

Finding a New Start

Occupational therapy
program helps injured
veterans succeed at CSU

When his vehicle wrecked in East Africa on May 25, 2009, Joel Peters was on his way to administer first aid to fellow Marines injured by an accidental mortar explosion.

He wasn't wearing the dated Humvee's seat belt because it wouldn't fit around his gear, and he was thrown from the truck, hitting his head and injuring his rotator cuff, ribs, and back. Peters suffered a severe traumatic brain injury and spent two weeks in a coma. His family was told to prepare for the worst.

Fast-forward five years, and Peters and his wife Darcy, also a former Marine, are now living in Timnath and expecting their third child. He's hoping to graduate from Colorado State University in summer 2016 with a bachelor's degree in social work. And he doubts he could have done it without the New Start for Student Veterans program in CSU's Center for Community Partnerships and one of its research associates, Erica Schelly.

"If she wasn't there, and the program wasn't there, I'd be less motivated," Peters said. "Sometimes I need that extra push."



Social work student and U.S. Marine veteran Joel Peters at home with his wife Darcy and son Benson.

“ Through New Start, you realize that just because you got hurt doesn't mean you can't ever do anything again. ”

— Joel Peters

New Start is based in the Department of Occupational Therapy and funded primarily through the generosity of CSU alumnus and military veteran Dennis Repp and other

donors, as well as backing from the Department of Veterans Affairs. The program supports CSU student veterans by providing services in areas like memory, concentration,

and/or physical challenges; stress management; academic skills; peer mentoring; recreation; and campus/community resources.

"Through New Start, you realize that just because you got hurt doesn't mean you can't ever do anything again," Peters said. "You got hurt, but that's irrelevant at this point. At New Start, there's a genuine desire to help. They are a welcoming place."

Peters had a long road recovering from his brain injury. After a couple of months at a hospital in Bethesda, Md., he spent five months doing rehab in Palo Alto, Calif., and was stationed with a Wounded Warrior Battalion at Camp Pendleton in southern California for three years. Despite the doctors who

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From the department head



Bob Gotshall

As I wind down my year as the interim department head, I can reflect on the many achievements of the Department of Occupational Therapy. This newsletter highlights only some of these accomplishments and milestones. One reason I took this position was my deep respect for the personnel and programs in OT. A major benefit of my tenure for me has been to learn about the profession of OT and all that you do.

I have found it easy to advocate for a profession that serves individuals in a profound manner, enabling those who have barriers to participation to engage more completely in occupations where they live, work, learn, or play, thus leading to a more full, productive, and satisfying life. As we prepare students for this profession, and as our faculty research and discover new knowledge to provide the basis for a high-quality evidence-based practice, OT will remain integral to the positive health and well-being of people within our communities.

I am pleased to announce that **Dr. Anita Bundy** has been named OT department head starting January 2016. Dr. Bundy is a well-known and respected international scholar who brings a depth of experience

and perspective on OT education and practice. Read more on page 8.

There are many highlights to share with you this year. The OT department continues to be ranked sixth in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Additionally, out of 150 entry-level professional occupational therapy programs, our students have once again ranked number one on *Graduateprograms.com*. As you read this newsletter, I hope you gain a good sense of why we continue to earn these rankings.

The most significant news is that 100 percent of our graduates who sat for the national certification exam in both 2013 and 2014 passed on the first attempt.

Our faculty, staff, and students have been recognized for excellence by receiving several notable awards, highlighted within this newsletter. I hope the news from CSU-OT finds each of you well and prosperous.

With Regards,

Bob Gotshall, Ph.D.
Interim Department Head
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Applause

Karen Atler

Karen Atler was awarded the 2015 College of Health and Human Sciences Tenure-Track Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

Atler also received the Marjorie Ball Award of Merit, the highest honor awarded at the 2014 state conference of the Occupational Therapy Association of Colorado.



Atler

Mary Khetani

Mary Khetani was nominated as a consulting editor of the *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, a top journal in the field of special education and rehabilitation.

Khetani also received the third place research poster award out of hundreds of submissions at the American Congress on Rehabilitation Medicine Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada, for "Psychometric properties of the Young Children's Participation and Environment Measure (YC-PEM)."



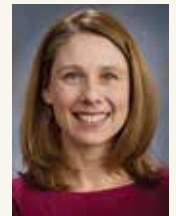
Khetani



McDowell

Linda McDowell

Linda McDowell received the 2015 College of Health and Human Sciences Superior Staff Service Award and celebrated 25 years of service to Colorado State University.



Schmidt

Arlene Schmidt

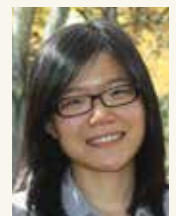
Arlene Schmidt was the recipient of the 2014 American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine Mitchell Rosenthal Award for her demonstrated leadership and significant contribution to rehabilitation medicine and research.



Crasta

Jewel Crasta and Mei-Heng Lin

Students Jewel Crasta and Mei-Heng Lin, Occupation and Rehabilitation Science Ph.D. candidates, have each been selected as one of CSU's 2014-15 International Presidential Fellows.



Lin

Provider with a Big Heart

Occupational therapy student devotes herself to helping those with disabilities

All 2014 graduate Molly Gleason arrived at CSU in 2012 to earn her master's degree in occupational therapy. Gleason was inspired to leave a comfortable job in the insurance industry to pursue her passion for helping families living with disabilities, which grew out of her experiences as a single mother raising a son with special needs and being the primary caregiver to her mother, who had low vision and congestive heart

failure. Unfortunately, her mother passed away before she could see her graduate, but Gleason says that she knows her mom is proud of her. Gleason's experiences as a caregiver to people with special needs have provided her with a unique perspective as a future health care provider.

"My son is my biggest inspiration; he works so hard and has taught me so much," said Gleason. "During his journey with special needs, he's taught me so much about things I never would have experienced. He has made amazing strides in his life, he's a great kid, and I'm very proud of him."

"My son is my biggest inspiration; he works so hard and has taught me so much."
Molly Gleason

While at CSU she worked as the study coordinator for the Children's Participation and Environment Research Lab at CSU. She led a study that partnered with parents of children with disabilities to create care plans that concentrate on increasing children's participation

in daily activities. Gleason was chosen to present on the findings of this study at the American Occupational Therapy Association's

Annual Conference & Expo in 2015.

Gleason's future plans are to stay in Fort Collins and work as an occupational therapist who honors the values and goals of her clients.

"I am so proud of Molly Gleason," said Lisa Fyffe, assistant professor in OT. "She is a student who not only mastered the knowledge and intrapersonal skills of an occupational therapy student; she also mastered the heart of the profession. I know that Molly will continue to represent the Department of Occupational Therapy and CSU well as she enters the field and pursues her career."



Molly Gleason, right, with her son.

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said he would never again speak intelligently or be able to drive a car, one of his only lingering symptoms now is an occasional loss of balance – the room spins briefly when he lies down. But he was told at Camp Pendleton that he'd never be able to achieve his dream

of following in his father's footsteps and becoming a police officer.

Peters came to Colorado to get a fresh start and began taking classes at Front Range Community College, where he was referred to Schelly. Among Peters' experiences with New Start has been whitewater rafting trips with fellow



For more information on the New Start for Student Veterans program, visit: www.ccp.colostate.edu/programs/new_start.aspx

student veterans, which he described as "the time of my life."

And he hasn't given up on his dream of doing the

kind of work that police do. Once he gets his degree in social work, he wants to work with parolees in a counseling role. His father

still serves as an inspiration. "When I would go on ride-alongs with him, he always treated people like human beings," he said.

Peters credits New Start with helping him keep that dream within reach. "I think now I'm more confident than I was before," he said. "It's a very valuable tool for disabled vets."



OT student Kelsey Mathias, left, trains Kathleen, a resident of New Mercer Commons, on the Nifty Knitter, an alternative knitting option for people with low vision.

Seeing through the Fog

OT students lead program for older adults with low vision

“It’s like looking through fog,” shares Polly, a resident of New Mercer Commons, an assisted living facility that is part of Columbine Health Systems in Fort Collins. “I can’t see clearly, but I really like the new lights the CSU students recommended, they help me concentrate to enjoy my favorite activities.”

Polly, like many in the New Mercer low vision group, has macular degeneration, an eye condition common in older adults that causes vision impairment. Macular degeneration affects 18 percent of 65-75 year olds and up to 30 percent of the population 75 years and older. Low vision refers to a visual impairment not correctable by glasses or contact lenses, and is a common condition caused by aging. With the Baby Boomer generation aging rapidly, low vision will become an issue for more and more people.

Through the OT fieldwork component, graduate students Kelsey Mathias and Samantha Clement have teamed up with Enight Skills Center, a local non-profit that provides vision rehabilitation, to create and implement an educational program for low vision residents at New Mercer. Cori Layton, a low vision specialist from Enight, provided hands-on learning opportunities, exposed students to Enight service provision, and aided in designing the low vision groups.

Trained by OT Assistant Professor Aaron Eakman, the OT students learned how to complete basic low vision assessments and created three group lessons including how to use magnifiers, improving the quality of light sources, and modifying leisure activities to accommodate low vision.

The group lessons are supplemented with individual consultations, in which the students assess the participant's living quarters to see how they can improve the space for their low vision client.

Gina Digiallonardo, an administrator at New Mercer who oversees the program, appreciates the practical application of the lessons.

"The students presented on topics that touched all of my departments, so it was very useful. We have been able to use some of the suggestions in maintenance and activities. I think the overall program has made us more aware of ways that we can modify an environment to make it better for a resident with low vision. I am very pleased with this new awareness."



Interested in supporting low vision education, outreach, and research activities in the Department of Occupational Therapy? Contact Aaron Eakman: Aaron.Eakman@colostate.edu

One especially useful exercise featured mugs from New Mercer's dining services. As contrast plays a huge role in differentiating between different objects, the students showed residents with low vision how to discern if there was liquid in the cup, a practical and safety skill they would need. By putting dark liquids into light-colored mugs, clients could clearly see when their mug was full or empty. Mathias was encouraged by the response of New Mercer

to review their dining services to make them more low vision friendly.

The program has been mutually beneficial, as the clients with low vision learn how to modify their lifestyle to enjoy their favorite activities while the students are exposed to an emerging practice area in OT.

"This age group is one I want to focus on when I am an occupational therapist," Mathias explains. "It is so cool that CSU gave me the opportunity to learn about this group through cutting edge practice in a newly emerging field."

Eakman emphasizes that this fieldwork opportunity supports one of the profession's main goals: to promote a positive, active connection to life.

"OT helps people develop the skills they need for completing the daily activities they want and need to do such as typing on the computer," Eakman explains. "With a health issue like low vision, clients can lose their connection to other people and to life. The OT program is about building that connection back up again."

This program is clearly working on building that connection, as was evident in the joy of New Mercer client, Kathleen, who was able to knit for the first time in years through a lesson on using the Nifty Knitter, a round loom which makes it possible to knit without having to see small needles or count stitches. Outside of leisure activities, OTs can help persons with low vision prevent accidents and injury and can help modify environments to promote a healthy and satisfying life.

New endowment honors life and career of Wanda Mayberry

The legacy of Wanda Mayberry – faculty emerita in OT – endures with the creation of the new Wanda Mayberry Student Professional Development Endowment. Mayberry was a faculty member at CSU from 1973 to 2000, and passed away at 78 in 2012 after battling cancer. In her will, Mayberry left her home to OT. The proceeds from the sale established the endowment, which will live on in perpetuity to support students for years to come.

When Mayberry first came to teach at CSU in 1973, she was instrumental in starting the master's program in OT, which had previously been a bachelor's only program. During her career at CSU, she taught, advised, and mentored students; developed courses and curricula; and served as acting department head. She was also very active in OT professional associations during her career. She provided service at the college level, and was a beloved teacher and mentor to students.



The Wanda Mayberry Student Professional Development Endowment will provide annual revenue to support the professional development of OT students, including student travel to professional meetings, registration fee relief, student workshops, student research, and other student professional development activities.

In addition, the OT department awards an annual scholarship in Mayberry's name, which was established by friends in 2000 upon her retirement. Mayberry was a generous donor to the scholarship as well. Her financial support of the OT department also included helping students attend the annual meeting of the American Occupational Therapy Association, and serving on a fundraising committee to inspire others to get involved.

Legacies Project
Honoring History.
Celebrating People



Mayberry was featured as part of the College of Health and Human Sciences Legacies Project.

You can view her video interview at:

www.chhs.colostate.edu/wandamayberry

Make a gift in her honor at:

www.giveto.colostate.edu/wandamayberry

Brainwaves Research Laboratory

Finding interdisciplinary solutions to improve lives



Patti Davies, right, with Bill Gavin from the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, co-directors of the Brainwaves Research Lab.

This past year has been an exciting and productive time for the CSU Brainwaves Research Laboratory. Drs. Patti Davies (OT), and Bill Gavin, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, co-direct the lab's research activities, which primarily focus on childhood development of sensory processing and cognitive abilities using electroencephalography (EEG) and event-related potentials (ERPs) methodologies, as well as traditional behavioral measures. The Brainwaves Lab also provides a rich learning environment for three Ph.D., three masters, and two undergraduate students. In addition to these ongoing research activities, some major developments are underway including the construction of a sound attenuation chamber to improve data collection capabilities, major strides in the interdisciplinary brain computer interface project, and a major grant award to study at-home interventions for childhood obesity prevention.

Sound Attenuation Chamber

A key element of sensory processing research is the ability to assure collection of reliable data, and the exclusion of outside sensory "noise." Currently, the Brainwaves Lab is located in the Gifford Building on the same floor as busy classrooms, maintenance activities, and other sources of auditory distraction that potentially have a negative impact on the research results. After many years searching for funding, the Brainwaves



For more information on the Brainwaves Lab, visit: brainwaves.colostate.edu.

Lab was awarded strategic investment matching funds from the Office of the Vice President for Research to be combined with support from the College of Health and Human Sciences and the Departments of Occupational Therapy and Human Development and Family Studies to build a sound attenuation chamber. This sound booth will provide additional benefits to other CSU faculty and external research collaborators.

Brain Computer Interface Project

This interdisciplinary project between the CSU Departments of OT, Human Development and Family Studies, and Computer Information Systems is funded by the National Science Foundation and uses computer algorithms to find patterns in brain activity to signal task completion by electronic devices. Currently, Davies and Gavin have begun their portion of the project, which involves studies of event-driven signal processing and applies these approaches to individuals with severe motor impairment,

such as those with high-level spinal cord injuries. The next component of this line of research is awaiting grant approval and will include a "smart house" simulation to apply and test brain computer interfaces that will assist clients in performing daily activities.

Interdisciplinary Grant from the USDA – National Institute of Food and Agriculture: Childhood Obesity Prevention Program

Davies and Gavin are also co-researchers on a recently awarded \$5 million grant "Bridging Home and Preschool Environments to Promote Healthy Eating and Activity Behaviors and Prevent Obesity in Early Childhood, the HEROs Study (Healthy Environments Study)," which was awarded to Laura Bellows in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition. The goal is to extend a previous healthy eating and physical activity research study involving Head Start preschoolers to incorporate the home environment using technology-based interactive family interventions. The overarching objective is obesity prevention and the Brainwaves Lab researchers will contribute their expertise in measuring motor skills, physical activity, and understanding of sensory issues (i.e. feeding), along with database and statistics methodology.



Pride and Passion

50-year alumna Janet Noland reflects on a life in OT

The class of 1964 was one of the first to have its honors graduates wear gold caps and gowns at commencement. One of the highlights of my life was walking across the platform in that shimmering gold cap and gown to receive my Bachelor of Science degree with a major in occupational therapy,” shared Janet Noland ('64), CSU-OT alumna, during her speech at the 2014 College of Health and Human Sciences Homecoming and Donor Recognition Breakfast. As a 50-year graduate, Noland was invited to be the guest speaker at the breakfast.

Noland graduated from Del Norte High School in 1960 knowing that she wanted to be in a health career, but that nursing was not her passion. Her mother ordered a book on careers and Noland was excited to stumble upon occupational therapy. With her mind set on a career in OT, Noland moved into Green Hall for her first quarter at CSU. That year, she was the only student in the state of Colorado to receive the prestigious National Foundation OT Scholarship, now known as the March of Dimes Foundation.

Noland fondly remembers receiving a beanie cap

at orientation and diving into courses in the College of Home Economics, now the College of Health and Human Sciences. She took a wide variety of courses including cooking, sewing, anatomy, neurology, physiology, zoology, woodworking, and ceramics.

As her studies focused more closely on OT, Noland remembers challenging coursework and special faculty members.

“I was honored to take classes with Marjorie Ball, head of the OT department at the time, who had a lectureship in her name through the Colorado Occupational Therapy Association,” said Noland. “When I told my other OT friends across the state that she was one of my professors, they were star-struck!”

Noland’s first position out of CSU was as the only occupational therapist at the McClellan County Rehabilitation Center in Waco, Texas, where she learned how to work independently as the lone OT in a small medical setting. After returning to Colorado, she spent 15 years working as an occupational therapist and activities director at St. Joseph Hospital and Nursing Home in Del Norte, Colo. From 1989 to 2000,



Janet Noland pictured with her husband, Donald, at the CHHS Homecoming Breakfast.

Above left, Noland shows off her freshman beanie at the CHHS Homecoming Breakfast.

she was contracted with several therapy companies to work in extended care facilities and home health settings in the San Luis Valley.

In 2001, she opened her own practice, J. N. Occupational Therapy Services, Inc., and was contracted to work in extended care facilities and in home health care agencies. When she decided to ease into retirement in 2012, Noland closed her practice and transitioned into the role of a private OT contracted by Alamosa County Public Health to provide home modification evaluations for Options for Long Term Care.

“I really love the home modification work I do,” shares Noland. “My husband, a civil engineer, comes with me on visits and measures the room while I interview the client. He will draw sketches of the modified space and I add my evaluation.”

Now a member of the 50-year alumni club, Noland tries to visit CSU and the University of Wyoming at least once per year for the Wyoming/CSU football game, as her husband is a Wyoming alumnus. “When I visited this year for Homecoming, I took a walk around the Guggenheim Building. All I could think was, ‘this used

to be home to OT! We also had food labs here!’ A lot has changed, but it is really cool to see,” said Noland. Today, the Department of Construction Management calls Guggenheim home, and the Department of Occupational Therapy has its own building on the CSU Oval.

“I am honored to be an alumna of Colorado State University. My advice to current OT students is that a career in OT provides so many exciting job possibilities, but you sometimes have to be assertive and search them out.”

Study of children's play is no game to new department head in OT

Anita Bundy, professor and chair of Occupational Therapy at the University of Sydney, has been named the new head in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Colorado State University.



Bundy has been at the University of Sydney since 2002, but she is no stranger to Fort Collins. For 10 years prior to her appointment in Sydney, she served as a professor in OT at CSU.

"Dr. Anita Bundy has outstanding experience in OT administration, teaching,

and research, including directing a large project examining various interventions with children in schools. She brings a broad depth of knowledge and international experience and reputation to CSU, and I am pleased that she will be leading our highly ranked Department of Occupational Therapy," said Jeff McCubbin, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences.

Bundy is most well known for her work with children, especially the assessment and promotion of play. Her work in schools over the past decade has also addressed "risk reframing," for example, taking into consideration the benefits of everyday risk-taking for children. As a researcher and supervisor of postgraduate research, she has led projects relating to a diverse range of therapeutic

contexts, including children's play, mental health, everyday quality of life, driving assessment, and sensory integration.

"I am very excited to return to CSU and Fort Collins. I'm looking forward to working with OT students, faculty, and staff and to the possibility of extending my research in play and risk reframing to Colorado," said Bundy.

Bundy is also the co-editor of two textbooks published by F.A. Davis and commonly used by occupational therapists: *Sensory integration: Theory and practice* and *Kids can be kids: A childhood occupations approach*.

Bundy will officially start her position at CSU in January 2016. Bob Gotshall will continue to serve as interim department head until that time.