

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2022!

In the [UNC Division of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy](#), we strive to recognize and honor the “rare gifts and talents, and rare personalities”¹ of all our students and faculty in an ongoing manner. Black History Month provides an opportunity for us to shine a light on and recognize some of those in our UNC OT community who identify as Black or African American.

KERRI REID, MSOT Class of 2022

- BA in Global Studies and Psychology, UNC-Chapel Hill, Class of 2020
- Experience as an Ethics and Policy Intern, Residence Hall advisor, and President of the UNC NAACP

As a future OT, I hope to provide much needed representation and access to rehabilitative services for marginalized groups. I am empowered to continue to grow my professional skills to become an OT that transforms the field as we know it. Everyone deserves a seat at the table, but first someone must pull out a chair.



LAUREN WINNIX, MSOT Class of 2023

- BS in Psychology/BA in Spanish, UNC-Charlotte, Class of 2019
- Experience as an ABA Registered Behavior Technician

As an OT, I look forward to using my creativity to come up with interventions that will help individuals live a meaningful and purposeful life. I hope to empower others and be there as they discover their strengths and gain confidence within themselves. I'm excited to be a part of this rewarding career and increase the field's diversity as a Black practicing OT!



KHALIL CURRY, MSOT Class of 2023

- BA in Therapeutic Recreation, Eastern Washington University, 2020
- Therapeutic Recreation internship in Assisted Living facility

Representation is especially important in the health care field because there are patients of all different backgrounds but not as many health care professionals of color to provide these services. In my opinion, a shift in patient experience and clinical practice within the OT field can begin to transpire with further inclusion of more professionals of color. I hope that my career as an occupational therapist entices and invites other Black individuals to consider joining occupational therapy!



ALEXIS JESSUP, MSOT Class of 2023

- BA in Therapeutic Recreation, UNC-Wilmington, Class of 2021
- Extensive volunteer experience with children with disabilities

As a future OT, I hope that I can make minorities feel heard in a healthcare system that shuts their voices out. I also hope that I can use my own medical experiences to improve structures that are in place.



BERT REVELLE, MSOT Class of 2022

- BS in Psychology, Biology minor, UNC-Charlotte, Class of 2018
- Over 15 years of experience in automotive services

Because occupational therapists serve culturally diverse populations, I feel that it is both appropriate and beneficial to have cultural diversity among the occupational therapy practitioners who serve those populations. Because I am African American, I understand that my culture, unique background, life experiences, and perspectives are essential for establishing successful therapist-client, and inter-professional relationships in many settings and communities.



KIERRA PEAK, MS, OTR/L, PhD Candidate

- Dissertation Topic: An Intersectional Approach to Explore the Meaning of Black Youth Activism

Part of my initial reasoning for being an OT was so that clients could see someone that looks like them helping them. As a PhD student I hope to ask and pursue questions that I feel are important but aren't often highlighted in OS research. And I just hope to be myself in all spaces even when it challenges the narratives others project onto me.



BREONNA CALDWELL, MSOT Class of 2022

- BA in Psychology from North Carolina State University, Class of 2018
- Significant experience as a therapy aide and direct support professional

As a future OT, my aim is to provide representation in healthcare and expand access to services for communities of color. I hope to contribute to a necessary shift in our profession toward increased diversity to allow for more culturally competent care. I want to use my personal experiences to create rapport with the people I serve and empower them to lead meaningful lives!



¹ Meyer, A. (1977). The philosophy of occupation therapy. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 31, 639-642, p. 641. (Reprinted from *The Archives of Occupational Therapy*, 1, 1-10; 1922)