

Innovate, Educate, Celebrate: VCU's OT Month Showcase!

The VCU OT program's students, staff, and faculty were eager to celebrate OT month through several events and initiatives! The VCU Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) joined together, and with the perspectives of fellow peers, planned several interactive activities—including information booths, guest speakers, spirit week, interprofessional journal club, and more. All activities centered around spreading awareness about OT, celebrating its uniqueness, and advancing the profession. Below is a description of each activity along with pictures.

OT Month Information Booth: Let's Play! The OT Way!

Purpose: To kick off OT month, it was important to us to spread awareness about what occupational therapy is and what occupational therapy practitioners do. In the lobby of the College of Health Professions (CHP), OT student volunteers set up an interactive information booth, which featured OT equipment and occupation-based activities. The equipment included the following, for example:

- Adaptive equipment: sock-aid, dressing stick, reacher, weighted utensils, universal cuff, and long handled shoe horn
- Assistive Technology: switch activated toys
- Pediatric-based games and activities: seated scooter, stepping stones, bean bags, balls, and knotted rope

The student volunteers guided participants to interact with the equipment in order to better understand how OTPs create therapeutic experiences. Students explained how the equipment can be used in interventions, the performance skills that OTPs might target using the equipment, and the occupations the equipment might be used for. The purpose of the event was to provide a fun and safe space to share more about the profession.



OT Month Information Booth: OT Trivia & Cookies!

Purpose: To continue to raise awareness about the OT profession and encourage participation from various programs within the VCU CHP, student volunteers hosted another interactive information booth in the CHP lobby. Student volunteers posed OT-related trivia questions to participants and discussed relevant topics. Participants who answered a question, whether correctly or incorrectly, received a cookie. Below are the trivia questions:

1. How many years has occupational therapy been around?

Answer: 107 years! The field was founded in 1917, and was named occupational therapy in 1920.

2. There are nine areas of occupations within the OT scope of practice. Can you name one of them?

Answer: The nine areas of occupations are activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, health management, sleep/rest, education, work, leisure, play, and social participation.

3. What is the overall goal of occupational therapy?

Answer: Occupational therapists help people engage in daily life activities that are meaningful to them.

4. What is one setting that occupational therapists can work in?

Answer: Occupational therapists work in inpatient hospitals, outpatient clinics, schools, homes, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and mental health settings.

5. What ages do occupational therapists work with?

Answer: All ages—from birth to end of life care!

6. How can you become an occupational therapist?

Answer: Earn a bachelor's degree; gain relevant experience; earn a master's or doctorate degree from an accredited occupational therapy program; complete fieldwork requirements; pass the NBCOT exam; obtain state licensure.



OT Month Infographic!

Purpose: Student volunteers provided the following infographic at each of the information booths in the lobby of CHP, which participants could access through a QR code. Participants could reference the infographic and learn more about OT at their convenience. The infographic is displayed below:

April is...

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY MONTH

What is OT?

Occupations are meaningful everyday activities. These occupations can be disrupted when the developmental process is atypical or when an individual experiences an accident/injury. Occupational therapy incorporates these occupations within the therapeutic and rehabilitative process.

Who are OTs?

Occupational therapists are skilled healthcare professionals who use scientific and evidence-based practices to intervene with individuals.

When would you need OT?

A wrist injury can make it hard to get dressed, arthritis can interfere with cooking, or autism can hinder school participation. Occupational therapy allows you to do activities that you want/need to do. We focus on the individual, groups, and the community.

What would OT help with?

- Achieve goals
- Stay healthy and manage condition(s)
- Maintain or rebuild independence (with or without assistive devices)
- Participate in everyday activities that give you meaning

Where can you find OTs?

- Hospitals
- Schools
- Clinics
- Skilled nursing facilities
- Assisted living facilities
- Community centers
- Mental health settings
- Homes

For more information, visit

www.AOTA.org
All info retrieved from AOTA: What is Occupational Therapy?

OT Month Bulletin Board!

Purpose: The VCU SOTA updates the department bulletin board monthly to highlight OT-related topics, practice areas, and themes. April provided the perfect opportunity to showcase the depth of OT's impact. The board featured a detailed history of OT, common FAQs OTs receive (and how to best answer them), and interactive components such as adding sticky notes about what individuals love about OT. Additionally, the board included an OT Student Spotlight, which highlighted one third-year student's capstone project which was focused on creating adaptive makeup products for clients with disabilities. The OT Student Spotlight provided a real-world example of innovative OT interventions. The board also included fun and engaging facts about OT to educate and intrigue viewers, as well as an interactive Q&A section to encourage further exploration and understanding of the field.



OT Month Guest Speaker and Student Perspective Event: OT Month Speaker Series: Insights and Inspirations!

Purpose: This event was planned in response to the strong student interest in neurorehabilitation and working with the neuro population. The student body demonstrated a keen desire to learn more about these areas and to pursue additional training and certifications to improve client outcomes. By organizing this event and inviting speakers like Kathryn Perry, who has extensive experience in neuro-populations and specialized interventions, the student leadership aimed to provide valuable insights and inspiration to their peers. Kathryn Perry, a seasoned OT with a background in neuro-populations and certifications in interventions like LSVT Big, was a keynote speaker. She shared her personal journey of becoming certified in LSVT Big and implementing this protocol with clients, offering valuable insights and practical tips. Kathryn also shared information about the company she currently works with, Imago, a telehealth company that specializes in neurorehabilitation services. Kathryn's information about Imago was insightful because it showed how classroom content translates to real-world clinical practice. Her discussion of telehealth and neurorehabilitation resonated with students, as these are areas of great interest. Overall, Kathryn's insights into Imago provided practical knowledge and inspired students to consider new career paths.

In addition to Kathryn's presentation, two third-year students, who recently achieved LSVT Big certifications, shared their experiences. Their perspective provided a relatable and insightful look into the certification process and its impact on their fieldwork experience. This personal perspective likely will motivate students to pursue additional training and certifications themselves, knowing the real-world benefits these can bring to their future practice. This event was a valuable opportunity for students to learn, connect, and gain inspiration for their future careers in OT.

OT MONTH GUEST SPEAKER



KATHRYN PERRY,
OTR/L

ABOUT

Kathryn Perry will be coming to speak to us about LSVT BIG and IMAGO which is a telehealth company that provides services for the stroke population via telehealth.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Clair Martin (Grad III) & Rachel DeMasters (Grad III) will be in attendance to share the student perspective of becoming LSVT certified!

DATE & TIME

When: April 22nd
from 12-1
Where: 1075, Zoom
also available

LSVT BIG Training & Certification for Students

LSVT BIG®

Logistics

- Can't implement LSVT BIG unless you are certified
- Cost as a student is \$325 - sometimes coupon codes
- Potential to apply for a grant through Doctoral Capstone Experience if relevant
- Online or Live Training options (content for both is identical)
- Live Training - 2-day course offered at select locations worldwide
- Once you sign up online, immediate course access and the ability to complete the course in as little as 2 days (estimated to take ~15 hours in total)
- 60 days to complete after registering online
- Certification exam following course, 50 questions, requires 85% to pass
- Free upgrade to professional status upon graduation
- Renew certification every 2 years (\$60 online course) - takes 2.5 hours to complete, get CEUs

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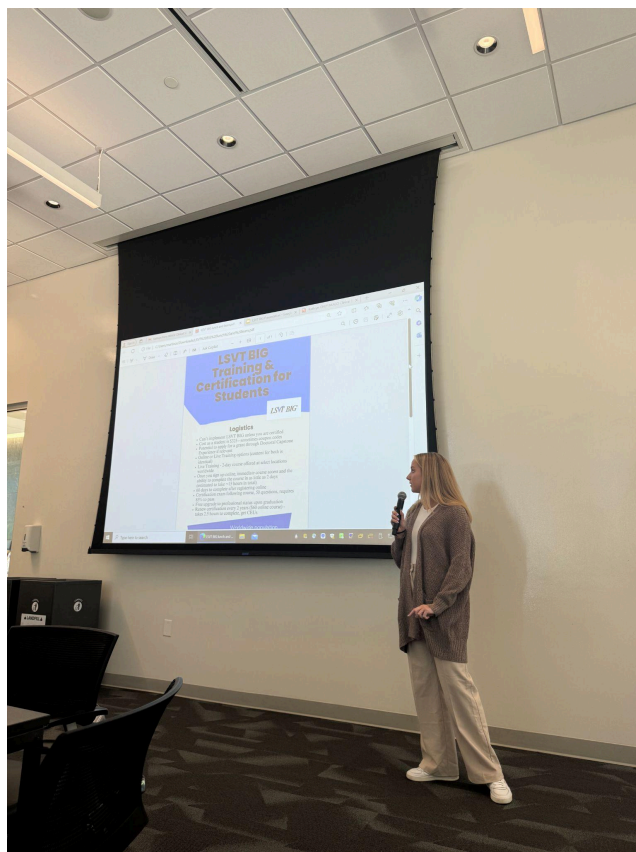
Worldwide population of people with Parkinson's Disease & that number is growing

Perks to getting certified as a student

- CHEAPER NOW! - cost after graduation is \$605
- Allows for you to delve into an evidence-based intervention & develop skills/receive training that can be transferred to your clinical practice!
- LSVT BIG can be utilized with various neurological conditions (especially great if you're considering working in neuro)
- Ability for YOU to provide LSVT BIG tx during fieldwork - under supervision of an LSVT certified clinician's supervision & in accordance with state practice acts, professional regulations, and insurance regulations
- Lifetime access to downloadable resources & tx tools
- Enhanced marketability & looks great on the resume of an entry-level therapist!
- Once LSVT BIG certified, you are eligible to get BIG for LIFE certified (group exercise maintenance classes for patients who have gone through the full protocol) - online training course, takes ~3-3.5 hours to complete...CEU's offered

Link to sign up as a student on the website!
<https://lsvtstore.mybigcommerce.com/online-lsvt-big-certification-course/>

If you have any questions that might pop up, email me at
 demastersrc@vcu.edu



OT Month and Alumni Weekend Guest Speaker

Purpose: Leadership and advocacy are important components for occupational therapy practitioners. We wanted to share how one occupational therapist, an alumni from VCU, views leadership and advocacy in her job. Kathryn (Katie) Hamlin-Pacheco, M.S., OTR/L, is an occupational therapist, former teacher, and founder of the Brain Executive Program. She is the author of *“How to be a Brain Executive and Get Sensory Sharp”* and the Sensory Safe hurricane evacuation planning guide. She is also a 2017 alumni from Virginia Commonwealth University Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program as well as their Virginia Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities program. She has combined her clinical knowledge with her experience as an educator to create the Brain Executive Program, aimed at empowering children and their families through everyday neuroscience to be the power-holders and change-makers in their own lives. Katie talked with us about how leadership and advocacy is important in her everyday life as a clinician.



OT Month Spirit Week!

Purpose: The OT Month spirit week served as a creative and engaging initiative to celebrate Occupational Therapy Month. Each themed day ("Student-Professor Style Swap," "Favorite Occupation Day," "Represent Your Undergraduate School," and "VCU OT Apparel Day") had a unique purpose. Each one fostered a sense of community and pride within the department, encouraging students, faculty, and staff to express their enthusiasm for the profession in fun and meaningful ways. The initiative aimed to strengthen relationships, promote diversity, and build school spirit, ultimately creating a positive and inclusive environment that celebrates the essence of OT. In addition, we intentionally documented the events of the spirit week and shared on social media to enhance outreach to a wider audience.

OT MONTH SPIRIT WEEK 2024
APRIL 22-26

MON 22 PROFESSOR/STUDENT SWAP
 It's time for Freaky Friday! Dress up as one of the professors in the VCU OT department! Get ready to see the professors as students!

FAVORITE OCCUPATION DAY
 Wear an outfit that represents your favorite occupation! Is it sleep? Is it leisure? Education? Social participation?
TUES 23/ THUR 25

WED 24 REP YOUR UNDERGRAD SCHOOL
 Represent your undergraduate school! Which school will take the crown? Who will we see the most of?

VCU OT APPAREL DAY
 Wear any VCU OT apparel you have!
FRI 26

TUES/THURS: This is the same theme due to Grad 1 and Grad 2 difference in schedules.

Gentle Reminder: Please stay within the VCU OT dress code guidelines

Professor/Student Swap



Undergrad Apparel



Favorite Occupations



VCU OT Apparel



Emerging Practice Area Resource!

Purpose: This resource was designed specifically for students to explore and learn about the diverse and evolving practice areas within OT. This initiative aimed to educate and inspire students by showcasing new and emerging practice areas, highlighting the exciting opportunities available within the profession. Overall, this initiative served to promote awareness, understanding, and appreciation for the dynamic and varied practice areas within OT.

Topics Shared:

- Telehealth
- Primary Care
- Hippotherapy
- Childhood Obesity
- Pelvic Floor
- Maternal Health
- Lymphedema Management
- Breast Cancer
- Gender Affirming Care
- Palliative Care

Interprofessional Collaboration: OT & PT Journal Club Event!

Purpose: Students from the VCU OT and PT departments collaborated to host the first-ever interprofessional journal club. The selected article focused on factors impacting emotional and physical wellness in patients with chronic pain following inpatient treatment by an interdisciplinary team. In addition to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the study design, students discussed the impacts of chronic pain on patient physical activity and occupational engagement, the benefits of pain neuroscience education, and their professions' contributions to patient rehabilitation in a team-based setting.