

NEWS FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

June 2016

ARGENTINA

For the first time, a National Network of Occupational Therapy (ReNaTO) has been conformed. The main aim is to gather all OT organizations and different representatives from the provinces where an OT organization does not exist yet.

At the beginning, the objectives are:

- Gather altogether organizations and provincial representatives of Argentina.
- Conduct regular meetings and exchange problem solving strategies in the practice, taking into consideration diversity and regional particularities.
- Enhance and promote the representativeness of Occupational Therapists in Argentina.

In the last months the Occupational Therapy Education Program of the University of Quilmes (UNQUI), has been re-approved for 7 years.

Our National Journal continues to receive readers and greetings from colleagues. The whole team is now working towards a new number. (<http://www.revista.terapiaocupacional.org.ar/index.html>)

Through the Chapter of Gerontology of the AATO, our National Association has signed a cooperation agreement with the Argentinean Gerontology and Geriatric Association (SAAG).

Moreover, the New Guidelines for Palliative Care include Occupational Therapy as part of the interdisciplinary team approved by the National Ministry of Health by Resolution No. 357/2016.

Our National Association is still working towards the regulation of our New National Law for OT Practice.

Carolina Alchouron
Delegate

COLOMBIA

The XVI Colombian Occupational Therapy Conference and the 32nd WFOT council meeting, celebrated in the city of Medellin this past March, were a success. These events left both the Colombian practitioners and students motivated to continue working collectively for strengthening and developing the Occupational Therapy profession in the country, and to continue celebrating 50 years of history since the start of the first academic program.

Two byproducts of this conference are now being prepared by the Colombian Occupational Therapy College: a memoir presenting the abstracts of all the conference's sessions, and a special edition of the Journal 'Ocupación Humana,' showcasing some of the papers presented at the conference. It is estimated that these documents will be available to the professional community in August 2016.

Also at the conference, the Colombian College of Occupational Therapy (CCTO, in Spanish) held its Annual General Meeting to elect a new national executive council. We are honored to introduce OT Solángel García Ruiz (President); OT Natalia Peña (Vice-President); OT Marcela Alejo (Secretary); OT Yurani Vecin (Treasurer); OT Oscar Larrota (Deputy Treasurer); and, OT Clemencia Martinez (Internal Auditor).

This past April 23rd in Nemocón, on the outskirts of Bogotá, the new board of directors met with important Colombian occupational therapy stakeholders in order to establish a short and long term strategic plan for the CCTO. Amongst them, the Association of Occupational Therapy Faculty – ACOLFACTO; the Student Network – RETO; and, different regional representatives, established five main areas of action linked by three strategies (see *Figure 1*). Since then, the team has been delineating the strategic goals, objectives, and activities that will further connect the occupational therapy professionals, students, and academic programs around the country. Moreover, this will forge a more participatory, decentralized, and dynamic workforce. The strategic plan will be consolidated in June and is expected to guide the CCTO actions over the next ten years.



Figure 1. CCTO’s Areas of Action and Strategies 2016-2026

Furthermore, the CCTO’s executive council has begun the process to elect its new Latin-American Confederation of Occupational Therapists – CLATO representative. This is an essential space for the development of the profession in the region. By mid-June, CCTO will be publicly presenting its new representative who will fulfill a two-year term.



In this photo taken at CCTO’s meeting on April 23rd, 2016, *from left to right: Standing: Oscar Larrota, Marcela Alejo, Aleida Fernández, Clara Duarte, Solángel García, Natalia Peña, Karol Guerrero (ACOLFACTO), Yurani Vecino. Sitting: Marixa Bravo (RETO), Jaqueline Cruz (Regional Sur).*

El éxito del XVI Congreso Colombiano de Terapia Ocupacional y de la 32ª Reunión del Consejo Mundial de la WFOT, eventos realizados en la ciudad de Medellín en el pasado mes de marzo, dejó a estudiantes y profesionales colombianos llenos de entusiasmo para continuar trabajando colectivamente por el fortalecimiento y posicionamiento de la Terapia Ocupacional en el país, y así seguir celebrando sus primeros 50 años de formación.

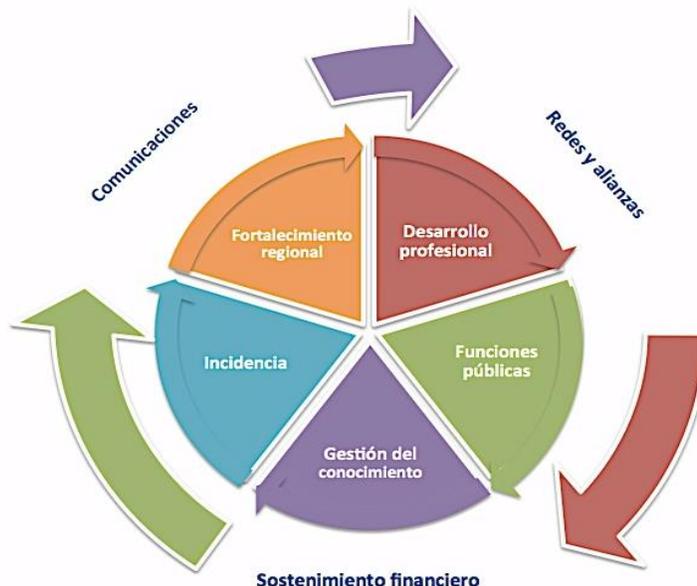
Como producto del Congreso se preparan dos publicaciones, por un lado, un libro de memorias, por otro, una edición especial de la Revista Ocupación Humana; ambas recogerán la diversidad y riqueza del Congreso, la primera a través de los resúmenes de las diferentes presentaciones, la segunda, mediante artículos derivados de algunos de los trabajos que allí se expusieron. Se proyecta que estos documentos estén a disposición de la comunidad profesional en el mes de agosto de 2016.

Precisamente en el marco del XVI Congreso, el Colegio Colombiano de Terapia Ocupacional (CCTO) celebró su Asamblea Anual Ordinaria, donde se eligieron los nuevos integrantes de su Consejo Directivo Nacional:

- T.O. Solángel García Ruiz, presidenta
- T.O. Natalia Peña, vicepresidenta
- T.O. Marcela Alejo, secretaria
- T.O. Yurani Vecino, tesorera
- T.O. Oscar Larrota, suplente de tesorería
- T.O. Clemencia Martínez, fiscal

Para dar inicio a su gestión, el nuevo equipo directivo convocó a diferentes actores de la profesión en el país, entre ellos, la Asociación de Facultades – ACOLFACTO, la Red de Estudiantes – RETO y representantes de las diferentes regiones, a una jornada de trabajo realizada el 23 de abril de 2016. El encuentro, que se llevó a cabo en una zona rural cercana a la capital del país, se enfocó en construir un plan estratégico que oriente el trabajo del CCTO en el mediano y el largo plazo. Como resultado de la jornada, los participantes definieron cinco líneas de acción y tres estrategias transversales (ver figura), alrededor de las cuales se están trazando objetivos, metas y planes de trabajo que esperan vincular activamente a profesionales, estudiantes y escuelas de formación de todo el país, con miras a forjar una acción gremial más participativa, descentralizada y dinámica. El plan de trabajo se consolidará en el mes de junio, con él se aspira a tener un horizonte de acción para los próximos diez años.

Líneas de acción y estrategias definidas por el CCTO para el periodo 2016-2026



Entre sus primeras gestiones, el Consejo Directivo Nacional ha iniciado el proceso de elección de una nueva delegación del CCTO ante la Confederación Latinoamericana de Terapeutas Ocupacionales - CLATO, un espacio esencial para el desarrollo de la profesión en la región latinoamericana; en el mes de junio se dará a conocer el nombre de la persona elegida para desempeñar esta labor en los próximos dos años.



En la foto, de izquierda a derecha: Oscar Larrota, Marcela Alejo, Aleida Fernández, Clara Duarte, Solángel García, Natalia Peña, Karol Guerrero (Acolfacto), Yurani Vecino, Marixa Bravo (RETO), Jacqueline Cruz (Regional Sur). Durante la jornada de trabajo del 23 de abril de 2016.

Clara Duarte, Communications Director
Pamela Talero, Translator

ITALY

The Italian Association of OTs (AITO) is sorry to inform other WFOT members that Francesco Della Gatta resigned from his presidential position. We thank him for his great passion and the priceless amount of time he dedicated to AITO as President.

The new AITO President is Michele Senatore, who has been in the rehabilitation field for 20 years, working in different areas and teaching in the Occupational Therapy course at the University G. D'Annunzio of Chieti, in which he is the coordinator of practical internships.

With the new executive committee we pointed out new goals:

- ❖ Creating orientation courses for secondary-school students involving OT students and Universities, to acknowledge high school students about Occupational Therapy and our profession. In these orientation courses students will be guided to approach themes like disability and inclusivity through practical workshops, leaflets and visits to OT services;
- ❖ AITO is constantly seeking collaboration with disease associations and relatives ;
- ❖ Continue emphasizing and explaining to our health professional colleagues the importance of OT so that after seeing our competences, our value and the difference we can make for our clients, they can't work without us anymore; and patients and clinical centres will ask for our presence and spread information;

- ❖ Continue organizing events and conferences (for example in health fairs and exhibitions) involving medical doctors and other professionals that could talk about OT and its value;
- ❖ Strengthen our relationship with Universities of OT and push them to join ENOTHE.

After the World OT day that was in Chieti University and that strengthened our relationship with the University, raised a lot of consensus and approval for our profession and increased our number of supporters between medical health professionals, we had last month another great day and event: The Italian OT Day.

The Italian OT day was held in Bologna (a well reachable city from the entire Italian peninsula) at Expo Sanità (Health Expo: <http://www.exposanita.it>) organized in collaboration with the regional OT university course. The title of the day was “The Occupational Therapist: competences for the free choice of a life project” and OT was presented from different points of view, different health professionals and fields (hospice, Parkinson approach, work re-integration, autonomy devices...).

We finally would like to encourage and remind all OTs that come to Italy to work and teach, to let us know, inform and contact us. AITO will be very happy to help you and support you!

Giulia Zanaboni
WFOT and COTEC Delegate

JORDAN

The Jordanian Society for Occupational Therapy (JSOT) celebrating OT Month

A series of events and activities took place in Jordan under the supervision, guidance, cooperation, and initiation of the JSOT celebrating OT month during March, April and May 2016:

Working with Syrian refugees in Jordan: The Jordanian Society for Occupational Therapy (JSOT) has responded to the demand of different local organizations which provide rehabilitation services and participated in providing OT services for the needed refugees.

As of February 2016, According to UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), there are around 630,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan. About 18% (117,500) of refugees have settled in the Jordanian four different camps, and 81% in different Governorates. Based on their final research, Handicap International reported that: one in five refugees is affected by physical, sensory or intellectual impairment; one in seven is affected by chronic disease; and one in 20 suffers from injury.

Therefore, a voluntary program was established to assess clients' needs and to cover their therapy. The group consisted of a number of university teachers, therapist and students. Jordanian occupational therapists and academicians who are licensed to practice as OTs were involved in providing OT services for this target group through the JSOT.

The Occupational Therapy Departments of the University of Jordan (JU) and Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) celebrated the OT Month and targeted the community to improve awareness about the value of OT services.

The celebration in the above mentioned universities was attended by faculty Dean and staff, students, as well as public figures and clients from the community.

The JU celebration held four initiatives to celebrate OT month. These initiatives were conducted by 2nd year OT (BSc) students and supervised by: Dr. Somaya Malkawi, OTR. The ceremony was held on the 28th of April, included a full schedule of OT events and initiatives. A speech by the first Jordanian occupational therapist (Dr. Widad Akrouk) who talked about the history and development of OT in Jordan. Then a showcase of each of the four initiatives and finally the ceremony ended by honoring key Jordanian occupational therapists with rewards.

An Occupational therapy gathering took place on 30th of April, The meeting was held in the presence of occupational therapist from different work fields and different generations. Current issues and challenges that face the OT profession in Jordan were discussed. The discussion was rich and enlightened all participants for possible solutions and recommendations for the future.

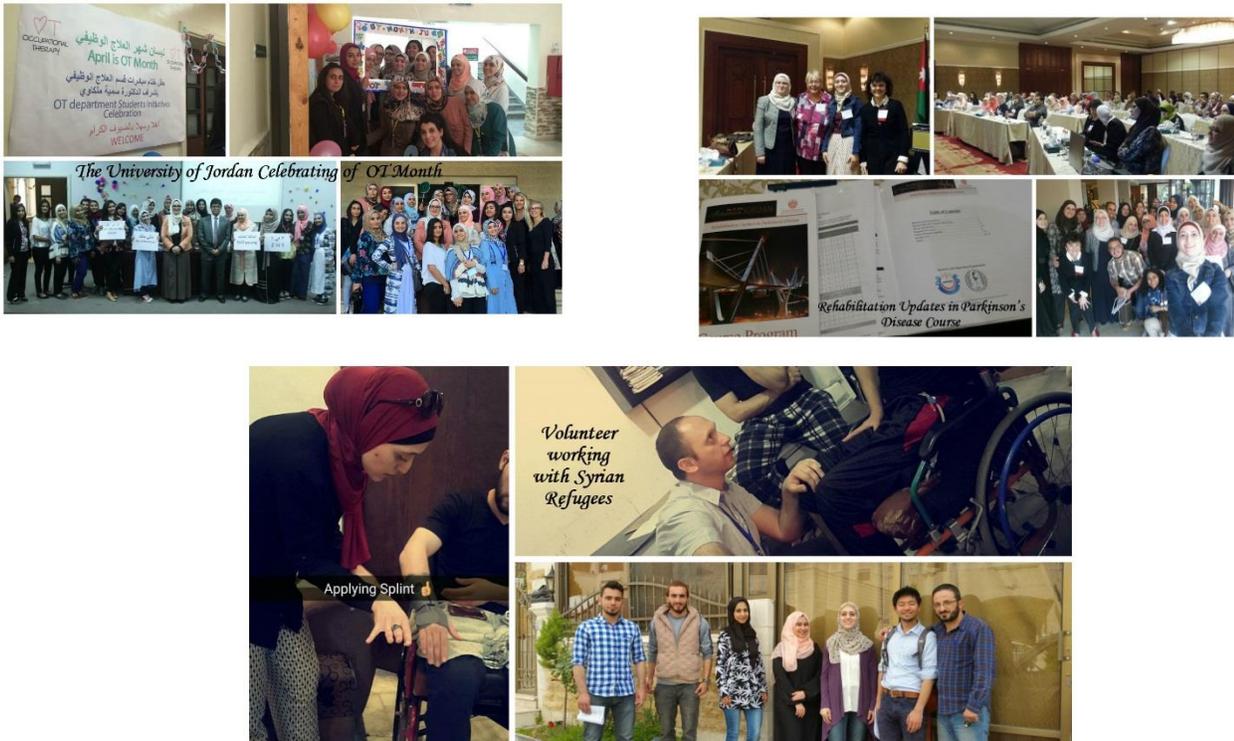
The conclusion of the meeting was about improving the level of therapeutic services that occupational therapists are offering which requires improving the level of our therapists through conducting specialized courses and workshops, in addition to different initiative actions which show the importance of OT role in the society.

The JSOT conducted a Workshop entitled: Why SI: Introductory tips for the Sensory systems, Assessment, & intervention. The workshop was held at the University of Jordan (JU) – Amman on Saturday 7 May, 2016.

The First Projects' Exhibition for occupational therapy students at JUST was held under the paragon of Professor Yousef Khader, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Medical Sciences /JUST. The Exhibition was attended by Chairman of Rehabilitation Sciences Department Dr.Mikhled Maayah and many visitors including faculty members from different departments at JUST including the Faculty of Engineering, Computer Sciences and Nursing. Visitors voted for the best 3 projects out of 20 projects presented in the Exhibition. The projects were; Sensory Integration Home (students: Malak Altety & Juhainah Abu AlHaija), Hand Station (students: Lara Gahzal & Wardah Sabag), and Vestibular Balance Board (students: Raneem Almanasrah & Eman Aldabas).

On Friday 20 May 2016, Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) and International Parkinson Movement disorder Society (MDS) in collaboration with the JSOT conducted a Rehabilitation Updates in Parkinson's Disease Course on Landmark hotel – Amman. An international and local faculty of movement disorders rehabilitation specialists were taught the course. This one-day course was to increase knowledge about rehabilitation in Parkinson's disease and build clinical capacity of rehabilitative professionals in the Middle East.





Hashem Salman Abu Tariah
Delegate

KAZAKHSTAN

The country of Kazakhstan is developing incredibly fast. It is a privilege to watch this happen, and at the same time to be a part of it! As an association we never run out of ideas of how to develop Occupational Therapy (OT) in Kazakhstan. There are many opportunities to grow our profession as there is such a need for OT.

We think about hospitals and health care centres that could use Occupational Therapists; about all the equipment that could be distributed; and about courses that could educate future OTs.

But before we consider all this we need to answer the question that we get asked many times: i.e.: "What is Occupational Therapy?" In this newsletter a few of our Occupational Therapists working in Kazakhstan will share stories about how Occupational Therapy has improved somebody's quality of life.

We hope that you will enjoy these fantastic stories and will become interested in growing our profession in Kazakhstan!

Evelien Visser
President

Note: You can find more information about Occupational Therapy in Kazakhstan by contacting info@ergotherapy.kz

ROMANIA

2015 was the year of the "Continuing Professional Education" program launch as a combined effort of global and local Occupational Therapists. Therefore, two training courses in two different universities have been provided for the students and graduates, in collaboration with Dr. Mary-Margaret Windsor (ScD, OTR/L. USA), Isabelle Beaudry-Bellefeuille (MScOT, OT(C). Spain) and Elizabeth Shaffer (OTR/L. RO). A week of workshops, meetings and discussions, mentored by the same M.M.Windsor strengthened the role of Occupational Therapists in special school and rehabilitation centers both for children with developmental disorders and adults with disabilities. At the inaugural online course 'WFOT Disaster Management for Occupational Therapists (DMOT)', the Participant group included a Romanian OT student.

We continued to promote Occupational Therapy as a distinct profession and not a therapeutic strategy (as it is still perceived in psychology, special education, and rehabilitation medicine) by writing articles in local medical magazines (September, 2015. medicalmarket.ro); by participating at conferences (October, 2015, Bucharest. "Finland-Romanian School") and courses (November, 2015. Bucharest. "Mazicon Rehabilitation Centre"); by celebrating the World OT Day at the University of Bacau; by staying connected with the association online communication resources (facebook and webpage); by presenting papers at various events ("Felix- Medical Days") and talking to students in psychology (May, 2016. University of Oradea), etc. All this being done in collaboration and with the support of international Occupational Therapists living, working and/or volunteering for many, many years in Romania like Dawn Hoffman, Dr. Renne McDannels, Professor Sharon Cermak, and others.



Mirela-Carmen Burlău
Delegate

RWANDA

The Rwanda Occupational Therapy Association (RWOTA) would like to proudly acknowledge our recent acceptance as members into the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT). As the University of Rwanda's occupational therapy department curriculum has also been approved, Rwanda is now a full member of WFOT. We are greatly appreciative of the WFOT and their support and we look forward to building our relationships with all of you around the world.

The University of Rwanda offers a Bachelor's degree in occupational therapy. The first classes began in the fall of 2014, with the first ever occupational therapy student body in Rwanda. In that class are 14 students who will be graduating in 2018. A second class of 16 students enrolled in the fall of 2015.

There is much work to be done in Rwanda within the health sector and as occupational therapists we are looking forward to the opportunity to be a part of the progress here. OT is relatively unknown in Rwanda and this lack of awareness brings many challenges. RWOTA has recently finalized its Action Plan for the fiscal year 2016-2017 and increasing OT awareness is a top priority.

We are very fortunate to already have many advocates for OT such as the Physiotherapy Department at the University of Rwanda, Handicap International, the Rwanda Military Hospital, Ndera Mental Health

Hospital, and the University Hogent of Belgium. We have also begun forging relationships with advocacy groups and NGOs and feel confident that we will develop many strong partnerships with these organizations in the coming months.

One of the first opportunities that RWOTA has to increase OT awareness will be the upcoming inaugural International Scientific Conference being held here in Kigali from June 28-30, 2016. The theme for this year's conference is how to address the growing concern regarding NCDs. Two of our RWOTA members will be presenting papers, one addressing OT treatment post-stroke and the other addressing the unique role of OT in response to NCDs. We will also have students from the OT program at the conference to discuss the role of OT in Rwanda's emerging healthcare system. NCDs pose an increasing threat to individuals and communities throughout Africa and there is an increasing emphasis on the prevention and treatment of NCDs within the healthcare communities here. We are excited to be in a position to offer our services within the multidisciplinary team addressing this rising concern.

Other initiatives that RWOTA plans to take in order to raise awareness of the role and value of OT are to hold special assembly meetings that include stakeholders such as the Rwandan Ministries of Health and Education. We will include persons with disabilities advocates such as the National Council of Persons with Disabilities and the National Union of Disabilities Organizations of Rwanda. These collaborations are important if we want to make a contribution to children with disabilities in the schools and towards occupational justice for all persons with disabilities here in Rwanda.

Another way in which we feel we can impact lives in Rwanda is to become involved with the community health centers that are the core of healthcare delivery here. Of course we recognize the importance of having a presence in the hospitals and we are working hard to increase awareness of OT within these settings. But we also feel that there is an opportunity to show the value of OT in bridging the gap between acute/short-term hospital care and the longer-term care that is so urgently needed. The Rwanda Allied Health Professions Council has identified the need to increase resource mobilization to enhance efficiency of health programs, increase harmonization of response to NCDs, improve standards of healthcare delivery and monitoring, and building capacity of healthcare providers. As OTs, we feel we play a vital role in each of these mandates. To show the role we can play, we plan to create strategies to show how OT can contribute to the prevention and early detection of disease, particularly NCDs. Also, how we can help clients manage acute and chronic disorders to increase participation in meaningful activities as this affects both individual wellbeing as well as the economic wellbeing of entire communities.

We know we have much work to do. But we are excited for the opportunities to be a part of the healthcare team and to contribute to the well-being, happiness, and health of the wonderful people of Rwanda.

Lydia Burd
MOT, OTR/L
Head of Department, OT
University of Rwanda



Lydia Burd, MS, OTR/L (left), the first Director of the Occupational Therapy education program at the University of Rwanda, receives donated texts and supplies from Toni Thompson (USA), MA, OTR/L, C/NDT (right) in Kigali, Rwanda. Burd served as lecturer prior to being appointed the first Director of the OT program inaugurated September 2014. The World Federation of Occupational Therapists has accepted Rwanda as a full member with **Epiphanie Murebwayire (not pictured) serving as President of the Rwandan OT Association.**



Lydia Burd, MS, OTR/L, shows the OT education area at the University of Rwanda (building at right) as she mobilizes on her motorcycle, a popular mode of transport

TAIWAN

Save the date

The Taiwan Occupational Therapy Association/ Chang Gung University, Taiwan/ the Asia-Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists invite to you to submit abstracts to:

The 1st Asia-Pacific Occupational Therapy Symposium in Taiwan

Contextualizing Occupational Therapy: Research, Practice, and Education

October 20th- 22nd, 2017

1. Call for Symposium Proposals

A symposium involves several presenters, typically 4, organized around a topic of interest. Symposium proposals must include the following information in order to be considered.

- The title of the proposed symposium
- A short descriptive summary of the proposal (100-200 words)

- Titles and abstracts of all papers, with up to 500 words for each
- A list of participants and either an abbreviated curriculum vitae or short biographical description (not to exceed 1 page) for each participant, including any non-presenting co-authors.
- Institutional affiliation and e-mail addresses for all participants, including any non-presenting co-authors.
- Please indicate one major theme of your contents within the following four topic categories

Topic Categories for Symposium Proposals

1. Professional Research: Symptom, disease mechanisms, evidence based research, efficacy and underlying mechanism research, etc.
2. Professional Practice: Issues of clinical practice in OT related fields including physical, pediatric, psychology, community, etc.
3. Professional Education: The education of OT to be fit for practice throughout their career in a changing environment and in different contexts
4. Professional Issue: Health Policy, marketing, professional promotion, context, scope of practice, etc.

2. Call for Abstracts

You are invited to submit the abstracts to report on research findings, case studies, unique practice experiences, professional innovation and issues related to Occupational Therapy. The presentations can be in the formats of oral or poster presentation.

For more details, please refer to the 1st announcement of call-for-proposal coming soon...

Pei-Ying Sarah Chan
1st Alternate Delegate

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO / CARIBBEAN

2016 has been a wonderful year for the Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Therapy Association (TTOTA) so far with two major milestones being achieved at the 32nd WFOT Council Meeting in Medellin, Colombia. The curriculum of the new Master of Science in Occupational Therapy at the University of the Southern Caribbean (USC) in Trinidad received WFOT approval and, as a result, TTOTA was granted the status of full member in the WFOT.

TTOTA membership has reached its highest ever at 16 members and the association looks forward to admitting student members from the USC programme. USC will be accepting its first cohort in September 2016 and the new OT department welcomes contact from both prospective students and interested faculty going forward.

TTOTA has embarked on an exciting new Strategic Plan for the period 2016-2018. The Plan includes a re-defined focus of the association on the areas of Education and Continuing Professional Development, Political Advocacy, Partnership and Networking, Research, and Fundraising.

TTOTA's current Executive Committee is made up of Jeanne Sabga-Aboud (Chair / WFOT First Alternate), Shivani Maynard (Vice-Chair), Raquel Martinez (Secretary), Sara Stephens (Treasurer), Priya Gomes (PRO) and Lesley Garcia (WFOT Delegate). As we anticipate continued growth we have activated the Second Alternate position for the first time and elected Tara Riley in this post.

At the 32nd Council Meeting, the Association of Caribbean Occupational Therapists also saw organizational advancement as its membership category was changed from Contributing Member to Regional Group Member.

This Caribbean OT umbrella organization which has been a member of WFOT since 1994 will be holding the 13th Biennial Scientific Conference from November 2nd to 4th 2017 in Kingston, Jamaica. The theme of this dynamic and growing conference is “Occupational Therapy in the Caribbean: 25 Years of Making Waves and Building Bridges”. We look forward to welcoming you there!

Lesley Garcia
Delegate

UNITED KINGDOM

Improving Lives, Saving Money campaign – College of Occupational Therapists

The College of Occupational Therapists in the UK has launched the Improving Lives, Saving Money campaign in a drive to promote the value of the profession. The campaign focuses on making the case for occupational therapists in three key areas:

- Keeping people out of hospital
- Reducing pressure on primary care
- Addressing over reliance on social care

NHS and care services have reached a tipping point across the UK with increasing demand and limited funds available. Those who commission care are faced with difficult decisions about which services to buy and how to provide cost effective care that meets the needs of local communities.

It is critical in today’s climate that occupational therapists can clearly show how they are improving lives and saving money for the public purse.

The two year campaign focuses on the value of occupational therapy with the aim of highlighting to commissioners and providers of health and social care in the UK to understand the difference that investing in occupational therapy can make.

Key points to date:

- Launch of the campaign in November attended by stakeholders including Alistair Burt, Minister of State for Community and Social Care and publication of the report on **occupational therapy's role in urgent care in England**.
- A series of ten workshops with members across the UK to discover and share best practice to enable occupational therapists to demonstrated the impact of their practice by submitting date impact examples.
- The launch of the campaign microsite www.cotimprovinglives.com

At the end of the first year we will publish four nation reports on our key findings presenting our case for the future of occupational therapy in all four nations in the UK.

Education Reform for pre-registration Healthcare Degrees in England

Recent changes following the UK Government Comprehensive Spending Review issued by the Department of Health in November 2015, mean that there will be significant changes to the proposed funding of nursing, midwifery and allied health education in England. After 2017, students will be required to take out repayable loans to fund their education instead of receiving a bursary as they currently do. This will almost certainly have a significant impact on our occupational therapy courses in

England. At present, the full extent of effects of these changes is unknown. A recent consultation with the College of Occupational Therapists membership has been undertaken and the results will be published on our website in due course.

We will be monitoring closely to assess the impact on our own COT Learning and Development Standards and other key areas around continuing to meet the WFOT minimum standards.'

Lorayne Bromberg
College of Occupational Therapists (COT)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Welcome to the New AOTA Alternate Delegate to the WFOT

Welcome to Dr. Ginny Stoffel, PhD, OT, BCMH, FAOTA, immediate past President of the AOTA, to the international team. Dr. Stoffel was elected as the new AOTA Alternate Delegate to the WFOT and will be assuming office on July 1st, 2016. We look forward to Dr. Stoffel's contribution to the effort of building international collaborations. At the same time, I would like to extend our thanks to Dr. Anne Jenkins, MA, EdM, MDiv, DMin, OTR/L for her service as the outgoing WFOT Alternate Delegate and personally for her mentorship in the past year, as I transitioned into the Delegate role. She has been an invaluable member of the AOTA team. All the best Dr. Jenkins.

The AOTA 2016 Annual Conference & Exposition

The 2016 AOTA Annual Conference and Expo was held in Chicago, April 7th to 10th. There were several sessions that were oriented towards international collaborations. One of the main events was the annual International Breakfast in which the speakers Frank Kronenberg, BSc, OT, BA(Ed), PhD Candidate (one of the key authors of the "Occupational Therapy without Borders" movement) and his wife Elelwani Ramugondo, PhD, MSc, BSc both of South Africa presented on the topic of *Ubuntu*, an African philosophy that emphasizes interdependence rather than independence, as a different way of examining the connections among occupation, individual health, and social well-being. The presentation was very dynamic and well received. The breakfast was followed by an informal "Conversations that Matter" session in which the ideas presented by Kronenberg and Ramugondo were discussed more in depth by a group of 50 plus interested students and practitioners.

Presentation on the AOTA/WFOT Collaboration

On April 8th, the AOTA International team consisting of the AOTA Delegate (Moses N. Ikiugu), Alternate Delegate (Anne Jenkins), International Liaison (Rebecca Argabrite Grove), outgoing WFOT Research Program Coordinator (Susan Coppola), and a graduate of AOTA's Emerging Leadership Development Program (Kristin Will); and the WFOT Executive team consisting of Ritchard Ledgerd (WFOT Executive Director) and Samantha Shann (WFOT Vice President, Finance) presented on the topic of "Building a Globally Connected Profession" through the AOTA-WFOT partnership. Some of the content in this joint presentation included a report on the proceedings at the WFOT Executive Council meeting in Colombia last March, the research agenda on which the AOTA and WFOT could collaborate, global networking, and management issues among other issues. The session was very well attended, indicating increasing interest in international collaborations amongst AOTA members.

AOTA Centennial Celebration 2017

The AOTA will celebrate its Centennial anniversary during the Annual Conference & Exposition in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 30th through April 2nd, 2017. Occupational therapy practitioners throughout the world know that historically, the profession was formally founded at the Consolation House in Clifton Springs, New York, in 1917 where six individuals from disparate professional backgrounds (2 architects, a social worker, a physician, a teacher, and a secretary) were united by the

simple idea that occupation (what people do with their hands in everyday lives, energized by mind and will as Mary Reilly later put it) can influence health and well-being. They founded the National Society for the Promotion of Occupational Therapy (NSPOT), which later became the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is symbolically the perfect place to celebrate this hallmark considering that it was the city in which the constitution of the United States was formulated, effectively founding the new Federation. There are many sites in Philadelphia related to the history of the United States that conference attendees can visit in addition to many arts and cultural activities. Since this celebration is a landmark not only for the AOTA but for occupational therapy in general, we hope that many of our friends and colleagues from across the globe will join us.

The AOTA will also host the WFOT Executive Management Meeting the week before the conference and centennial celebrations. Everybody, welcome to Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly love.

AOTA's Vision 2025

AOTA's Vision 2025 builds on the work of the Centennial Vision to continue to move the Association and the profession forward. It is the culmination of a 2-year process that included focus groups, online surveys, interviews, and a [Vision Summit](#) with more than 80 occupational therapy and industry stakeholders including WFOT.

Occupational therapy maximizes health, well-being, and quality of life for all people, populations, and communities through effective solutions that facilitate participation in everyday living.

In addition, Guideposts were created to help further define and communicate the Vision's core tenets to key stakeholders, including OTs, OTAs, educators, students, consumers, policymakers, and the general public:

Accessible: Occupational therapy provides culturally responsive and customized services.

Collaborative: Occupational therapy excels in working with clients and within systems to produce effective outcomes.

Effective: Occupational therapy is evidence-based, client-centered, and cost-effective.

Leaders: Occupational therapy is influential in changing policies, environments, and complex systems.

Moses N. Ikiugu
Delegate