

TNOTA Board Meeting July 9, 2026

In attendance: Stedmon Hopkins, Rachel Palmer, Valery Hanks, David Eades, Sydnee Duncan, Christy Watt, Bhumika Patel, Rosemary Lewis, Martin Davis, Stephanie Lancaster, Elizabeth Guse, Kurt Hubbard, Julia Johnson, Cindy Blackwell, Audrey Owens, Mikayla Gale, Anna Fung, Barbara Meussner, Tabitha Gibbs, Taylor Kozell, Nicole Ayers, Alison Stewart, Allie Jones, Sara Lum, Kimberly Jessee, Gigi Jordan, Mikayla Gale

Staff in attendance: Zach McElgunn, Peggy McElgunn

MSC to accept June minutes as presented.

Action Items for TNOTA Board members

- Please update any CE events that you've had [here!](#)
- Please submit any district, committee, or CE events ASAP using the [Executive Board webpage](#) at least 30 days prior to the event.
- You can submit any communication requests on the [Executive Board webpage](#)
- Please send a notice of any leadership changes - personnel and roles - in your district or on your committee to president@tnota.org and admin@tnota.org
- Please continue to engage with TNOTA social media posts.

Upcoming Events

- **Please watch our social media and website for announcements and information about continuing education events as more learning opportunities are planned.**
 - President, VP, and Treasurer nominations/elections will be coming up in the Fall
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Announcements

- Board member news
- New business/updates:
 - Discussion and vote on bylaws updates - [draft sent](#) out last week by Peggy

Board voted to accept these updates as written

- [TNOTA Hall of Fame Awards](#) open through July 31
- Updated format for the [TNOTA newsletter](#) - and new co-editor, Kurt Hubbard
- Now in development: Comms Committee
- Poll on opportunities for potential student collabs:
<https://tinyurl.com/TNOTAcollab>

ACTION → Please complete this poll to help identify opportunities for student collaboration within TNOTA – <https://tinyurl.com/TNOTAcollab>

- [“Small ball” Monthly Challenge](#)

ACTION → Help facilitate the mission of TNOTA through board & member engagement by completing a “Small ball” meaningful action for TNOTA here: [“Small ball” Monthly Challenge](#)

- Reminders:
 - If you did not get the email on Monday with the agenda for this meeting, please note that in the chat so staff can address that, or email staff at admin@tnota.org to be added to that list.
 - Student reps - if you are rolling off the board and there is a new student rep taking your place, please email me at president@tnota.org with the new rep on the email to let me know (if you haven't already done so).
- TNOTA Annual Conference Updates
 - 2026 Conference in Nashville at Scarritt Bennett on Sept 18-20, 2026. Theme is “Finding our Rhythm: OT in a Changing World”
 - Preconference on Friday will be Suicide Prevention Training and Ethics & Jurisprudence
 - Registration is open - Early bird will remain open until August 1st
 - We have a session scheduled for board members to share information about serving on the board. Sunday at 1:30. Will need volunteers for this session.

ACTION → If you are interested and available to participate in a panel/session at conference to share information about volunteering with TNOTA and serving on the board, please contact Stephanie!

- T-shirt available for pre-order with registration \$20



- - NOTE: T-shirt price is not part of the board registration discount
 - ***Anyone on the board who has already registered and ordered a t-shirt will be invoiced for the cost of the shirt.***
- Currently have 10 sponsors (\$5,450)
- Next working on swag
- Board members should stay alert for more info on the **annual board member dinner** which will be near the conference site on **Friday 9/18/26** – the cost of the dinner is covered by the association.
- Link to hotel –

- Financial Report for May 2026
 - TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY:
 - Total Income for the month: **\$10,366.41**
 - Expenses for the month: **\$7,431.12**
 - Net Income for the month: **\$2,935.29**
 - Links to documents:
 - [Balance Sheet](#)
 - [Profit/Loss](#)
 - [Comparison](#)

Reminder from staff to board members needing support - text, call or email especially if urgent:

- Zach = 804.245.0703
- Peggy = 804.245.9210

- Membership Update
 - **Membership Report for the period 6/11/26 - 7/9/26:**
 - 1st year OT: 22 (-1)
 - 1st year OTA: 9 (-)
 - OT: 381 (-14)
 - OTA: 68 (-5)
 - Retired: 1 (-)
 - Student: 346 (+26)
 - TOTAL members: 876
 - **TNOTA Audience Report for the same period:**
 - Total contacts: 3,130 (-9)
 - New contacts: 35
 - 32 via API; 3 via list import
 - Deleted contacts: 24
 - 17 unsubscribe; 7 hard bounce

- Legislative updates
 - Victory- from AOTA:
 - In response to a June district court ruling, the Department of Education published an updated list of “professional degree programs” which included occupational therapy. As a result, eligible graduate-level OT students now qualify for higher federal borrowing limits. This new designation is temporary and remains subject to future legal and regulatory developments.
 - OT Compact- 8 states now issuing privileges including TN

- Advocacy Committee
 - Cindy will be the point person for the committee during Rosemary’s maternity leave
 - Looking for co-chair after the growth of the committee this year

- Continuing Education Committee
 - In the busy period right now in the middle of the year
 - Thank you to the new committee members who have lightened the load and created a very productive environment for this committee
- Diversity & Inclusion Committee
 - No major updates. It has been a slow month.
 - We did hold our two community meetups. Total of one person attended. The individual is considering joining TNOTA now and volunteering. She planned on reaching out, but may warrant a follow up.
- Mental Health Committee
 - Planning CoP meeting late July/early August.
- Mentorship Committee
 - Due to low mentee applicants, the application period for mentor and mentee is extended to July 31st. Doing so will slightly delay our start date for the 7th cycle to September 19, 2026.
 - The mentorship committee has been creative and hardworking, in concert with Stephanie L. and our Admin team, in making highly targeted outreaches to potential mentor and mentee applicants; within the last several weeks our mentee applicants increased from 1 to 4. We are continuing those targeted outreaches.
 - WE NEED YOUR HELP - if you know of an OTP who will consider being a mentee, direct them to the Mentorship tab on our TNOTA website. If YOU will consider being a mentee, please apply!
 - Our next monthly committee meeting is **July 22 @ 7:30 pm**
 - Don Lewis, Program Director of the OTD program at ETSU, has kindly agreed to present a CEU event for mentorship this fall. More info to come.
 - Sue Liff, Alison Stewart, and David Eades are progressing with the mentorship research project. We are completing one of 2 IRB applications, and beginning our lit review in July.
- OTA Connect Committee
 - If you know anyone who might be interested in participating as a Chair of this committee, please have them reach out to admin@tnota.org and/or president@tnota.org
- Philanthropy Committee
 - No new updates regarding partnership with Crumley House
- Student Involvement Committee
 - Next Meeting schedule for August
 - This will be an inverted version of the fieldwork educator course, more focused on the student role in the fieldwork setting
 - Welcome to Sara Lum, new co-chair
- Tennessee OT Foundation/Representative Assembly Updates

- July 8 the TNOTF awards/recognitions opened
 - 2026 TNOTF Excellent Educator Award - <https://www.tnota.org/2026-tnotf-excellent-educator-award/>
 - TNOTF Student Scholarship - <https://www.tnota.org/tnotf-student-scholarship/>
- Amanda **needs 2 volunteers to help review this set of award applications**, preferably not someone in academia since many nominations involve students that those working in OT/OTA programs will know. This will entail a **few hours of reading essays and watching videos of nominees during the month of August**; this work can be done asynchronously and is open to practitioners (not students or educators). Please email admin@tnota.org if you can help with this micro-volunteer job.

ACTION → Email admin@tnota.org if you are interested in assisting the TN OT Foundation with their scholarship application review process

- East District
 - Not too many updates, but a potential East District secretary has been identified
 - Still looking for a Vice Chair – If interested please contact Julia Johnson
- Middle District
 - Looking for a Secretary to join our district!
 - August 6th at 6pm CE: Surviving to Thriving- a Guide to school based practice
 - Saturday in Sept/Oct: Nashville OT Meetup- Volunteer Event with OneGen Mobile Food Pantry.
- Northeast District
 - Regrouping as a team to determine how best to support our district and increase involvement/membership.
 - Next district event late July/early August
- Rural West District
 - Lunch and Learn Membership course July 9th by Michelle Roth
 - PAMS Course scheduled Oct 11th
 - Compliance Day scheduled Nov 7th
- Southeast District
 - PAMs course in June
 - Long COVID CE on July 22, 2026 from 7-8:30CST/8-9:30pm EST virtually
- West District
 - 7/14: Church Health Informational with Kevin Gibson, PT. We will be discussing OTs role serving the underserved and the recent legislative change in TN that impacts children.

Student Representatives & School Reports

- Belmont University
 - First years started our summer semester at the beginning of this month
 - Second years have started their first level II fieldwork placements
 - We are in our accreditation year and this week we had our site visit with ACOTE. They reviewed our program, toured facilities, met with staff in depth, interviewed a group of students from the 2027 cohort (virtually) and students from the 2028 cohort (in-person). We have received great feedback!
- Concorde Academy
 - *No TNOTA Board Rep*
- East TN State
 - First year students are working hard in their first semester.
 - Second years are continuing to enjoy summer break before starting back for the fall semester.
 - Third year students are completing their first Level IIA fieldwork rotations in various settings and states throughout the U.S!
- Jackson State
 - *No TNOTA Board Rep*
- Lincoln Memorial University
 - 1st year students: Flying through their first semester and doing great with their anatomy cadaver lab!
 - 2nd year students: We are learning all about assistive technology and ADA accessibility in our community.
 - 3rd year students: Completing level IIA fieldwork rotations.
- Milligan University
 - Not in attendance
- Nashville State
 - Not in attendance
- Roane State
 - Everyone is enjoying summer break and taking the opportunity to relax and prepare for next semester! We are excited to welcome the new cohort in August and the second years are preparing for their third semester.
- South College Nashville
 - New clinicals in geriatrics on the horizon
 - Thank you Elizabeth for filling in
- South College Knoxville
 - *No TNOTA Board Rep*

- Tennessee State University
 - Hello! Our second-year students have started their level II fieldwork. Our first years have started their level I Mental Health fieldwork in pairs or small groups of about 3-4 at these sites. The first years are working to pair upcoming cohort members with a mentor to help their new transition into OT school. We have been given the opportunity for a community outreach with an engineering company here in Nashville, helping engineers understand why minimum ADA accommodations are not always the best. We are super pumped to work with them as they have reached out to us. The summer semester has been flying by!
- Tennessee Wesleyan
 - Finishing out the summer semester with many students finishing up their first level 1 FW placements
- UT- Chattanooga
 - Not in attendance
- UTHSC (Memphis)
 - Not in attendance
- Walters State Community College
 - Not in attendance

Next meeting will be **August 13, 2026, at 7 p.m. Central**

Action	Date	Who
If you have a speaker, topic, contact, or suggestion for the next East district CE, please contact Julia Johnson (julefor@outlook.com)	ASAP	Board (especially East District members)
Please submit any district, committee, or CEU events ASAP for 2026 using the Executive Board webpage	ASAP	Board
Communications requests (social media, email) can be submitted here on the Executive Board webpage	Rolling	Board
Continue to engage with TNOTA social media posts	Rolling	Board
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