting by the end of the month.

Communications & Social Media- Morgan Webb

Marketing Report:

- Please [submit](#) any upcoming CEUs/district events for 2024 so these can be put on the TNOTA calendar and advertised appropriately.
- Memberclicks Research Request Form was recently updated to allow files to be uploaded if needed.
- The TNOTA website was updated to include a new [“Open Volunteer Positions” webpage](#).

Continuing Education- Audrey Owens

- We are still approving courses, with a steady flow to approve courses.
- We would like an Option for renewal of approval, and to adjust the link to courses and to manage them better.
- Open volunteer position for the Continuing education committee.

Diversity & Inclusion- Tamara Calhoun

- Meeting on Feb 15 to discuss quarterly chat: health literacy with bipod groups
- Event on March 26 at 7pm

Mental Health- no report.

Mentorship- Logan Herndon

- Just started our 5th cycle- we are off to good start with a meet and greet.
- We have 18 pairings which is double from last year
- Upcoming CEU from Cindy Blackwell Feb 28

OTA Connect- No Representative present, report sent in.

- Social media series to launch relatively soon by the end of the month.
- Live panel discussion Wednesday March 27th as adjunct to social media series
- Conference interest meet up at state conference
(Possible meeting setup to meet up at conference for anyone interested or in OTA connect)? Just an idea
- Next OTA connect group meeting Thursday March 27th with topics around establishing and building the relationship between OTAs and OTs and choice of topics for May meeting

Philanthropy- no report**Student Involvement- Jennifer Henderson**

- Trying to add in a couple of programs- Rep from Concord hopefully in future.
- Working on gathering students (4-5) for conference committee.
- Tues 2/27 at 6, Dr. Rita Flemming Stalling speaker for student involvement committee chat. Capped at 100 guests, link in website under events to register.

TNOTF- no report**East District- Robert Mullaney**

- Robert introduced himself, he is the program director at South College in Knoxville, and new to TN area.
- Planning to offer at least 2 CEUs and 2 supportive events to get colleagues together.

Middle District- Gigi Jordan

- Starting to plan & schedule events for 2024.
- May 2: Integrative mental health practice & biopsychosocial model with Mental Health CoP
- June 12: Car seat safety w/ Missy Bryan (Full day)
- Mental health workshop in fall (date tbd)

Northeast District- Jennifer Crowder/Kimberly Jessee

- Trying to connect with ETSU and Milligan
- Trying to get a date pinned for the postponed speaker from the fall

Rural West District- Sandy Dicks

- Currently planning for the year

Southeast District- Martin Davis/Bhumika Patel

- We are continuing to work with our district student rep (UTC) to establish a role/responsibilities that are part of our district representation.
- Created a Facebook page that is specific to OTs in the Chattanooga area as a way to build community, share information, network, etc.

West District- Claire Herring

- We had a CEU speaker lined up for February but she will be out of the country so we had to pivot and she will serve as our August speaker! Dr. Toni Thompson will be speaking on human trafficking.
- Our next West District Event will be on March 5th from 5:30-7:30 at the Half Shell here in Memphis. The event is on the TNOTA website and calendar for people to RSVP because there is a capacity limit.
- We have been in contact with Kim Musicante to talk about OTs role in oral health for our May event. The UTHSC Dentistry college built a clinic for children and adults with special needs (not in operation just yet). We are working on the details for that CEU event and will update you all in further meetings.

Belmont University- Kristen Hocklander

- 2nd year students getting ready for “Go Baby Go” led by our professors
- 3rd year is on capstone project
- MSOT 2nd year, finishing 2nd Level IIs and preparing to graduate in a few months

Jackson State- No report.**LMU- Irene Leonidas**

- Last week we had our first SOTA meeting
- We are working on capstone and research projects

Milligan- Jericka Emmert

- just held SOTA elections
- planning community event “Joggin for the noggin”
- tshirt fundraising event to pay for our pinning ceremony

Nashville- No report.**Roane- in progress.**

South Nashville- No report.

South Knoxville- in progress.

TSU- No report.

Tenn Wes- No report.

UTC- Kate Henderson

- 1st years just started level I with adults
- 2nd year's are starting geriatric rotation for 2 weeks
- Currently working on capstone ideas
- We are attending the AOTA conference
- 3rd year working on capstone projects

UTHSC- Akosua Odei

- 2nd year got assignments for FW rotations for March
- 3rd years are in 2nd level II FW rotations

Walter State-

- New rep (membership pending)

Next Meeting- Stephanie Lancaster

- March 14, 2024 at 7 p.m. CST

Motion to adjourn

To accept

To second- Robert Mullaney