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# Eastern Michigan University

## Occupational Therapy Alumni Newsletter

SPRING 2014

### Alumni News & Events

Greetings fellow Alumni! Spring is finally in the air and is likely greatly welcomed by many of us, not just in Michigan, but all throughout the country after this brutal winter! As we leap into spring we wanted to send out an update to everyone on what has been going on in the EMU OT Alumni community and all the great things the new year has to offer!

In September, the OT Chapter was awarded an Alumni Association Chapter Grant that was used toward hosting the 3rd Annual Lyla M. Spelbring Endowed Lectureship & Conference VIP Reception held at the historic Ladies' Literary Club of Ypsilanti on September 27, 2013. In addition to honoring our distinguished guest, Dr. Suzanne Peloquin, the event recognized alumni spon-

sors of the Spelbring Conference, faculty, university dignitaries, and student members of Pi Theta Epsilon. The intimate evening provided all with an op-

lies flocked to the "Lights Before Christmas" at the Toledo Zoo, including some of our own OT Alumni. In addition to enjoying over one million lights that decorated the

Zoo for the holiday season, the event, hosted by the EMU Alumni Association, included a dessert bar, children activities, photo booth, and EMU goodies! It was great to see all the "TRUE MU" green and white gear among the lights!

Aside from battling the winter weather, the OT Chapter has

been busy planning for 2014 and looks forward to new opportunities for our Alumni to network, mentor, enjoy continuing education opportunities, and continue to celebrate EMU's legacy of producing outstanding occupational therapy practitioners! Continuing reading for updates from the OT Program, Alumni info, and additional events and opportunities.



EMU Pi Theta students pose with Dr. Suzanne Peloquin (far left, front) at the Spelbring VIP Reception.

portunity to engage and participate in a common cause through an event that celebrates and fosters scholarship, leadership and philanthropic service. A HUGE thank you to the Alumni Association for their generosity and help to make the event such a success!

On November 16, 2013, EMU Alums and their fami-

## A Brief Message From EMU's OT Program Director



Program Director - Amy Lamb, OTD,OTRL,FAOTA

The Occupational Therapy program was pleased to celebrate the graduation of the Class of 2013. The faculty held our annual graduation reception for the thirty-four graduates after the University commencement ceremonies on December 21st, 2013. This event continues to be a wonderful way to welcome the graduates' families and friends to our community and celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates as they move forward on the next step of their professional journey.



Class of 2013



The EMU Occupational Therapy Program is actively preparing for an upcoming ACOTE re-accreditation visit. Our self-study document is due in early August with the onsite team visit scheduled for November 3rd - 5th, 2014. Stay tuned for more updates as we approach the fall of 2014!

EMU Occupational Therapy faculty member and an EMU OT alum Jayne Yatzak (pictured right) successfully completed and defended her dissertation this Fall! Congratulations to Dr. Yatzak!



Our EMU OT family has grown by 4 feet! Dr. Andrea Zakrajsek, EMU OT Faculty member and EMU OT alum (pictured left), and her husband, Patrick, welcomed Kellen Patrick (6lbs, 1 oz) and Hallie Jennifer (5lbs) into their family and everyone is doing well. Big sister Isla is excited they are here!

# 2013 Spelbring Lectureship



The annual Lyla M. Spelbring Endowed Lectureship and Conference presented by the EMU Occupational Therapy Program is quickly becoming the “Must Attend” occasion of the autumn season, as evidenced by the sold out crowd at last September’s third annual event. The daylong conference began with a breakfast bar; included a gourmet lunch and afternoon snacks as well! And there was something to suit everyone’s interests in the variety of workshops offered including: Linking body and brain to health; Positioning for functional ability and wheelchair seating; Developmental trauma and occupational therapy; Leadership challenges for the next generation; Occupation-focused goals and interventions in vision rehab; Strategies for healthy aging; Private practice and product designs in a dynamic healthcare environment; Teaching research as a means of inspiring habits for best practice; and Integrating technology into everyday practice. Attendees also enjoyed several developing scholar posters presented by EMU MOT students.

The centerpiece of the day was the inspiring Key-note, luncheon-lecture presented by Dr. Suzanne Peloquin (pictured right) who drew upon stories from her own and others’ successful practice to celebrate and affirm our profession’s ethos and genius, and honor the spirit of Lyla Mae Spelbring’s life and legacy.

Special Thanks to all the Committee members, faculty, presenters, student volunteers, and community donors who made the 2013 Spelbring such a success!



EMU Alumni Michael O'Connor (far left) presents to conference attendees. To the left, conference attendees participate in the Developing Scholar Poster Presentation. Visit our Facebook Group: EMU OT ALUMNI for additional photos!

# Upcoming Opportunities!

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## EMU OT Alumni Mentorship Program!

Are you a new grad just starting out or thinking of taking up a new OT role? Are you an experienced clinician who is interested in mentoring another alum? We are excited to be putting together a way for our alumni throughout the country to stay connected! **EMAIL US at [emuotalumni@gmail.com](mailto:emuotalumni@gmail.com)** if you are interested in joining the mentoring program and stay tuned for more details in our summer newsletter!

## Going to the AOTA Conference this year in Baltimore?

Add these EMU Alumni Presenters to your Conference itinerary:

- Mary Beth Bisinger
- Regina Michael Campbell
- Patrick Hoag
- Camille Skubik-Peplaski

## Save the 2014 Spelbring Date!

The lectureship & conference planning committees, which consists of EMU OT faculty, students and alumni, is already immersed in planning another exciting lectureship and conference for Saturday, September 27, 2014. We are delighted that



Dr. Betty Risteen Hasselkus (left) has accepted our invitation to present this year's Lyla M. Spelbring Endowed

Lectureship. Dr. Hasselkus is an

Emeritus Professor of Kinesiology/Occupational Therapy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she served as Program Director for ten years.

During her over 40 years of active participation in the profession of occupational therapy, Dr. Hasselkus has focused her research, teaching and practice on the everyday occupational experience of people in the community, with a special emphasis on family care giving for older family members, physician-family caregiver relationships, meanings of everyday occupation to dementia day care staff, and the meaning of doing occu-

pational therapy. She is a world traveler and a mesmerizing storyteller. If you'd like a preview of her compelling appreciation for everyday occupations and the joy she finds in the meaning of space and place visit her personal blog at: <http://hasselkus.wordpress.com/>

We'll have more details soon; including how to take advantage of early registration so you don't miss out. The event sells out quickly and we'd love to see you on September 27<sup>th</sup>.



# Alumni In Action

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Have you or an alum you know received an award, special recognition, etc.? Tell us about it so we can recognize all the accomplishments of all our alumni!!!

**EMU OT alum Amy Ansara's article: *Psychosocial Aspects of Pain Management: A Mind-Body-Hand Treatment Approach* was featured in AOTA's December 2013 Special Interest Section Physical Disabilities Quarterly Newsletter. Head to AOTA's website for a copy if you missed it!**

## OT Alumni Story: Jamie (Baird) Cruz '06

Jamie (Baird) Cruz is a 2006 Graduate of the MOT program at EMU. During pediatric courses Jamie had her "ah-ha" moment when she realized she could get paid to play and be creative with kids.

After graduating Jamie moved to California where she has specialized in pediatrics; working in the school system and then at a sen-

sory-integration therapy center. In 2011 Jamie received her Sensory Integration Certification from USC and Western Psychological Services.

While her current role primarily focuses on mothering her two little ones, she has found time to obtain her business license in order to work as a private contractor, is developing a Play and Learn parent/child class for a local preschool, and volunteers her time with a local Holistic Moms Network.

In addition to mothering Jamie enjoys learning about holistic living and practicing a balanced lifestyle, which she thinks fits well with the phi-

losophy of OT. Jamie enjoys sharing her passion with others and uses various social media outlets to do so.

Regarding her time at EMU, Jamie credits Dr. Gretchen Reeves with inspiring her love of pediatrics and Dr. Valerie Howells for mentoring her to be a leader.

Thank you for sharing your EMU OT Alumni story Jamie!



Jamie and her family

You can follow Jamie's social media accounts on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/theotmama](http://www.facebook.com/theotmama)), Pinterest ([jamieleeot](https://www.pinterest.com/jamieleeot)), or Instagram ([jamieleeot](https://www.instagram.com/jamieleeot))

**Interested in sharing your EMU OT Alumni Story? Email us and we may feature your story in our next newsletter and/or on our Facebook page!**

## UPDATE US!

We are constantly updating our contact information databases and need your help. If you haven't recently notified us, please send us your name (first, last, maiden), year of graduation, address, employer and email address so we can update your information!

*Don't forget: April is OT Month! Tell us how you plan to celebrate our great profession!*

*Want to get involved?!? Consider the following:*

- *Mentorship Program*
- *Share your OT Story*
- *Update us on Alums you know*
- *Join us at an upcoming event*

Send us your photos! We want to feature our alumni doing what they love to do and living life to the fullest. You may also see your pictures in the next newsletter. Upload your pictures to the EMU OT Alumni Facebook page or email them to us!

## Contact Us! We'd love to hear from you!

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**JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP:  
EMU OT ALUMNI**



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