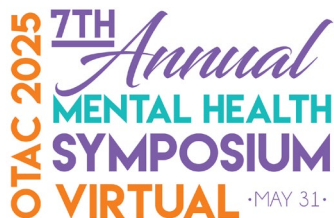


7th Annual OT in Mental Health Symposium

VIRTUAL



EVENT DATE AND TIME

Saturday, May 31, 2025

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Early Bird Discount Ends

Monday, May 5, 2025

Advance Registration Closes

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Cancellations Due By

Monday, May 19, 2025

Register [HERE](#) Online

Register by Secure Fax

916/294-0415

To Mail in Form &

Payment:

OTAC,

3620 American River Drive,

Suite 230,

Sacramento, CA 95864

QUESTIONS?

Contact OTAC staff:

Email staff@otaonline.org

Call toll-free (888) 686-3225

Cancellation/Refund.

\$35 is retained to cover cancellation/refund processing costs. Written notice must be received in the OTAC office by May 19, 2025, to be eligible for refunds. No refunds after this date. OTAC reserves the right to make changes to the program. No refunds will be made based on these changes.



Saturday, May 31, 2025 – 9:00am to 3:00pm (5.5 PDUs)

9:00am - 9:15am	Welcome and Introduction
9:15am - 10:15am	Classroom Spotlight: Evidence-Based Interventions in Mental Health Practice
10:15am - 11:15am	Addressing Functional Cognition in Mental Health: Practical Strategies for Occupational Therapy Practitioners
11:15am - 11:30am	Break
11:30am - 12:30pm	OTD Capstone Experience: Translating Evidence into Practice
12:30pm - 2:00pm	Panel: OTD Capstone Coordinators
2:00pm - 3:00pm	Roundtable Discussion: Now What?

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

	OT/OTA MEMBERS	OT/OTA NONMEMBERS	STUDENT MEMBERS	STUDENT NONMEMBERS
Early Bird	☐ \$79	☐ \$109	☐ \$59	☐ \$89
<i>Early Bird Ends May 5</i>				
Regular	☐ \$99	☐ \$129	☐ \$79	☐ \$109

SYMPOSIUM/MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT OFFERINGS

Are you a nonmember who wants to join OTAC?

And a nonmember that wants to attend the Symposium?

You can join OTAC and attend the Symposium at a discount.

- ☐ OT: Symposium and Membership - \$245
- ☐ OTA: Symposium and Membership - \$205
- ☐ STUDENT: Symposium and Membership - \$95

WORKPLACE DISCOUNT

3 or more from the same workplace address can earn a 10% discount.

Does not apply to the Symposium/Membership Discount

EMAIL Shannon@otaonline.org to take advantage of these discounts.

TOTAL DUE: \$ _____ Please review the cancellation/refund policy.

Name _____

Employer or School _____

Home Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Email _____

Mobile _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS: CHECK ONE

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

Credit Card Number _____

Exp Date _____ **VCode** _____

Cardholder Name _____

Cardholder Signature _____

Date _____

Occupational Therapy Association of California

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7th Annual OT in Mental Health Symposium (5.5 PDU's)

Full Description, About Our Presenters, and About the Program

9:00am-9:15am

Welcome and Introduction

Erin McIntyre, OTD, OTR/L;

Ingrid Leu, OTD, OTR/L;

Jessica De Brun, OTD, OTR/L

9:15am-10:15am

Classroom Spotlight: Evidence-Based Interventions in Mental Health Practice

Celso Delgado, Jr., OTD, OTR/L, BCMH;

Tessa Milman, OTD, OTR/L

This presentation will review the evidence-based interventions taught in the mental health curriculum at USC Chan Division of Occupational Therapy and provide suggestions for incorporating these interventions into clinical practice. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on how these interventions align with their curriculum or context.

10:15am-11:15am

Addressing Functional Cognition in Mental Health: Practical Strategies for Occupational Therapists

Lauren Espinoza, OTD, OTR/L;

Jessica Lopez, MA, OTR/L, CNS

Functional cognition is a critical component of occupational therapy in mental health settings. Cognitive challenges arising from trauma, acquired brain injury (A/TBI), serious mental illness (SMI), substance use, stress, or sleep deprivation can significantly impact a person's ability to perform daily activities and achieve independence. In this session, occupational therapy practitioners (OTP) will gain insight into how cognitive abilities such as memory, attention, problem-solving, and executive functioning influence a client's independence and quality of life. We will explore practical, evidence-based interventions that can be included to improve client outcomes. This includes but is not limited to the development of routines and habits, task modification, environmental

modification, feedback, and the use of visual and auditory cues. These strategies help clients overcome barriers such as memory difficulties, disorganization, and poor task follow-through, while fostering problem-solving and promoting overall engagement. This session will also highlight evidence-based assessments for evaluating functional cognition, including tools like the ACLS-5. By the end of this session, OTPs will have a deeper understanding of how to assess and address functional cognition, empowering them to provide personalized, effective interventions that enhance client outcomes.

11:15am-11:30am

Break

11:30am-12:30pm

OTD Capstone Experience: Translating Evidence into Practice

Meira Becirovic, OTD, OTR/L (TX)

This presentation will highlight the impact of integrated capstone students into mental health settings through the lens of *EmpowerHER*, a doctoral capstone project focused on supporting women at the intersection of PIV and disability in shelter environments. Projects like *EmpowerHER* can inspire OT/OTA students to pursue mental health practice while addressing gaps in underserved communities. Attendees will learn how student-led initiatives can deliver meaningful, evidence-based interventions, expand access to OT services, and advocate for the profession's vital role in mental health care.

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12:30pm-2:00pm

Panel: OTD Capstone Coordinators

Amy Lyons-Brown, MS, OTD, OTR/L;

Elise Leizerovich, OTD, OTR/L;

Deanna M. Mannarelli, OTD, OTR/L

Join us for a panel of OTD capstone coordinators as they share their experiences guiding mental health doctoral students. This is a great opportunity for practitioners and educators to consider capstone opportunities and how they may support unmet needs at their sites. It is also an opportunity for students interested in pursuing mental health to explore and understand the capstone experience.

2:00pm-3:00pm

Roundtable Discussion: Now What?

Erin McIntyre, OTD, OTR/L;

Ingrid Leu, OTD, OTR/L;

Jessica De Brun, OTD, OTR/L

Experience an interactive roundtable discussion with fellow practitioners on practical applications of evidence-based interventions in various mental health settings. This is a great networking opportunity!

Symposium Committee

Jessica De Brun, OTD, OTR/L

Ingrid Leu, OTD, OTR/L

Erin McIntyre, OTD, OTR/L

Kayla Wei, OTD, OTR/L, CLT, DipACLM

About Our Presenters



Meira Becirovic, OTD, OTR/L (TX), is a newly licensed occupational therapy practitioner who earned an undergraduate degree in health sciences with a minor in psychology from Texas State

University and went on to

complete a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences. She has a strong passion for mental health, trauma-informed care, and advocacy for underserved populations. During her doctoral capstone, Becirovic collaborated with a domestic violence shelter, advocating for the integration of occupational therapy services and implementing therapeutic activities for the residents. In conjunction with her experience, she developed the *EmpowerHER* guidebook – an evidence-based resource designed to guide occupational therapy practitioners in working in shelter settings. The guidebook addresses key topics such as the intersectionality of intimate partner violence (IPV) and disability, ADA compliance, assessments and interventions for women and children, advocacy and social justice, and self-care for occupational therapy practitioners. Becirovic is currently working at an outpatient pediatric clinic, where she is eager to continue building on her passion for working with children while maintaining her commitment to advocacy for women and children who experienced IPV.

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Jessica De Brun, OTD, OTR/L, is an assistant professor of occupational therapy at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, San Marcos, CA. De Brun completed her BS, MOT, and post-professional OTD at Loma Linda University. She has a wide variety of experience

as a mental health occupational therapy practitioner working in emerging practice, community-based pediatric, and adult mental health services. De Brun's clinical practice experience includes pediatric trauma intervention centers, domestic violence shelters, substance use and recovery services, local school districts, and regional centers. Her research and scholarly interests have focused on emerging practice, program development, trauma-informed education, secondary trauma and burnout, early childhood trauma, the maternal-child co-occupational experience, and occupational justice. De Brun has served as a fieldwork educator in various emerging practice and community-based settings including mental health programming for children, survivors of domestic violence, and for individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. De Brun serves as chair of the Occupational Therapy Association of California's (OTAC) Nominations Committee, where she advocates for OT leadership in California and for the occupational therapy profession.



Celso Delgado, Jr., OTD, OTR/L, BCMH, is an associate professor of clinical occupational therapy in the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. His practice expertise includes

community-based mental health and psychiatric rehabilitation, in particular Full-Service Partnership

(FSP) services that provide care to persons labeled with psychiatric disabilities in California. FSP is designed to support populations who experience significant emotional, psycho-logical, or behavioral needs and have been historically underserved/unserved by systems and public services. Delgado has worked as an occupational therapy practitioner in the FSP programs at Occupational Therapy Training Program (Torrance, CA) and at USC's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at Children's Hospital Los Angeles serving children, transitional age youth and their families. He has research experience as an intervener providing Lifestyle Redesign® intervention in Spanish and English to people with spinal cord injuries at-risk of developing pressure ulcers through USC's Pressure Ulcer Prevention Study, a research program that was funded by the National Institute of Health. Delgado is currently an instructor of the mental health practice immersion course for students in the division's entry-level professional program. He also teaches classes that focus on occupation-centered programs for the community and healthcare communication with Spanish-speaking clients. In addition, he provides fieldwork education and doctoral level mentorship to graduate students from the division placed at community-based mental health settings and psychiatric hospitals in Los Angeles County for their level II fieldwork or residencies. Delgado is Board Certified in Mental Health by the American Occupational Therapy Association. He was elected and served in the Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC) Board of Directors from 2014-17. He was a 2017 recipient of OTAC's Vision Award. He is a member of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity. Since 2011, he has served as a faculty advisor for Troy Camp at USC.

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Lauren Espinoza OTD, OTR/L, has been working as an occupational therapy (OT) practitioner in homeless services for over five years. She completed a residency with USC Keck Street Medicine program, with a research focus on functional cognition,

specifically looking at which assessment tools could best be adapted for street-based use. She was also the first OT employed with Step Up On Second, a community-based mental health organization serving those experiencing or with a history of homelessness. She currently works for Los Angeles County, Department of Health Services Housing for Health as OT supervisor over the interim housing programs.



Elise Leizerovich, OTD, OTR/L, is an assistant professor and the capstone coordinator at West Coast University in Los Angeles. She received a Masters in Occupational Therapy from Thomas Jefferson University in 2014 and a Post-Professional Clinical Doctorate in Occupational

Therapy from University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences in 2020. Leizerovich's clinical background is primarily in inpatient/outpatient/-community-based mental health, as well as school-based practice.



Ingrid Leu, OTD, OTR/L, is currently the director of occupational therapy at Exodus Recovery, which provides psychiatric treatment services in hospital-based inpatient and outpatient programs in Los Angeles County. She supervises level I and level

II students from different universities to increase exposure and pique interest in mental health. Leu also co-founded the Greater Los Angeles Mental Health Practice Network, whose goal is to provide education and support mental health occupational therapy practitioners while advocating for occupational therapy's distinct role in mental health practice. Leu is also currently teaching at Stanbridge University. She has also served as a regional director on the OTAC Board of Directors and in 2023 was co-recipient of the OT/OTA Partnership Award.



Jessica Lopez, MA, OTR/L, CNS, is a dedicated occupational therapy practitioner with experience working with vulnerable populations, including individuals who have experienced homelessness, mental illness, and substance use disorders. Currently, she works as an occupational

therapy practitioner at Los Angeles County, Department of Health Services Housing for Health, Enriched Residential Care Program, where she plays a pivotal role in the transition process to permanent supportive housing. Lopez integrates functional cognition into her everyday practice, using it to assess and address clients' cognitive abilities and challenges in their daily activities.

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Amy Lyons-Brown, OTD, OTR/L, is an assistant professor at the University of St. Augustine on the San Marcos Campus where she teaches in the Residential program for occupational therapy. She has been an occupational therapy practitioner for 25 years.

She graduated with a BA in biology in 1998 from Augustana College in Illinois and graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with an MS in occupational therapy in 1999. She graduated from A.T. Still University with her OTD in 2015 with an emphasis on prevention and population health. Lyons-Brown's clinical experience includes working across the continuum of care and across the lifespan focusing on occupational performance in neurological populations such as stroke, traumatic and acquired brain injury, Parkinson's disease, and dementia. In addition, she has experience in clinical management as a director of rehab in skilled nursing. She has served in academia as a contributing faculty and as an assistant professor since 2011 at the master's and doctoral levels. Her research and scholarship interests include educational methodology for development of critical thinking skills, healthcare outcome measurement tools, and prevention of intimate partner violence.



Erin McIntyre, OTD, OTR/L, is an assistant professor of occupational therapy at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, San Marcos campus. McIntyre's career has focused on working with adults labeled with

serious mental illness in a range of service settings, both inpatient and community based, nationally and in the United Kingdom, where she spent six years working in London. McIntyre's primary practice interest is working with adults experiencing psychosis in community-based mental health settings. Her scholarly work has focused on occupational therapy's role in trauma-informed education, secondary trauma, the experience of hoarding disorder, psychosis as a human experience, and the inclusion of experts by experience in academic settings. She has served as a fieldwork educator in various mental health emerging practice settings, including a variety of services for individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as substance use and recovery settings. McIntyre co-facilitates the AOTA Psychosis Community of Practice and serves as the OTAC representative for the California Coalition for Behavioral Health.



Deanna M. Mannarelli, OTD, OTR/L, earned a master's in occupational therapy from Samuel Merritt College and began her career as an acute inpatient practitioner at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. It was there that she developed a strong interest in stroke recovery and became Neuro-IFRAH certified before

transitioning to the role of inpatient rehabilitation therapist. She continued her work at Huntington Hospital and eventually found her way to USC – Keck. Throughout her career, Mannarelli consistently hosted fieldwork students, discovering a deep passion for supporting the profession by mentoring future practitioners. This dedication led her to join the fieldwork team as a fieldwork coordinator, and she later advanced to the role of director of fieldwork and capstone coordinator for the inaugural Entry-Level Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program.

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Tessa Milman, OTD, OTR/L, teaches mental health, clinical reasoning, community programming and qualitative research, utilizing team-based learning and other learner-centered pedagogies. Her

courses incorporate diverse perspectives and critical theories, to support occupational therapy students to become culturally humble practitioners who care deeply about lived experiences and embody person-centered and trauma-informed approaches. She has practiced and supervised students in pediatric and adult mental health settings. When working with children, Milman worked specifically with families who had experienced trauma and were involved in the foster care system. Her personal journey building her family through adoption from the foster care system has provided her with experiential knowledge about the impact of trauma on relationships and participation. She is passionate about integrating lived experience with academic knowledge within teaching and practice, and embedding justice, equity, diversity and inclusion into occupational therapy practice and curriculum. Milman is on the board of directors of the division's Diversity, Access, and Equity Committee, where she serves as chair of the curriculum workgroup. She holds a Doctorate of Occupational Therapy and Master of Arts in occupational therapy, both from USC. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Smith College.

About This Virtual Symposium

This Symposium Will Be Recorded

Participate virtually on May 19, 2024, and then re-watch at your convenience for the life of the recording on OTAC's platform. Recordings are generally available 7 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)

Earn up to 5.5 PDUs.

To earn PDUs for virtual events, 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.

[Click here for OTAC's complete disclaimer/terms. You must agree to these disclaimers/terms. Please don't register if you do not.](#)

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 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.



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



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UPCOMING VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON SYMPOSIA

OTAC 2025 **4TH** Annual
ACUTE CARE
SYMPOSIUM
VIRTUAL •APRIL 26•

OTAC 2025 **1ST** Annual
OLDER ADULTS
SYMPOSIUM
IN-PERSON •MAY 10•

OTAC 2025 **4TH** Annual
ACADEMIC
SYMPOSIUM
VIRTUAL •JUNE 20•

OTAC 2025 **7TH** Annual
SCHOOL-BASED
SYMPOSIUM
VIRTUAL •SEPTEMBER 13•