



Summer 2017

Letter from our New President - Nicolé Pavenick

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Hello Oregon OTs! I am excited to take over as the president of OTAO. I have served on the board for 4 years beginning as one of the Viewpoint newsletter editors, 2 years as a Continuing Education Co-chair and a year as president-elect. Here is a little information about me; I am a native Oregonian, born in Forest Grove, I've lived in Eugene and the Portland Metro Area. I have been practicing occupational therapy for 5 years. I currently work at Providence Portland Medical Center at the inpatient rehabilitation facility. Prior to finding OT, I worked in a school district as an educational assistant and at a summer camp with children with special needs for 7 years. In my free time I enjoy traveling, snowboarding, camping, hiking, razor clamming and crabbing. I love all things Oregon and I am looking forward to connecting with members and non-members alike to see how we can best advocate for occupational therapy throughout our wonderful state.

Goals for Presidency:

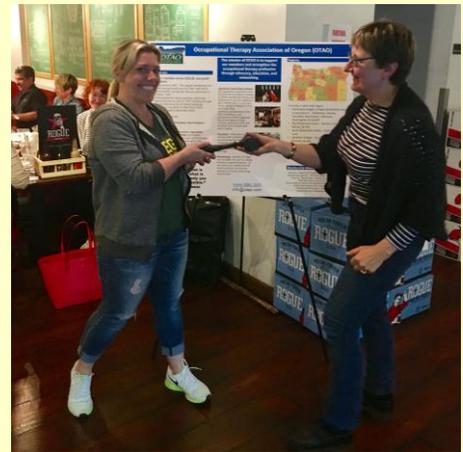
- Increase awareness of OTAO to occupational therapists in the state of Oregon
- Collaborate with OTs throughout the state to provide support/CE opportunities/networking/advocacy
- Offer more sites for OT Night Out throughout the state of Oregon to create a space for OTs to meet in their communities to discuss desires/wants/needs
- Take road trips to visit OT sites throughout Oregon to promote communication between OTs/COTAs and OTAO

Welcome to our new president! Nicolé Pavenick

I do not work on Mondays, if you would like to schedule a site visit for a short presentation about the benefits of being an OTAO member and to meet with 1-2 board members please contact info@otao.com or call Nicolé at (505)-332-1081. I can also be reached by e-mail at nicolepavenickotao@yahoo.com

Passing the Baton: From cherished and loved to a fresh perspective

*We will miss you dearly,
Jan. Thank you for all of
your hard work for
OTAO and
occupational therapy!*



OTAO Conference Update

Come celebrate occupational therapy's 100 years this October 6th & 7th at the annual OTAO Conference in Portland, OR. In "Building on One Hundred Years," we invite attendees to reflect on our profession's history and roots while forging ahead with innovative and evidence-based practices.

This year AOTA President Amy Lamb will join us, along with Karen Brown Wilson, Shawn Phipps, and Mandy Davis, for key note presentations and exciting workshops. Conference presenters cover a wide array of topics including Trauma Informed Care, sensory processing, professional development, occupational science, feeding issues in pediatrics, physical disabilities, and functional cognition. Register now to attend conference and benefit from informative presentations while earning CEUs. Take part in the morning yoga sessions, OTAO/ Legislative committee updates, vendor exhibits, and the OT Centennial Celebration with birthday cake, appetizers, and a sing-a-long hosted by John White!

To submit professional posters for the conference click the "Call for Posters" link at www.otao.com/conference. To donate items for the silent and live auctions click the "Donate Here" link on the conference webpage.

And finally, keep on the lookout for the 2017 OTAO Conference brochure coming soon!

End of Session Report: News from Legislature

Just a month ago, few thought it was possible. Long-time staff and the multitude of lobbyists in the Capitol thought there was only a slim chance. Once again, however, politics surprised and the 2017 Legislative Session adjourned prior to the constitutional deadline of the 10th of July... although just barely. The final gavel fell late on Friday afternoon in the House of Representatives, as the leery and weary group of legislators mustered what excitement they could at the prospect of finally going home.

Regardless of what side of the aisle or the primary interests before the Legislature, many left the Capitol building disappointed, dismayed and even disaffected. Business interests felt that progressives had run rough-shot over their needs, while unions and social justice groups gasped at what little they believe they were handed. With nobody satisfied - and you can wager no legislative office left un-lobbied - some may say this was a dismal session. Some go so far as to say this was the most miserable session in recent memory. Some would call that true compromise¹. We'll let you be the judge
... ..

**“there is
such a thing
as cockeyed
optimism”**

The Governor, facing her first organic election for her first full-term in the Executive Office in 2018, appeared to work hard at threading the needle. She seemed to pare down what she insisted on bringing home, in particular as the months wore on without movement on a tax-and-cuts package, transportation package, union priorities, clean air priorities and even her firearm reform proposal. Politically speaking, that may have been the only path she saw before her. Bringing elected officials back for a special session - or more likely a series of them - is not good for ratings. Cutting bait on some key issues, but managing the losses to message a win on others, however, is.

The Senate found their way out of the building hours earlier on the 7th, with a dignity that becomes the senior chamber. Spending six months fielding flaming arrows of progressive policy, the Senate found its main purpose this session in negotiating, stopping or trying to manage a loss on most legislation sent their way. Like so many other groups, anything they may have passed proactively and sent over to the House for a vote was swiftly and decidedly redirected to one of two committees: House Rules or Ways & Means.

In a documented, dogmatic series of procedures, House Leadership parked hundreds of legislators' priority bills, bills that held promise and those that were threats (or both to a variety of stakeholders) in those two committees, in an effort to bring forth great change. This was the session to revamp our revenue system, institute comprehensive cost-cutting measures, pass a robust transportation package, save the environment, save jobs, end homelessness, feed the children, improve their schools, bolster the veterans, protect the elderly, create economic development, create more transparency and accountability, expand Medicaid services, end opioid addiction and keep guns out of the hands of those in crisis. (seriously)

¹Political Negotiation: When nobody walks away with all they want or nobody leaves happy.

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And you know what? They did most of it, *kind of*. And balanced the budget, to boot, *at least for now*. All this as a backdrop, the Occupational Therapy Association of Oregon made it further down the road to passing legislation than we have in recent history - and on big issues, too.

Top Tier Priorities:

It all began with the annual Conference in October, where the OTAO Legislative Committee conferred with members from across the state about what tools OTs need to provide their services more efficiently and more effectively to patients. The two bills that emerged were very different, but were both steeped in one philosophy: Increased Access & Impact on Outcomes.

Rural Practice Incentive Program(s)

Coming back for a second round, [HB 2751](#) was modeled after legislation that had been proposed in 2016, at the request of Representative Greg Barreto (R-Pendleton) and his constituent, an Occupational Therapist. Very straightforward, this bill would add OTs to the list of eligible providers for the loan repayment program, which is one of a handful of programs that aim to incentivize health care providers to practice in rural and/or underserved communities.

OTAO worked with the Chair of the House Health Care Committee to schedule the public hearing and testimony on HB 2751 during our annual Advocacy Day in Salem. An OTAO member from Eastern Oregon and a student (who would like return home to Eastern Oregon to practice) presented to the committee members on:

- what the state of access is in rural Oregon;
- why inclusion of habilitative and rehabilitative services is critical to cost and care, and;
- how this bill will help to accomplish those goals.

The testimony on this bill and discussion by the legislators was mostly positive... mostly. The lobbyist for the Office of Rural Health spoke in opposition to the bill, explaining that this would only be a fix du-jour and would simply "think the soup," rather than addressing an access shortage. And one of the members of the Health Care Committee, a doctor, was more concerned about promoting incentives for physicians or providers he deemed more critical. Despite the nay-sayers, the hearing room was full with OTs and our statistics stood for themselves. HB 2751 passed out of the House Health Care Committee and the House Chamber with a unanimous vote in both.

Over in the Senate Health Care Committee another physician had begun to dig a bit deeper into the access shortage and the various incentive programs. These questions led to a bigger shift in incentive policies than we could have imagined - and not only for Occupational Therapists. What Senator Elizabeth Steiner-Hayward (D- SW Portland), Chair of the Human Services Sub Committee on Ways & Means, found was that presently these incentives vary both by type and by provider. This is the moment when HB 2751 met its demise; when it became clear

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that a broader reform conversation was needed. This bill was still in committee upon adjournment.

For years it has been a professional jumble of who might qualify for which, and legislatively the impact on the state's bottom line has been unexamined. After much testimony in both the House & Senate Health Care Committees, including our own contribution through HB 2751, Rep.

Nancy Nathanson (D- Eugene), Co-Chair of Ways & Means, along with Sen. Elizabeth Steiner-Hayward crafted a plan this session to answer this question... with a study.

While OTs remain off-the-list for these incentives, conversations at OHSU this summer and fall are likely to yield legislation that provides an opportunity to ensure that a broad set of providers are eligible for the incentives that are on the table. See: [HB 3261](#)

Caseload Reform in K-12:

With the introduction of OTA's second priority bill, [HB 3263](#) arrived on the scene and immediately began making waves. State Rep. Susan McLain (D- Forest Grove) heard the problem and truly understood: OTs are being asked to serve too many students for their human capacity; the model of care is stagnant. She also heard our solution and became a champion of students and parents who receive OT services at school.

HB 3263 directed the State Board of Education to begin a rule-making process that would address the issue of caseload and, therefore, the adequacy and impact of services to students. It also provided the framework for the Board of Ed to use, designed to stretch out special education dollars and to have a more impactful interaction with each of the kids who have IEPs. Modeled to increase access, this framework utilizes the work of OTAs, in a team, and in concert with an overseeing OT to deliver services.

The Chair of the House Committee on Education, Margaret Doherty (D- Tigard), granted us a public hearing and a chance for verbal testimony, in addition to the written testimony submitted by OTs and Professors of OT from around the state. OTA's members and leaders stood prepared with facts, figures, rules from other states and those states' statistics. In opposition was the "education lobby." Both in public and behind closed doors representatives of the school board association, the teachers union, and the school administrators association all took exception to this proposal as another mandate, without the resources to carry it out.

At that point Rep. Susan McLain, from her seat at the Committee dias, let loose a little bit. She admonished the education lobby for being so hard to move; for creating roadblocks to good innovative policy because of a larger, more systemic financing problem. The Chair informed OTA's lobbyists that this bill was not going to go to a vote and therefore would languish in committee upon

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adjournment. She was quick to add, however, that Rep. McLain has committed to pulling together a workgroup in the time leading up to February of 2018 and to find a pathway still.

OTAO Leadership was prepared to use this bill as a starting point for an important conversation, and were thrilled to make it through to a hearing and now on to a workgroup. *Your participation is going to be very important as we move forward.*

Bills Concerning OT:

In addition to the bills that were put forth by OTAO, there were a number of bills that were put out "at" OTs in Oregon. Whether intentional or not, the following bills would have impacted your practice.

- [SB 48](#): Adding a new Continuing Education requirement for all of the health licensing boards, including the Occupational Therapy Licensing Board, focused on suicide risk, detection and prevention. This bill ultimately became a voluntary collection of data on licensees who have completed CE on this ilk. It passed and went into effect on July 1.
- [SB 217](#): The original draft of this bill was designed to allow chiropractic physicians and naturopathic physicians to provide release for an athlete who sustained a concussion or is suspected of sustaining concussion. Some theorize that the "traditional" medical community cleverly disguised their opposition by amending the bill to include a larger set of practitioners. By including OTs, PTs, PAs, athletic trainers (and more!), the price-tag from the agencies involved surely would have hindered its progress... or perhaps it just didn't have enough oomph to get off the ground. Either way, this bill remained in the Senate Health Care Committee upon adjournment.

- **Additional Therapy Licensing Boards:**

There are regularly instances where it is critical that OTAO identify and address the unintended consequences that arise from dueling licensing boards.

- [HB 2432](#): Similar to our previous rides with ABA therapy and music therapy, where we needed to ensure that the regulation of a form of therapy which is used within a menu of treatment options by OTs is not prohibitive or costly. HB 2432 created an Art Therapy Licensing Board, passed and has been in law since late May. OTAO ensured that the use of these tools by OTs is not punishable.
- [HB 2723](#): a new pony was (literally) added to the stable with HB 2723. Rep. Janeen Sollman carried forward a legacy bill from the office holder before her in Hillsboro, prohibiting the exclusion of Hippo-therapy from medicaid coverage. The bill nearly found its way out of the first committee after being amended into a study bill about possible inclusion in medicaid at all, but did not in the

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end. 2732 remained in House Health Care upon adjournment in July.

- [SB 5523](#): Finally, the budget for the licensing board. The OTLB has remained in good standing for years, with legislators often commenting on the good stewardship of licensee fees (not all boards can boast this). As a partner in the field, OTA/O leadership authored a [piece of testimony](#) in support of the budget as it was proposed in SB 5523 and spoke to Legislators on the Ways & Means Committee in person, in support, also.
 - The OTLB was given one-sixth of a 1.9% budget increase this biennium and has been asked to report back, jointly with the others, on information technology needs for the future.

A Few Other Items:

Informational Hearing on OT & OTAs in Public K-12 was held on our Advocacy Day and allowed for OTA/O to uphold its Legislative Commitment to its dues-paying members:

- Raise the profile of Occupational Therapy Services & Impacts for Legislators;
- Pro-actively work toward passing legislation informed and driven by OTA/O members;
- Increase activity and awareness amongst all OT/As to encourage participation with OTA/O.

Given 10 minutes for a spotlight on Occupational Therapy and Occupational Therapy Assistants, OTA/O leadership shined! Legislators left our informational session both with a greater sense of connection to the work of OT, but many also shared their own personal or professional connection with an OT or an OTA. We all learned a great deal from each other that day.

- Nicholina Terzoeff

Upcoming Events

2017 OTAO Annual Conference	Oct 6-7
Legislative Deadline: Interim Legislative Days	Sept 18-20
Legislative Deadline: Interim Legislative Days	Nov 13-15
Legislative Deadline: Concepts to be Requested by 5pm via a Legislator	Nov 21