

Historical Annual Report

2014-2021



Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity

About COTAD

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) formed in 2014 through a collaboration that occurred between members of the AOTA Emerging Leaders Development Program. COTAD has grown tremendously since its early days and has added individuals to its Executive Board, Board, and general membership. Now established as a non-profit organization, COTAD operates as group of individuals from across the United States all working towards a common goal of promoting diversity and inclusion within the occupational therapy workforce and increase the ability to occupational therapy practitioners to serve an increasingly diverse population.

MISSION

To empower occupational therapy leaders to engage in practices that increase diversity, equity and inclusion for a more transformative occupational therapy profession.

VISION

A future in which occupational therapy is accessible, inclusive, and effective for all.

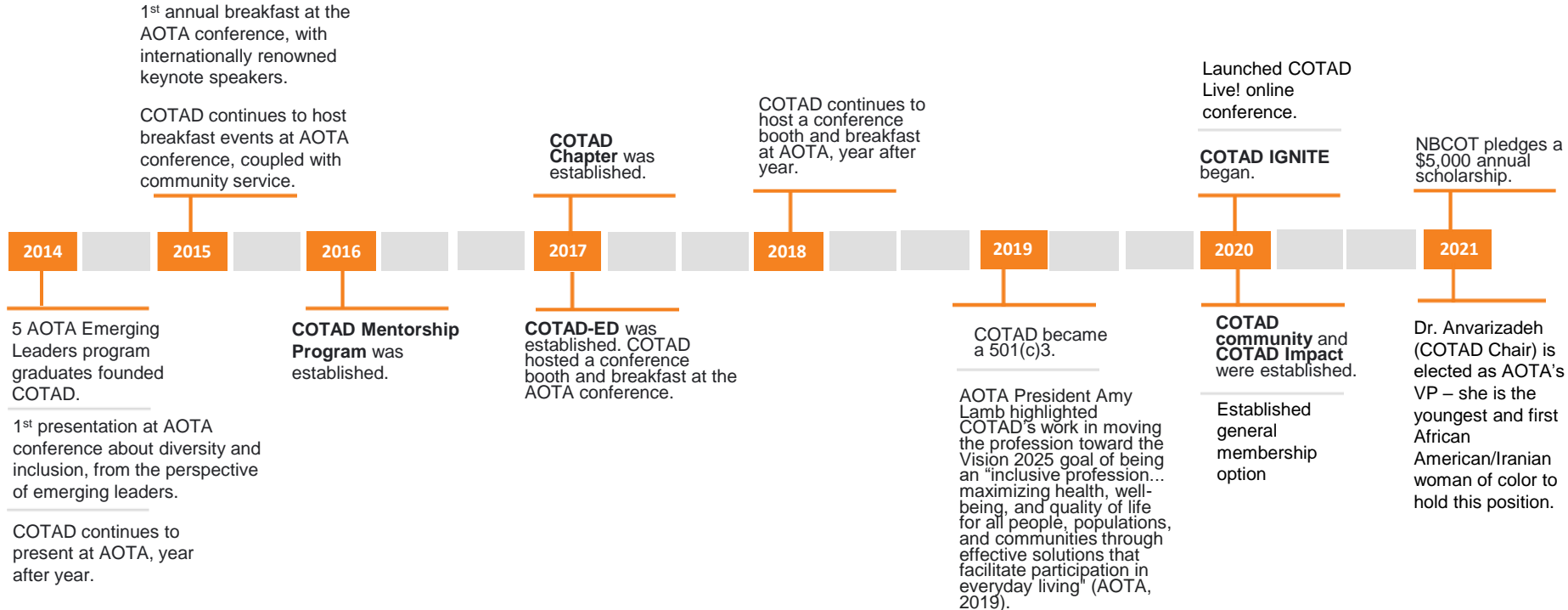
<https://www.cotad.org/>

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COTAD'S HISTORY

In 2014, COTAD decided take action in enhancing diversity and inclusion for prospective and current occupational therapy professionals. Over the past 7 years, COTAD has grown tremendously with the establishment of non-profit status, an executive board, and members in all 50 states and internationally. Our ongoing collaboration with AOTA leaders helps strengthen our organization, increase our reach, and provides us with important opportunities to share perspectives, data, and resources.



A Letter from the Outgoing Chair: Fanning the Flames to Ignite a Brighter Future

Today, I watched the first woman *and* the first woman of color take the oath of office to lead the United States of America as Vice President. And as I joined millions of people across our nation who were celebrating this monumental achievement, I was reminded of what great things can be achieved when we have a vision for what the future can be and we act on it.

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity came together because of a shared vision, a desire to identify solutions to overcome obstacles and put the time and energy into action. In 2012, our founding members, Dr. Arameh Anvarizadeh, Dr. Cristina Reyes Smith, Stacy Wilson, D'Andre Holland, Nadine Kwebetchou and myself discussed the barriers to achieving equity in our profession. Our mutual respect for one another and passion for sharing the joy of occupation led us to develop a presentation about our pathways to occupational therapy at the 2013 AOTA Annual Conference. We shared our message about the value of diversity, the need for inclusion, and the urgency with which we must dismantle systems that oppress. We heard the voices of practitioners, students and educators eager to be involved and to learn more. We heard from students who felt isolated and practitioners who were not represented. Since then we have done everything we can to make sure we hear all of your voices, your ideas for making change, and the obstacles you have come up against throughout your occupational therapy experience.

COTAD's mission has evolved over the years, and I am so proud of how far we have come, how much the organization has grown and the absolutely incredible efforts of our community. I am humbled to be a part of COTAD, and most of all, to have grown as a professional and a person alongside these incredible people. I am inspired by the honesty, passion, and genuine devotion to a brighter tomorrow that I have heard from our occupational therapy community. I am also continually driven to act when I see the myriad opportunities we must do better and do more to serve our students, our clients, and our communities.

Serving as the Chair for COTAD from our inception until 2020 has taught me many things about leadership, friendship, and hope. Most of all, I have learned that I only know what *I* know. No matter how much we learn and how much experience we have, we can't *ever* know exactly what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes. Therefore, we must always do our best to build a table that has a spot open for others' experiences and voices that we have not yet heard. We must always do our very best to treat everyone as valuable contributors and continue to listen in even in moments when we feel that we have already heard enough. It is a hard ask, to make the extra effort in the moments when you least want to, but it is this extra effort that will lead to meaningful, sustainable change. Everyone can be a leader for change, whether it is in a visible leadership position, or as a role model in your place of work or education. Leadership is not about having a powerful title – it is the ability to influence those around you. When you display kindness, empathy, or give an extra minute to listen to a voice that has been left out- you are a leader. The leaders I have had the honor to get to know, and call my COTAD family, are the ones leading and *being* this extra effort. Everyone in COTAD is a leader.

It is because of phenomenal leaders, mentors and friends that we have reached this momentous growth in COTAD. None of this would have been possible without the vision and inspiration from Dr. Cristina Reyes Smith. Cristina submitted our first abstract and provided me with the mentorship to continue COTAD's work. As we continued to make progress, Stacy Wilson led the charge for publishing our efforts so the OT community could read about our work. Nadine Kwebetchou and Adam Pearson provided us with critical insight how to grow and establish our organization. Jordan Skowronski and Lauren Jones built the foundation of many of our initiatives. I cannot say thank you enough to these individuals, and the many others who have donated their time and expertise to COTAD over the years. It is now with absolute joy that I pass the torch on to Dr. Arameh Anvarizadeh as the incoming Chair to COTAD and Dr. Stephanie Lancaster as Vice-Chair.

Dr. Anvarizadeh has served as an incredible Vice-Chair and irreplaceable friend for many years, tirelessly advocating for COTAD at every opportunity and giving a voice to so many in our profession. Under Dr. Anvarizadeh's leadership, COTAD Chapters evolved from an idea to a thriving nationwide, and nearly international, community of emerging student leaders. We are sure to see a cadre of occupational therapy providers that have been influenced by the exceptional mentorship that Dr. Anvarizadeh has provided in the years to come. Dr. Stephanie Lancaster has also been a critical part of COTAD for the past several years, helping develop our online presence and providing leadership and direction to all of our initiatives. Drs. Anvarizadeh and Lancaster are the energy behind the IGNITE! Series, which has provided a platform for so many important conversations this year. If you have not had the opportunity to attend, I highly recommend listening to the recordings available on our YouTube channel (or better yet, registering to attend the upcoming series!).

As I look towards the future, I am emboldened by the enthusiasm that we have seen in 2020 for delving into difficult conversations and I am reassured that this fire that has been ignited will not die out. Fires burn most brightly when many flames unite together. And so, it is with fervent optimism that I know we will meet the occupational needs of society through inclusive and equitable practice by driving policy, research and education in occupational therapy to deconstruct systems that have held us back and limited our ability to provide client centered care.

We've lit the flame, don't let it go out.

Catherine R. Hoyt, PhD, OTD, OTR/L
COTAD Chair, 2012-2020



Dr. Arameh Anvarizadeh (COTAD Chair: 2020 - Present)



Dr. Arameh Anvarizadeh, OTD, OTR/L is the Director of Admissions and Associate Professor of Clinical Occupational Therapy at the USC Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. Dr. Anvarizadeh is responsible for developing the holistic admissions process and for maintaining effective admissions strategies and procedures within the division. She also oversees each academic program and makes certain the division is filled with high caliber diverse students.

Dr. Anvarizadeh is a Founding Member and Chair of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD), a non-profit organization striving to empower occupational therapy leaders to engage in practices that increase diversity, equity and inclusion for a more transformative occupational therapy profession. She is responsible for developing the COTAD toolkit, the Ignite Series, and COTAD Chapters. She tirelessly works to support and establish COTAD Chapters at academic programs across the country while empowering students to facilitate dialogue, awareness, and change related to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the profession and beyond.

Dr. Anvarizadeh recently made history as the youngest and first African American/Iranian woman to become Vice President of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). She is also the youngest woman of color inducted into the prestigious Roster of Fellows (FAOTA).

Dr. Anvarizadeh also currently holds leadership positions with AOTA as the Credential Review and Accountability Committee (CRAC) Chair, as a Representative Assembly Leadership Committee (RALC) member, as a Governance Task Force member, and as the liaison between the Governance and DEI task forces. Dr. Anvarizadeh was also a member of the AOTA Special Task Force on Entry Level Education, and a crucial contributor to the professional dialogue on the entry level degree requirements. She is a recent alumna of the 2020 cohort for the Executive Leadership Program for Multicultural Women.

Within the Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC), Dr. Anvarizadeh serves as a member of the Advocacy and Government Affairs Committee. She is a recipient of OTAC's Janice Matsutsuyu Outstanding Service Award and Vision Award. She previously held the position of Communications Chair for seven years.

Dr. Anvarizadeh is an accomplished speaker who has lectured in numerous state and national conferences, as well as internationally at the World Federation of Occupational Therapists' (WFOT) congress. Dr. Anvarizadeh is passionate about building healthy, diverse communities through inclusion, equity, empowerment, and advocacy. Using her skills as an occupational therapist and her passion for people, Dr. Anvarizadeh helps others discover, cultivate and spread their dopeness.

ANNUAL BREAKFAST



Each year, COTAD invites leaders in occupational therapy to discuss *the value and power of a diverse workforce with students, practitioners, instructors, researchers, and program leaders.*

- 2020 **Varleisha Gibbs, PhD, OTD, OTR/L**
Scientific Programs Officer
American Occupational Therapy Foundation
- 2019 **Michael Iwama, PhD, MSc, BScOT, BScHP**
Dean and Professor, School of Health And Rehabilitation Sciences
MGH Institute of Health Professions
- 2018 **Lenin Grajo, PhD, EdM, OTR**
Director Post-Professional OTD, Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy
Columbia University
- 2017 **Felicia Banks, PhD, FAOTA**
Chairperson, Associate Professor, Occupational Therapy
Howard University
- 2016 **Yolanda Suarez Balcazar, PhD**
Professor, Department Head, Occupational Therapy
University of Illinois, Chicago
- 2015 **Patrick Bloom MS, OTR/L**
AOTA Board of Directors

Igniting Change in the OT Community



COTAD supports the Black OT community.

As a grassroots organization dedicated to developing a diverse workforce and inclusive profession, we denounce police brutality and racism. We are deeply impacted, heartbroken, and angry about seeing yet another senseless murder of a Black person at the hands of police.

COTAD believes in action-oriented organizing to hold our profession accountable for creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive society. We are calling all members of the OT community to join us in sparking dialogue and igniting change to promote occupational justice.

“As a minority I appreciate how this organization made this zoom meeting a safe place for us to talk about these issues”

- COTAD event attendees

2020 was a unprecedented year for COTAD. With the number of COVID cases increasing, COTAD had to find a unique way to incorporate its mission and purpose throughout the community.

Despite the challenge, COTAD was able to provide a platform – the Ignite series.

Ignite was created to provide a counter space for people of color in the OT community, provide a support system, and to provide resources to amidst social distress.

Ignite I: Are You Okay? The Impact of Racism & Police Brutality on Health & Occupation

“

It is hard to have these kinds of conversations in such a heartbreaking situations seeing the pain on everybody's face”

-OT Professor attendee




COTAD wants to know:
Are YOU okay? Let's talk
about police brutality,
racism, its impact on our
health and daily
occupations.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: COTAD CHAPTERS,
OT/OTA STUDENTS AND FRIENDS. OT/COTAS
WELCOME UNTIL MAX CAPACITY IS REACHED.

SATURDAY JUNE 6TH. 3:30-5:30 CST

REGISTER AT: [HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/COTAD-CHAT-LETS-TALK-ABOUT-RACISM-ITS-IMPACT-ON-HEALTH-OCCUPATIONS-TICKETS-107494167950](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cotad-chat-lets-talk-about-racism-its-impact-on-health-occupations-tickets-107494167950)




The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity
presents . . .

IGNITE
SERIES

**The Value of Voices:
Interdisciplinary Perspectives on
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**

Saturday, July 11, 2020 from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. CST

Register at
www.tinyurl.com/COTADignite3



www.cotad.org

@cotad_diversity

Addressing racism and its impact on occupation

Creating space for dialogue, learning, and action

Ignite II: The Black Male OT Experience in the U.S

“ We received emails almost daily about COVID, but nothing about what’s happening now. It hurt.”

-Student attendee

Addressing racism and its impact on occupation

COTAD™ **IGNITE** SERIES

The Black Male OT Experience in the U.S.

June 17, 2020 from 5 - 7:00 p.m. CST

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/Ignite2020b>

Creating space for dialogue, learning, and action

Addressing racism and its impact on occupation

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity presents . . .

COTAD™ **IGNITE** SERIES

3, 2, 1 IGNITE!

- 3** Identify three things you will do to combat racism.
- 2** Share two things you've seen done or found to be helpful.
- 1** Name one thing you've done to combat racism.

Thursday, Aug. 6, 2020 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. CST

Register at www.tinyurl.com/COTADignite4

www.cotad.org

Addressing racism and its impact on occupation

Creating space for dialogue, learning, and action

Ignite III: Advancing LGBTQIA+ Inclusion in Occupational Therapy

“

When you use gender neutral language you open the door for someone to share who they are. But when you use gendered language you can easily close the door”

-Practitioner attendee



COTAD Impact

2025 Vision Statement Summit

2015

Entry Level Education

2018

Workforce Diversity Act

2019



COTAD participated in AOTA's 2025 visioning summit, advocating for "inclusion" verbiage in the 2025 vision statement.



Dr. Anvarizadeh was a member of the AOTA Special Task Force on Entry Level Education, and a crucial contributor to the professional dialogue on the entry level degree requirements.

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY

RANKING MEMBER Special Committee on Aging

Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act

The allied health workforce is in need of diversification. Professionals in the fields of physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology and audiology are overwhelmingly Caucasian. A 2018 workforce study conducted by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) found that over 92 percent of occupational therapists identified as Caucasian, 3.1 percent identified as African-American, 3.2 percent identified as Hispanic and 1.4 percent identified as multi-ethnic. The American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) reports that only eight percent of SLPs are non-Caucasian. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) reports that only 13 percent of PTs in the country are non-Caucasian.

In addition to the lack of ethnic diversity in these allied health fields, the number of practicing professionals with disabilities is less than five percent according to AOTA. Exacerbating the lack of disabled professionals is the fact that most allied health professionals with disabilities enter the field after their own treatment and therefore are often late career professionals.

The population of people treated by OTs, PTs, SLPs, and audiologists is far more diverse than the professionals treating them. According to the Institutes of Medicine, over 40 percent of individuals receiving therapeutic treatment are non-Caucasian. An Institutes of Medicine report found that patients that receive treatment from professionals of similar ethnic background often trust their therapists more and are more likely to follow-through on their treatment.

The Allied Health Diversity Workforce Act would create a \$5 million a year grant program that would provide grants and stipends for students of diverse ethnic backgrounds or students with disabilities in programs preparing occupational therapists, physical therapist, speech-language pathologists and audiologists. The bill is time limited, providing grants to eligible universities and other preparation programs for a total of five years. There is a companion bill in the House (H.R. 3617) introduced by Rep. Bobby Rush (D-Ill. 1st) and Rep. Cathy McMorris-Rodgers (R-Wa. 5th).

Original co-sponsors: Sen. Lisa Murkowski

Organizations Supporting the Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act: University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Alaska Anchorage College of Health, Temple University College of Public Health, Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association, Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association, Alaska Physical Therapy Association, Alaska Speech-Language-Hearing Association, National Black Association of Speech-Language and Hearing, National Black Occupational Therapy Association, Multicultural Diversity & Inclusion Network, Occupational Therapy Network for Native Americans, Terapia Ocupacional para Diversidad, Oportunidades y Solidaridad, Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity, American Occupational Therapy Association, American Physical Therapy Association, American Academy of Physical Therapy, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

To co-sponsor the legislation or for more information or questions on the bill contact Michael Gamel-McCormick (michael_gamel-mccormick@aging.senate.gov) or Angela Ramponi (Angela_Ramponi@murkowski.senate.gov).

COTAD worked with the AOTA Federal Affairs department to spearhead an initiative to address workforce diversity via a Bill to Congress.

The Bill mimics a current nursing workforce diversity program run out of the Health Services Resource Administration (HRSA).

COTAD Mentorship Program

Mentoring relationships can ignite academic careers as mentees receive support and gain insight from mentors. In addition to offering professional advice, a mentor's influence can provide invaluable emotional and psychological support for students experiencing conflict or challenging situations, which can aid in student retention in occupational therapy programs.

Goals and Objectives

- Promote personal, intellectual, and professional growth
- Assist with personal and academic concerns through a one-on-one relationship
- Support occupational therapy students to navigate resources offered through the professional association
- Encourage students to fully explore and utilize resources for achieving academic success, networking opportunities, and professional development
- Create a professional relationship with mentors who can serve as professional references
- Encourage individuals to develop to their greatest potential
- Helps an individual develop her or his own vision for the future
- Foster caring and support as a strategy to develop active community partnerships

Mentorship Matters: Achieving Goals Around the World



Ashika Shah, BS, OTS

“I decided to join the COTAD Mentorship Program* because I wanted to learn more about the profession and receive support as a student in the first cohort for the Johnson & Wales University (JWU) OTD program. Additionally, my personal experiences in the healthcare field have been different than those of my cohort. I never knew this opportunity existed until I became the Co-chair for the JWU COTAD Chapter, but when I learned about it I jumped at the chance to speak to a myriad of occupational therapists regarding their diverse experiences and future endeavors.”



“There are several things I wish I had known when I started working as a new grad occupational therapist. Some of the barriers I faced before stepping into this field were unlearning westernized theories and concepts of OT practice and integrating Sexuality and Mental Health for people of all age groups into my daily practice. Unlike what I was told would be the case when I was a student, I have had the privilege of working with people throughout the life span – from age three onward – which has allowed me to constantly diversify my approach and intervention strategies with a special focus on Sexuality, Intimate Occupations, and Mental Health. I have had my share of drawbacks, unlearning, learning, and relearning, but the biggest barrier I experienced when I started working was having no one to guide me in this niche area of practice. After a year of navigating this role and sharing my experiences on social media, I felt confident enough to work towards my personal goal of becoming the resource I never had.”

Dr. Sakshi Tickoo, Occupational Therapist, Personal and Sexuality Counselor, Student and New Grad Mentor

Mentorship Matters: Maintaining Connections during COVID19



Raymond Nubla, MS, OTR/L

“I was drawn to COTAD’s Minority Mentorship Program because the more I learned about OT, the more I recognized the disparity between the cultural backgrounds of our clinicians and the backgrounds of the populations we serve. My clinical background is in serving youth with mental health challenges within the community setting, where my clients are predominantly people of color and of low socio-economic status. I wanted to be part of the movement to see occupational therapy clinicians be more reflective of my clients’ cultures. COTAD’s MMP was a great way to connect with like-minded individuals to promote that type of diversity within the OT profession.”



Kimberly M. Rahimian, OTD, OTR

“I sought out mentorship because I knew I would be graduating from my three-year long journey from VCU and realized I wanted and needed additional support as a new grad. I never knew such an opportunity would exist with COTAD, but fortunately discovered it as I was finishing my doctoral capstone that focused on diversity and inclusion within my own OT educational program.”

Mentorship Matters: Becoming a Lifelong Learner



Ebonee Crow, OT (Mentor)



Crystal Mandudi, OTS (Mentee)

“In the past few months of meeting with Ebonee, I have enjoyed getting to know her not only as an OT practitioner, but also as a person. We have discussed our concerns regarding COVID-19 and how it has affected our routines, school, work, and family life. As a mentor, she has helped me set personal goals pertaining to school and she keeps me accountable in following through with each. Another great thing we have begun in our mentor/mentee meetings is to come prepared to discuss an article on a specific topic. Our first article was about ergonomics and how OT can be best utilized in certain settings (since that was something I was enjoying in class at that time). Currently, we are researching articles on mental health and the effect of OT interventions in preparation for my Level I Psychosocial Fieldwork this summer.”

Mentorship Matters: Local Connections, Global Impact



Jasmin Torres, OTS with her mentor, Sandra Guzman, OTR

“During my week in Ambato, I had a variety of experiences, including working at a school for children with special needs, shadowing OTs and other professionals, and educating providers and families about occupational therapy.

During the day, I worked at a school for children with developmental and physical disabilities. I screened 20 to 30 children with various diagnoses, including epilepsy, Down syndrome, hemiplegia, and cerebral palsy and gave recommendations to other children and families. I also led an inservice with other health professionals (doctor, physical therapists, and child life specialists) to discuss occupational therapy’s role in the U.S. and the similarities and differences between rehabilitation services in each country, which was a valuable learning experience.”

Mentor Spotlight: Sandra Duarte, OTR/L 2020 COTAD Mentor of the Year



Duarte travels to Ambato, Ecuador with a medical mission team annually to work with children with developmental disabilities. Her mentee, Jasmin Torres, OTS, attended the mission trip in 2019 with Sandra. Jasmin shared her reflections on the journey which included gaining clinical experience at a school for children with developmental and physical disabilities, running an in-service with other health care professionals, completing home visits, observing pediatric OTs in a hospital, and scrubbing in to observe live surgeries. After this experience, Jasmin stated, “This was by far the most profound learning experience I have had in my career as an OT student; it was astounding to realize how much of an impact healthcare and rehabilitation have in different parts of the world.”

In addition to serving as a mentor in COTAD’s Minority Mentorship Program, Duarte works in the United States and internationally with at-risk and marginalized individuals and families to help provide access to the services and equipment they need. She also frequently involves students, physicians, and other allied health providers in her work and makes an effort to impress upon them the need for culturally relevant, sensitive, and high-quality care.

COTAD Community



Leadership Team



Whitney Harris, OTR/L



Jonette Ishmael, OTR/L



Christina Alabastro,
OTR/L, CNS



Bianca Callier, OTR/L

COTAD Community and supporters from across the country raised \$1,350 and collected 1164 items to include in wellness kits for clients at Rosie's Place, a women's shelter and community center in Boston, MA.

To learn more or join the team,
email cotad.community@gmail.com

Since its official launch in April 2020, COTAD community works with students, programs, community partners, sponsors and others to achieve our goals of:

Promoting

inclusivity, equity, and belonging in diverse settings through community service projects

Educating

communities we enter about the value and power of occupational therapy

Developing

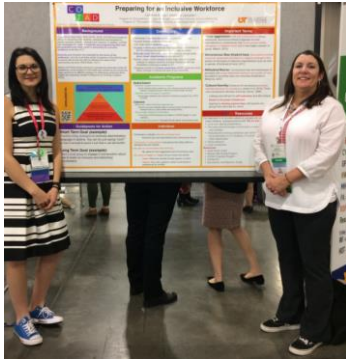
unity within communities served through collaborative projects addressing diverse needs

COTAD-ED



COTAD-ED is dedicated to enhancing the skills, knowledge, and resources of current and future occupational therapy educators on issues related to diversity and inclusion.

COTAD-ED programming includes virtual chats, online discussions, biannual COTAD-ED gatherings (at the AOTA Education Summit and AOTA Conference), mentorship, and professional consulting for program leaders or staff who are interested in improving education practices and recruiting and retaining a diverse student body.



Since the group's formation in 2017, it has grown from a few like-minded colleagues to a group of knowledgeable, forward-thinking academicians and clinicians who are dedicated to promoting professional diversity and culturally humble practice within their academic programs.

2017 AOTA CONFERENCE



Conference Booth: For the first (and not the last) time, COTAD had a booth in the Conference Expo Hall. We met hundreds of OT/A students, clinicians, researchers, and academics and had engaging discussions with them about issues related to diversity and multiculturalism.

Our booth also featured an activity in which visitors to the booth could write down something they wish others knew about them to share anonymously. We received a variety of responses that truly highlighted the plethora of cultures, ideas, values, beliefs, and experiences of the OT community.



Pre-conference Institute: Several COTAD Board members led an engaging, interactive Pre-conference Institute focused on "Promoting a Diverse Workforce in Occupational Therapy Through Student Recruitment and Retention." The Institute included offer two panels with guest speakers from across the country; updates and resources from AOTA, COTAD, and MDI; and an interprofessional guest speaker from an acclaimed medical school.



Attendees at the 2018 COTAD ED Dinner in Louisville, KY during the AOTA Education Summit



2018 AOTA CONFERENCE Inaugural COTAD-ED meetup

Drs. Smith and Lancaster hosted an inaugural COTAD-ED meetup. The event was titled “Discussions on Diversity”. Attendees networked with fellow instructors, researchers, and program leaders. At future meetings, attendees will have the opportunity to contribute to conference presentations, share resources related to diversity issues, and become part of a growing network of leaders committed to professional diversity in our profession and on campuses across the country. “Discussions on Diversity” are held at the AOTA National Conference and AOTA Education Summit 2018.

COTAD had 10 events at the AOTA Annual Conference and Expo in Salt Lake City, including short courses, poster presentations, official meet-ups, and the 4th annual COTAD Breakfast!



Coalition of
Occupational Therapy
Advocates for
Diversity

Come and see us at AOTA Conference 2019!

COTAD
continues to
expand impact
at the AOTA
Annual
Conference



Wednesday, April 3

7:30 p.m.
COTAD-ED Discussions on Diversity dinner
New Orleans Social Club (NOSH)
752 Tchoupitoulas St.



Thursday, April 4

8:00 - 8:50 a.m.

Conversations
That Matter 103

Small Steps on the Journey to Vision 2025: Supporting Prospective OT Students from Underrepresented Backgrounds
-Stephanie Lancaster, Conner Marshall, Alexia Rebe, & Cristina Reyes Smith

8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Posters

AFW 1017: Developing a Facility-Specific, Structured, and Comprehensive Level II Fieldwork Program in the Acute Care Setting
-Megan Lambert

Research 1006: The Infant Toddler Activity Card Sort (ITACS): A Caregiver Reported Measure of Occupational Development of Young Children
-Catherine Hoyt, Jianna Fernandez, Ashley Chuck, Laura Pilney, Taniya Varughese, Regina Abel, & Allison King

2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Workshop

Workshop 210: A Closer Look at the Fish Bowl: Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Twenty-First Century OT Education
-Cristina Reyes Smith, Felicia Banks, Doreen Head, & Albert Copolillo

5:30 p.m.
COTAD Booth opens at the AOTA Expo
Stop by and connect with COTAD!



Friday, April 5
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Conversations
That Matter 204

Inclusive Practices to Promote Success for OT Students on Fieldwork
-Stephanie Lancaster, Lauren Jones & Cheryl Lucas

9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Poster Session

AFW 4028: Community-Based Fieldwork Outcomes and its Impact on the Profession and Population Health
-Aramah Anvarizadeh, Lauren Diaz & Krikor Sarafian

12:45 - 2:45 p.m.

Poster Session

AFW 6018: Throwing a One-Two Punch with Two-Stage Testing
-Stephanie Lancaster



Saturday, April 6
8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

5th Annual COTAD Breakfast & 1st Annual Awards Ceremony

Keynote Speaker: Michael Iwama, PhD, MSc, BScOT
"Like a River ... the Power and Promise of a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce"
For reservation & ticket information, go to www.cotad.org

9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Poster Session

AFW 7024: Creating and Assessing COTAD Chapters Within Occupational Therapy Educational Programs
-Aramah Anvarizadeh, Whitney Harris, Jabari Hoyle, Bianca Callier, & Christina Marie Alabastro

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Poster Session

MH 8003: Expanding OT in Mental Health Through the Collaborative Model of Fieldwork
-Aramah Anvarizadeh & Ingrid Leu

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Short Course 334

The Role of OT in Designing and Implementing a Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Development
-Adam Pearson & Leslie Vogan

2020 Virtual Conference



We remained connected with OT practitioners from across the world during our first-ever online conference with 225 registrants! The COTAD Live! online conference was an all-day event, featuring our 6th Annual COTAD Breakfast keynote speaker Dr. Varleisha Gibbs, PhD, OTD, OTR/L, breakout group discussions, and dialogue about current challenges and opportunities related to diversity and inclusion in occupational therapy.



Action for Inclusion in OT Education

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity presents . . .

Addressing issues of racism and discrimination in OT education

CO
TAD™

IGNITE

SERIES II

Action for Inclusion in OT Education

Programmatic Challenges Related to Racism & Discrimination

Thursday, Aug. 20, 2020 from 6 - 8 p.m. CST

Register at
<https://tinyurl.com/ignite2-1>

www.cotad.org

@cotad_diversity

Creating space for dialogue, learning, and action

“We should hold our educators to a higher standard. Our White faculty aren't equipped to have these conversations but they should open up the space. There is so much focus on anatomy, but we should put more focus on culture and talking about injustice.”

- COTAD event attendee

The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity presents . . .

Addressing issues of racism and discrimination in OT education

CO
TAD™

IGNITE

SERIES II

Action for Inclusion in OT Education

Fieldwork Challenges Related to Racism & Discrimination

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 from 6 - 8 p.m. CST

More information and a link to register
are available at www.cotad.org

@cotad_diversity

Creating space for dialogue, learning, and action

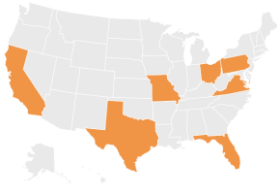
“Seeing someone who looks like you, who is relatable and speaks the same language helps OT students feel a sense of belonging in academic programs.”

- COTAD Event Attendee

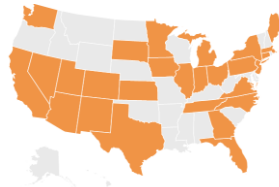
COTAD Chapter

COTAD Chapters are designed to support occupational therapy students to work together to develop and promote diversity and inclusion within occupational therapy education programs and in the profession. Each Chapter is designed to create opportunities and resources to foster open conversation and increase awareness of different lived experiences to increase cultural humility.

2017



2020



From 2017 to 2020, we saw dramatic growth of Chapters established. Currently over 80 chapters are active in the United States.

NBCOT donates \$5000 for COTAD scholarship, study kits, and a free test to the Chapter of the year



NBCOT Logo & Photo of Paul Grace, NBCOT President/CEO

NBCOT leadership has committed to sponsoring a COTAD scholarship in 2021 to help promote diversity in the occupational therapy profession. In addition to the scholarship, NBCOT plans to provide exam Study Packs to each member of the COTAD Chapter that wins the annual Chapter of the Year competition. NBCOT leaders Paul Grace, Angela McCauley, and Becky Russell were instrumental in establishing this partnership and collaborating with COTAD Board members to provide vital financial and academic support for COTAD members and supporters.

“We look forward to continuing to support COTAD’s goals of igniting change and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion for the OT profession and the populations OTRs and COTAs [serve],” Paul Grace, President and CEO said in a statement.

COTAD is deeply appreciative of NBCOT’s support for our mission of promoting justice, equity, and diversity in occupational therapy we look forward to implementing the scholarship program.

2017 COTAD Chapter Spotlight: West Coast University

1st Established COTAD Chapter



“The focus of the WCU Diversity and Inclusion Committee is to promote inclusivity and cultural humility among students and others through in-depth dialogue and engaging events. Through the Diversity Committee’s Fall 2017 Open Mic Night, WCU OT students were able to gain a sense of unity as they came together to appreciate what made each showcased culture unique.

Ultimately, by immersing themselves in activities and discussions related to their individual and shared cultures, student and faculty participants developed their cultural proficiency and gained a greater knowledge and respect for their unique cultures and each other. In the future, the committee is planning to host a second Open Mic in July 2018 and develop community service opportunities geared towards serving Los Angeles’ homeless population.”

2018 COTAD Chapter Spotlight: SUNY Downstate Medical Center Community Service



Over two days, students wrapped and delivered presents to children and teens in a local Brooklyn homeless shelter. The children, teens and parents of the residence stated that they greatly appreciated the presents.

They raised over 200 toys and gift card donations and were able to give multiple gifts to each child within the complex. In addition, they were able to provide presents to their siblings and provide a sizable donation to the homeless shelter's daycare center. This was accomplished under the leadership of faculty advisor Vikram Pagpatan, MS, OTR/L, ATP and Marjorie Norton, Residential Aide Supervisor at the Fannie Barnes homeless shelter.

2019 COTAD Chapter Spotlight: Washington University at St. Louis

1st every winner of the COTAD Chapter Excellence Award



Congratulations to the first-ever winners of the COTAD Chapter Excellence Award! Washington University at St. Louis (WUSTL) occupational therapy students earned this honor for their dedication to community service, education, and fundraising to support diversity-related causes in their community.

During the awards ceremony at the 2019 COTAD Breakfast in New Orleans, LA, Dr. Arameh Anvarizadeh, COTAD Vice-chair and founder of the COTAD Chapters program highlighted the multiple achievements of the organization, including hosting multiple events related to diversity and inclusion for school and community members, as well as working closely with COTAD leadership and other nationwide Chapters on diversity issues. Emily Sherman, OTD/S '19 proudly accepted a certificate and commendation on behalf of the WUSTL COTAD Chapter and stated that she was grateful for the award and the contributions of her fellow student leaders to the chapter's work.

2020 COTAD Chapter Spotlight: Northern Arizona University

COTAD Chapter of the Year Award



Program Statement

Our NAU COTAD Chapter officially began less than a year ago and in the time since then we have worked on multiple levels of increasing awareness of diversity issues and its impact on our profession.

We have created a safe space for underrepresented students and host monthly meetings to discuss our mental health, local and national resources and how to support one another.

We have advocated for our profession and the increasing diversity amongst its professionals at multiple events such as- career day hosted by an organization which focuses on refugee and immigrant families, Native Health Day for high school and community college students, multiple high school visits to our campus, Native Journey to Academic Success program and the Black Leadership Summit.

We have hosted a Hispanic/Latinx Heritage celebratory lunch and just ended our three part Diversity and Inclusion Workshop Series which included workshops on “Unconscious Bias”, “MedSafeZone, LGBTQ+ health” and “Why Your Diversity Quotient Matters”.

Our chapter continues to grow, with 26 members total now, and is looking forward to continuing our projects and collaborating with more local organizations.