

# Updates from the University of Alberta

by Lili Liu, PhD, Professor & Chair,  
Dept of Occupational Therapy,  
Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine

All 2010 marks the start of celebrating 50 years of teaching occupational therapy at the University of Alberta. Read the interview with Leonard Allbon, the first director of the occupational therapy program, in the Spring / Summer 2010 issue of the Rehab Impact magazine online at [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/rehabmed/rehabimpact.cfm](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/rehabmed/rehabimpact.cfm).

The Department of occupational therapy is planning a day of celebration on May 14, 2011 and would like to feature interesting stories on their OT alumni. Please visit [www.ot.ualberta.ca/50](http://www.ot.ualberta.ca/50) to submit your story. If you are a University of Alberta alumnus, please contact [alumrec@exr.ualberta.ca](mailto:alumrec@exr.ualberta.ca) to update your e-mail address and other contact information.

As part of OT month, on October 6, occupational therapy students found time in

their busy schedules to initiate a flash mob dance. The dance was organized and choreographed by OT student Brianna Boyle. View the dance on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaHGY0N5b1k&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaHGY0N5b1k&feature=related).

The department and faculty would like to welcome Cori Schmitz as our new Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE). Cori received her B.Sc. in occupational therapy from Queen's University in 1997, and her Master of Education, community rehabilitation & disability studies from the University of Calgary in 2009. She has over a decade of clinical experience in Canada and abroad, including Guyana, South America, British Columbia and Alberta. She has practiced in a range of areas including acute care, rehabilitation and community settings. She has a particular interest in community-based mental health care and services for marginalized populations.

We also welcome Jutta Hinrichs as our Calgary clinical education coordinator for the

department. This .5 FTE position is an 18 month pilot project from April 2010 to September 2011. Jutta is working with the clinical education team to oversee all clinical education-related activities of M.Sc. OT students with placements in the Calgary area. Jutta was seconded from her role as professional practice leader – OT (adults) with Alberta Health Services, Calgary zone, which she held for six years. Jutta is well-known to CAOT and is continuing another term as CAOT Board member representing Alberta.

The department congratulates Dr. Elizabeth Taylor who has been appointed Associate Dean, Professional Programs and Teaching, a position she is sharing with Dr. David Magee for the 2010-2011 academic year, after which she will assume the position on her own. Dr. Taylor's experience in her recent role as president of CAOT will serve her well in the interdisciplinary and international initiatives of the faculty.

# ACOTUP

NEWSLETTER – Fall 2010

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

## A nationwide collaboration

by Paulette Guitard Ph.D Erg. Aut.(Ont.) erg(c),  
Directrice Programme d'ergothérapie Université d'Ottawa

The OT program at the University of Ottawa is excited to be part of a nationwide collaboration to support internally educated OTs. The Occupational Therapy Examination and Practice Preparation (OTepp) project assists internationally educated occupational therapists (IEOTs) transition into Canadian practice. OTepp is led by the School of Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario in partnership with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). OTepp is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program and by the Government of Ontario.

OTepp offers IEOTs the opportunity to participate in core academic curriculum that reflects Canadian practice. Additional resources include practicum experience, exam preparation, work readiness and career guidance.

The core curriculum is being offered in English in face-to-face classes at McMaster University and at the University of British Columbia and in an online format. The University of Ottawa will be offering the core curriculum in French both in a face-to-face and online format.

For more information, please visit [www.otepp.ca](http://www.otepp.ca), or contact Elizabeth Steggles, National Project Manager, [stegggl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:stegggl@mcmaster.ca).



Dr. Catherine Backman, winner of the UBC Award for Excellence in Interprofessional Education Teaching

## Interprofessional Education Teaching

The University of British Columbia's Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy is proud to congratulate Dr. Catherine Backman, winner of the UBC Award for Excellence in Interprofessional Education Teaching. Dr. Backman co-leads and teaches a three day, case-based interprofessional (IP) module on rheumatology.

Offered to all final year Master of Occupational Therapy and Master of Physical Therapy students at UBC, this unique module uses personal accounts from several perspectives to respond to questions arising from a case example of a child with juvenile idiopathic arthritis and her family, living in a First Nations community. Personal presentations from a residential school survivor (for aboriginal perspectives related to health and healing), a teen who has lived with arthritis since age four and his mother, provided a compelling backdrop for interdisciplinary panel presentations from the BC Children's Hospital arthritis team (rheumatologist, nurse, social worker, occupational therapist and physiotherapist).

A key feature of the IP module is the peer teaching, in which occupational therapy and physical therapy students work in groups and are encouraged to share their professional perspectives, discuss their approaches to a clinical problem, and teach each other their roles and skills in the context of arthritis management.

This module enhances student's exposure to collaborative practice and family-centered care by observing a concrete example, the BCCH team, of how a well-developed IP team works together to solve complex cases. In their small groups, students must work as an IP team identifying examples of respect, trust, effective communication, and shared decision-making to then come back a whole to discuss the JIA case example and key questions that arise from it.

With such an innovative and exemplary teaching model, it is no surprise that this team won the 2010 award.

## New foundational knowledge courses at McMaster

By Deb Stewart, course coordinator

Knowledge of foundational sciences is considered an important competency within occupational therapy. Foundational sciences for occupational therapy include: biological science (anatomy/physiology); social sciences (psychology, sociology, anthropology); and research science (basic statistics and measurement). Faculty in the occupational therapy program at McMaster University have developed two new half courses called Foundational Knowledge I and II that take place in the first two terms of study. The challenge for faculty has been to develop these courses to fit with our problem-based, self-directed learning approach.

Students start in term one to learn about self-directed learning competencies and strategies as applied to foundational knowledge. They then complete a "self-screening questionnaire" for the three foundational sciences (biological, social and research), and use the results of the questionnaire to develop a learning plan, with objectives for all three areas of foundational knowledge. Students can access a variety of learning

resources depending on their individual self-directed learning needs. Learning resources include: formal resource sessions with faculty held once per week per term; online modules for each foundational science; lists of online resources for more in-depth individual study; and quizzes on each topic area.

At the end of the course, students submit a portfolio containing an organized completed learning plan, evidence of accomplishment of their learning objectives, and a self-assessment of their learning. The principal text for these courses is a "text bundle" which has been compiled by faculty using a variety of textbooks available from a publisher of higher education resources.

The knowledge gained from these courses will provide student occupational therapists at McMaster University with the foundational knowledge they need for application in all other occupational therapy courses, including problem-based tutorials, inquiry seminars, skills labs and practica.

# ACOTUP EDUCATION SESSION 2010

By M. A. Campbell-Rempell, C. Donnelly,  
C. Grass, L. Liu, B. Merritt,  
M. Paterson, L. Snider, and C. Storr

The Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP) identified the need to sponsor an education forum session on “Demystifying Academia” as part of the CAOT annual conference in Halifax. The education sub-committee of ACOTUP which is comprised of Margaret Anne Campbell-Rempel, Brenda Merritt, Margo Paterson and Caroline Storr, organized the two hour session which was held on Saturday May 29, 2010, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Marriot Harbourfront Hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Approximately 20 participants attended the session. This session was the last session before the closing ceremony following the CAOT business meetings and many clinicians had already begun their journeys home.

There were three session objectives:

- To demystify the various roles in academia from educator, researcher and administrator;
- To present the wide spectrum of academic career possibilities;
- To present success stories of new graduates, junior faculty members, and senior faculty members at five Canadian universities.

The session started with a brief introduction by Margo Paterson who gave the background and overall context for the session. She explained ACOTUP is concerned about succession planning in the future as many academics will be retiring in the next five to 10 years. As a result, there will be a shortage of academics and a number of vacancies at Canadian universities. She introduced the panel of experts who were

asked to provide brief descriptions of each of their roles in academia and engage the audience in understanding the balance between the benefits and challenges of academic life.

The panelists were chosen to reflect geographic diversity across the Canadian university sector. They were asked to give their perspectives on their various roles. Many of the panelists had filled multiple roles which were very complementary, providing insightful discourses. The panelists were: Crystal Grass (PhD student); Catherine Donnelly (clinical instructor/term adjunct professor); Jacque Ripat (tenure track professor); Laurie Snider (researcher) and Lili Liu (chair). All of their powerpoint presentations have been posted on the ACOTUP website at [www.acotup-acpue.ca](http://www.acotup-acpue.ca) if readers wish further details.

After the panelists provided their narratives, the audience was invited to ask questions and a fruitful, although brief, discussion took place. The organizers had planned to break the larger group into smaller groups and had prepared eight questions for discussion but that was not necessary as there were so many interesting questions directed to the panelists. Overall this session was highly interactive and 12 participants took the time to complete the evaluation feedback form provided below.

- **Objective 1 (demystify roles):**  
Met: 6; Very Well: 6
- **Objective 2 (present wide spectrum of roles):** Met: 6; Very Well: 6
- **Objective 3 (learn success stories)**  
Met: 4 Very Well: 8

Value received from the session:  
Average: 2; High: 6; Very High: 2;  
Undecided: 1

## WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT/ VALUABLE THING YOU LEARNED DURING THIS SESSION?

- There is the possibility of future professions in academia and I feel the support of the room and the panel to challenge this endeavour;
- The many roles and positions available in academia, the different track choices;
- Different (huge!!!) between expectations for tenure at different universities;
- To explore the differences between programs and to explore the life paths to academia and gain insight into how it might fit for me and colleagues might want to support to go forward;
- Trend towards post-doc requirements;
- That I am not alone in my struggles and that my own unconventional trajectory is not uncommon;
- Variety of career paths leading to academia.

## WHAT INFO DID YOU EXPECT TO LEARN, BUT DID NOT?

- No expectations, the info I received was very valuable – thank you;
- What options for salaried support during studying, scholarships, TA jobs;
- Need to have current info from panel on the changing landscape;
- Options following PhD studies that allow for continues clinical work;
- More advice/tips/concrete ideas.

## TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

Each panellist stressed the importance of identifying a mentor(s) to assist with career planning, funding possibilities and post-doc requirements specific to different universities.



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

**Hampton Roads, Virginia**  
Armed Forces Public Health Conference  
March 18-25, 2011 | <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/FHPC/>

**Denver, Colorado**  
The First Mountain & Plains ERC Occupational Health & Energy Summit  
April 13-15, 2011 | <http://maperc.ucdenver.edu/energysummit>

**Queensland, Australia**  
24th National Conference & Exhibition  
June 29-July 1, 2011 | [www.ausotconference.com.au](http://www.ausotconference.com.au)

## A unique higher education training program

McGill University, in partnership with the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec, the Ordre des ergothérapeutes du Québec and the Constance Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre (CLRC) has created a unique higher education training program in driving rehabilitation for occupational therapists. This program aims at training qualified professionals with a solid expertise, based on evidence, which will enable them to effectively intervene in driving screening and evaluation, retraining and vehicle adaptation for different targeted populations. The program is offered in English and in French and includes five courses. The courses are accessible by Internet and some are complimented by practical workshops supervised by expert clinicians. This training program will furnish the student with the necessary tools enabling them to play a leading role in this sector, as part of their profession. Information on the program is available at <http://www.mcgill.ca/spot/gradprogram/>.



## In Memoriam

### Line Robichaud



By Andrew Freeman *erg. PhD,*  
Director, Occupational Therapy Programme,  
Laval University

On 27 September 2010, our profession lost an important leader, Dr. Line Robichaud, at the age of 51. Line, who worked since 1988 as a professor and researcher at Laval University, served as director of the occupational therapy program for six years.

Among her many achievements in this role include that of having overseen the implementation of the new bachelors-masters continuum, a project that is nearing completion. Line had an outstanding career as an

occupational therapy clinician, teacher and researcher. In each of these areas, she made a highly important contribution in the geriatric field in particular, specifically with respect to the services for aged individuals losing their autonomy. Among Line's accomplishments include a significant number of peer-reviewed publications, research grants from the CIHR, FQRSC and Quebec Ministry of Health, supervision of many graduate students, journal manuscript reviewer and membership of several committees. Line also served as the secretary-treasurer to ACOTUP from 1995-1997. However, as important as any of these concrete achievements were Line's qualities as a human being that were evident to all with whom she worked: her deep interest in others, her empathy, her humanity, her intellectual curiosity, her passion, her sense of humour and her humility.

Line was a simple person in the best possible sense of this word. She was a profoundly engaged individual who made a wonderful contribution to occupational therapy. We miss her greatly.