Robyn Thompson, MS, OTR/L joined the Life Skills Clinic and is now accepting pediatric clients. Robyn has worked as an occupational therapist with kids for about fourteen years in school, early intervention, home, and clinic settings. As an adjunct instructor for the Division of Occupational Therapy, she also teaches some of the pediatric courses and labs.

The pediatric practice at the Life Skills Clinic follows a community-based model to help meet the needs of children with disabilities in the Salt Lake City community. Although there is a great space for pediatric therapy in the clinic, youth can also receive therapy in settings that best meet their needs, community places. The pediatric practice also works closely with families and encourages their input and participation in the therapy process. Pediatric occupational therapy services are also available through the Life Skills Clinic to private and charter schools who would like to contract hourly occupational therapy services.

Pediatric occupational therapy at the Life Skills Clinic works with children and their families to encourage active participation in activities or occupations that are meaningful to them. These include play-related activities, school tasks, self-care, and activities of daily living. Pediatric occupational therapy services are designed to improve overall development and to help children and youth acquire the skills needed to actively participate in meaningful activities.
The pediatric practice offers one-on-one therapy services and will add group therapy sessions as the practice grows. The group therapy sessions will involve groups of 4-6 children and will address various areas of occupational performance in a setting where children benefit from group participation and peer modeling.

The pediatric practice also plans to develop intensive summer programs as a way to meet the needs of children who are out of school for summer break and are not receiving regular school-based services. Programs will integrate developmental and sensory-based activities with social strategies in a friend-making experience. Specific programs will be designed for both older and younger participants.

The staff at the Life Skills clinic is excited to have the energy of children in the clinic. Having a pediatric practice on campus will also be a great opportunity for occupational therapy students to have some extra first-hand experience with pediatric occupational therapy. Once students see how much fun it is to play at work, there will be no turning back!

Please share information about the Life Skills Clinic pediatric practice with anyone who may be interested. The Life Skills Clinic staff would be happy to answer any questions and looks forward to helping meet the therapy needs of children in the Salt Lake City community.

---

**STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**

**HURDLING THROUGH**

By STEPHANIE JOLLEY, OTS

I'm down in the starting blocks about to run 400 meters while jumping over ten hurdles next to an Olympian when suddenly I realize: I have a case mapping due on Monday. Needless to say, yes, it is difficult to find balance between being a student and an athlete.

My competition season is from January to May, and every time I get my travel schedule I think, “How?  How on Earth am I going to survive?” Full time school, full time athlete, part time job, social life? Yeah right. But somehow it all happens and somehow I’ve survived for the last four years.

But everybody is busy right? Nobody goes through graduate school and doesn’t have at least ten breakdowns where they question every decision they’ve ever made in life. We get through it because it’s all worth it. I balance being a graduate student and a Division I athlete by remembering that when I graduate I will be an occupational therapist. I will help people be able to participate in their “occu-passions” that are as meaningful as running is to me.

I’m so lucky to be an occupational therapy student and a student-athlete. I wouldn’t trade the 6:00AM weight lifting and post-race vomit for all the life lessons I have learned. It has made me a more dedicated student, and it will make me a hard-working occupational therapist. Go Utes!!

**Stephanie Jolley was named PAC-12 Athlete of the Week in March 2013.**

http://utahutes.cstv.com/sports/c-track/spec-rel/032013aac.html

Utah head coach Kyle Kepler said, “Stephanie ran a terrific race and this honor is well deserved,” “Her time was very good for an opening race of the season. Stephanie has been training very well and will look to improve in the coming weeks.”

Last weekend at the Aztec Invitational, Jolley led the Utes in the 400m hurdles. Coming off an injury plagued indoor season, Jolley caught the spotlight as she won the event title. Jolley clocked a time of 1:00.0 to capture the top-spot and the Ute's only event title of the meet.
OT ranked 11 in U.S. News 100 Best Jobs of 2013 that offer a mosaic of employment opportunity, good salary, manageable work-life balance, and job security.

source: U.S. News

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
MICHELLE TAGGART, OTS
OT GO TO

Hi! My name is Michelle; I am a “soon-to-be” graduate from the University of Utah Division of Occupational Therapy and the creator of OT Go To. So what is OT Go To, and how did I come up with the idea?

OT Go To is a website that I created for occupational therapists, occupational therapy students, and even clients who are looking to get their OT questions answered. Information is posted in the form of podcasts (audio radio), “how to” videos, and blog entries. Podcasts feature various occupational therapy topics and interviews with occupational therapists from all around the world.

The idea for OT Go To actually came to me on one of my fieldwork placements. At this particular placement, we were sending home adaptive equipment and home exercise programs on almost a daily basis. One particular client I was working with was having a hard time following the written instructions we had sent home with her. I decided to pour over the Internet and see if I could find any videos or other forms of media that she could refer to for more information. That night over dinner, I talked to my family about my frustrations about not being able to find what I was looking for online. I joked that it would probably just be easier to create a website than actually find what I was looking for online.

Well, my dream became a reality when I posted my first blog entry and podcast in September 2012. I wanted to create a website that would focus on multimedia resources for occupational therapy such as instructional videos and downloadable audio in the form of podcasts. I also wanted to give a perspective of occupational therapy from that of a student.

The OT Go To podcast, which can be found in iTunes, covers a variety of topics such as tips for surviving grad school, sensory integration, early intervention, OTs in mental health, the history of OT, and the difference between occupational therapy and physical therapy. For one of my first podcasts, I asked random people around Salt Lake City if they could define OT. While the field has come a long way, it is pretty apparent that many people still have no idea what occupational therapists do! This general lack of knowledge surrounding OT further emphasized the need for opportunities to promote occupational therapy.

The biggest thing that developing OT Go To has helped me realize is how tight-knit and supportive the OT community is and how important it is to follow your dreams. Following my dream has allowed me to meet people in the occupational therapy community that I only could have dreamed of. I have to say that, without a doubt, occupational therapists are the coolest people around! One person explained it to me, “When OTs meet it feels like they have been friends for a lifetime.” I couldn’t agree more! The support and outreach I have received from OTs from all over the world proves this theory right. I hope that OT Go To will continue to grow and be a place of support for both OTs and students alike.

If you would like to be a guest on the OT Go To podcast or if you are interested in learning more please visit www.otgoto.com for more information or contact Michelle Taggart at michelle@otgoto.com.
The role of an occupational therapist is primarily to assist people of all ages with all kinds of disabilities to achieve their occupational goals. But are OT’s prepared to assist level I and level II students to achieve their educational goals if those students have a disability? What is a reasonable accommodation? Who determines what is reasonable? Who are the key people in the FW experience who can assist the student to have the same opportunities as their peers? This article is meant to introduce some ideas and stimulate thinking.

The first step in accommodation of a disability is for the student to disclose. Prior to disclosure it is not appropriate for a professor or a FW educator to ask a student directly if they have a disability. Once a student has disclosed a disability and requested an accommodation, it is necessary for several agencies to get involved: the disability services department on the university campus, the academic fieldwork coordinator of the university, and the HR department of the facility in some cases. The disability services center will work with the student to determine how their disability will impact their learning. Generally this is done in collaboration with the academic fieldwork coordinator, particularly if the student is looking for accommodations on fieldwork. It is ideal if the student discloses a disability prior to placement on the fieldwork, as arrangements may be made ahead of time, and everyone involved will be on board with expectations. However there are some times when a student will disclose a disability while on fieldwork. If disclosure happens during a student’s fieldwork, the same procedure is followed to determine a reasonable accommodation. However, the student is evaluated on their fieldwork performance before the accommodation on the basis of that performance without a disability.

It is important to remember that some disabilities are not apparent such as medical conditions, learning disabilities, mental health issues. The goal of reasonable accommodation is to ensure that students with any type of disability have the same access to education as their peers, so that with the accommodation they are on the same “level” as any other OT student and can then proceed to apply and integrate their academic knowledge in a clinical setting. It is also important to note that disabilities must be diagnosed by a doctor and that temporary disabilities do not warrant accommodations. For further information on reasonable accommodations check out the University of Utah’s disability service website: http://disability.utah.edu

Congratulations Class of 2013!
On April 16, 2013, the University Neighborhood Partners – Hartland Partnership celebrated the opening of their new building. Since the fall of 2004, when the center first opened in a three-bedroom apartment in the Hartland Apartments, University of Utah occupational therapy students have been completing Level I Fieldwork experiences providing life skills training with residents of the community. In 2008 Level II students were added to the program. Many university and community groups provide classes and services at UNP-Hartland. It didn’t take long for programming to outgrow the available space. Center partnerships now have access to a 10,000 square foot, beautifully remodeled space located at 1578 West 1700 South.

The Hartland Partnership Center is a place for faculty, students, community organizations, and residents to work together. Programming includes English classes, citizenship classes, health care education, youth programming, life skills training, and much more. Residents benefit from program offerings and students and faculty gain enriching experiences while they work with and learn about diverse cultures and global issues that impact the lives of those they meet there.

The majority of residents occupational therapy students work with came to the United States with refugee status. Occupational therapy students teach classes on topics including driving, computer use, college preparation, and pre-employment. They also work with individuals and families on a wide range of other skills to assist these new Americans become more integrated into and more comfortable in their new environment. OT students have worked with residents on use of public transportation, bill paying, and navigating health care systems. In addition to life skills classes and individual sessions, students participate in the PAR FORE life skills and golf program for youth and the Karen weaving group which supports the maintenance of Karen cultural traditions.

Occupational therapy students from across the country under the supervision of Yda Smith, PhD, OTR/L, are now participating in this unique fieldwork program along with University of Utah students. The Division of Occupational Therapy Immigration and Resettlement Community-Based Fieldwork Program has welcomed Level II students from Colorado State University, Ithaca College, Stony Brook University, Samuel Merritt University, and many others. Three out-of-state students will be joining us this summer from the University of New Mexico and Adventist University in Florida. Students involved in the program work not only with University Neighborhood Partners-Hartland Partnership, but also with the Hser Ner Moo Center, the International Rescue Committee, and Utah Health and Human Rights Project. Working with these organizations provides a wide range of experiences for students. They are able to assist with training in basic life skills for those who just arrived from refugee camps, as well as work with people who have been here for longer periods of time. They most often work with adults but also provide occupational therapy services to children. They also have opportunities to provide mental health therapy for people with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, and depression.