

8th Annual School-Based OT Symposium – VIRTUAL

Executive Function, Interoception, and Neurodiversity-Affirming Care:

A Blueprint for School-Based OT

Evidence | Meaningful Occupation | Links to Curriculum | Tools to Support Practice

VIRTUAL

Participate from anywhere you have a strong internet connection.

RECORDING WILL BE AVAILABLE BY SEPT. 27, 2026 FOR REGISTRANTS.

DATE AND TIME
September 12, 2026
 8:00AM to 4:00PM
 Pacific Standard Time

Register Online
<https://otac.site-ym.com/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=2057617&group=>

Register by Fax
 916/294-0415

QUESTIONS?
 Contact OTAC staff:
 Email staff@otaonline.org
 Call toll-free (888) 686-3225

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Cancellation/Refund Policy. \$45 is retained to cover processing costs.
Full policy is on page 5.
Disclaimer: Read the disclaimer on the last page

Saturday, September 12, 2026 – 8:00am to 4:00pm (earn 6.5 PDUs)

8:00am – 8:05am – Introduction
 8:05am – 10:15am – KEYNOTE: Move It, Build It, Own It: An Occupation-Based Approach to Motor Learning, Systems Designs, and Metacognition
 10:15am – 10:30am – Break
 10:30am – 11:15am – Regulation Starts Within: Interoception Strategies for School-Based Practice
 11:15am – 12:00pm – Making It Work: Bringing Interoception into Everyday Practice
 12:00pm – 1:00pm – Lunch Break
 1:00pm – 3:00pm – Neurodiversity Affirming Approach in OT School-Based Practice
 3:00pm – 3:15pm – Break
 3:15pm – 3:55pm – First-Person Narratives
 3:55pm – 4:00pm – Wrap-Up

REGISTRATION FORM *One form per person. Please type or print clearly. Check appropriate boxes.*

	OT/OTA MEMBERS	OT/OTA NONMEMBERS	STUDENT MEMBERS	STUDENT NONMEMBERS
EARLY BIRD	☐ \$99	☐ \$139	☐ \$69	☐ \$99
REGISTER BY AUGUST 7				
REGULAR	☐ \$129	☐ \$169	☐ \$99	☐ \$129
REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 11				

EDUCATION SPECIAL 1: ARE YOU A NONMEMBER WHO WANTS TO JOIN OTAC AND ATTEND THE SYMPOSIUM?

THIS EDUCATION SPECIAL DISCOUNT INCLUDES THE SYMPOSIUM AND MEMBERSHIP.

- ☐ OT: SYMPOSIUM AND MEMBERSHIP - \$259
- ☐ OTA: SYMPOSIUM AND MEMBERSHIP - \$219
- ☐ STUDENT: SYMPOSIUM AND MEMBERSHIP - \$109

EDUCATION SPECIAL 2: 3 OR MORE (SAME PHYSICAL WORKPLACE) EARN A 10% DISCOUNT. **CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH SPECIAL 1 DISCOUNT PACKAGE.**

EMAIL SHANNON@OTAONLINE.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION

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PAYMENT OPTIONS: CHECK ONE

☐ Check (make payable to OTAC) ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ AMEX

Credit Card Number _____

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SUBMIT PAYMENT: ☐ Fax to: 916/294-0415, or

☐ Mail: OTAC, 3620 American River Dr., Ste. 230, Sacramento, CA 95864, or

REGISTER ONLINE - <https://otac.site-ym.com/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=2057617&group=>

Schedule, Topic Descriptions, and About Our Presenters

Adapting, Supporting, Thriving: Elevating Outcomes and Promoting Excellence in School-Based Practice

Participants will:

- Broaden their understanding of motor learning, systems design, and metacognition, and how these can support all students.
- Gain an understanding of interoception and its application to practice.
- Learn to apply the neurodiversity-affirming approach for those with sensory challenges.

SCHEDULE

8:00am – 8:05am

Introduction/Overview

Beth Dillin, MOT, OTR/L

This introduction will set the stage for the day.

8:05am – 10:15am

KEYNOTE: Move It, Build It, Own It: An Occupation-Based Approach to Motor Learning, Systems, and Metacognition

Nicole Quint, PhD, DrOT, OTR/L, FAOTA

School-based occupational therapy practitioners are skilled at addressing motor, sensory, and regulatory needs, but are we doing it within occupation, or just alongside it? This session will introduce a three-pillar framework integrating motor learning, systems design, and metacognition through an occupation-based lens. Using goal attainment scaling and self-monitoring strategies, participants will discover how anchoring intervention at the point of performance transforms skill-building into student ownership — and why occupation-based practice is the missing link we've been looking for to bridge this gap.

10:15am – 10:30am – BREAK

10:30am – 11:15am

Regulation Starts Within: Interoception Strategies for School-Based Practice

Kelly Mahler, OTD, OTR/L

This session will explore the role of interoception in student self-regulation and participation within a school-based setting. Attendees will learn practical, activity-based strategies to support students' awareness of internal body signals and translate this awareness into meaningful engagement in daily school routines.

11:15pm – 12:00pm

Making It Work: Bringing Interoception into Everyday Practice

Erin Dolin, EdD, OTR/L

You've heard the "why" — now let's talk about the "how." This session will focus on integrating interoception concepts and the use in everyday school-based practice. Whether you are in an evaluation, collaborating with your team, or supporting students in the classroom, we will explore simple, realistic ways to connect these ideas to what you are already doing.

12:00pm – 1:00pm – LUNCH BREAK

1:00pm – 3:00pm

Neurodiversity Affirming Approach in OT School-based Practice

Caitlin Loyd, MS, OTR/L; Jo-Ann Vargas, OTD, OTR/L; Sara Wallace, OTD, OTR/L

Neurodiversity has been around for decades, you might know it with different names, but the support standards are evolving. Understanding neurodiversity conceptually lays a strong foundation for student access to their curriculum and overall well-being. In this training session you will learn the history, terminology, paradigm shift, and practical strategies to implement in your practice. Examples will be provided to elucidate the concepts, nuanced approaches, and strengthen documentation practices.

3:00pm – 3:15pm - BREAK

3:15pm – 3:55pm

First-Person Narratives

Facilitator Amanda Cassetta, OTR/L, ATAC; Panelists Tara Douglas; Tracy Schroeder, MSW, LCSW
Come hear and learn first-person narratives from two neurodivergent professionals.

3:55pm – 4:00pm

Wrap-Up

About Our Presenters



Amanda Cassetta, OTR/L, ATAC, has been an occupational therapy practitioner for 25 years (10 years working in an outpatient neuro and 15 years within school-based therapy). Throughout the last 15 years, she has worked in a variety of

educational settings. Cassetta has several certifications, including (neurodevelopment treatment, sensory integration, and Assistive Technology Assessor certification). She has done self-training within S'cool Moves, Brain Gym®, and Bal-A-Vis-X. All of these have contributed to her approach to movement and learning and a belief that all children want to learn when they are in a 'ready to learn state.'



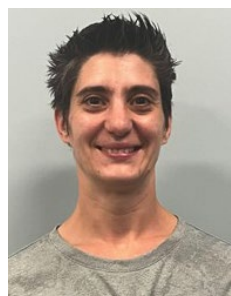
Beth Dillin, MOT, OTR/L, received a master's in occupational therapy from Samuel Merritt University. She has worked in the pediatric setting with children, educators, and their families in private practice, hospitals, and primarily in public school

settings. She emphasizes holistic treatment by addressing the "whole child." Dillin has postgraduate occupational therapy training in sensory integrative principles, executive functioning concepts, visual perceptual complexities, and co-regulation.



Erin Dolin, EdD, OTR/L, is an occupational therapy practitioner with over 25 years of experience across school-based, hospital, and clinical settings. She holds advanced training in sensory integration, the Perceptual Enrichment Program (PEP), Therapeutic Listening, and

Handwriting Without Tears. Her work focuses on executive function, sensory processing, and interoception as key drivers of regulation and participation in neurodiverse students. Dolin serves as program director for the OTA program at Clovis Community College and is a national presenter for Learning Without Tears, known for translating complex concepts into practical strategies clinicians can use immediately. She previously served as a member of the OTAC Board of Directors.



Tara Douglas earned an associate's degree from Western Technical College in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and brings 15 years of diverse experience to the field of occupational therapy. Her career spans 12 years in school-

based settings; before then, she worked in rehabilitation, skilled nursing, and hospital environments. Having practiced across the Midwest and Southwest — including Nevada, Missouri, New Mexico, and Kansas — she offers a unique, multi-regional perspective on student success. Her professional approach is deeply informed by her own lived experience navigating physical barriers. This personal history provides her with an intuitive understanding of accessibility and inclusion, allowing her to connect with students through a lens of shared perseverance and practical problem-solving.



Caitlin Loyd, MS, OTR/L, is a licensed occupational therapy practitioner, independent educational evaluator, and co-founder of The Learning Owl, a practice dedicated to supporting neurodivergent children and

families through neuro-affirming care. As a late-diagnosed autistic adult, Loyd brings both clinical expertise and lived experience to her work, grounding her approach in authenticity, connection, and respect for each individual's way of engaging with the world. Her work focuses on emotional regulation, sensory processing, executive functioning, and motor coordination, with an emphasis on supporting meaningful participation across settings. Loyd also facilitates a community-based playgroup for neurodivergent families, creating a space where children can engage freely, build connections, and be supported without pressure to mask or conform.

Kelly Mahler, OTD, OTR/L, is an award-winning



occupational therapy practitioner, author, and interoception groupie known for her boundless curiosity and empathetic approach. Holding a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy, she has served school-aged children and adults for over 22 years. Mahler is author of 12

resources including The Interoception Curriculum, now used in over 30 countries worldwide. She enjoys speaking internationally on interoception, neuro-affirming practices, and playful strategies for inner exploration using a lens of curiosity, validation, and empathy.



Nicole Quint, PhD, DrOT, OTR/L, FAOTA, is a professor and program director at Nova Southeastern University's Department of Occupational Therapy, with more than 20 years of pediatric clinical experience and 15 years in academia. She is a prolific

presenter having presented at more than 40 national and international conferences, specializing in occupation- and evidence-based practice, focusing on utilizing sensory processing, motor learning, and executive function. She is co-creator of the School Based Occupational Therapy Transition (SBOTT) model, co-developer of the Scholarship of Practice in Occupational Therapy (SPOT-M) model, and founder of Quint-Essential Leadership, a coaching and workforce development company built for occupational therapy practitioners who are done waiting for a seat and ready to build their own table.



Tracy Schroeder, MSW, LCSW, is the program manager for Behavioral Health at East Valley SELPA, where she has overseen mental health and residential programs for member districts since 2010. A licensed social worker since 2005, she earned a master's in social work from California State

University, San Bernardino, and holds a LCSW, PPS in counseling, a Child Development Program Director Permit, and an Administrative Services Credential. She is currently pursuing a BCBA and has extensive experience working in multicultural settings as a therapist, case manager, and supervisor serving children, adults, and families. Schroeder's professional path is deeply informed by her personal journey. Undiagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD in childhood, she faced academic challenges early on, including speech and learning difficulties. Through resilience and self-discovery — sparked by her daughter's diagnosis — she transformed obstacles into strengths, developing adaptive strategies that continue to shape her compassionate, informed leadership.



Jo-Ann Vargas, OTD, OTR/L, is an occupational therapy practitioner with over 30 years of clinical experience. She has worked in various settings ranging from in-patient rehabilitation to outpatient clinics serving all age ranges. Vargas graduated from Loma Linda University with a

Bachelor of Science in occupational therapy and obtained a master's degree in education with emphasis on best practices and a post professional doctorate in occupational therapy. She has over 15 years of experience serving in the school system as lead occupational therapy practitioner. She has presented at local and state conferences on various topics related to self-regulation, handwriting, sensory processing, school-based OT practice, neurodiversity, autism, among others.



Sara Wallace, OTD, OTR/L, is a pediatric occupational therapy practitioner and co-founder of ThriveWell Occupational Therapy, Inc. She earned a graduate degree from Loma Linda University in 2021, developing a strong interest in how neuro-

divergence and mental health impact functional outcomes. Wallace has experience in school-based, outpatient, and early intervention settings and currently supports neurodivergent children and their families in private practice. Her areas of specialty include neurodiversity-affirming care, sensory processing, interoception, feeding, self-regulation, and school participation.

Symposium Committee

Amanda Cassetta, OTR/L, ATAC

Beth Dillin, MOT, OTR/L

Erin Dolin, EdD, OTR/L

Danny Pavlovich, OTD, OTR/L

Lisa A. Test, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Jo-Ann Vargas, MA, OTR/L

Sara Wallace, OTD, OTR/L

About This Virtual Symposium

This Symposium Will Be Recorded

Participate virtually on September 12, 2026, and then re-watch at your convenience for the life of the recording on OTAC's platform. Recordings are generally available 14 days following the conclusion of the event.

System Requirements. OTAC webinars are broadcast through Zoom. A broadband internet connection is required. For minimum system requirements, visit the following page:

Zoom - <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-Requirements-for-PC-Mac-and-Linux>

Professional Development Units (PDUs) Tracking

PDUs will be entered into your OTAC account.

To earn PDUs, registrants must complete the post event survey that is emailed out within one week following the event.

Symposium Disclaimer

This Symposium is sponsored by OTAC for the purpose of professional development. The material presented is not intended to represent the only or the best methods appropriate for the occupational therapy and/or medical condition or professional development issues being discussed but rather is intended to present the opinions of the presenters, which may be helpful to other health care professionals at arriving at their own conclusions and consequent application. Attendees participating in this professional development education program do so with the full knowledge that they waive any claim they may have against OTAC and its representatives for reliance on any information presented during this educational event.

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Cancellation/Refund Policy

\$45 retained to cover cancellation/refund processing costs. Written notice must be received in OTAC office by **September 4, 2026** to be eligible for refunds. No refunds after this date. *Disclaimer: OTAC reserves the right to make changes to the program. No refunds will be made based on these changes.*

Why OTAC Symposia? To support OTAC Core Value 7 – Professional Development: To provide quality education and resources to advance the knowledge, skills, and continued competence of occupational therapy practitioners.

About OTAC. OTAC is a nonprofit, 501c6. This means that end-of-year net revenue is retained for operations and for the benefit of the members and is not distributed to private owners. It is governed by an elected, noncompensated Board of Directors and hires a professional association management team.

OTAC Mission Statement. OTAC is the collective voice that serves, promotes, and supports the profession of occupational therapy.

FIND OTHER SPECIAL TOPIC FORUMS, EDUCATION PASSPORT EVENTS, and SYMPOSIA [HERE](#) THROUGH OUR ONLINE EVENTS CALENDAR

We are also accepting Call for Presentations/Posters for the OTAC Annual Conference & Innovation Expo.

Due May 15, 2026

[Click here](#)

Be A Conference PRESENTER
Submit a proposal:
Session or poster presentation
Deadline **EXTENDED** to:
MAY 15, 2026

NOV. 5-8, 2026.

OTAC 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO
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