



2024 Fall Conference Speaker Biographies

A

Brittany Albert is an OT with 15 years of experience spanning from skilled nursing, inpatient, and outpatient clinical settings. She currently works as an outpatient therapist at Duke Health specializing in the treatment of neurological based conditions as well as serving as an interventionist for the BETTER TBI transitional care program. She holds additional certifications including: Certified Stroke Rehabilitation Specialist, Certified Brain Injury Specialist, Functional Capacity Evaluation Certified, PWR!Moves Therapist Certified.

Jacob Anderson has worked as an occupational therapist for 14 years in various settings. Throughout most of his career he has worked with students/children in schools, clinics and daycare settings. He is an assistive technology provider through RESNA. Jacob Anderson currently works in a public separate school for intensive special needs in Burke County, NC as well as serves on the countywide Assistive Technology Team. He has presented at the NCDPI EC Conference over the past several years focusing on education and implementation of assistive technology in school settings. He has worked in the school systems in Ohio, West Virginia and North Carolina over his career.

B

Dr. Maryann Brennan is a dedicated Occupational Therapy Practitioner (OTP) specializing in pediatrics. She currently resides in Sunset Beach, NC, with her husband and works full-time at the Brunswick County School System. With over 32 years of experience in pediatrics, Dr. Brennan has an extensive background that includes positions in hospitals (inpatient NICU and acute care), school systems, private schools, private practice, and higher academia. Her vast expertise and commitment to her field make her an asset in her current role, where she continues to make a significant impact on children's lives.

C

Dr. Stacey Caplan has served as the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and Associate Professor for the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program at Wingate University. She has over 30 years of clinical experience in acute care and pediatric practice that has expanded her education and expertise in non-profit management, organizational leadership, and program development. Dr. Caplan earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Therapy from Louisiana State University Medical Center, and a Post-Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree with a concentration in Administration and Practice Management from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. Her professional interests lie in evidence-based practice in fieldwork curriculum, and maternal/ infant health. She currently serves on the NCOTA Board as co-chair of the Education and Research Special Interest Section.



Elisha Chambers PhD OTR/L is a dedicated clinician, academician, and early career researcher. She graduated from Howard University with her master's degree in Occupational Therapy in 2011 and her Doctor of Philosophy in Health Related Sciences from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2020. Dr. Chambers has 13 years of clinical experience working with children and youth from underserved populations. Dr. Chambers has a deep passion for enhancing therapeutic outcomes, promoting wellness, and increasing access to high quality care. As an advocate for equity in the occupational therapy profession, Dr. Chambers is committed to advancing practices that foster inclusivity and belonging. Dr. Chambers challenges practitioners, students, and educators to engage in a continuous process of self-reflection.

Dr. Megan Edwards Collins, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, CAPS, CFPS, is a Professor at Winston-Salem State University in the Department of Occupational Therapy. Dr. Edwards Collins currently serves as the program Chair and teaches Assistive Technology and coordinates the research courses.

D

Kelsey Delker, originally from Ohio and now residing in Florida, is a dedicated Pediatric Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA/L) with five years of experience in outpatient pediatrics, school settings, and early intervention. She earned her bachelor's degree in health science from Advent Health University in 2015, followed by an associate's degree in occupational therapy from Keiser University in 2019. Currently, Kelsey works at a hospital-based pediatric outpatient clinic in Orlando, Florida. In addition to her clinical work, Kelsey earned a certification in adaptive swimming in 2023 and began offering adaptive swim lessons to children in her community. Outside of her professional role, she enjoys spending time with her dog, engaging in outdoor activities, traveling, gardening, and crafting.

Anne Dickerson, PhD, OTR/L, SCDCM, FAOTA is Professor in East Carolina University's Department of Occupational Therapy and Director of the Research for the Older Adult Driver Initiative (ROADI) and current editor of Occupational Therapy in Health Care. Dr. Dickerson is an international leader in occupational therapy research in areas of older adults, driver simulation, and drivers with autism spectrum disorder, and driver rehabilitation.

Debb Dorsett, MOT, OTR/L, CEIM owns Circle Therapy, a private practice serving children in their homes and community settings in NC. As an OTA and then an OT working in the home / community pediatric setting, she is dedicated to filling the natural gaps that may exist for clinicians working in pediatrics.



Dr. Reeti Douglas is the Doctoral Capstone Coordinator and Assistant Professor at Wingate University's Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program in North Carolina. Dr. Douglas earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Therapy from University of Texas Medical Center, and a Post-Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree with a concentration in Hand Therapy from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. During her 23-year career, she has always loved working with children in pediatric areas including outpatient, inpatient, home health, hand clinics, sports medicine clinics, and special needs camps. Dr. Douglas has taught continuing education courses in capstone mentorship, pediatric splinting and casting, and rehabilitation of pediatric athletes and has been invited to speak at national and state conferences in her areas of pediatric expertise. She currently serves as a member of NCOTA's DEI committee.

Kelly Draucker, OTD has 20 years of experience treating complex patients with neurological issues related to spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, and stroke. She has experience primarily in the outpatient setting but has also worked in acute care and inpatient rehabilitation hospitals. She received her doctorate in occupational therapy from Creighton University in 2004. Kelly finds working with patients who are recovering from neurological injuries and illness to be tremendously rewarding because of the dramatic progress that is possible and the nuance of care. Kelly currently works at WakeMed in Raleigh, NC and has recently had the pleasure of working with patients following vagus nerve stimulator implantation. This innovative tool has provided new opportunities for neurological recovery for the chronic stroke population.

E

Emily Edwards, BA, COTA/L is a COTA/L having worked in pediatrics for 2 years. As a relatively new COTA/L working in pediatric home health, she is motivated to support new practitioners in finding their footing as they gain confidence in their flexibility working in pediatrics.

Kelly Erickson is originally from Virginia and currently resides in North Carolina with her husband and 3 dogs. Kelly graduated from Radford University in 2016 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. In 2020, she graduated from Radford University Carilion with an associate's degree in occupational therapy. Before entering occupational therapy, Kelly gained experience as a direct service provider in group homes and in an adult day center. Kelly has practiced for 3 years as a COTA/L in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities with focuses on stroke, cognitive, and orthopedic rehabilitation. In her free time, Kelly enjoys traveling, reading, crafting, and spending time with her dogs.

F

Madison Faulkner, MOT, OTR/L is an OTR/L and has been working in pediatrics for 1 year. During her first year of practice, she can attest to the comfort and confidence she has gained from having a supportive and collaborative team surrounding her.



Kayleigh Fessenden is currently an occupational therapy instructor at Cabarrus College of Health Sciences instructing courses on development, mental health, adult intervention and kinesiology as well as serving as a capstone advisor. She has been an occupational therapist for 13 years working in both the inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation environment specializing in hip fractures, amputations, fall prevention and balance. Kayleigh designed and led a joint commission accredited hip fracture program in the inpatient rehabilitation environment, as well as played the role of Student Fieldwork Coordinator. Prior to switching to academia, she held the role Director of Rehabilitation for an outpatient clinic in an assisted living facility that included a memory care unit. Kayleigh is originally from South Florida and relocated to North Carolina. She enjoys spending time with her dogs, running, doing yoga, traveling and spoiling her nieces and nephews.

G

Meredith Gallagher has lived in North Carolina for 5 years but is originally from Connecticut and New Jersey. After graduating with her bachelor's in psychology from James Madison University in 2017, Meredith furthered her education in occupational therapy by earning her associates degree from Cape Fear Community College in 2020. She has been a practicing COTA/L for over three years working in pediatrics, both outpatient and school-based services, with focuses in sensory modulation, fine motor and visual motor techniques, and reflex integration. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, visiting local craft markets, and traveling.

Angela Gehrt graduated from Medical College of Georgia in 2008 with her MHS in OT. Since then, Angela has served mostly the pediatric population in Early Intervention, hospital-based outpatient clinics, private outpatient clinics, and community-based services in schools and daycares across multiple states. Angela has a passion for working with neurodivergent children both in and out of the professional role. In her free time, Angela volunteers as a Girl Scout troop leader and regularly uses her professional training to ensure each child can meaningfully engage in troop activities. It was this experience that led Angela to seek admission into the Post-Professional Doctorate of OT degree at Boston University matriculating in January 2024. The focus of Angela's doctoral project is improving the overall health and wellness of neurodivergent children.

H

Tamika Harris (she/her/hers) is an East Carolina University graduate who has worked with the pediatric population for 23 years in a variety of settings including: early intervention, home health, outpatient clinics, residential centers for people with multiple disabilities, but primarily in the public school systems of North Carolina. She is currently employed by Wake County Public Schools. She has successfully worked within her schools collaboratively with her IEP teams to support students with challenging behaviors and served on the school-wide behaviors expectations team.

Dr. Daniella Hauser is an Associate Professor at Wingate University in Wingate, NC where she serves as the adult rehabilitation specialist for the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program. Dr. Hauser obtained her Bachelors of Science and Masters in Occupational Therapy from the University of



Scranton in Pennsylvania and her Post Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree from Mount Mary University in Wisconsin in 2018. Her clinical experience is in inpatient rehabilitation and acute care working with adult and geriatric populations. She founded and runs Wingate University's OT free clinic for clients in the local NC area. She has published research on leisure activities for older adults with chronic conditions. She has presented at state conferences on the topics of student run free clinics and sexual intimacy. She is a certified sexuality OT.

Robin Hodges, BA, COTA/L is a COTA/L and has been working in pediatrics for almost 6 years in both clinic and home health/community settings. She believes that mentorship is integral to fostering the resiliency needed to successfully navigate the highs and lows of being an OTP. Robin strives to empower her team and encourage collaboration and personal growth during her weekly mentorship meetings with her teammates.

Donald Howard MBA MS OTR/L CLT is a proven and passionate leader that gets results through mentoring, coaching and strategic planning. Mr. Howard is a graduate of Howard University, BS in Occupational Therapy (1992) and Boston University, MS in Occupational Therapy (2008). Donald describes himself as a lifelong learner and educator. Mr. Howard has over 20 years of experience as an occupational therapist, primarily in hand rehabilitation and lymphedema management. He has over 15 years of experience in healthcare leadership. Mr. Howard is committed to advancing equity in the occupational therapy profession. He holds several elected offices in professional organizations supporting noteworthy causes. He is President of BROTHAS, which supports males of the African diaspora within the occupational therapy profession.

Karen Howarth graduated from Washington University School of Medicine with a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy in December of 2000 and received her post-professional doctorate from Columbia University in August 2023. She has been a licensed and board-certified pediatric occupational therapist for the past 23 years. Dr. Howarth has experience working in various settings, including the neonatal intensive care unit, children's rehabilitation hospitals, pediatric and cardiac intensive care units, outpatient clinics, early intervention, and most recently, the public school system. The past twelve years of her career have been spent in the Wake County Public School system, five of which she has served on the school district's Mealtime Support Team for students with unique mealtime needs. Dr. Howarth has extensive and specialized training in pediatric feeding difficulties and disorders, including premature infants, children with Cerebral Palsy, transitioning children from tube feeding to oral feeding, children with Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID), and Autism. Her capstone project was focused on determining the initial psychometric properties of a mealtime screening tool I developed, and my manuscript has been accepted for publication in OJOT.

Holly Huggins is a recent occupational therapy graduate who completed her Master of Occupational Therapy through the Cabarrus College of Health Sciences bridge program in July. Before returning to school, she had six years of practice experience as an occupational therapy assistant, focusing on school-based practice, early intervention, and home health pediatrics. In practice, Holly's interests include advocacy for expanding occupational therapy's role in the school-based setting and facilitating a more inclusive school environment. Holly grew up in Charlotte, NC, and continues to call it home. In



her free time, she enjoys reading, playing pickleball, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.

I

Dr. Chinno Ingram is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Winston-Salem State University. He has over 10 years of experience providing occupational therapy services in skilled nursing, outpatient, and community based settings. He currently teaches Adult Interventions, Advanced Topics, and Movement Components of Occupation. He received the NCOTA Innovation Award in 2022 for his work with 3D printing.

J

Karen Johnson is an occupational therapist with 20 years of experience working across several settings including acute care, inpatient rehabilitation and outpatient settings. Karen has spent the latter part of her career focused on neuro rehabilitation in Duke Health systems. She is also the owner of Innovative OT NC, LLC, which focuses on helping people stay in their homes despite physical and cognitive changes. Karen has contributed to a book chapter focused on cancer related cognitive impairment and was a transitional case manager for the BETTER pilot study. She authored two publications since participating in the TBI study. Karen is a certified brain injury specialist (CBIS), certified stroke rehabilitation specialist (CSRS), and certified aging in place specialist (CAPS). She feels strongly that occupational therapy practitioners (OTPs) can fill a gap in healthcare with a more deliberate focus on cognitive status and treatments to address brain changes both in clinic setting and in the community. This passion has led Karen to start her own business, she often takes students; and she provides education in her community regularly. When Karen is not working, she enjoys time with family and friends. They love game nights and trying new activities. Karen's latest venture is ax throwing in a league with her husband.

Katherine Jones, EdD, OTR/L, CLT-LANA is assistant professor of Occupational Therapy and serves as the OT Department Chair and OTD Program Director at Methodist University. She teaches topics related to children, youth, and families. Dr. Jones has spent over 19 years in the clinical setting working with the pediatric, adult, and gerontology populations in settings that included acute care, rehabilitation, skilled nursing, home health, outpatient, and school-based therapy. Over the years her special interests have been in maternal mental health, oncology and survivorship, adapted toys for play, lymphedema, traumatic brain injury, stroke, shoulder rehabilitation, autism, visual-perception, cognition, psychosocial needs across the lifespan, and oculomotor dysfunction.

Ryan Joyce is originally from North Carolina and currently resides in Raleigh. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Exercise and Sport Science and Communication Studies from UNC Chapel Hill in 2015 and his master's degree in occupational therapy from Medical University of South Carolina in 2018. He holds an NBCOT Microcredential in Pediatric Post-Concussion Care. He has worked with the Wake County Public School System for 6 years as an OTR/L. During the summers, he is a Program Director at Camp Carefree. He enjoys traveling, time with his family and dog, and spending time outdoors.



K

Melissa Kandel, OTR/L, BCPR is a graduate of the Indiana University School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Occupational Therapy program. She is board-certified in Physical Rehabilitation by the American Occupational Therapy Association and has 27 years of experience as an OT in a variety of settings including acute care, subacute care, outpatient, pediatrics, and home health care. She has been with Duke University since 2007 and currently serves as an Assistant Manager in the Acute Division of the Rehabilitation Services Department co-supervising a team of OTs who provide hospital-wide services. She is the course director for the Occupational Therapy in Acute Care course at the Doctor of Occupational Therapy division of Duke University School of Medicine. Melissa serves on research projects regarding the impact of intensive rehabilitation on patients with congestive heart failure and with the BETTER study to research how to best support patients with a traumatic brain injury in their transition back to the community. She is the Director of the Acute and Critical Care OT Fellowship through AOTA which she established in 2015 and has served as a member of the AOTA Roster of Fellowship Reviewers since 2017. She has also been an invited speaker at multiple national and regional conferences.

Annabeth Knight, OTD, OTR/L, ATP, is an assistant professor and the academic capstone coordinator in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program at Methodist University. She primarily teaches Supporting Occupational Performance with Technology & Environment, Introduction to Doctoral Capstone Experience & Project, and Contemporary Practice Model Development. Dr. Knight's areas of expertise are in pediatrics and assistive technology, including practice in settings of early intervention, outpatient pediatrics, and schools. She has presented at national and international conferences on topics of interdisciplinary assistive technology teams, OT's unique role in assistive technology, pediatric therapy dosage, and assistive technology intervention via telehealth. Dr. Knight is a certified assistive technology professional and has specialized experience in alternative access for medically complex children.

L

Amber Lewis is an OT, who specializes in restoring function for patients recovering from various neurological conditions including stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and multiple sclerosis. She treats patients on land and in the water with specialization in Neuroaquatics. She has over 20 years of experience from all parts of the rehab continuum, but her primary love and passion is OP Rehab. She uses her love for learning to creatively blend science, technology and human connection to change a person's brain and their life. She earned her bachelor's degree in occupational therapy from Winston-Salem State University and dual master's degrees in administration and leadership from Pfeiffer University. She is also a certified Brain Injury Specialist and certified Stroke Rehabilitation Specialist. Rehab technology can significantly benefit a patient's recovery and ability to adapt to new ways of doing things. Amber currently works at WakeMed in Raleigh, NC and has been the lead OT in the VNS Stroke Program development and implementation of care.



Dr. Jeffrey Lucas is an Occupational Therapist that has been practicing in Skilled Nursing and Acute Care for over 10 years. Dr. Lucas is CEO/Owner of Trending Developments LLC which is a property management company providing affordable housing for families in Eastern North Carolina. Currently, Dr. Lucas is an Assistant Professor in Occupational Therapy at Winston- Salem State University. Dr. Lucas's research interests are increasing awareness of burnout in rehabilitation professionals in order to retain individuals within the profession.

M

Amy Mahle EdD, COTA/L, ROH is a servant leader, collaborator, and author who values and experiences joy by investing in people, uniting others, and inspiring them to take action towards meaningful projects and issues. She is driven by innovation, community engagement, creating a team-oriented culture, and a model of continuous improvement. She has held various volunteer leadership roles at state and national levels and is currently serving as an AOTA Board Director (2022 - 2025). Amy is the co-author/co-editor of the comprehensive textbook, *Adult Physical Conditions: Intervention Strategies for Occupational Therapy Assistants*. She has been a COTA/L for 17 years, and currently serves as the founding program chair of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College in Salisbury, NC.

Jacqueline D. Mayo, OTD, OTR/L is an assistant professor and program chair at Cabarrus College of Health Sciences in Concord, NC. With a profound dedication to fostering cultural competence and humility, Dr. Mayo focuses on enhancing the educational experience for both students and faculty. Her commitment to diversity and inclusion is evident in her active role on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the North Carolina Occupational Therapy Association (NCOTA). Through her work, Dr. Mayo strives to advance equitable practices and enrich the learning environment within the field of occupational therapy.

Megan Leach McCann, OTR/L (she/her/hers) is the program director for the Occupational Therapy Assistant program at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, NC. Megan is also a co-founder and board member of the nonprofit Charlotte Clubhouse, promoting meaningful work and inclusion for people with mental health conditions. Meaningful Roles and Occupations include mom of dogs and humans, spouse, pedestrian, cyclist, dancer, reader, yogi, cook, organizer, sister, friend, volunteer, and equity advocate.

Sydney Mitchell is a senior occupational therapist at Duke University Hospital working in acute care neuro. She is a Certified Neuro Specialist and Certified Brain Injury Specialist with over 5 years of experience in acute and critical care. She is pursuing her post-professional occupational therapy doctorate at MUSC focusing on academic teaching. She is passionate about change in the OT profession and practicing the most up-to-date and evidence-based care, which has led her to utilize AI in her daily practice in a variety of ways.



Taylor Moore, COTA/L is a COTA/L that is new to OT and to the pediatric setting. When looking for a job, having a support system within the company was her main deciding factor. She chose CT because of their top tier support and mentorship systems that are offered. She is hopeful that her experience as a new grad joining CT will inspire other companies to start their own mentorship programs.

N

Charlotte Evans Navarro, OTD, OTR/L, is an Assistant Professor and the IPE Coordinator for the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program at Methodist University. She has been in academia for four years, teaching adult clinical skills and intervention courses. Dr. Navarro's areas of expertise include orthopedics, acute trauma, and critical care. Dr. Navarro received her Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree from Mary Baldwin University.

P

Sara Kelleher Peña works as fieldwork and admissions support for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's MSOT program. Before joining the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy in January 2024, she spent six years as a school-based occupational therapist, as well as two and half years working in acute care (PRN). With a background in journalism and education, Sara felt a bit out of place in her occupational therapy graduate school experience until she realized the numerous amount of transferable skills. Sara finds any and all opportunities to write, including to local school boards, musical artists, and dogs when they have weddings or birthdays.

Anne Pioppo is a OTR/L who has been practicing for nine years. She has spent that time focusing primarily on treating neurologic and geriatric populations with special interests in health literacy, cognition, mental health, and minimizing barriers to healthcare access. She continues to learn from each patient interaction and has been involved in many specialty clinics including ALS, Movement disorders, Huntington's, Memory Disorders, and is beginning work with the Metabolic Clinic.

Alyssa Pittman, OTR/L, CLT, is an assistant manager of rehabilitation services at Duke University Hospital. She has a decade of experience working and performing research in the acute care setting. Presently, she is pursuing a Master's in Health Administration. Her overarching vision encompasses empowering fellow professionals, striving for operational excellence, exploring non-traditional career trajectories within Occupational Therapy, and championing the advancement of the profession.



R

Madison Reep graduated from Winston-Salem State University with a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy in 2015. Madison practices in the Triad area, specializing in adult critical care with exposure to inpatient rehab, independent living to skilled nursing continuum, and outpatient, where she helped to establish a neuro program. Madison is an adjunct faculty at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College and Winston-Salem State University. She is a member of NCOTA and AOTA with previous NCOTA board experience as SIS Co-chair for Physical Disabilities. She served as an editor for the polytrauma chapter within the 2nd edition of the Mahle-Ward textbook for the occupational therapy practitioner. Madison owns a small business specializing in holistic wellness for the pregnant and postpartum person.

Gracie Tedder Ross is an occupational therapist with 2+ years' experience working with neonates. Additionally, she completed her level 2 fieldwork in the NICU. She currently works in the NICU at Atrium Wake Forest Baptist hospital in Winston-Salem, NC

S

Dr. Sanchala Sen is an occupational therapist with 35+ years' experience as a clinician and in academia. She has worked in various OT settings including the neonatal intensive care unit and currently teaches at a Master's level OT program. Her primary areas of interest are in neurology in adults and infants. She currently teaches neonatal therapy and adult physical conditions courses at Winston-Salem State University. Dr. Sen is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Winston-Salem State University. She has over 30 years of experience providing occupational therapy services in inpatient, acute care, outpatient, skilled nursing, and community settings. She currently teaches topics in Adult Interventions, NICU, Specialized Practice, and Research. She is a regular presenter at state, national, and international conferences. Dr. Sen has held office positions at the state association. She has received the clinical fieldwork educator award, a Master clinician award, an Excellence in Community Practice Award, and the highest Susan Scullin Award from the North Carolina State Association for her contributions to the field of occupational therapy. She is also a fellow of the American OT Association.

Dr. Wynnet Sinclair is an Assistant Professor at Wingate University's Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program in North Carolina, where she serves as the geriatric specialist. She received her Bachelor's in Exercise and Sport Science from Colorado State University and obtained her Post Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree from Chatham University. Her 20+ years of clinical experience includes practice in long-term acute care hospitals (LTACHs), acute care, outpatient, home health, and skilled nursing facilities. Her administrative experience includes management of skilled nursing facilities and director of rehabilitation for her LTACH settings. Dr. Sinclair has received specialized training for the treatment of bowel, bladder, and pelvic floor disorders from Marquette University and from Herman & Wallace; and she has been treating pelvic floor dysfunction since 2003. She became a Certified Sex Educator in 2021 and is currently working on her lactation certification.



Ariona Smith, MOT, OTR/L is a Supervising OTR/L that has been working in pediatrics for a year. As a new OT she strives to foster support for her team and facilitate growth through collaborative efforts, and has developed many mentorship pathways for CT that aid in those areas.

Mayra Soto is a bilingual (Spanish) acute care occupational therapist with experience in general medicine, oncology, and neurology patient populations. She strives to provide patient-centered care and support to family caregivers. She has a unique perspective to serve minority populations as her world intersects two cultures.

Sherry Stancliff OTD, OTR/L, SCSS has 39 years of experience providing services within the occupational therapy adult continuum and school-based practice. In 2019, she received her postgraduate doctorate from Chatham University and has taught for the last eight years at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College Occupational Therapy Assistant Program.

Erin Sweeney, MSOT has 4 years of clinical experience. Her career culminated in experience mainly in Acute Care, Skilled nursing and Outpatient rehab settings. She received her Master's of Science in Occupational therapy from Winston-Salem State university in 2019. Erin has a heart for caring for the neurological population and focusing on maximizing the quality of life. Erin currently works at WakeMed in Raleigh, NC and has recently had the pleasure of working with patients following Vagus nerve stimulator implantation for the chronic stroke population. .

T

Stacia Hall Thompson, PT, DPT, PhD, is the Program Director and Chair for the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Methodist University. She has been in academia for ten years, teaching various courses, including neurological rehabilitation. Dr. Thompson's areas of expertise include neurological, geriatric, and vestibular rehabilitation. Her certifications include being an American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties Certified Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy, Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT) Big, Certified Exercise Expert for Aging Adults, and Credentialed Clinical Instructor. Dr. Thompson received her Doctor of Physical Therapy and B.S. in Exercise Sport Science degrees from Elon University. She received her Ph.D. in Health Sciences with a concentration in Health Professions Education from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. Dr. Thompson received the APTA North Carolina Outstanding Physical Therapist Award in 2018 and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Elon University's Doctor of Physical Therapy Program in 2019.

Fay Tripp has provided OT services directly with the Duke Eye Center Vision Rehabilitation & Performance team since 2006. She has obtained specialty certifications as a Low Vision Therapist and a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist. She is a co-instructor for the Duke OTD Low Vision course and serves as a clinical instructor for students completing low vision specialty fieldwork and capstone experiences.



W

Amber Ward has been an occupational therapist for 30+ years; most recently in an outpatient clinic with progressive neuromuscular diseases and wheelchair seating clinic. She is an adjunct professor in the OT assistant and Master's OT programs at Cabarrus College of Health Sciences in addition to working in the clinic full-time. She is the author of numerous articles and book chapters, as well as speaking and presenting locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. She served on the NCOTA board for many years as well as NCOTA Board President from 2010-2015. She has received the AOTA honor of Roster of Fellows and the Terry Brittell OT/OTA Partnership Award as well as the NCOTA Suzanne C. Scullin Award and the Presidential Award.

Taylor Welch BS, COTA/L has 8 years experience as an OTA. She spent 7 years in clinical practice and leadership roles in skilled nursing facilities and made the transition to academia in 2023 as the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator for the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College.

Dr. Jenn Workman graduated from the OT program at East Carolina University in 1997. During her 27-year career as an OT, she has worked in acute care/ICU, in-patient rehab (TBI/SCI population), home health, assisted living facilities, and skilled nursing facilities. She also spent 2 years as a travel OT in Tampa, Baltimore, Charlottesville, VA and Napa, CA. Her clinical specialties include TBI and dementia. Since 2014, she has been the AFWC and an instructor in the OTA program at Cape Fear Community College in Wilmington. She is a native Wilmingtonian and enjoys traveling, cooking, anything true crime-related, live music (especially Michael Franti), the beach, and doing anything with her friends. As of March 2024, she is a 5-year breast cancer survivor. She completed a post-professional occupational therapy doctorate program at Chatham University in April 2022.

Sarah Wright has over 10 years of experience as an OTP. She began her career as an occupational therapy assistant, and has since gained a Master of Occupational Therapy, along with a post-professional doctorate. Her clinical expertise is in adult acute care, with a special interest in critical care. The focus of her Doctoral Capstone Project was the role of OT in preventing PICS, and this continues to be a scholarly interest.

Z

Cathy Zanowski is an OT with 40+ years of experience in a variety of settings but always with a functional approach and with using a Mental Health lens. She has recently created the FLI (Functional Living Institute) as a non-traditional fieldwork site for both Level I and II OTA students with the Rowan Salisbury Schools. She is an active member of both AOTA and NCOTA and SIS in Mental Health and the AOTA Community of Practice on Transition. She currently is an adjunct faculty member at Rowan- Cabarrus Community College and created and runs the "RCCC Thrives" program that provides mental health support to community college students.