



VOLUME 7 | SPRING 2025

Hello from the UNE MSOT Program and Happy Spring!

As a New Englander I am always surprised by my love/dislike relationship with the winter part of the Spring Semester. I do love the beauty of the snow and occupations such as taking a walk in the crisp air or enjoying a really good cup of cocoa, but the adult occupations of winter boots and clothing, shoveling, and clearing off the car always challenge me.



In typical fashion, the Fall Semester flew by here on campus. Year I students completed their second semester and Year II students worked towards completing their first Level II experience, supported by many in our UNE OT community. Thank you for all you do for UNE OT!

We loved hosting the MEOTA conference on the Portland Campus this past fall and hope to do so again in the future. We are looking forward to spring events such as the AOTA Inspire 2025 in Philadelphia, (look for details about our alumni gathering in this newsletter), our Annual Adaptive Expo on April 15th in Innovation Hall on the Portland Campus (all are welcome, we would love to see you), and of course graduation in May as we celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2025. Our community partnerships continue to be strong as we learn from, with, and about each other in many different contexts.

I have enjoyed hearing from alumni as you share your stories, contribute to courses, support fieldwork students, and collaborate in many ways. Please reach out with your news, photos, and stories of your lives as OT Practitioners. Be Well, (spring is technically only a few weeks away!)

Kristin Winston, PhD, OTR/L
Program Director

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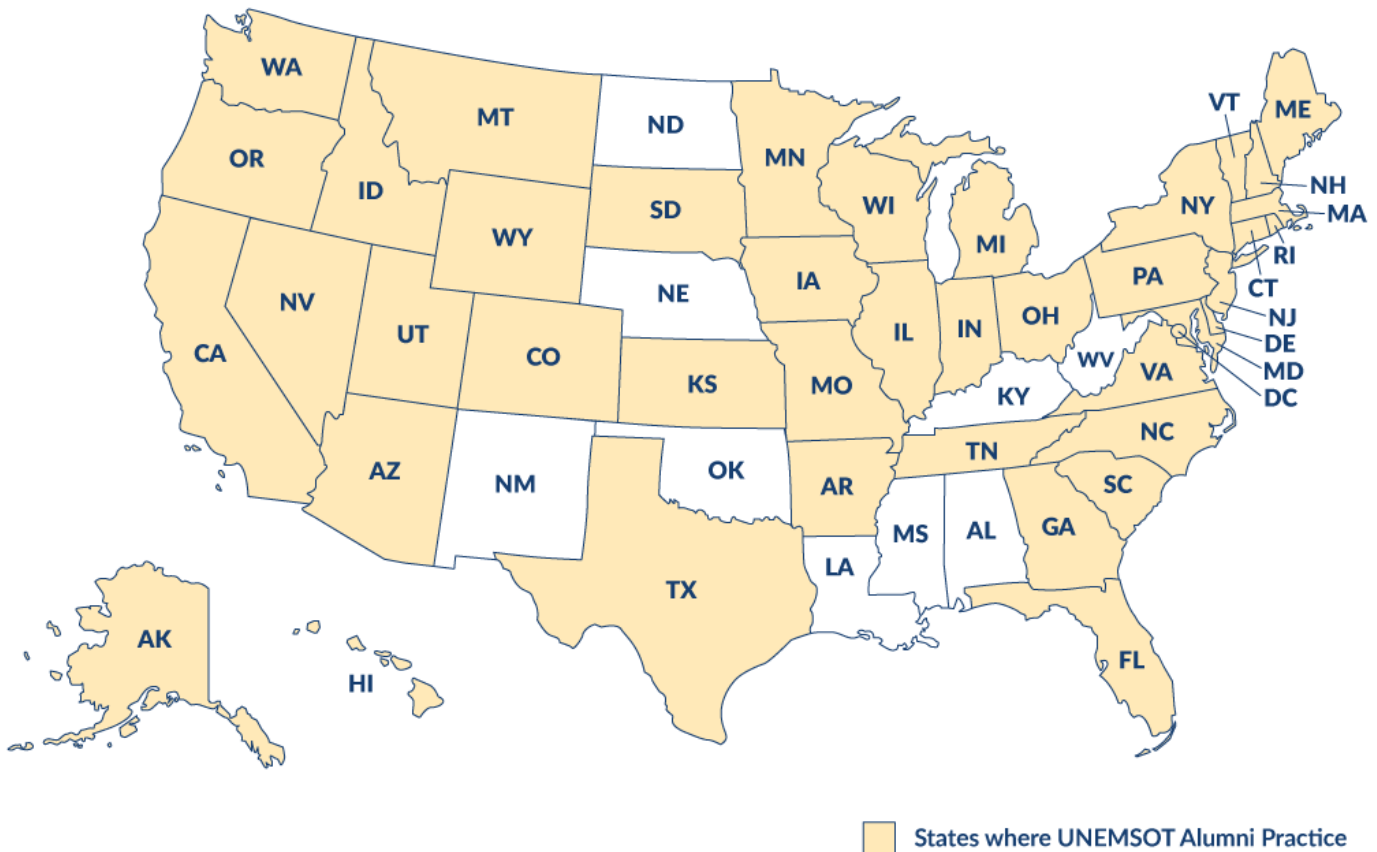
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INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

NEWS FROM THE FIELDWORK OFFICE

The Fieldwork Office recently prepared students in the Class of 2025 for their final Level II spring fieldwork experiences. We enjoyed hearing about what they learned during this fall's Level II fieldwork, and look forward to providing them an opportunity to share everything they learned in spring fieldwork when they return to campus for graduation in May. We are excited to begin the fieldwork placement process for students in the Class of 2026 and anticipate providing them with their sites in early summer.

We continue to offer students diverse Level I opportunities. This fall, the Class of 2026 collaborated with Day One Youth Residential Treatment Programs as part of their Mental Health Level I fieldwork. Students gained valuable experience in planning and implementing activities focused on substance use recovery, and enjoyed learning from the staff and residents in this program. This spring, students are looking forward to new Level I fieldwork opportunities centered on OT practice with children and youth and will observe in pediatric clinics, including Coastal Kids Therapy in Arundel and The Pediatric Development Center in Westbrook and Saco. Additionally, students will plan and facilitate activities for the STRIVE Tweens after-school program throughout the semester.

We continue to work on securing fieldwork placements for the Class of 2026 and for the Class of 2027 joining us in May. We value the connections our students can make with UNE alumni through Level I and Level II fieldwork and are thankful to those alumni who have reached out to offer us placements. **If you are interested in providing these opportunities, please contact Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Jessica Walton at jwalton5@une.edu.**



Help us fill in the map! Update us on where you are by filling out this form:
<https://forms.gle/poXiAoMrH3Xdc4Jb9>

HOMECOMING 2024 RECAP

We welcomed many UNE MSOT alumni to our annual tailgate event at Homecoming this year. During Homecoming, two of our alumni were inducted into the UNE Varsity Club Athletics Hall of Fame. As always, we loved catching up with current and former students while enjoying tailgate food and fun! **We look forward to seeing you all at the next Homecoming Tailgate on Saturday, October 25th, 2025 at the Blue Storm Stadium!**



Above: UNE MSOT Faculty and Students at the 2024 Homecoming Tailgate.



Above: Program Director Dr. Winston catching up with Dino Georgakopoulos '21, MSOT'23 and Spencer Nagi, MSOT'23.



Above: Avery Alberghini Laperle '19, MSOT'21 was recognized for her outstanding achievement and contributions to the Softball team. Among her many accomplishments, Avery was UNE's second student-athlete recognized as a College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) Academic All-America® First Team selection in 2019. Congratulations Avery!



Above: Jolena Lampron '18, MSOT'22 was recognized as the third women's lacrosse student-athlete to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. Among her many accomplishments and impressive statistics, Jolena stands as UNE's leader in caused turnovers with 186 over 66 games and is ranked 13th in NCAA Division III history. Congratulations Jolena!

PROGRAM UPDATES

Pi Theta Epsilon Induction

Twelve students from the Class of 2026 were inducted into the honor society Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE) on November 13. This year's induction ceremony marked the 31st anniversary of the establishment of UNE's Alpha Psi Chapter of PTE. Professor Emeritus Nancy MacRae, M.S., OTR/L, FAOTA, began the chapter in 1994 and gave an overview of the organization's history at the event. Congratulations to all!



Inductees left include: Evan Brohan, Macie Browne, Peyton Clark, Abbigail Fournier, Sara Grenier, Brianna Michaud-Nolan, Allison Morin, Gabriela Puentes, Jack Rogers, Alexis Tardy, Mackenzie Truman, and Julia White.

Right: Current PTE faculty mentor Dr. Carol Lambdin Pattavina and Professor Emeritus Nancy MacRae shared congratulatory remarks with the new inductees.



3D Printing

Professor Elise Ostensson has been leading the way with integrating knowledge and application of 3D printing technology into the MSOT curriculum. As part of their neuro-occupation coursework this fall, students were challenged to use 3D printing technology to address specific adaptive needs that were presented in a case study.

First-year students Gaby Puentes and Jenny Frick were highlighted in UNE news for their process and product for a client with multiple sclerosis. Read more about this project here: <https://www.une.edu/innovation-ot-3d-printing>

Right: Professor Elise Ostensson (left) guides Gaby Puentes and Jenny Frick through the print of a device to assist their assigned client.



Involvement at the York County Shelter

Over the summer, MSOT students joined students from UNE's Dental, Social Work, Osteopathic Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing programs at York County Adult Services Shelter in Alfred, Maine to provide services monthly to individuals who are unhoused. Along with their faculty mentor Dr. Carol Lambdin-Pattavina, students started by conducting an initial needs assessment. Following this initial assessment, building relationships and a sense of belonging was identified as a primary focus of the student OT interventions. Interventions so far have included making DIY tote bags out of gently loved t-shirts, discussing tips and tricks for taking care of self in the extreme cold after making DIY lip balm, and even making DIY eye masks for those who find it difficult to sleep with noise and light in the shelter. The unhoused was not a population Erin Quinty, MSOT '26 was familiar with but as she said, "I wanted to step out of my comfort zone and work with a population I had no previous experience with. I am so happy to have had this opportunity, and I always thoroughly enjoy my time at YCS". Macie Browne, MSOT '26 highlights the relational nature of this opportunity. "Getting to know the individuals at the shelter has shown me how impactful human interaction can be. I have learned from these individuals that regardless of your current situation you can always find something to be happy about. We have found that bringing positive energy into a room full of individuals can truly make a world of a difference." This service project will be expanding to the family shelter as well and we look forward to continued involvement.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

On November 14, the UNE chapter of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity hosted a Transgender Day of Remembrance event. Students gathered to remember those that were lost this year to anti-transgender violence. We welcomed Heide Lester, development director of Equality Maine, to lead a discussion on how OT practitioners can provide safe spaces and support for the LGBTQ+ community.

OT, AES & PT students at Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation Event

On October 19, students from the DPT, MSOT, and Applied Exercise Science programs gathered at the Pineland Farms Outdoor and Fitness Center in New Gloucester with Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation to host a power-soccer demonstration.

This event introduced wheelchair users to the sport, and allowed students the opportunity to engage in the sport of power soccer. Played on a standard basketball court, the fast-paced sport is designed for individuals who use power wheelchairs to manipulate the soccer ball into the net. The demonstration also welcomed members from Northeast Passage, a nonprofit recreational therapy organization, and regional U.S. Power Soccer teams, creating an inclusive and informative experience for all involved.

Right: UNE students at Pineland exploring power soccer equipment with community members.



MEOTA AT UNE: FALL 2024 CONFERENCE RECAP

MEOTA at UNE: Fall 2024 Conference Recap

The University of New England hosted the Maine Occupational Therapy Association (MEOTA) Fall Conference on Saturday, November 16, with an all-day event on its Portland Campus for the Health Sciences. The event brought together a record-breaking attendance of more than 170 occupational therapy practitioners from across Maine and beyond for a day of professional development, networking, and continuing education.

The conference featured a diverse lineup of expert speakers and workshops focused on current trends and innovative practices in the field of occupational therapy, including several faculty, emeriti, and alumni, including:

Jennie Dapice, Ph.D., OTR/L, BCP, assistant professor of occupational therapy at UNE lectured on “Canine-Assisted Occupational Therapy in Education”

Betsy Cyr, PT, D.P.T., DHSc, PCS, assistant clinical professor; **Kathryn Loukas, O.T.D., M.S., OTR/L, FAOTA**, professor emeritus of occupational therapy; and **Bella Crugnale, M.S.O.T. '24, OTR/L**, presented “Pedaling for Play, Participation, and Physical Activity: Wheeled Mobility Opportunities in Maine for Children with Disabilities”

M.S.O.T Program Director **Kris Winston, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA**, and **Lisa Clark, M.S., OTR/L**, closed the event with “An Exploration of Ethical Practice.”

The conference also provided a platform for students, faculty, and professionals to collaborate and discuss key challenges and opportunities within the field during a business meeting led by MEOTA President **Kimberly Davis '91, O.T.D., M.S., OTR/L, FAOTA**.



Above: Dr. Jennie Dapice and her Service Dog, Lincoln.

Below: Dr. Kris Winston and Adjunct Faculty Lisa Clark presenting at MEOTA.



Mary Woodbury '89

Over the course of her 30+ year occupational therapy career, Mary Woodbury has learned that it's important to be curious and always be learning new things. She says, "Having a genuine interest in helping people and the drive to educate yourself are qualities that make a great Occupational Therapist." Mary's early career involved working in rehabilitation units where she developed a broad understanding of the role of occupational therapy in healthcare. During this time, she became interested in hand therapy. "I love the specialty of hands because you need to learn as much as you can about the hand and arm to be able to administer the right kind of care at the right time."



Mary saw the need for hand specialists in rural Maine and realized the impact she could make on a broad range of people. "Everybody needs to use their hands, so we see conditions that really affect people's daily lives." She says, "I like being able to help a wide variety of people get their lives back."

Mary and her husband, Brian, run the Hand Therapy Treatment and Education Center in Brunswick, ME. Their mission is to increase access to occupational hand therapy services and education around the state. The center is a traditional outpatient occupational therapy clinic with a focus on hand therapy, and it is also a teaching clinic that provides student fieldwork and mentorship as well as community education outreach.

To train general practitioners and improve patient outcomes for those who are unable to reach a specialist, Mary created a program called "Hand Basics" that describes the 10 most common hand conditions. She says, "We are both helping one patient and training many professionals to share the treatment even further. Being able to treat these regularly occurring conditions really makes a difference."

Bella Crugnale '22, MSOT'24

Bella Crugnale, MS, OTR/L was an OT Trainee with the Maine Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) during the 2023-24 academic year. Her elective project included supporting children with neurodevelopmental disabilities in wheeled mobility through customized bicycles with the AMBUCS program. Bella wrote a grant which brought the Maine Trykers \$8,000 through the Narragansett Number One Foundation. As part of her elective leadership project she also hosted two bike days and awarded two tykes to local children and their families. Bella did a literature review to gather evidence to support wheeled mobility as play and community participation to improve functional mobility. Her efforts and enthusiasm were appreciated in all her successful endeavors! Bella is presently working in an outpatient program for children and families in Massachusetts.



Above: Bella Crugnale (left) presenting her work with UNE PT Faculty Dr. Betsy Cyr and OT Professor Emeritus Dr. Kathryn Loukas.

UNE Alumni at the NIH

Leslie Bardin '15, MSOT '17 and Alexandra St. Clair MSOT '17, were highlighted for their work at the NIH in the latest edition of the UNE Magazine.

For Leslie Bardin '15, MSOT '17, and Alexandra St. Clair, MSOT '17, making an impact on vulnerable communities through applied research at UNE led them to pursue occupational therapy career paths at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

While practicing in OT clinics after graduation, Bardin and St. Clair longed for the creative problem-solving

opportunities they found in their UNE research experiences. They soon found themselves at the NIH Clinical Center, where each patient has a research protocol attached to their care. As occupational therapists, Bardin and St. Clair have the freedom to expand treatment options for their patients and make a difference for patients through the lens of occupational therapists.

As a licensed hand therapist, St. Clair's research examines how daily upper extremity function is impacted by a patient's condition. Bardin's research focuses on using health and wellness education to create protocols to overcome socio-economic barriers facing intersex patients, which impacts their overall wellness.



Above: Leslie Bardin (left) and Alexandra St.Clair (right).

SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITIES

The Judith Giencke Kimball Endowed Scholarship

Established by the family and friends of Dr. Judith Kimball, this scholarship honors her 36 years plus of service to the University of New England. As the founding director of the Occupational Therapy program at UNE, Dr. Kimball prepared countless students for their work in the field of occupational therapy. Several alumni, foundations, corporations, and friends of UNE donate each year to provide scholarship assistance for our students. Each fall, UNE MSOT students completing Level II fieldwork rotations are invited to apply for this scholarship by writing essays about their goals for fieldwork and professional development in their future careers. One recipient is awarded up to \$2,500 which is applied to their spring semester tuition. If you would like to support the Judith Giencke Kimball Endowed Scholarship, please visit www.une.edu/giving. Click "make a gift" and then in the "designations" section, select the Judith Giencke Kimball Endowed Scholarship.

FACULTY RECOGNITION

Congratulations to **Professor Elise Ostensson**, who was awarded two Open Educational Resources (OER) Grants. These awards highlight UNE's commitment to creating affordable, accessible, and customized student learning experiences and increasing the use of high-quality, openly licensed materials.

Dr. Jennie Dapice was awarded \$3,000 from the WCHP Catalyst Seed Grant Program for her project entitled "Bringing Human-Animal Interaction Scholarship to the University of New England". Congratulations Dr. Dapice!

Congratulations to **Professor Caroline Beals**, who successfully defended her doctoral dissertation titled "Occupational Needs of College Students following Concussion" in December 2024, earning her Ph.D. in Occupational Therapy from Nova Southeastern University. Congratulations Dr. Beals!



Left: Professor Elise Ostensson.

Right: Dr. Jennie Dapice.



Left: Professor Caroline Beals.

March 25, 2025

UNE GIVING DAY! Make a gift. Make a Difference. Meet the Challenge.

UNE's Giving Day is March 25 and there are two challenges where your gift can make a real difference!

- 50 gifts from WCHP alumni, faculty, and professional staff unlocks a \$2,500 challenge gift
- \$2,000 donated to GASPA Scholarship unlocks \$6,000 gift

All gifts count for a \$14,000 challenge gift! Make your gift today! www.une.edu/givingday

April 4, 2025

You're invited to join Occupational Therapy program alumni, faculty, current and prospective students on Friday, April 4, 2025 from 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. at the Iron Hill Brewery - Center City, 1150 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19107-3601, to hear from OT Program Director Kris Winston, Ph.D., O.T.R./L. Enjoy connection, community, lite bites and cash bar.

[Click here to register to attend.](#)

April 15, 2025

Pediatric Adaptive Projects Expo & Nancy MacRae Occupations Auction will take place on Tuesday April 15, 2025 from 4:30-6 pm in Innovation Hall. Come explore the creativity and innovation of our first-year graduate students. Over 25 interactive, adaptive projects created by our students will be on display, serving as interventions for children and families and promote occupational engagement. Projects from past years ranged from sensory boards to adaptive pictorial cookbooks and modified toys. Come see what this year's exhibits hold! This event is free and open to the community, students, faculty, and professional staff. Individuals of all ages and abilities are welcome. Light refreshments will be served. Proceeds from the auction will be donated to St. Catherine's Challenge, a national student-led fundraising initiative supporting occupational therapy research grants.

April 26, 2025

S.E.E.D.S for Growth will take place on Sunday April 26, 2025 from 1-4 pm in Innovation Hall. S.E.E.D.S (Students Educating, Empathizing, Destigmatizing and Supporting) for Growth is an event designed to spread mental health awareness. The community is welcome, and the event will feature activities and educational opportunities designed to enhance personal mental health and well-being and better prepare future healthcare practitioners to support others.

October 25, 2025

Fall Homecoming Tailgating! We hope to see you on Saturday, October 25th from 10AM-1PM on the Biddeford campus for the WCHP homecoming tailgate in the Alford Forum Lot! Come join us for food and fun, followed by the Homecoming football game at the Blue Storm Stadium.





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QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER?

We would LOVE to hear from YOU!

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