

Columbia University MOTivator

75th Anniversary
Edition

we see the need, we meet it, we exceed it!

Columbia OT Celebrates 75 Years

On April 22nd and 23rd, alumni, present and former faculty and staff, and students gathered to celebrate the Programs' 75th anniversary. On Saturday, attendees enjoyed a happy hour at the Empire Hotel, and on Sunday, we hosted an anniversary program that included the history, present, and future of the Programs, as well as a keynote speech by Lauren Manning, a 9/11 survivor and OT recipient, and a luncheon. There was representation from the class of 1959 to our current students, as well as current and former faculty and staff.



Keep reading to see more photos and details from each event, alumni memories of the programs, and ways to stay involved. We are looking forward to continuing grow our connections with our vibrant and wonderful alumni community.

Letter From the Director

Hello Alums!

What an extraordinary 75th Anniversary celebration.

This current academic year has been filled with major accomplishments. While these will be shared in more detail in our next *OT mOTivator*, here are some snippets: we have had four major promotions approved by the College of Physicians and Surgeons; been assigned classroom space dedicated to occupational therapy, which is being converted into a multipurpose lab; our MS students earned first place in AOTF's St. Catherine challenge, and two of our doctoral students were highlighted as *Young Scholars* by AOTA; and our postprofessional OTD program began. But what our 75th celebration was really about is 75 years of unparalleled accomplishments, and what terrific accomplishments they are. We can truly boast that Columbia graduates are and have always been the brightest and best of our profession.

For those unable to join us, and for all able to take part in our festivities, this special edition of the *OT mOTivator* highlights the reunions at both the evening reception and the day event; the resilience of our program; our plans for future alumni opportunities; and, of course, the extraordinary and unforgettable talk given by Lauren Manning, survivor of both attacks (1993 and 2001) on the World Trade Center. Her talk reminded us of moving forward despite terrible odds.

Please enjoy this edition of the *OT mOTivator*,



Dr. Janet Falk-Kusler

Professor and Director, Programs in Occupational Therapy

Vice Chair, Dept. of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine

Assistant Dean, College of Physicians and Surgeons

Major Dates in Columbia OT History

1941: Programs established on Morningside campus

1945: Moved to the Health Sciences campus. A baccalaureate program and a post-baccalaureate professional certificate program were offered.

1968: Established present professional level Master of Science Degree. First class graduated in 1970.

1977: Baccalaureate program was phased out.

1981: Post-professional level Masters programs for therapists already certified at the baccalaureate level began.

1988: Dual degree program with Mailman School of Public Health began.

2007: Launched the Doctorate of Education (EdD) program in collaboration with Teachers College.

2016: Began offering first Post-Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program in New York State.



Saturday Party Time



Julie Kern, '86, Diane Heimer Schreibman, '86, and Adele Purvis, '70 and faculty catching up.



Lauren Cohen, '09, Ellen Osei, '10, Lance DeGuzman, '16, Megan Sadlier-Brown, '16, Carly Goldberg, '06, and Debi Wolfe, '95.



Kristi Sunde, '13, Carly Goldberg, '06, Pamela Miller, faculty, and Lee Ann Westover, '16.



Julie Kern, '86, Sue Fine, '59 and faculty, Emily Raphael-Greenfield, '86 and faculty, and Phyllis Mirenberg Simon, '88 and faculty.

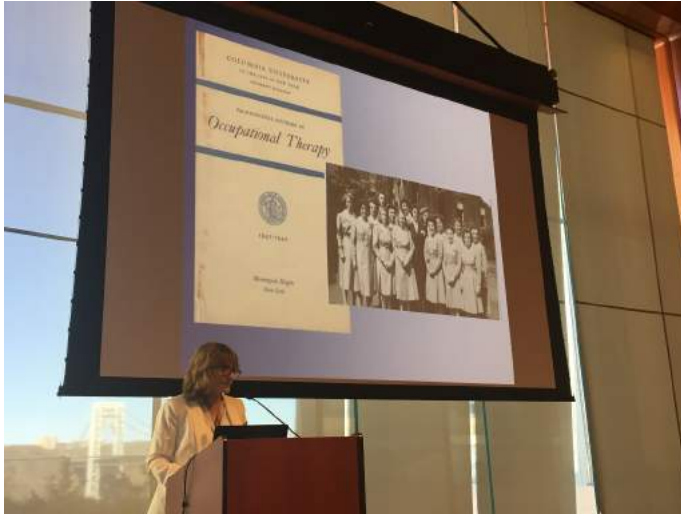
Alumni, faculty, and staff had a wonderful time catching up and making new connections at the Empire Hotel over food and drinks. There was a fantastic mix of class years in attendance, from 1959 to 2016. Many people were excited to see former faculty members (and alumni) Sue Fine and Adele Germaine Purvis, or to catch up with current faculty members and classmates. Several alumni connected with Dr. Lenin Grajo about the post-professional OTD program. It was a fun filled evening.

Sunday



Alumni, students, and former and current faculty and staff gathered for breakfast before the main presentation. Clockwise from top right: Adele Germaine Purvis, '70 and faculty and Anne Bentley-Fell, '83; members of the classes of 1996 and 1997 with Janet Falk-Kessler and Patricia Miller; Valerie Takai, '64 and Su Choe-Baek, '05; Fara Rose, '11, Stephanie Schechter, '10, Alison Behm-Daponte, '10, and Pamela Caine, '11; Lois Roth Kurpiel, '72, Jeanette Glover, '73, and Laurelee Hawkins, '68.

Sunday



Janet Falk -Kessler gave a presentation about the history of our program, including our start on the Morningside campus, changes to our curriculum (no more crafts!), and how accomplished our alumni are. Dawn Nilsen showed attendees the types of technology in use for anatomy classes, including several apps. Lenin Grajo demonstrated Zoom, which is used for video conferencing and presentations, especially in our doctoral programs. Then, attendees practiced using an audience response system similar to the one used in the classroom to test their knowledge of program trivia.

Lauren Manning gave an incredible keynote speech about her recovery after being burned over 80% of her body during the 9/11 attacks. Her resilience and strength during her long recovery are inspirational. She had high praise for occupational therapists and attributed a great deal of her recovery, especially the use of her hands, to her OT team. She was gracious enough to take questions from the audience after her talk. Lauren is currently a student in the Columbia Narrative Medicine program.



After the presentations, attendees had a delicious luncheon and got to spend time networking, connecting, and catching up with fellow alumni from all classes. Class pictures were projected on a screen, and everyone enjoyed trying to find themselves. Julie Kern and Diane Heimer Schriebman spoke to alumni about the need to support the program and ways alumni can continue to be engaged with the program.

Alumni Memories

Dr. Novack picking up brains out of a bucket and then running his hands through his hair. - Julie Kern, 1986

Dr. Novack catching the brain off a table, placing it back on the table, and running his hands through his hair. - Dore Blanchet, 1988

So glad weaving is no longer taught. We had to choose a pattern, wind the threads in the right pattern, then thread the loom. The threads had to be pulled through tiny heddles. At least one person during every class would run out of the room crying hysterically. - Laurelee Hawkins, 1968

I am proud to say that I have the distinction of having graduated without finishing my weaving project! Alas! - Sue Fine, 1959

When Barbara Neuhaus told our class that she'd bring lunch for us during our all day Activity Analysis Presentations - the look of shock on Joe Napoli's face...and Rich Scaliese's when Barbara distributed her cucumber tea sandwiches is unforgettable! - Anne Bentley Fell, 1983

The first day of class, Janet says, "Look to your left, then look to your right. You will know these people intimately, because you will live, breathe, and drink OT for the next two years." - Elouise McIver, 2002

The relationships that developed between our class and the staff was what helped us get through and grow. - Lois Roth Kurpiel, 1972

I remember receiving my acceptance letter. I was holding my 4 year old son Max in my arms, I opened the letter and elatedly told Max, "This is really good for us!" - Karen Shapiro, 1995

Receiving the Achievement in Mental Health Award and taking a photo with Emily Raphael-Greenfield and Ginnie Stoffel! - Rosa Colorado, 2013

Karen Diasio taught our mental health fieldwork seminar and we met off campus in her apartment and ours, often sitting on the floor. We had some great discussions. - Mary Beth Early, 1974

I remember my first AOTA conference with my OT classmates and having a great experience with both the learning and meeting new OT's. It was such an exciting experience going into this field. - Daniel Geller, 2001

In a recurring theme, everyone remembers Gordon Williamson - "Its all about the pelvis!"

Support Columbia OT

Alumni donations help support the following areas:



Scholarships. Last year, students were given 12 awards from general gifts and 4 awards from alumni endowed gifts.

Student support

Education enhancement. Gifts have helped subsidize the cost of iClickers that all students are required to use in class.

Software for classroom instruction

AV for our OT lab was supported by a generous anonymous donation

How to Give

<https://giving.columbia.edu/giveonline/>
Search for "Occupational Therapy" and chose a gift fund.

By mail to:

CUMC Office of Development
516 West 168th Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10032

If you are interested in annual giving or major gifts, please contact Janet Falk-Kessler.

Future donations can support:

Scholarships. 80% of our students rely on Financial Aid.

The new OT multipurpose lab. We are finishing installation of practical modules in the lab space this summer.

Any area of practice. Future gifts can be directed to support individuals who are interested in a specific area of practice.

International Program Stipends

Prep Courses for the NBCOT exam

Updated admissions technology

Any support that alumni and friends of Columbia OT can provide will help enhance our students' experience.

Stay Connected to the Programs



Alumni posing in front of the Black Building, former home of the Columbia Programs in Occupational Therapy.



Website, including information about our doctoral programs, an alumni section and news updates

columbiaot.org



Official Facebook page with updates from the Programs

<https://www.facebook.com/ColumbiaOT>



Alumni, Faculty, and Student Facebook group to connect with others and share resources

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/59530213112/>



<https://twitter.com/OTatColumbia>

Click here to join our mailing list to receive the newsletter via email and receive periodic updates about alumni events

Attention Class of 1980!

Mary Palmieri and Cecilia Gookin are planning a class reunion.

Date TBD

Please get in touch with either Mary or Cecilia for more information:

palmieriot@aol.com or greatblue22@yahoo.com