

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

The New York University Department of Occupational Therapy

Volume 5, Issue 1

January 2005

Friends and Students Pay Tribute to Marie-Louise Blount



Marie-Louise holds her grandson, Meyer, as her son, Wesley, pays tribute to her. In the background are Anne C. Mosey, Anita Simons and Angela Holliday, 2004 Behlen OT Scholarship winner. Photo Credit: Mark Bogulavsky ('06)

Not only jazz music filled the Kimball Lounge on October 14 when alumni, colleagues, family, friends and students gathered to honor and bid fond farewell to Professor Marie-Louise Blount on her retirement. There was an abundance of hugs, greetings of pleasure at people seeing each other again, and Marie-Louise's favorite Caribbean and Asian food to be shared. More than 90 guests were in attendance.

Clinical Professor Blount came to NYU in 1988 to serve as Director of the Professional Program in Occupational Therapy. Prior to that, she was Director of the Occupational Therapy Program at Towson State College in Maryland. During her long and fruitful career at NYU she touched many lives as a mentor, a teacher, and a friend.

A short program included remarks from Steinhardt School's Dean Mary Brabeck, OT Department Chair Jim Hinojosa, OT Alumni Board Chair Karen Stone, Marie-Louise's son Wesley (daughter Elena and grandson Meyer were also present), and Wimberly Edwards a long time friend.

Karen Buckley, successor Director of the Professional Program in Occupational Therapy led a roast put together by the OT faculty.

2nd Anne Cronin Mosey Lecture in March

Save Sunday, March 6, 2005, for the Second Anne Cronin Mosey Lectureship. Mary Foto, OT, CCM, FAOTA, has been invited to give this year's lecture. Her topic, "*The Crisis In Reimbursement*," is one for which she is superbly qualified.

Ms. Foto, a former president of the AOTA (1995-98), owns and manages two companies: The Foto Group, Inc. which provides rehabilitation medical review and case management for the Medicare program and health insurance industry, and Rehabilitation Technology Works, an orthopedic and soft tissue injury practice.

In 2003 Ms. Foto was elected co-chair of the AMA's Health Care Practitioner's Advisory Committee. In this capacity, she represents the Advisory Committee and its non-physician member organizations in developing and recommending annual updates to the Medicare fee schedule.

In seeking Ms. Foto as our speaker the Alumni Board and the OT faculty hoped that she would guide us in unraveling our dilemma of how occupational therapists can navigate reimbursement systems that determine the amount and types of services clients receive, while enabling us to fully use our clinical decision making and therapeutic skills.



Mary Foto

The Lecture will be followed by a brunch and thereafter a panel discussion and audience Q & A session. Panelists include OTs Iris Kimberg, MS., PT, OTR, who owns a home care practice, Sue Seiler, OTR/L, who owns a pediatric practice, and Linda Pflug, OTR/L, who is the Director of Occupational Therapy in a very large long term care facility with two sub-acute rehab units. Karen Buckley, Director of the Professional Program in Occupational Therapy, will chair the panel.

Plan to join us on March 6, 2005 for this very relevant and stimulating program.



Karen Stone. Photo Credit: Mark Bogulavsky '06.

From the Chair

by KAREN STONE

Greetings to you all with best wishes for a happy, and healthy new year.

Let me tell you about the NYU OT Alumni Board, who we are, what we do, and how you can participate.

THE ALUMNI: Betsy Figatner ('49), became an OT after she was discharged from the US Army. Now retired, she most recently worked in long term care. Illene Spindel Burack ('50), a feminist and activist, is still

working in pediatrics. Karen Faberman Stone ('57), semi-retired, is still working in long term care. Muriel Zimmerman ('60), Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lecturer, is retired. Henrietta Charach ('89) is a private contract OT in pediatrics and has her own business. Loreto Dumitrescu ('97) works for the NYC Department of Education. Claudia Beyer ('03) works for the NY Foundling Hospital in pediatric rehab. Ivory Flynn ('04) works for the NYC Department of Education. Alexandra Orloff ('04) works in a pediatric practice.

THE FACULTY: Brian Fisher, Ph.D., the OT faculty liaison, is from Toronto and teaches anatomy to our students. Phyllis Ginsberg is the OT Department Administrator and an invaluable member of the Alumni Board.

THE STUDENTS: Our future alumni, Dara Borisoff ('05), Erika Feil ('05), Mark Bogulavsky ('06), and Kristen Ryan ('07).

THE TASKS: First and foremost, we seek to raise funds for the Frieda J. Behlen OT Scholarship Fund and to administer the scholarship. We try to do this with the imagination that OTs are famous for, and to that end we hope you appreciated our non-traditional 2004 appeal letter and are responding generously.

Secondly, we seek to bring alumni in touch with each other and with the OT Department through such vehicles as the Newsletter, the various special events we sponsor each year, the OT Alumni website page, and the committees in which we invite you to participate. Among our sub-committees are Alumni Outreach, Archives, Newsletter, Web Page, Fund Raising (individual and corporate), Professional Development (mentoring) and Scholarship Award. We meet as a group every four to six weeks and communicate in the interim via email, phone, regular mail, and perhaps an additional committee meeting.

YOUR PART: Read our mail to you. Contribute to the OT Scholarship Fund (if you are called by NYU, specify that your contribution is for the Frieda J. Behlen OT Scholarship Fund or else it will never come to us). Read this Newsletter and send in comments, etc. Additional options: Join the Alumni Board and/or a specific sub-committee. Attend our special events. Offer to mentor a new grad or a current student. Offer to be a regional outreach resource person for prospective OT students. Help us design the 2005 fund appeal letter.

Organize and get together with other NYU OT alums in your geographic area. And so on.....

We participate in the Alumni Board because we want there to be an NYU OT alumni association; we value giving the service, and because it's been fun to work together.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

OT Archival Contribution from Lorraine Williams Pedretti

A large carton of her notebooks, papers and textbooks, all clearly labeled, recently arrived from **Lorraine Williams Pedretti** ('58). Current OT students were shocked to discover that once upon a time, NYU OT students had to write their own textbooks!

Thanks Lorraine for your significant contribution to our Archive collection.

NYU OT Reception at 2004 Annual AOTA Conference

A reception in Minneapolis during the 2004 Annual AOTA Conference for alumni, students, faculty and friends took place on the evening of May 21st. The party was held at the Marquette Place Towers in a suite arranged and paid for by alum Lynn Fienberg Safriel ('02) and her husband.

More than 50 attended the reception and found the setting, with its elegance and panoramic view of Minneapolis, provided just the right environment to socialize and catch up with friends and colleagues. NYU arranged for the food and drink.

Many thanks to Lynn and her husband for their graciousness, thoughtfulness and generosity.

Be sure to look out for the NYU Reception at the 2005 Annual AOTA Conference in Long Beach, California, May 12-15, 2005.

Frieda J. Behlen Scholarship

Last year 23 NYU OT students applied for the Frieda J. Behlen Occupational Therapy Scholarship Award. The Award is derived from the interest earned on this Endowed Scholarship Fund. It is given to two students after an application and blind review process. The award is for summer studies, a time of the year when no other scholarship funds are available to OT students. The award is in addition to the student's school year financial aid package, and does not decrease it.

Please contribute. All amounts, however small, hopefully large, are welcomed and appreciated. This year there will be two \$2,000 scholarships awarded, an increase in amount from 2004. The scholarship is given in honor of Frieda J. Behlen, the NYU OT department's founder; she never hesitated to take out her personal checkbook to help a student in need.

(Continued on page 5)



Nikki Wilson: Making Young Dreams Come True

by IVORY FLYNN

During the Holiday season, many people contribute to a worthwhile charity. Some volunteer in a soup kitchen or donate their used clothes. For alumni **Nikki Wilson** ('01), giving is a year-round mission. Nikki recently founded Dream Makers Youth Foundation (DMYF), a non-profit organization that provides community-based educational, recreational and rehabilitative services to children with special needs.

Currently, DMYF is tackling three focus areas: a tutoring program for children with special needs in metropolitan Atlanta, an adapted sports program for children with physical disabilities, and consultation services to the Hurdy Gurdy House (a home in South Africa for adolescents with autism). In an interview with *Alumni Newsletter*, Nikki shed some light on her inspirations and offered tips to other alumni who might be interested in the world of non-profit organizations.

What inspired you to found DMYF?

As a school-based Occupational Therapist, I often interact with those directly involved in the education of children with special needs — teachers, therapists, parents and service coordinators. Parents also spoke of the unavailability of recreational activities sensitive to the needs of these special children. It became obvious to me that therapeutic services provided in school only met part of the needs of this special population. These children needed extra assistance beyond the classroom to meet their academic goals, along with opportunities for socialization so that they could simply enjoy being kids, despite their disabilities. Determined to meet their needs, I established DMYF.

Who else comprises the DMYF board?

We have two professional educators with over 60 years of experience combined, an accountant who oversees the fiduciary aspects of the organization, a mother of a child with cerebral palsy who has over 15 years of fundraising experience, a former politician with expertise in negotiating with and influencing legislative bodies, and an HR specialist who has expertise in non-profit, finance and administrative staffing, as well as experience in staff training and development.

How did your education at NYU impact DMYF?

After staying up late nights studying for Sally Poole and Anita Perr's impossible exams, and passing Isabel Cadena's Neuroscience and Karen Buckley's Neuro Perspectives, I knew I could do anything!

My inspiration to create (DMYF) began during my undergraduate studies, while I completed volunteer hours for enrollment

into NYU's OT program, at a school for children for disabilities. It was further developed during the Occupational Therapy Promotion and Management course, when I had to write a Program Development paper. I wrote about opening a sports facility specifically geared to individuals with physical disabilities, with wheelchair sports training and competitive leagues. Such an organization already existed in Atlanta, so I became involved, and began coaching a wheelchair soccer and basketball team (the Cobb Cougars). At this time, I further refined my mission to offer an adapted sports program, and a tutoring program to children with mild-to-moderate cognitive disabilities, which would provide them with the socialization opportunities they have been missing, as well as enable them to be active members of their communities, and successful within their school environments.

Do you have a background in non-profit management?

No. Managing DMYF is a learn-as-I-go experience. I prepared myself by reading books about it; I also enrolled in a yearlong non-profit management course offered by the Non-Profit Training Institute.

Any advice for other OTs interested in setting up a non-profit foundation?

1. Establish a niche for your organization. Perform a "needs assessment" to see if the programs you plan to offer are needed within the community you wish to serve, and that the same needs are not already being met by someone else.
2. Enlist competent board members who have internalized your mission and have the time to dedicate to the fulfillment of your organization's goals.
3. Enlist board members who have expertise in areas you do not.
4. Effective time-management and organizational skills are a must; it is quite possible that you may have to juggle full-time employment with developing and managing your organization.

For more information about DMYF, please contact Nikki at (678) 398 6693 or dreammakersyf@aol.com. Tax-deductible donations can be made to "DMYF, Inc." and should be mailed to:

DMYF, Inc.
3316A South Cobb Drive
PMB #163, Smyrna
GA 30080



Nikki with one of the Cougars

In The Press Faculty and Alumni Publications

by CLAUDIA BEYER

Dooley, N.R., & Hinojosa, J. (2004). Improving quality of life for people with Alzheimer's disease and their family care-givers: brief occupational therapy intervention. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 561-569.

Weinstock-Zlotnick, G., & Hinojosa, J. (2004). Bottom-Up or Top-Down Evaluation: Is one better than the other? *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 594-599.

Hinojosa, J., & Foto, M. (2004, December) Occupational therapy documentation for reimbursement: Sensory integration. *Special Interest Section Quarterly Newsletter*.

Segal, R. (2004). Family routines and rituals: A context for occupational therapy interventions. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 499-508.

Goverover, Y., & Hinojosa, J. (2004). Brief report— Interrater reliability and discriminant validity of the Deductive Reasoning test. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 104-108.

Dirette, D., & Kolak, L. (2004). Brief report—Occupational performance needs of adolescents in alternative education programs. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 337-341.

Abreu, B.C., & Peloquin, S.M. (2004). The issue is— Embracing diversity in our profession. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 353-358.

Pallister, D.S. (2004). The issue is—Preparing students to hit the ground running with problem-based learning standardized simulations. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 58*, 236-239.

Silver, M. (2004). Physical rehabilitation for people who are homeless. *OT Practice, 9*(13), 17-21.

Silver, M. (2004). Addressing elementary school violence. *OT Practice, 9*(4), 23-24.

Silver, M. & Alborno, A. (2004, June). Health care middle managers and staff supervisors: Agents for change. *Administration & Management Special Interest Section Quarterly, 1*-3.

Tewfik, D.B. & Sabel, R. (2004). Testimony—Advocacy in action. *OT Practice, 9*(20), 13-16.

Babiss, F. (2002). *An ethnographic study of mental health treatment and outcomes*. New York: Haworth Press. Fran's book is based on her Ph.D. dissertation on suicidal, self-mutilating and eating disorder cases. It incorporates narrative, poetry, drama and symbolic illustration.

Cohen, R. (1992). *Leftovers*. Regent Press. A major focus of this novel is the growth of the disabled rights movement. It tells the story of a young woman's life after she leaves the political left at the end of the McCarthy era.

Drake, M. (2004). *The Disappearing Patient*. iUniverse Inc. In Margaret's most recent mystery, a southern occupational therapist works with a difficult patient who disappears.

Developing Assistive Technology

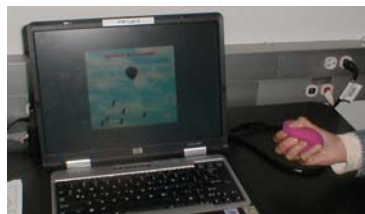
by ANJU MARY PAUL

Imagine a teddy bear sitting beside a hospitalized child, that glows every time the child's parents sends a message via cell phone to a particular number, letting the child know that Mummy and Daddy are thinking about her.

This was one of the assistive technology devices developed by the students of *Developing Assistive Technology*, the multidisciplinary course co-taught by Clinical Assistant Professor **Anita Perr** ('95) and Master Teacher of Communications Marianne Petit from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts' Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP). Many of the products developed by this class were on display at the annual ITP Winter Show from December 19-20, 2004.



Another device developed by the students was for use by patients with hand injuries at NYU's Health Center. Patients are given a ball with a microchip embedded inside, connected by wire to a computer. Gripping and squeezing the ball moves the on-screen cursor in a simple video game, "Keep the Balloon Afloat". This way, instead of the routine (read: boring) exercises that hand patients usually have to run through, they can play a game while exercising!



Anita says that all the products developed by the class were "amazing". Besides the devices themselves, another benefit of the course was communication skills building. "It's about learning about each other and each other's backgrounds. OT students learn about circuit boards; ITP students learn about disability and function, and how people manage day to day," she explains.

Developing Assistive Technology has proven to be so popular with students that Tisch is developing more assistive technology programs in ITP. Contact Anita at anita.perr@nyu.edu for more information about upcoming collaborative courses.

Alumni & Faculty News in Brief

by IVORY FLYNN



We welcome Assistant Professor, **Brian Fisher**, as the new faculty liaison to the Alumni Board. A native of Toronto, Brian joined the OT Department in September 2004. He previously taught at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Alberta, where he had conducted research on

the role of muscle protein in skeletal muscle injury and recovery. In a newly created joint appointment, Dr Fisher teaches anatomy in NYU's OT, PT and Speech Therapy departments.

Karen Buckley ('77) who officially assumed the position of Program Director for NYU's Professional Program in Occupational Therapy, opens the floor to ideas and suggestions from alumni to help maintain the high caliber of NYU graduates. She is particularly interested in your ideas for elective courses to broaden the NYU experience.

Claire Nurse ('04) writes to let everyone know she is happily working at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn in an acute rehabilitation unit. She enjoys the friendly staff, the doctors' respect for occupational therapy, the collaboration between physical therapists and occupational therapists, and the relatively new facility.

Beth Elenko ('00) is proud to announce that she was recently blessed with the birth of a beautiful baby girl, Alexis Shayna.

Jane Rutt ('02) ran the city on November 7 as she and her husband, Rick, successfully completed the New York City marathon. Jane is currently fulfilling her work commitment to the Department of Education by working at P.S. 138. She is also involved in a project to create adapted equipment from cardboard for use in the school setting.

Gary Bedell ('98) has joined the Boston School of Occupational Therapy (BSOT) as an assistant professor. His current research focuses on health promotion and rehabilitation-based interventions to promote participation in home, work and community life for persons with HIV/AIDS. In a recent BSOT newsletter, he was quoted as saying, "Even though I will always be a 'New Yorker', I am still a fan of Boston."

Kate Catinella ('04) participated in the NYC AIDS walk on Mary 16 in memory of a friend. As part of a 12-member team, she helped raise \$4,000.

Loreto Dumitrescu ('97), an active member of the OT Alumni Board, who works in the New York City school system,

is engaged to be married this summer. Our congratulations to Loreto.

Obituaries

We sadly note the passing of **Lynn Shark** (Steinhardt '68) who worked as an OT for over 30 years before retiring to become a web designer. She succumbed to ovarian cancer on December 14, 2003.

We also regret to announce the passing of **Lora E. Dunetz** (Steinhardt '45) and **Anni Juergensen** (Steinhardt '67).

Research Corner

by LORETO DUMITRESCU

Christine C. Chen, Assistant Professor in NYU's Department of Occupational Therapy, presented two posters at the International Symposium on Rehabilitation Outcomes in Stockholm in September 2004.

Currently she is in the data collection stage of her five-year National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Child Health and Human Development grant study entitled "Measuring Hand Function - Development of an Outcome Measure". If you wish to participate in the research, contact Dr. Chen (cc103@nyu.edu or 212-998-5852). She would very much welcome hearing from you.

Mary Donohue (Steinhardt '73, '85), Clinical Professor and current co-chair of MNYD's research committee and co-editor of *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health* is interested in hearing about your current research and clinical efforts. Her own research on developing the "Social Profile" is moving along. Please contact her at 212-998-5839 or mvd1@nyu.edu to tell her about your current research efforts.

Ariela Neuman (Steinhardt '03) is currently completing her post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Special Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her grant from the US Department of Education, Research and Practice division is titled "Educational Policy Research Involving Students with Disabilities". The study will be examining the extent to which early intervention services meet the developmental/functional needs of infants/toddlers and their families. She is using data drawn from the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS).

Frieda J. Behlen OT Scholarship

(Continued from page 2)

Think also of how valuable occupational therapists will be to the restoration of body, mind, and environment in the post tsunami region for many years to come. Your contribution to the Frieda J. Behlen OT Scholarship Fund can help pay for the training of some of these OTs.

Thanks to Alumni Outreach Volunteers

Many thanks to those alumni who are volunteer resource persons for prospective NYU OT students. Your help is gratefully appreciated.

If you are interested in joining this Alumni resource group, contact **Sheri Wadler**, Professional Program Admissions Director, via email at sw39@nyu.edu or phone at 212-998-5847.

Computer Discounts for NYU Alumni

NYU Alumni will be able to purchase IBM computer products at a discount online and in person at the NYU Computer Store located at 242 Greene Street.

This offer is available for online purchases to alumni registered in VioletNet, NYU's online alumni community, and in person to alumni with a valid NYU Alumni Card. To register on VioletNet, send an email to violetnet@nyu.edu requesting a user name and password.

Check out: www.nyu.edu/alumni/benefits for additional benefits available to NYU Alumni such as discounted car rental and hotel stays.

POST-PROFESSIONAL COURSES

In Summer 2005, the course

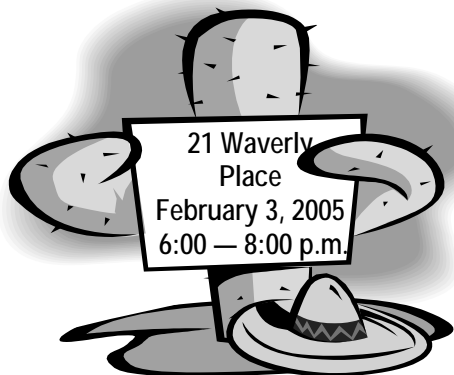
**"Scholarly Inquiry
in**

Occupational Therapy"

(E40.27624) is being offered to OT professionals.

In this course, students analyze philosophical issues in OT, looking at ethical dilemmas & sound arguments.

Second Alumni Happy Hour at Caliente Cab!



Are You in This Photo?



Help Us Identify The OT Students In This Photo.
Who are they? Where Are They Now?

*Camp Sebago, where this photo was taken in the 1950s, is located on Lake Sebago in Palisades Interstate Park, and was used by the School of Education (as it was known then) from 1926 to 1962. Summer school students could take courses geared for school administrators, physical education teachers and recreation directors. Courses included Life-Saving, History of Physical Education, and Coaching Athletics.

During the 1950s, most departments in the School of Education had a "club" with a "club room" in the Student Activities Building at 88 Washington Square East. Clubs elected officers, had meetings and organized several special events each year. The OT Club spent a "Spring" and a "Fall" weekend at Camp Sebago each year. This photo was taken at such a weekend. Frieda J. Behlen is at the bottom right.

Share Your Memories/Photos Of Weekends At NYU's Camp Sebago or other fun times at NYU.

The Alumni Newsletter of the New York University Department of Occupational Therapy is published by the NYU Occupational Therapy Alumni Board. Comments and submissions are welcomed. Send to 35 West 4th Street, Room 1103, New York, NY 10012 or ed.ot.alumni@nyu.edu. Co-editors: Karen Stone ('57), Phyllis Ginsberg. Contributors: Claudia Beyer ('03), Ivory Flynn ('04), Loreto Dumitrescu ('97). Editorial Assistant: Anju Mary Paul.