



The Official Newsletter of SJSU SOTA November 2019

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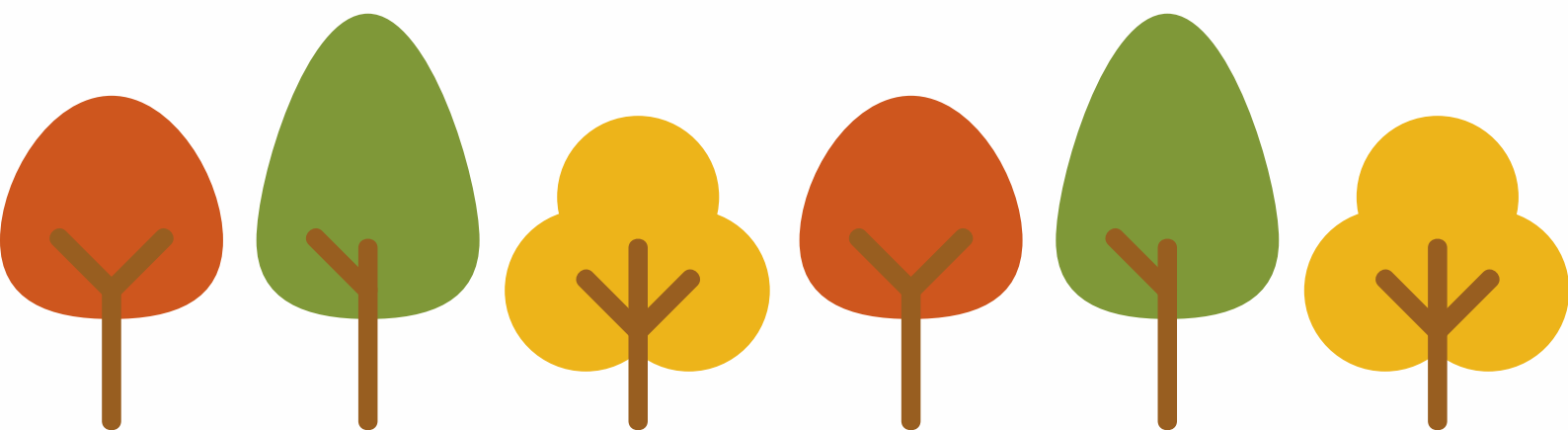
Class of 2019 speak on their Fieldwork II experiences

Read about OTAC from our OTAC reps

**Next SOTA Meeting will be on
Wednesday, November 6!**

Hello all! Hope your semester is going well!! Good news, we've made it to November and the holidays are right around the corner! For this month we made a special newsletter with double the information! Take a break from your studies and read about Fieldwork II experiences from the class of 2019. They've shared some insight as well as a few tips that will be helpful for us all in the future.

Our very own OTAC reps, Elaine Lau and Shar Naidu, were also kind enough to provide us with summaries of their time in OTAC! If you did not attend, read their reflections and get a general idea of what the conference was like. Enjoy!



Student Speaks

Fieldwork Level II Testimonials

Monica Ondriezek MSOT, Class of 2019:
Fieldwork Level II Nueva Vista in Morgan Hill

What fieldwork placement did you get?

I did my psychosocial site at Nueva Vista in Morgan Hill. It is essentially a board and care home with a bit of a different model.

What was the most rewarding aspect of this setting?

Being able to apply what I have been learning for two years. My CI allowed us to be very independent, so we really had to trust that OT gut and make clinical judgements. This placement also allowed me to grow in my therapeutic use of self skills and developing therapeutic relationships, while still maintaining boundaries.

What was the most challenging aspect of this setting?

This setting was going through a lot of administrative changes. The company had hired on a consultant which led to a lot of turn over (including my CI switching to only contracting for 10hrs/week) and the facility being short staffed. I think the biggest difficulty was learning to be independent for 30hrs/week while also using professional skills to advocate for OT. They were in the process of deciding if they should hire an OT or a rehab therapist, so I felt a need to advocate for OT, which is kind of scary when you are just a student. I think generally speaking the most difficult part was documentation and understanding de-escalation techniques.

What advice would you give to students starting fieldwork 2 in this setting and in general?

Oh so much! Trust yourself and be open to the process. I remember starting and wanting to study for all the answers ahead of time. You can study and worry for this all you want, but you learn a lot by just doing (remember we teach that to our clients). Go in knowing you aren't going to know it all and that is okay. That is why we get to say we are students. I will say I was impressed how much I did know and how strong my OT gut was though. Lastly, realize you are human, your CI is human and the clients you are with are human. Have real connections, put yourself in others' shoes, take care of yourself and smile!

Student Speaks

Fieldwork Level II Testimonials

Colleen Nunn MSOT, Class of 2019:

Fieldwork Level II - California Children's Services

What fieldwork placement did you get?

My first fieldwork placement was with California Children's Services (CCS) Medical Therapy Program (MTP) in San Joaquin County (Tracy, Stockton, Manteca, and Lodi). I would recommend this fieldwork placement to anyone. My fieldwork educators, Melody and Sharmeen, were wonderfully supportive, and they would really like to have more fieldwork students in the future. They asked me to tell other SJSU students to come their way!

What was the most rewarding aspect of this setting?

I really enjoyed working with the kids. Even though they were often medically fragile, they brought a lot of joy and fun with them into their therapy. It was also incredibly rewarding to help lighten the load on families raising medically dependent children. For example, I helped to fit a child diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy with a power wheelchair so that he would be able to go on a family vacation without having to be carried by his father.

What was the most challenging aspect of this setting?

The most challenging aspect of doing my fieldwork in the CCS MTP was learning to express myself confidently and with authority to groups of physicians, experienced therapists, and parents. I was intimidated at first, but everyone was very supportive, and it was gratifying to watch myself improve over the course of the 12-week fieldwork.

What advice would you give to students starting fieldwork 2 in this setting and in general?

I would advise incoming fieldwork students to take advantage of opportunities to build relationships with all the staff at their fieldwork sites. For example, I had a really good time eating lunch with the program director, OTs, PTs, PTAs, and aids at my site. They all contributed to my education in different ways. Whenever there was a potluck, I brought a dish, and when it was 80s day at the clinic, I pulled out my leg warmers. Just try to get involved. I would also advise not being too hard on yourself. Try to relax and soak up as much of the experience as you can.

Student Speaks

Fieldwork Level II Testimonials

Sonja Kramer MSOT, Class of 2019:

Fieldwork Level II - Mills Peninsula Medical Center

What fieldwork placement did you get?

My first fieldwork II was at Mills Peninsula Medical Center in San Mateo on inpatient behavioral health. It was a 26-bed acute psychiatric secure unit for adult patients (18 years or older). In this setting, OT was delivered almost exclusively in groups with the exception of evaluations, which included a 1:1 interview. The OT runs 3 groups a day, M-F, and documents on each patient in attendance for each group.

What was the most rewarding aspect of this setting?

Witnessing the difference that my groups made in the behavior of my patients (the increased structure and occupation-based activities helped the patients to engage, become more emotionally/mentally regulated/organized, and to improve their moods most of the time).

What was the most challenge aspect of this setting?

Learning to become comfortable going "off-script" and leading the group of people at the level they are at instead of the activity I had envisioned was difficult. Also, remembering to lead as though I was onstage (project confidence, increased enunciation of words, increased volume of voice, varied sentence structure and tone of voice, hand gestures and extra-upright posture, etc) to keep audience attentive.

What advice would you give to students starting fieldwork 2 in this setting and in general?

In this setting, know your personal boundaries and enforce them. Learn to embrace the unexpected and have fun with the groups you lead. Be confident in your knowledge and lead your groups with conviction. Remember that fieldwork is about continuing your learning from the classroom. You may have an urge to try to be the best and most perfect OT student your fieldwork educator has ever seen...try not to think that way. Take any criticism in stride, try to learn from your mistakes, and realize that mistakes are okay. Now is a great opportunity to make the mistakes while the "training wheels" of being a student are still on. My best pieces of advice are: 1) Ask questions. 2) Forgive yourself for your mistakes. 3) Practice what you preach and maintain your own occupational balance for your own health and sanity.

SOTA Events



SOTA with Paddle4Good!



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Past Events

- September 18: Backpack Awareness Day
- September 28: Volunteer at the Vista Technology Education Conference
- September 29: Letter-writing/advocacy event for Virtual Hill Day
- October 4: Paddle4Good
- October 10: SOTA movie night
- October 24: SOTA October Workshop: Care for LGBTQAI+ Clients

Future Events

- November 7: Last SOTA volunteer event
- November 18 (recipe submission deadline) : SJSU Occupational Therapy Student and Faculty Cookbook



SOTA's First Movie Night!

OTAC Reflections!



Elaine Lau

2nd Year OTAC Representative

As a returning attendee, going back to OTAC was, in many ways, a familiar experience. And yet, it was still a very refreshing experience, with many new things and people to see. The conference offered a huge variety of sessions that were led by incredibly passionate OTs out in the field. I learned about new fields that I had no idea OT practitioners were involved in, such as oncology, and about emerging fields of practice within the OT profession, including maternal mental health. There were also sessions that were geared toward students, including one that was focused specifically on salary negotiation. Additionally, I was introduced to individuals doing amazing work as they were honored in the Awards Ceremony, including representatives of Homeboy Industries, who shared their stories of reclaiming their livelihoods after a life of gang involvement, and an OT and OTA duo, who have had a partnership and friendship spanning 20 years, showing the incredible work that can be accomplished with strong teamwork. Furthermore, it was an honor to sit in when Wendy Hildenbrand, the new president of AOTA, delivered the Keynote Address, in which she explained her vision for the future of occupational therapy over the next few years.

What surprised me most about returning to the OTAC conference was realizing how much more knowledgeable and confident I felt compared to the previous year. I was shocked to find I was able to follow along with many of the topics that the OTs at the conference discussed. It was empowering to see the progress that I was making towards becoming a real OT. Equally as motivating and inspiring was seeing the research poster presentations made by students from last year's cohort. We were able to reconnect with the students and hear about the incredible research that they did during their last semester of schooling.

Attending the OTAC conference for the second time was an incredibly fun and exciting experience. Although being in school can often feel overwhelming and stressful, being at an event where I am surrounded by so many innovative and enthusiastic people helps to remind me of why I decided to pursue this profession.

OTAC Reflections!



Shar Naidu

1st Year OTAC Representative

At its core, attending OTAC as a student was inspiring and made me incredibly proud to be joining such an innovative and growing field. I'm motivated and excited by the range of work being done by OTs all over CA. I'm not sure how many students came into OT school knowing where they wanted to work, but I was not one of those lucky souls. Now my already open mind feels further stretched by just briefly learning about OT in places such as oncology, maternal mental health, NICU, and sleep hygiene. OTAC was also a great opportunity to briefly connect with practitioners in the field and see some of the amazing research being done. To me, it felt like lifting the curtain between being a student and reading great Slagle lectures from the 60's, to hearing about what is happening in the field right now.

From my experience at OTAC, it feels like a challenging and exciting time to be an OT! Many OTs spoke passionately about partnerships with hospitals, doctors, and community organizations, and are always striving to provide excellent care and promote OT. I'm looking forward to attending OTAC's OT in Oncology 3rd Annual Symposium on Saturday, Feb 1st to learn more about this practice area that I knew nothing about before OTAC. Now, when I get stuck or frustrated on a paper or assignment, I take a breath and try to remember those feelings of inspiration from OTAC and the reminder that we will be out there soon so I should probably be paying closer attention to those theories I was trying to read.