

# On Topic

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SJSU SOTA  
OCTOBER 2018

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## FALL PREVENTION

by Sonja Kramer

No, we're not talking about trying to block the unstoppable tide of pumpkin-flavored goodies, but about preventing older adults from taking a tumble. September 22nd was National Falls Prevention Awareness day, which is sponsored by the National Council on Aging.

Falls are a growing public health issue, as they are the leading cause for older adult hospitalizations and a major cause/result of hip fractures, head injuries, and even death.

**Every 11 seconds, an older adult is treated in the ER for a fall.** With education on how to prevent falls from ever happening, we can reduce the morbidity and mortality experienced by older adults who are at risk for falls. To learn more,

visit: <https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/>

***SOTA meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month. Next one is Oct 3rd!***

# STUDENTS SPEAK

## FACULTY LED PROGRAM Q&A

Each of the FLPs are fantastic adventures where you will learn and grow as a future OT and as a person. Three SJSU OT students from the Class of 2019, Sonja Kramer, Tammy La, and Trina Godwin, tell tales from their travels abroad!

### Sonja – Finland

**Location:** JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Jyväskylä, Finland

**Typical day:** I would make breakfast in the hostel kitchen or buy a donut or yogurt from a nearby K Market convenience store. Class usually started at 9 am, so I would meet some classmates downstairs at the hostel and walk together. Classes included lectures, activities, field trips, and group projects, but it was all very low-pressure, fun learning. We even got coffee breaks during class! We ate the school lunch in the cafeteria, which was very inexpensive and pretty tasty! School was usually over by 4 pm, but sometimes we had organized activities we were encouraged to attend that the Finnish students organized for us, such as a beach volleyball game at the lake behind campus, or teaching us Finnish games. Dinner was usually on our own--sometimes we met some of the Finnish students at a restaurant or by the lake, and sometimes we had group dinners with our faculty leaders.

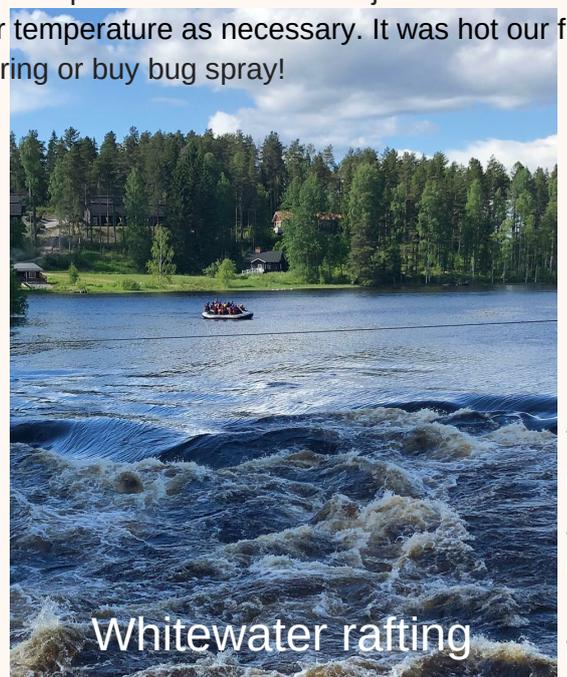
**How was OT integrated into this program?** We take classes with Finnish OT and physiotherapy students as well as students from many other disciplines and other countries. The courses we took focused on healthcare and human wellbeing. The interdisciplinary aspect of the classes was one of my favorite parts because we learned so much from each other. Plus, I now have friends that I met from around the world!

**Favorite parts?** Finland is a breathtakingly beautiful country with pristine forests and lakes that we got to hike through and go swimming in. The students were warm and kind and we all became friends. I got to try so many new things such as whitewater rafting, going in a Finnish sauna, watching Finnish baseball, eating reindeer, going to a board game bar, and more. Finland is a really safe place and I never felt out of my element even while traveling solo.

**Any tips for a packing list?** Bring an eye mask for sleeping! There is no need for streetlights or flashlights even at 2 am! I highly recommend bringing it. Bring a pair of comfortable waterproof shoes and a rain jacket in case it rains, and bring both warm layers and shorts so you can adjust your temperature as necessary. It was hot our first week and chilly on the second week. Also bring or buy bug spray!



Mindfulness yoga at the lake



Whitewater rafting

Photo: Paige Dunlop

# Trina-Vietnam

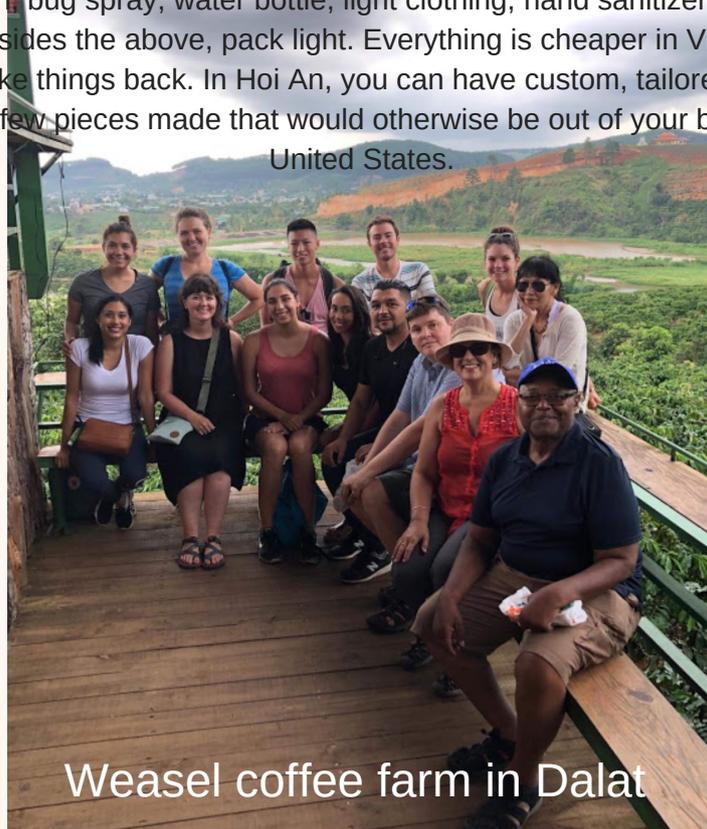
**Location:** Vietnam (Hanoi, Hoi An, Da Lat)

**Typical Day:** One of the best things about Vietnam was that there was no “typical day.” Each day was different. We spent a fair amount of time sight-seeing and exploring culturally significant locations. We were able to visit museums, temples, historical sites, and ruins. We biked, we climbed, we rode in sampans, and we walked everywhere! Additionally, in Hoi An, we had the privilege of volunteering at CHIA (Children’s Hope In Action), an NGO that provides health, education, and disability services to children and families in the area. And in Da Lat, we spent time with a local farmer and his family, learning about their culture, their occupations, and their family history. While every day was different, we always met interesting people with different stories to tell, we ate delicious food, and we got to take in the new and unfamiliar.

**How was OT integrated into this program?** Through observations, interactions and discussions, we explored occupations and occupational meaning. Through our coursework and discussions, we examined how the performance, context, and meaning of occupations were similar and different from those in the United States. After the trip was over, we reflected on what this will mean when we begin practicing.

**Favorite Parts?** I love to travel. Besides the great food, traveling gets me out of my comfort zone. It exposes me to new people, new places, and most importantly, new ideas. Vietnam was so different from any other place I had been before, and each city we went to had something unique to offer. We got to experience Vietnam’s natural beauty in Ninh Binh and its chaotic streets in Hanoi. There were beaches in Hoi An and pine trees in Da Lat. I felt like I got to experience completely different places in just one trip. Additionally, I loved how active we were. We never sat for too long, and I loved being able to explore everything on foot.

**Any tips for a packing list?** Comfortable and breathable shoes (I would recommend Tevas or Keens), sunscreen, bug spray, water bottle, light clothing, hand sanitizer, travel toilet paper, and wet wipes. Besides the above, pack light. Everything is cheaper in Vietnam, and you will want the room to take things back. In Hoi An, you can have custom, tailored clothing made. It’s worth it to get a few pieces made that would otherwise be out of your budget here in the United States.



# Tammy-Taiwan

**Location:** Taiwan (Tainan, Sun Moon Lake, Taichung, Taipei)

**Typical day: Week 1 (Tainan):** I would be up and ready to have breakfast in the hotel dining area by 8:40am and the whole group would meet in the lobby at 9. A taxi would take us to our site for the morning and we would get to learn about a new and different type of clinic and how the Universal Healthcare in Taiwan works. Lunch was usually a “Taiwanese bento box” and boba delivered to the site for lunch. After lunch, we would get to learn more about the site or go to a different one, and after dinner we were free to explore! We tried delicious restaurants for dinner, had fun at the night markets, did some shopping, got relaxing (and super affordable) back massages and foot soaks at the spa, and even got to go karaoke a couple of times!

**Week 2:** Week two was all about cultural exploration, which meant long bus rides, traversing through some of Taiwan’s most beautiful tourist spots, and lots of tea tasting! The schedule got pretty packed at times, but it was definitely filled with lots of fun and unforgettable sights. When the tour was done, some of us took a day trip from Taipei to the very gorgeous town of Jiufen.

**How was OT integrated into the program?** We got to see many different healthcare settings, and in quite a few of them, we had their OTs present to us. This opened the door for any questions we had about how different OT was in the U.S. and in Taiwan and we got to build some great connections. The different sites we visited included: a non-profit social welfare clinic, a long term care facility, pediatric clinics, a psychiatric teaching hospital, a halfway house, and even an assistive device center! We also had the chance to get to know some of the OT students from the National Cheng Kung University and be their ‘clients’ for the day while they guided us through some assessments. During the later half, we visited Chang Gung University and listened to their research presentations.

**Favorite Parts?** The food, of course, was amazing. I didn’t get tired of having wintermelon milk tea everyday. The people in Taiwan are also very kind and welcoming, so I always felt safe and comfortable, even with no mandarin speaking skills. One of my favorite days was when the NCKU students took us out touring and we spent the whole day hanging out. My favorite sites that we visited were the assistive technology Universal Home, which was like the IKEA of assistive devices, and the Jianan Psychiatric hospital, where we spent two days and got to participate in some of their groups. Taiwan is a beautiful country with lots to see, and luckily we got to travel from the southern point (Tainan) to the north (Taipei)! About halfway north, we spent some time in Taichung where we watched an unforgettable sunset while playing around the Gaomei wetlands.

**Any tips for a packing list?** An umbrella is a must. You never know when it’ll start pouring on you! And if not, it’s also a great shield from the sun. Load up on sun protection and mosquito repellent. If you think long sleeves and pants will protect you from the bugs, you’re wrong (I got bit on the eye and forehead)! That being said, bug bite ointment might also be good. Definitely bring some good walking shoes and leave some extra space in your luggage for all the clothes, snacks, and souvenirs you’ll buy from the night markets and Poya!



Sunset at Gaomei Wetlands



Lion Dance at Jianan Psychiatric Teaching Hospital

# SOTA Events



*SOTA's BBQ Mixer social was attended by over 100 OT students, faculty, and Pre-OT Club students! The SpecTAColar event included grilled tacos, icebreaker activities, and lots of smiles!*

## Past Events

- Sept 5 - SOTA Board Meeting
- Sept 17 - BLS Workshop
- Sept 18 - BBQ Mixer Social

## Future Events

- Oct 3 - SOTA Board Meeting, Backpack Awareness Day
- Oct 8 - AOTA Boardroom2Classroom
- Oct 17 - Breaking Barriers: The Power of Occupational Therapy
- Oct 27 - DogFest Walk'N Roll with Canine Companions for Independence

# Fast Facts: AOTA

Professional association founded in 1917 with over 60,000 members: OTs, COTAs, and OT students! AOTA represents 213,000 Ot practitioners nationwide!

Annual Conference 2019 April 4-7 at Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. More networking, learning, advocacy, and fun!

Advocates for OT practitioners and assures the highest quality of OT care, promotes professional development, educates the public, and more!

Student membership price is \$75, and members get discounted textbooks, fieldwork and exam prep, scholarship opportunities, a subscription to AJOT, the OT research journal and more!