Hello from Bondurant Hall. The 2010-2011 academic year has been filled with important events for the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy: the 30th anniversary of the first graduates of the UNC Chapel Hill Occupational Therapy Program in October; the installation of a major display featuring occupational therapy, occupation, and some of our graduates in the lobby of the Health Sciences Library; the first Mitchell Symposium in Occupational Science; and a very successful self-study and on-site review for our ACOTE accreditation. Whew! And if that were not enough, we reviewed an outstanding (and very large) pool of applicants for next fall’s incoming class, and our first two doctoral students are getting set to defend their dissertations.

I am particularly pleased at the outcome of our ACOTE on-site. The reviewers spoke with administrators, faculty, students, recent graduates, clinical instructors, and employers. They read the 680 pages of documentation we sent them in November, and reviewed more when they were in Chapel Hill at the beginning of March. What was most affirming in this process was not that they found no deficiencies (they didn’t, but we won’t know for certain until the Council votes on the review in April), but rather that their report of our strengths reflected what we value: commitment to educational excellence, collegiality, evidence-based practice, client centeredness, occupation, research, diversity, and cultural competency. The reviewers said our students and graduates are “impressive, articulate, independent learners” with “professional maturity.” This review reflects a community effort. Thanks for being part of who we are and for your ongoing support.

Virginia Dickie, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA
Director, Division of Occupational Science

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Dr. Mary Lawlor met with doctoral students during her two days on campus, part of the inaugural Mitchell Symposium. See story page 7. From left, sitting: Mary Lawlor, Rebecca Aldrich, and Mackenzi Pergolotti. Standing: Lauren Little, Emily Furgang, Antoine Bailliard, Ashley Freuler, and Kendra Heatwole Shank.
Alumni, faculty members, and friends came together in Chapel Hill on October 23, 2010, to commemorate the Division’s 30th Anniversary. Morning activities included three continuing education sessions, poster presentations by current students, and tours of Bondurant Hall. The celebration continued in the evening with a banquet at the North Carolina Botanical Gardens.
A Brief History of the Division

The 1980s

The first decade of the Division was focused primarily on the establishment of an innovative freestanding entry-level Master of Science program preparing professional occupational therapy practitioners. The late Dr. Marlys Mitchell, identified as the founder of the program, pioneered the first graduate curriculum in occupational therapy in the state of North Carolina.

Dr. Mitchell, who served as the program’s first director, was succeeded in 1984 by Professor Cathy Nielson. Both Mitchell and Nielson were heavily involved in national and state professional leadership and passed on a legacy of service to students and alumni.

The 1990s

Following some early turnover, a small but stable faculty core formed in the mid-1980s and grew to six in number by 1990. During the following decade, there was considerable emphasis on the conceptual work that led eventually to a curriculum revision and to the change from a Division of Occupational Therapy to a program educating entry-level occupational therapy practitioners within a Division of Occupational Science, embracing the evolving academic discipline that would provide the foundation for an eventual doctoral program as well as opportunities to reinvigorate clinical practice. Key to these changes was a commitment by the faculty to envision 21st century occupational therapy practice and prepare students as strong critical thinkers rather than solely as possessors of a prescribed body of knowledge. The visioning process was tangible as well as conceptual, resulting in the following narrative that remains a part of our vision:

The Division of Occupational Science seeks to educate occupational scientists and occupational therapists who possess the vision, knowledge, critical thinking abilities, and commitment to independent learning and scholarship necessary to make contributions in their respective fields. Furthermore the Division is devoted to the preparation of occupational therapists who possess the expertise required by traditional practice settings and the courage required to forge new models of practice appropriate for the changing environmental and human needs of the future. Just as the University has historically produced numerous state as well as national leaders, the University’s Division of Occupational Science strives to produce scientists, practitioners, scholars, and researchers who assume leadership in the discipline of occupational science and the profession of occupational therapy.

The 2000s

The time period 2000-2010 was marked by several major accomplishments summarized briefly as a burgeoning of scientific inquiry and scholarly activity that is both broader in scope and richer in depth than in previous decades. Essential factors contributing to this growth include the implementation of the doctoral program in Occupational Science in 2006, the expansion of the faculty in terms of both numbers and research expertise, and an enhanced effort toward multiple forms of professional service and scholarly activity. Of equal importance, the Division has consistently maintained collegiality and community, encouraging contact between the MS and PhD program and engaging collaboratively with students in administrative, research, and service efforts.

In the fall of 2006 the Division admitted its first two students into a new doctoral program and thus became one of only several programs in the country preparing students for a traditional PhD. The initial cohort of students and those who are following them have become engaged in national and international meetings, presenting their research. Additionally, several of them have published in leading journals. The Division experienced the retirement of two long-time faculty members and the departure of one tenure-track faculty member. Those vacancies were filled and new positions were added, bringing the full-time faculty to 10. Though earlier faculty consisted solely of occupational therapists, the current faculty include non-occupational therapists as well as occupational therapists whose doctoral degrees are in anthropology, psychology, and human growth and development.
Beth Bell ('83) worked in pediatrics with Easter Seals for a couple of years following graduation. She then spent two years on the mission field in Kenya, followed by several years of homeschooled her children and working in a SNF. She is currently employed at the first rural P.A.C.E. (Program of All-Inclusive Care of the Elderly) center in the southeastern United States. Located in the heart of the western Virginian Appalachian Mountains, in Big Stone Gap, Va., the PACE center has an out-patient clinic, rehab wing, transportation center, personal care assistance, social work team, and a day center. O.T. conducts evaluations of new participant applicants, re-assessments on those who have had a change of status, and six month reassessments of each PACE participant. O.T. also includes the education of family members and aides, therapeutic treatment sessions, which may take place in the rehab wing, day center, or in the home, assessments or treatment in the hospital or nursing facilities, and the management and issue of adaptive and positioning equipment. The primary goal for each participant is to enable that person to be as functional as possible, and to remain in his/her home with adequate safeguards, emotional and physical support, and assistance in and out of the home to make that goal possible. “I love my job and am very happy to be a part of this fairly new health care management system for elderly,” writes Beth.

Catharine Kendall Lees ('83) is still in the wheelchair seating clinic at Carolinas Rehabilitation in Charlotte and enjoying the challenges and learning opportunities with inpatients and outpatients. She completed my two terms on the NCBOT and is still serving on the Certification Examination Verification Committee. As of January 26, 2011, she was officially two years cancer free and strongly urges all women to have their annual mammograms for their health and happiness. “My other pastimes and passions remain my dear golden retriever, Jack, and our local rescue club, knitting, reading real 3 dimensional books of all genres, and mastering my photography,” writes Catharine. “Cheers to all of us who were in the second class; we started in 1979 and graduated over a period of the next 5 years!”

Kathy Barrett ('96) is still working at Flagstaff Medical Center in Flagstaff, Ariz. Her primary caseload is with outpatient pediatrics 90 miles from the Grand Canyon. “Come visit, friends!” writes Kathy. She can be reached at barrettgk@alumni.duke.edu.

Shannon (Rigsbee) Radmacher ('99) remarried in October 2010. Her husband, Dan, has a six-year-old son, Nathan, so she is now a stepmom. After 11 years working primarily in skilled nursing facilities and six years as the OT team leader at her current facility, she recently made a job change to a home health company. “I’m looking forward to

Alumni Updates

International Research Collaboration on OT Education

At the beginning of February, UNC Chapel Hill faculty members Jenny Womack, Linn Wakeford, Sue Coppola, and Virginia Dickie traveled to Stockholm for a joint workshop with OT educators at the Karolinska Institutet to discuss collaborative pedagogy research. The first day was spent in part with the entire KI teaching team and part with potential research partners. On the second day, a small group of faculty from KI met with the UNC team to share some existing research projects and develop a five-year plan for an ongoing project. Sue Coppola presented her long-term comparison of fieldwork experiences with curriculum themes, and Linn Wakeford shared her study comparing two methods of teaching.

“Although KI has younger students at the baccalaureate level, we have discovered that we share many teaching concerns,” said Dickie. “In the fall we plan to implement a study here that will develop into a larger shared study of ways to teach students skills in managing therapeutic relationships.”

Above: UNC Chapel Hill faculty at Karolinska. Left: Chapel Hill faculty with the Karolinska Occupational Therapy teachers.
Baranek Appointed to AOTA Advisory Panel

Grace Baranek, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, has been appointed to the Research Advisory Panel of the American Occupational Therapy Association and American Occupational Therapy Foundation. This advisory committee will be making recommendations to further research, and translation of science to education and practice, in keeping with national research priorities for the profession. Baranek is a Professor in the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy and serves as Associate Chair for Research for the Department of Allied Health Sciences.

Coppola Elected to AOTA Council

Sue Coppola, MS, OTR/L, BCG, FAOTA, Associate Professor in the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, has been elected by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) membership to serve a four-year term as the U.S. Delegate to the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT). In this role she represents the AOTA to the WFOT Council and works to advance practice, research, and education in occupational therapy. WFOT is the key international representative for Occupational Therapy to the World Health Organization and other international groups.

Cutchin Appointed to New Research Initiative

Malcolm Cutchin, PhD, Professor in Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, was appointed as a part-time associate professor at the University of Southern Denmark in May 2010. Cutchin is part of a new Research Initiative for Activity Studies at SDU and is collaborating with Danish colleagues to develop several research projects as well as advising doctoral students. For more information, visit http://tinyurl.com/333be7s. Cutchin continues to collaborate with research teams in the Division of OT at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden. Those projects focus on various dimensions of aging in place.

Lesley Anne Garcia ('00) was recently re-elected Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Therapy Association (TTOTA), the organization she helped found in 2004. In April last year, in her capacity as First Alternate to the Caribbean at the 29th WFOT Council Meeting in Santiago, Chile, Lesley helped submit the bid on behalf of the Association of Caribbean Occupational Therapists (ACOT) to host the WFOT Interim Management Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago. ACOT was successful and the IMM will be held in Trinidad and Tobago in May 2011. Lesley sees this as a great honor and is very optimistic about the impact this week-long visit from the executive of WFOT could have on the profile of occupational therapy in her country and the Caribbean region. She hopes it will draw attention to the need for more qualified occupational therapists and services in all areas of practice. Lesley runs a private practice and will soon be launching an adult day health service. For more information on TTOTA please visit the TTOTA website at www.ttota.com.

Alicia (Hermann) Keesling ('05) walked down the aisle October 2, 2010, to marry Josh. She has since left Duke’s NICU to work closer to her new home in Asheboro, N.C. She is now working in an outpatient pediatric clinic in Lexington, N.C.

Molly Shields Bagby ('09) and her husband, Justin, welcomed their first child on January 18, 2011. Their daughter, Keely Kathleen, weighed 6 lb., 7 oz. Everyone is doing well and adjusting to life as a family of three.
Two students from the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy were recognized at the annual Department of Allied Health Sciences Student Scholarships and Awards Brunch on November 6, 2010, in Chapel Hill.

Katherine Rachel Stewart, of Atlanta, received the Carolinas Rehabilitation Occupational Science Time-Limited Scholarship. Liz Hartzog ('03) worked with her employer, Carolinas Rehabilitation, to help establish the scholarship, which recognizes a deserving Occupational Science student who has an interest in a career working in acute physical rehabilitation. Recipients complete a clinical affiliation at Carolinas Rehabilitation in the summer. Carolinas Rehabilitation funded the scholarship in recognition of the excellent clinicians now working at the hospital who graduated from the UNC Chapel Hill program.

Elise Bullard Wright, of Asheboro, N.C., received the June C. Allcott Fellowship, which recognizes students who demonstrate exemplary, ongoing, and new community service. In her life (1916-1996) June C. Allcott was a gardener of friendships. She explored the world as a traveler, weaver of baskets, culinary adventurer, designer of jewelry and clothes, guidance counselor at the University of North Carolina, computer explorer, music and art lover, and friend. I am thrilled about spending my final level II fieldwork at Carolinas Rehabilitation this summer. UNCs program has a strong commitment to evidence-based practice, and Carolinas Rehabilitation clearly shares the same dedication to providing the most innovative and effective care possible through the use of the TBI Model System and the various clinical trials and research initiatives for individuals with spinal cord injury. I believe that this placement will greatly increase my skill-set and will help me develop professionally for my future practice as an occupational therapist.

Katherine Rachel Stewart
Carolinas Rehabilitation Occupational Science Scholarship Recipient

Elise Bullard Wright
June C. Allcott Fellowship Recipient

Occupational therapy is a profession that provides a capacity to serve others and impact each patient in a truly unique fashion. The beauty of the career is that these qualities can be packaged together to help others resume personally meaningful activities. My volunteer experiences have allowed me to work with a diverse group of people, from adults with physical disabilities to children with mental disabilities and geriatric patients who face challenges with daily tasks. Each of these factors drew me to the field. Ultimately, I hope to use my graduate education to accomplish a couple of goals. First, I would like to help people from all walks of life to overcome challenges they face in daily occupations. Plus, I desire to raise awareness about occupational therapy in my local community and surrounding schools to bring new interest to the profession. Therefore, I am honored to receive this particular fellowship because my career aspirations align directly with June C. Allcotts passions of positively affecting the lives of others through health care and making helping connections with people.

Elise Bullard Wright
June C. Allcott Fellowship Recipient

In October 2010, members of the UNC Chapel Hill Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) volunteered at Central Park School in Durham for their inaugural Backpack Awareness Day. First- and second-year students in the MSOT program participated in the program to spread awareness of the potential risks associated with children carrying around backpacks that are too heavy. Members of SOTA weighed the children and their backpacks, calculated the percentage of each student's backpack weight relative to his/her body weight, and talked with them about the risk of injuries associated with carrying around too much weight. According to the AOTA, carrying a backpack that weighs more than 15% of one's body weight is considered heavy enough to potentially cause problems, including musculoskeletal injuries for the wearer.

“Even if not all of the students understood the numbers involved, the event provided a good opportunity to spread awareness to students and their teachers about an aspect of school life that is often overlooked,” said Cat Ballentine, a second-year student in the MSOT program stated.

SOTA SPREADS BACKPACK AWARENESS

David Benthall ('11), Katherine Stewart ('11), Katie O'Toole ('11), and Sharon Moore ('10) presented at the 2010 NCOTA Conference, which took place October 2 and 3 in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Benthall participated in a lecture entitled “Living Life to its Fullest: Understanding the Role of Occupation at the End of Life.” Benthall co-presented with Tim Holmes, OTR/L, who supervised Benthall during his Fieldwork II in the summer of 2010. The presentation focused on understanding how occupations at the end of life reflect self-identity, continuity of self, and the creation of a legacy.

O'Toole, Stewart, and Moore, along with Alison Darwin ('03), OTR/L, delivered a presentation about therapeutic horticulture, in which health care providers use gardening as an intervention to achieve goals of therapy. The presentation focused on how occupational therapists can design a horticulture therapy program, write goals for therapy, and increase clients’ participation, socialization, and well being by instituting horticulture therapy groups at their work places.

STUDENTS SHINE AT NCOTA CONFERENCE
Inaugural Mitchell Symposium Convened in 2011

The inaugural UNC Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Mitchell Symposium was held on January 26, 2011.

The Mitchell Symposium is named in honor and memory of Dr. Marlys Mitchell, the founder of the master's program in Occupational Therapy at UNC Chapel Hill, and her husband, Earl, a great supporter of Marlys' work (and of occupational therapy). The symposium was made possible through a new fund, initiated by a generous donation to the division made by Dr. Ruth Humphry and Dr. Bruce Carney.

The inaugural lecturer was Professor Mary Lawlor from the University of Southern California Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. Dr. Lawlor delivered a lecture titled "Health Disparities and Cultural Competence: Bridging Clinical Worlds and Life at Home."

In the lecture, Dr. Lawlor discussed her longitudinal interdisciplinary urban ethnographic project called Boundary Crossings: Re-Situating Cultural Competence. The emphasis of the talk was bridging home life and institutional worlds, and the theoretical implications for addressing health disparities and facilitating effective collaborations in the moments of health care encounters.

Dr. Mary Lawlor met with doctoral students during her two days on campus. From left, Antoine Bailliard, Lauren Little, Mary Lawlor, Rebecca Aldrich, and Mackenzi Pergolotti.

Dr. Lawlor was on campus for two days, meeting with faculty and doctoral students and conducting a workshop on narrative analysis.

UNC Chapel Hill Division of Occupational Science Gift & Pledge Form

I would like to support the Division of Occupational Science with a gift to the OS Advancement Fund (Designation #8826).

Enclosed is my gift of: □ $50 □ $100 □ $250 □ $500 □ $750 □ $1,000 □ Other ______

□ Check: Make check payable to Medical Foundation of N.C., Inc. (indicate designation number 8826 on the memo line.)

□ Credit Card: □ Visa □ MasterCard □ American Express

Credit Card Number ________________ Security Code ___________ Expiration Date __________

□ Pledge: I pledge $________ per year for □ 1 year □ 2 years □ 3 years

□ Matching Gift: My employer (or my spouse's employer), _______________________________ , will match this gift.

I have enclosed the company's matching gift form. THANK YOU!

Gift in Honor / Memoriam / Celebration of: ________________________________

Alumni Updates: (We would like to hear from everyone! Please send us an update even if you are not making a donation at this time.)

Name: ____________________________________ Class: ____________

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Current Job Title / Position: ________________________________

Employer: ___________________________________________

E-mail Address: ________________________________

Mail To: Kyle Gray, Director of Development, Division of Occupational Science, Department of Allied Health Sciences, Bondurant Hall, CB #7120, UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7120. Questions: Contact Kyle at (919)966-3352 or kyle_gray@med.unc.edu.