

## UBC's Donna Drynan recognized for her contribution to teaching and occupational therapy

For many people, getting up and going to work each day is simply part of a routine. For others, it is a vocation, the pursuit of a dream, a dedication to a chosen profession. And once in a while, amongst all those grinders and dreamers, someone unique will stand out – someone whose achievements and positive impact on others is so remarkable it commands recognition.

In 2009, Donna Drynan, clinical associate professor in occupational therapy at the University of British Columbia (UBC), has been honoured not once, but twice, by her peers for her contributions to her students and her chosen profession.

In April, Drynan was named the 2009 recipient of the Clinical Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching. Drynan began her career at UBC as a sessional instructor in assistive technology and has taught there for 15 years. In 2002, she became fieldwork coordinator, responsible for the practice education component of the OT program.

At that time, UBC was in transition to the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program. Drynan ensured the final three cohorts of the BSc(OT) students successfully completed fieldwork and planned the fieldwork component for the new MOT program, plus three new courses.

A UBC press release cited reasons for Drynan receiving this award including how students enjoy her relaxed, pragmatic style and ability to stimulate clinical problem-solving.

As well, it names her support of clinical educators in developing learning objectives, orientation, and teaching practices.

Together with her colleagues from other disciplines, Drynan has developed inter-professional placements, and has documented and evaluated specific competencies for inter-professional practice.

Her teaching accomplishments include leadership in the B.C. student design competition, *Solutions*, which invites students from all post-secondary institutions in the province to create assistive devices for people living with disabilities. She integrated the *Solutions* criteria into a course assignment and MOT students now display their inventions alongside students from a range of other disciplines and institutions, like Emily Carr design students.

Yet another accomplishment for Drynan is the design of "E-Tips for Practice Education." Designed with three other practice education coordinators at UBC, E-Tips is a series of eight interactive online learning modules for preceptors, launched last year to rave reviews nationwide.

Drynan is also a director of practice education at the UBC College of Health Disciplines (the first to hold this position) where she contributes to the international placement forum of the B.C. Aca-



**Donna Drynan is the 2009 recipient of the UBC Clinical Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching and the BCSOT Outstanding OT of the Year.**

demic Health Council, along with her work and involvement with ACOTUP.

Along with receiving the Clinical Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching, Drynan was also named Outstanding OT of the Year by the British Columbia

Society of Occupational Therapy (BCSOT). The award "recognizes a BCSOT member who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession throughout their career."

Her peers at BCSOT selected Drynan for the award in recognition of "her work in assistive technology for children with severe disabilities, fieldwork education and inter-professional education, [and she] has enhanced the position of occupational therapy provincially, nationally and internationally."

BCSOT also cited Drynan's "dedication to student education, leadership, innovation, expertise in the field of technology and pediatric practices, and her advocacy for advancement, reasonable and fair practices that have contributed to ensuring that occupational therapy is well-represented and well-regarded in any forum in which she is a part" as examples of why she was selected for this recognition.

"Receiving two such esteemed honours in one year is very

humbling indeed. It makes me want to continue to aspire to contribute to the best of my ability," says Drynan.

"I want to thank the nominators and those who contributed to the nomination process and hope I will continue to meet and exceed their expectations of my performance. I am so thankful to have worked with such incredible colleagues and students over the years that I have learned so much from and know I still have a lot yet to learn!"

*If you or someone at your university is doing outstanding work in OT, we want to know! Email the executive director [bonnie@megram.com](mailto:bonnie@megram.com) or call, 1-613-432-9491 for inclusion in a future issue of the newsletter.*

### Revision

In the last issue of the ACOTUP newsletter, the article by J.P. Beaudoin as the outgoing president should have included that Caroline Storr, Margaret Anne Campbell-Rempel, Susan Mulholland and Brenda Merritt (not Jocelyn Brown) agreed to serve on the Education Committee and Margo Paterson agreed to serve as chair for that group. Thank you to all for volunteering their time. ACOTUP still needs volunteers for the Research Committee.

Interested parties can contact Bonnie James at 1-613-432-9491 or email [bonnie@megram.com](mailto:bonnie@megram.com).

# ACOTUP

NEWSLETTER – Fall 2009

**ACOTUP/ACPUE is a national organization that promotes and develops occupational therapy education and research with an understanding of issues in a global context.**

## News from Université d'Ottawa

By Dr. Paulette Guitard, director, OT program

How time flies! Summer is already behind us and we are now ready for another wonderful academic year. Last year was very productive as it resulted in two graduating cohorts: the 20th and last cohort at the bachelor's level and the first cohort at the master's level.

The last years have been intense, especially the past two, as we were carrying both programs simultaneously. We could not have achieved this without the precious collaboration of our numerous partners and the collaboration of two replacing professors, Ms. Andrée Daviau and Ms. Myriam Fay who we thank from the bottom of our hearts.

All the efforts and diligent work have paid off! The program was awarded a seven-year accreditation by the Canadian Association of Occupational

Therapists (CAOT).

This year, we are embracing another new challenge as a short program for bachelors in occupational therapy was accepted in June and launched this September. This is a 30-credit master's program offered to occupational therapists with a minimum of two years experience. Course work was conceived to be completed within a year. We are happy to welcome our first two students.

Finally, our team has grown since last January when Dr. Jacinthe Savard joined our team as an assistant professor on a half-time tenure track position. Many of you may already know her as she has assumed different positions within our program over the last years: replacing professor, clinical coordinator and interim director. We welcome her to our small, but wonderful, team!



Première cohorte d'étudiants au programme d'ergothérapie de l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (2008-2012).

## UQTR: première cohorte

L'implantation du programme d'ergothérapie à l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières va bon train. Actuellement, quatre professeures à temps plein, une coordonnatrice de stage à temps plein et une conseillère au démarrage du programme oeuvrent en équipe afin d'implanter un programme de formation par compétences.

Le programme vient d'accueillir une deuxième cohorte de 37 étudiants à l'automne 2009. Dans quelques mois, étudiants et professeurs intégreront de nouveaux locaux dans un édifice fraîchement construit.

## McMaster University holds OT & PT preceptor workshop

By Lorie Shimmell, professional practice coordinator, MScOT program & Bronwen Thomas, academic coordinator of clinical education, MSc(PT) program

Sixty OTs and PTs gathered together on Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at the Olde Springer House in Burlington for a Preceptor Workshop. It was a lively and animated group of people. Everyone first re-connected with colleagues, enjoyed a luncheon, and actively engaged in an excellent afternoon of learning and dialogue led by Dr. Joyce Tryssenaar entitled: "The Joy of Students: Optimizing the Preceptor Experience."

Clinical preceptors worked interprofessionally throughout the workshop to identify strategies and techniques each can take back to use when engaging with students in clinical practice.

This work was well-grounded in Dr. Tryssenaar's leadership, thought-provoking and informative topics with significant learning that could be immediately applied in our partners' clinical education work with students.

Thank you to our clinical partners who were able to attend this event, to Dr. Tryssenaar's for her skilled facilitation, and to Verna Pillai, Gioia di Vincenzo and Sara Gallagher who worked to bring this to fruition!



# Pandemic planning at University of Toronto

Jill Stier, Susan Rappolt, Alim Lalani, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

Staff and faculty within the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy (OS&OT) at the University of Toronto are committed to student safety in the event of an H1N1 pandemic. University directives on pandemic planning have been in place for months with widespread collaborative support across the U of T's rehabilitation sciences sector, including the departments of occupational science and occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology and the graduate department of rehabilitation science. Centralizing key support roles and focusing on information dissemination has been the priority, while ensuring educational objectives are met.

At the university level, the goal of the Health Sciences Committee on Emergency Preparedness is to make every effort to continue the educational activities of all students with the minimum amount of disruption possible. The Health Sciences Committee on Emergency Preparedness plans and coordinates activities anticipated at all stages of the impending H1N1 pandemic through three subcommittees: communication, student support and curriculum.

The rehabilitation science sector has representatives on each of the three subcommittees. A key element of the pandemic communication subcommittee is to centralize information collection and dissemination, and therefore, the Rehabilitation Sciences H1N1 website and the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy hotline were created. The website is updated as new information about H1N1

emerges. Students are requested to leave a message on the department hotline notifying the department if they have H1N1 symptoms, including the date of onset of their symptoms, what assignments they have due, and their expected date of return. Faculty members will be informed of student absences and will make electronic versions of class materials available to students who are ill. The department's IT specialist has enhanced the posting of electronic presentations by instructors with audio recordings of lectures and monitored online group discussion that is delivered securely through U of T's blackboard suite. Each course instructor has arranged for a co-instructor as a backup to avoid unexpected class cancellations should an instructor fall ill.

Members of the student support subcommittee prepared a rehabilitation student support "Question and Answer Fact Sheet," with questions about illness and prevention, who to contact, what to have on hand before an illness, what to do if you get ill and when students can return to class and clinical placement. The department's student liaison officer and graduate coordinator adapted the Sector Pandemic Protocol Memorandum for OS&OT students as part of the incoming student orientation package. Some of the highlights included advice on when to stay home, who to contact for medical assistance and responsibilities with regard to coursework. Mask fit testing for students has been arranged and a mandatory infection control education session is scheduled. Additionally, the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

has a student support team including staff, student and faculty members to work with students who become ill.

As a member of the curriculum pandemic subcommittee, the graduate coordinator in the department assisted in the creation of a template of the "Health Sciences Pandemic Committee Checklist." This checklist helped to identify: pandemic resources that were in place; goals and expectations of the department; delivery of the curriculum; resource needs, clinical placements, monitoring student illness and regulatory issues. Clinical fieldwork placements, which can take place at a multitude of locations are also being closely monitored by the OT fieldwork coordinators, as the nature of placements themselves are subject to change in the event of a pandemic. The OT fieldwork coordinator will be informing students of their rights and responsibilities during such an event, including the right to refuse to work in an environment where students are not provided with the same protection as employees. This includes crediting students for clinical work that falls outside of the parameters of their placement during a facility-wide pandemic within COTO guidelines. The fieldwork coordinator can then liaise with the site preceptor directly so as to not place undue pressure on the student.

Managing anxiety during a pandemic will be a challenge. Roles assigned to departmental members were designed to promote collaboration, reduce uncertainty and allow this department to manage priorities effectively as educational administrators and healthcare professionals.

## What Other Schools Are Doing

In preparation for the pending H1N1 pandemic, universities and OT departments across the country have pandemic plans well underway.

UBC has established a policy at the school along with guidelines for OT students on clinical placement during the pandemic. The guidelines include students following the infection control policies of the facility at all times, and they should not be exposed to patients, clients or residents with pandemic illnesses unless under strictly controlled conditions.

The OT department at the University of Alberta is following the U of A's guidelines, accessible through the homepage on the school website – in addition if a staff member is required to self-isolate, they will not be asked to produce a medical certificate to support an absence.

At Dalhousie University, the Faculty of Health Professions has a detailed plan that dovetails with the university plan on preparing for a pandemic. They are in the process of "operationalizing" the plan at the school level.

Queen's University's OT faculty has developed a policy on the pandemic in conjunction with the rest of the Ontario Council of University Programs in Rehabilitation Sciences group.



Join Occupational Therapists from across the globe at these upcoming events or explore their websites:

**Buenos Aires, Argentina**  
4th Anniversary Conference on Social Neuroscience  
November 3, 2009 | [www.neurologiacognitiva.org](http://www.neurologiacognitiva.org)

**Orlando, Florida, U.S.**  
90th AOTA Annual Conference & Expo  
April 29 - May 2, 2010 | [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

**Halifax, Nova Scotia**  
Meaningful Occupation: Enabling an Ocean of Possibilities  
CAOT & Nova Scotia Society of Occupational Therapists  
May 26-29, 2010 | [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca)

## At Dalhousie

At Dalhousie University, Dr. Anne Carswell is the acting director of the School of Occupational Therapy while Dr. Elizabeth Townsend is on a six-month administrative leave. Dr. Carswell, who is also the vice-president of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT), will be going to Switzerland this October to participate in the celebration of 50 years of close association between the World Health Organization and WFOT. There will be education sessions along with a mini-conference.

As well, faculty member Dr. Brenda Beagan recently received \$293,875 in funding from the CIHR for a study entitled "Healthcare practices and relationships – the experiences of queer women and primary care-providers."

The School of OT is also offering an online course on "Primary Health Care. Occupational Therapy and Inter-professional Practices." It will be held over four weeks starting October 26. More information can be found on the school's website.

## UBC OS & OT announce first graduating PhDs

Moving from one phase of life into another is a process that is sometimes so gradual you hardly know that the change has happened, despite the hard work and effort has gone into it. One day, all the approvals have been granted and instead of walking through the door of your division, you find a fully-operational department in its place; or you walk across a stage and shake a hand, and instead of being a PhD student, you're "suddenly" a doctor. UBC's Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy (OS&OT) made its transition from division to department in 2007 and is now extremely proud to announce the graduation of its very first PhDs from the Rehabilitation Sciences Research Graduate Program in May 2009. This program is shared between OS&OT and the Department of Physical Therapy, and offers both an MSc and PhD stream. The overall goal of the program is to provide health professionals with supervised training to conduct independent and

collaborative research in rehabilitation sciences. Dana Anaby and Jocelyn Harris, both OTs, have both spent the last few years working diligently on their research theses and can now share in the satisfaction of knowing they have contributed new and valuable knowledge to the field of rehabilitation sciences.

Dana Anaby, PhD, completed her doctoral studies developing and testing a model for explaining well-being of Israeli adults in relation to how they balance the everyday activities of their lives. Her findings suggest that a sense of well-being goes beyond personality or how activities are balanced. Instead, well-being appears to be based on the quality of the activities in which people are engaged. Dr. Anaby is currently undertaking a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at McMaster University with Professor Mary Law in which she is exploring the notion of participation and quality of life in children and youth living with disabilities. She is also interested in using a qualitative approach to apply her

"well-being" model to different populations.

Jocelyn Harris, PhD, has designed a homework-based exercise program to improve upper limb function in individuals who have experienced a stroke. The program significantly increases upper limb movement and ability in ADL compared to standard rehabilitation. In fact, so significant are the results of her study that they have been published in *Stroke* and the program has been adopted in many sites across B.C. On June 1, Dr. Harris launched her post-doctoral career in traumatic brain injury at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute with Dr. Angela Colantino.

As these two new PhDs take their initial steps into the field, the faculty and staff of OS&OT congratulate them on their achievements and acknowledge the hard work and dedication that Drs. Anaby and Harris have shown in the past two years at UBC. May they each enjoy an endless supply of curiosity and a prosperous career filled with new insights and ground-breaking endeavors.