

# TNOTA in Action

## Member Newsletter

Gigi Jordan MS, OTR/L

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### Heading to the AOTA Conference?

Join us for the TNOTA member meetup!

**When:** Friday, April 5 at 6pm

**Where:** The Pelican Bar at the Sheraton Hotel.

Hope to see you there!



### See you in Chattanooga!

Save the date for the 2019 TNOTA Conference!

**When:** September 6-7, 2019

**Where:** University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Chattanooga, Tennessee

### Happy OT Month!



### PAMs Course

**When:** May 30-June 2, 2019

**Where:** Jackson Madison General Hospital  
620 Skyline Drive  
Jackson, TN 38301

Participants who complete the thermal workshop will receive 15 CEUs and those completing the electrical workshop will receive 20 CEUs.

Visit [TNOTA.org](http://TNOTA.org) for more information!



# A Letter From the President

## David McGuire MOT, OTR/L

TNOTA Members,

I wanted thank each of you for your membership to TNOTA. Our organization has grown tremendously over the last 4 years. We underwent some major changes a few years ago and I believe it benefited TNOTA and our members greatly. TNOTA has been able to provide new leadership opportunities and your fellow members have stepped up in a major way to fill those roles.

In January of this year, the Executive Board met to set our agenda for 2019. We have some exciting plans for this year and beyond. You will now be receiving a quarterly newsletter to update TNOTA membership on upcoming events and opportunities, we are recording district meetings and hosting virtual meetings for additional CE opportunities for members, and we are also in the process of finalizing a 501c3 named the TNOTA Foundation to manage our scholarships and TNOTA's philanthropic endeavors. At the January meeting we developed and approved an aggressive strategic plan for the next year. We will be asking our members to participate in multiple committees to assist in addressing these organizational goals.

I have had the pleasure of working with some amazing people over the last 4 years and I am proud of the job we have accomplished. We are all volunteering our time in addition to full time jobs, family, and other responsibilities. It takes a lot to commit to TNOTA, but having the opportunity to work with the group that I have has been a truly once in a lifetime experience.

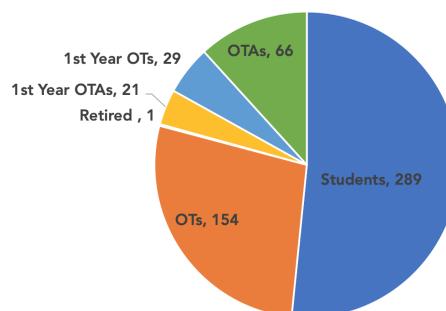
We just added an exceptional group of people to the Executive Board that will contribute to the further growth and success of TNOTA. Cindy Blackwell is the President-Elect and she will do an extraordinary job serving as President and leading TNOTA over the next couple of years.

It has been an honor and pleasure serving as the President of TNOTA. I am forever grateful for those I've had the opportunity to serve with. Once again, thank you for your membership for your support, without you TNOTA would not exist.

Regards,

David S. McGuire, OTR/L

President, Tennessee Occupational Therapy Association



### Stay Connected



@TNOTA1



@TNOTA2



facebook.com/tnotassociation/

### Membership at a Glance

Total Members: 560



# District Happenings

## East District

The East District hosts our meetings on the third Thursday of the month. Every month we alternate between hosting a CEU event and a networking event. We hope you will join us!

### Upcoming District Meetings

#### April 16 Social Event

Applebee's 2328 W Andrew Johnson Hwy, Morristown, TN

#### May 16 CEU Event

#### June 18 Social Event

Visit [TNOTA.org/events](http://TNOTA.org/events) to find more information on district events as they approach!

We are still looking for a secretary for East District! If you are interested in getting involved in TNOTA at a local level and have a passion for educating the everyday clinician. We encourage you to apply.

If you are interested in attending the district meetings, would like to present at a meeting, are willing to host an East District networking event, or would like to apply for the secretary position, contact Megan at [mcolletti@painconsultants.com](mailto:mcolletti@painconsultants.com)

## West District

### Upcoming District Meetings

#### Tuesday April 16, 7-8:30pm

University of Tennessee Memphis Interested in attending the meeting? Contact Whitney at [whitneyblairjoy@gmail.com](mailto:whitneyblairjoy@gmail.com) for more information



## Middle District

### Upcoming District Meetings

#### April 20, 6:30pm Social Event

First Tennessee Park, Nashville, TN



Join us at the Nashville Sounds vs. San Antonio Missions baseball game as we have an evening of networking and OT fun with the Middle District team to celebrate OT month! Family and friends are welcome!

General admission tickets may be purchased for \$10 at the ticket office the day of the game. We will meet at The Band Box in right field.

RSVP is not required but is appreciated. RSVP by April 19 to Reese at [reesevikram@gmail.com](mailto:reesevikram@gmail.com).

#### May 7 at 7:00pm Virtual CEU Meeting

Presenter: Julia Jones, MS, OTR/L will be speaking on visual perceptual deficits following stroke or brain tumor. Interested in attending this virtual meeting? Contact Morgan at [morgan326@icloud.com](mailto:morgan326@icloud.com) for more information!

## West Rural District

Meetings are held at the last Thursday during scheduled months at 5:30pm, and you can find more information on each in-service opportunity at [tnota.org/events](http://tnota.org/events). Snacks and refreshments are provided. These are wonderful opportunities to gain CEUs, learn new information that can be applied to our profession and improve our skills and knowledge, and to network with other OTs and COTAs within the Jackson, TN area.

The meetings are free for members and \$15 for non-members, We would love to have you join our next meeting!



# Communities of Practice Corner

## Pediatric Community of Practice

Cindy DeRuiter Blackwell, OTD, OTR/L

TNOTA's pediatric Community of Practice (CoP) group is growing! In the past few months, we have added over 55 members to our group. The group is open to all TNOTA members who practice in or are interested in pediatrics. Co-facilitated by myself and Andrea Ball, OTR/L, our CoP calls have covered topics including trauma informed care, school mental health promotion, OT's role under the Every Student Succeeds Act, and addressing the intersection of sensory and behavior concerns. Future call topics will include OT's role in addressing school violence, pediatric seating and car seat safety, and interoception. Members gain valuable insight into timely practice topics and work together to develop their knowledge and skills as pediatric practitioners.



Interested in joining our Pediatric Community of Practice? The group meets virtually on the second Monday of the month to discuss an important area of practice and share valuable resources. All members are welcome! Contact [cderuit2@gmail.com](mailto:cderuit2@gmail.com) for more information. In the meantime, mark your calendars for our next meetings: April 8, May 13, June 10 from 7:00-8:30 pm central. We hope you can join us!

## Mental Health Community of Practice

Kaylin Flamm MOT, OTR/L



Hi members, I am Kaylin Flamm, your new TNOTA Mental Health Chair. I am looking forward to connecting with many of you in the hopes of expanding our community of occupational therapy practitioners who are interested in working, learning, and advocating for occupational therapy in mental health.

Be on the lookout for information regarding a special interest section for mental health. This will be a great way for practitioners across the state to connect, discuss ideas, advocate, educate, and support one another while we address our client's mental health needs across all settings.

Additionally, we would love to develop a mental health subcommittee to help address the wide array of opportunities and obstacles occupational therapy practitioners face in the mental health setting. The top two priorities would be getting Qualified Mental Health Practitioner status for occupational therapists in Tennessee and creating and implementing new mental health specific CEU courses for our profession.

This is an exciting time for occupational therapists as we get back to our roots and refocus on our distinct value in the world of mental health. Wherever you may practice, you have the unique opportunity to advocate for the mental well-being of your clients. I am excited to hear from those of you working in specific mental health settings, those of you have an interest in incorporating mental health into your current setting, and those of you who are interested in advocating for more occupational therapists in mental health.



# Committee Updates

## Student Involvement Committee

**Morgan Webb, OTS**

In light of OT Month, the TNOTA Student Involvement Committee is hosting a "What is OT?" Video Contest to promote the occupational therapy profession, expand awareness of the profession, and explain occupational therapy to consumers and other professions.

**Submission Criteria and Deadline:** Students from OT and OTA programs in Tennessee until April 5th to submit a video! Upload a 2-5 minute video about occupational therapy to YouTube and send your video link to [morgan326@icloud.com](mailto:morgan326@icloud.com)

**Voting:** Videos will be posted on the TNOTA website for members to vote on during the month of April. The winner will be announced April 30, 2019.

**Prize:** The winning video will be featured on the TNOTA website and shown at the September 2019 TNOTA conference in Chattanooga, TN. The winner will also receive a pizza party for their program members!

Have a question regarding contest submission or voting? E-mail Morgan at [morgan326@icloud.com](mailto:morgan326@icloud.com)

## Conference Committee

**Valery Hanks, OTRL, CPAM, C/NDT**

The conference committee is seeking donations for the silent auction at the conference. All proceeds will go toward our scholarship fund. Consider thinking about how you or your department could donate to this meaningful cause. More information to come!



## Advocacy Committee

**Whitney-Blair Joy, OTR/L**

The Advocacy Committee is an exciting new initiative that TNOTA launched in 2019. The goal of this committee is to be the "voice" for occupational therapy practitioners throughout the state of Tennessee.

Initially, the committee will begin by interviewing colleagues and OT students within the determine profession to what their concerns are in academia and areas of practice.

Once these concerns have been identified, we will determine what areas of advocacy we will need to focus on.

The advocacy committee will also be developing templates to send to local government representatives to make them aware of issues that affect occupational therapy practitioners. The committee will also work together to develop templates for letters of medical necessity to help patients obtain DME, especially if they are denied the equipment after the first request.

These are the beginning goals for the advocacy committee and we plan to build upon these goals as time progresses.

Interested in joining the Advocacy Committee? Contact Whitney at [whitneyblairjoy@gmail.com](mailto:whitneyblairjoy@gmail.com) for more information



## Member Spotlight: Alyssa Papan, OTS

My name is Alyssa Papan and I am a 2nd year student in the MOT program at Tennessee State University. I am originally from the south suburbs of Chicago, IL and attended St. Ambrose University in Davenport, IA where I completed by BS in Psychology.

My journey to become an Occupational Therapist started as a little girl trying to play with my cousin who was diagnosed with autism when we were both 3 years old. As we grew older together, so did my passion to promote inclusion and help individuals with disabilities. As a senior in high school, I spent one day observing an occupational therapist in the school that my mother worked in and I knew from that day forward that occupational therapy was the path for me.

Since then I have interned in a skilled nursing facility, worked as a paraprofessional in a special education classroom, volunteered my time with the Women and Gender Studies Group in undergrad, worked as a summer camp counselor, volunteered and completed research at GiGi's Playhouse, volunteered at Pediatric Therapies, and joined the TNOTA board as TSU's Student Representative. In the future, I hope to work as a pediatric clinician in either an outpatient or school-based setting.



**“Our MOT Class of 2019 has participated in inter-professional events [with] ...physical therapists, social workers, nurses, dental hygienists, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, and medical students. These experiences have provided us with the opportunity to advocate for our profession [and] have taught us...how to work together professionally as a team.”**



As a program, our MOT Class of 2019 has participated in inter-professional events in order to learn and grow from other disciplines such as: physical therapists, social workers, nurses, dental hygienists respiratory therapists, pharmacists, and medical students. These experiences have provided us with the opportunity to advocate for our profession, being that majority of the other disciplines were not knowledgeable on OT's scope of practice – which was extremely eye opening. All around, the events have taught us many different ways to intervene, advocate, and how to work together and professionally as a team.



**Congratulations to all 23 TSU 3rd year students for passing their NBCOT exam!**

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**Would you like to be featured in our next member spotlight?**

We are looking for OT practitioners and students to tell their story! Contact Gigi at [gigi.jordan@gmail.com](mailto:gigi.jordan@gmail.com) for more information





# Legislative Updates

## John P. Williams, Esq.

In the last two years, the Tennessee General Assembly has passed two bills which will directly affect occupational therapists:

### **Chapter 396 of the Public Acts of 2017**

#### **Senate Bill 489 (Briggs)**

#### **House Bill 948 (Whitson)**

This law is entitled the Suicide Prevention Training Act. It applies to occupational therapists, alcohol and drug abuse counselors, social workers, professional counselors, marital and family therapists, and clinical pastoral therapists.

In collaboration with the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services was required to develop a model list of suicide prevention training programs and report that model list to the Department of Health by December 15, 2017. The board which regulates each of the professions listed above will approve training programs believed to be appropriate for that profession.

Beginning in 2020, each person licensed in one of the above professions must complete a training program at least 2 hours in length which has been approved by that professional's licensing board. Thereafter, each professional must complete a similar program at least once every 5 years. This continuing education can count toward the person's continuing education hours required under the person's practice act or rules. (Note: The General Assembly is currently considering a bill to require each licensee to complete the training every 4 years rather than every 5 years.)

It would be very helpful if programs were developed that are especially relevant to the practice of OTs.

### **Chapter 997 of the Public Acts of 2018**

#### **Senate Bill 1797 (Ketrone)**

#### **House Bill 1510 (Whitson)**

This new law, which took effect on July 1, 2018, is known as the Tennessee Public Safety Behavioral Health Act. The purpose of the law is to ensure that emergency medical workers and professional firefighters employed by state or local government agencies on a full-time basis receive appropriate trauma therapy for PTSD.

The law defines a "mental health service provider" to be a person licensed in Tennessee as a professional counselor, clinical social worker, psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner, marital and family therapist, or occupational therapist. The term also includes a person licensed in Tennessee as a physician, psychologist, psychological examiner, or senior psychological examiner. In addition to being licensed in one of those professions, the person must also meet the following requirements:

1. Provide evidence of successful completion of education and training in at least one trauma therapy (as defined in the law); and
2. Provide evidence of at least two years of post-licensure work experience with trauma patients.

The term "trauma therapy" is defined as follows:

(5) "Trauma therapy" means, with respect to victims of trauma, at least one (1) of the following evidence-based trauma treatment practices: trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy, exposure therapy, stress inoculation therapy, or eye movement desensitization reprocessing.

*Continued on page 8*



# Legislative Updates Cont.

The law imposes the following duties on each state or local government agency employing public safety employees:

(c) Public safety employers shall:

(1) Provide not less than ten (10) visits or sessions with a mental health service provider for the purpose of treating PTSD through the employee's health benefits or otherwise. Public safety employers may require a co-pay or co-insurance for these visits that is no more than co-pays or co-insurance for other health benefits offered by the employer;

(2) Promote the use of a mental health service provider and other behavioral health professionals to public safety employees;

(3) Establish, in conjunction with a mental health service provider, support programs in an effort to mitigate behavioral health issues within the public safety employee community; and

(4) Maintain, and regularly provide public safety employees with, at a minimum of once per year, a list of mental health service providers who are qualified to provide trauma therapy under this section.

The law prohibits public safety employers from engaging in any retaliatory action against a public safety employee who utilizes mental health service providers. The law imposes the following annual training requirements on a mental health service provider who provides services to public safety employees:

(e)(1) At a minimum of once per year, a mental health service provider providing services to public safety employees shall participate in training, within the jurisdiction in which the public safety employees work that familiarizes the provider with the unique problems associated with each public safety profession lifestyle, including, but not limited to, critical incident response training, critical incident stress management field exercises such as ride-alongs and visits to fire and emergency medical services (EMS) stations, and similarly appropriate training.

Hopefully, there will be some occupational therapists in Tennessee who will want to take advantage of this new law and provide trauma therapy services to emergency medical workers and professional firefighters.

## Are you looking to start or grow your private practice?

I am looking for OT practitioners to join a focus group I am forming to support one another, ask questions and share resources. We will meet virtually once a month. If you are interested in joining or learning more, contact Gigi at [gigi.jordan@gmail.com](mailto:gigi.jordan@gmail.com)!

## Need research study participants?

TNOTA provides an opportunity for all members (students, practitioners, and academia) to post requests for research/survey responses from members on the website and now in the quarterly newsletter. Members are encouraged to send requests to [admin@tnota.org](mailto:admin@tnota.org)

Do you have any suggestions or feedback for the Executive Board? We'd love to hear from you!

Contact us at [admin@tnota.org](mailto:admin@tnota.org)