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Celebrate Occupational Therapy Month!

by Ingrid Hendrix on April 10th, 2023 in [Occupational Therapy](#) | [0 Comments](#)



April is Occupational Therapy Month – a time to celebrate this wonderful profession and all that its practitioners, faculty, and students contribute to the well-being, independence, and success of those they work with. A consumer of occupational therapy services myself, I have benefited greatly from the dedication, passion, and creativity occupational therapists bring to helping people re-engage in the activities that are meaningful to them, whether that’s work, play, or family and community activities.

As the American Occupational Therapy Association defines it, “occupational therapy is a science-driven, evidence-based profession that enables people of all ages to participate in daily living or live better with injury, illness, or disability. This is accomplished through designing strategies for everyday living and customizing environments to develop and maximize potential.” (AOTA,2023) Occupational therapists work with children to help them develop the essential physical, sensory and cognitive skills they need to thrive. People of all ages who have experienced an injury or illness benefit from occupational therapy by discovering ways to make their activities less effortful. Occupational therapists often employ assistive technology to support people’s independence, from a simple hack to complex driving equipment or communication devices. They work with people to reengage with work they love, such as farmers through the AgrAbility program <http://www.agrability.org/>. Occupational therapy researchers engage with a wide range of topics, from self-management for people with scleroderma to mobile health assessments to improve community living outcomes for people with disabilities, just to name a few.

UNM’s Occupational Therapy Graduate Program currently offers an Entry-Level Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT), a 2.5-year full-time, year-round program “to prepare culturally

competent, ethical, and compassionate occupational therapists and leaders who design comprehensive and viable models of service delivery in community and healthcare settings.” (UNMOTPG, 2023). They will soon be offering a doctoral degree program.

Some recent highlights from the program include:

A 100% pass rate on the National Board Certification for Occupational Therapy exam for the class of 2021. The class of 2022 who graduated in December are currently taking or have taken the exam. Good luck to all of the students in the class of 2022!

The program received approval to offer a Post Professional Doctoral degree in Occupational Therapy (OTD) and will be accepting its first class of students in August 2023. Details are on the UNM Occupational Therapy Program website. <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/occupational-therapy/content/admissions-otd.html>

Occupational Therapy (Principal Investigators Drs. Mark Hardison and Tim Dionne) received a 3.5 Million Dollar Grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to provide scholarships for disadvantaged students (131 scholarships awarded to 76 students over 3 years - totaling \$1,925,000).

Celebrate Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy students this month and all year long for their amazing contributions to the health and well-being of our communities!

Explore more about UNM’s Occupational Therapy Program here: <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/occupational-therapy/content/>

Discover interesting facts about the history of the OT profession: <https://otpotential.com/blog/occupational-therapy-history>

References

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2023) *Everyday Advocacy*. <https://www.aota.org/advocacy/everyday-advocacy/marketing-and-promotion-of-ot>

UNM Occupational Therapy Graduate Programs. (2023) <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/occupational-therapy/>

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