

# SOTA Newsletter

Stony Brook OT

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## Breakthrough Medication Approved to Replace Surgical Intervention

by Karen B. DeChello, MS, OTR/L, CEA

Dupuytren's disease, or Dupuytren's contracture, is a hand condition which occurs when an overproduction of collagen develops initially as one or more nodules in the palm of the hand. The condition then spreads as a cord-like structure within the connective tissue, pulling the fingers down into a flexed position. Dupuytren's disease most commonly affects the ring and little fingers but can occur in any of the digits. It occurs most often in older men of Northern European descent. The exact cause of the disease is unknown. Factors such as ancestry, alcohol and tobacco use, diabetes, age, and gender can increase the risk of developing the disease.

Dupuytren's can cause significant deformities of the hand, limiting the ability of the individual to open their fingers and use that hand for activities of daily living. Activities such as washing your face, shaking hands, and putting on gloves may become difficult, if not impossible, for an individual to perform. Treatments had been limited to surgical intervention until recently; in 2010 the US Food and Drug Administration approved the first non-surgical treatment for this condition which is expected to become the standard of care. The treatment was also approved this year for use in Europe. I was the member of the research team that provided the non-invasive intervention during the last 10 years of the research.

The Orthopedic Department at Stony Brook worked for the past 15 years on researching a medication they developed,

called Xiaflex, which is injected into the existing cord to dissolve the collagen rope. On day 1 post-injection the physician would then manipulate the involved finger, essentially separating the rope, which would then allow the finger(s) to extend. The research protocol then required the patient to be fitted with a custom fabricated splint worn while sleeping and perform daily range of motion exercises to maximize the range of motion that was gained through the use of the medication. The splint was progressively readjusted as needed. Additionally, goniometry and grip strength measurements were taken at each follow-up session. My role within the team was to fabricate and adjust the splints, instruct in range of motion exercises, address edema concerns, and perform goniometric and grip strength measurements.

The participants were followed for 5 years following the last injection they received. The data showed significant and lasting gains not only in range of motion, but also in functional use of their affected hand(s) in activities of daily living. The fact that this treatment is the first non-surgical treatment for Dupuytren's disease approved by the FDA, and has enabled many affected individuals to avoid progressively limited ability to participate in ADL's and avoid an invasive surgical procedure, makes me proud on both a personal and professional level to have been a member of this research team. The role of OT in research can extend beyond what we traditionally view as research and we should all strive to advance our profession and its treatment outcomes in the healthcare environment.

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### Special points of interest:

- OT Professor DeChello researches breakthrough treatment
- Mets T-Shirt Fundraising Success
- Who is your class' Student of October?
- Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk

## Mets T-Shirt Fundraiser by Kim Kuhnert

The T-shirt fundraiser was a huge success thanks to the support of the students and faculty in Stony Brooks Occupational Therapy Program! Together we raised \$150.00 for our SOTA bank account which will probably be used for our deposit for formal this year. The people at Port Jefferson Sporting Goods were really helpful in determining the design of the shirt that would represent both the Mets and OT while also being very affordable. I want to especially thank my committee

member Marissa Longo who woke up early with me to design the shirts, count the money and assisted me in handing out the shirts. This was a really good outcome for our first fundraiser of the year and hopefully in the future as a program you will all be as equally as enthusiastic to help out and donate! As a final side note if anyone is interested in attending or performing in a battle of the bands please email me.

[ltgkimmie@yahoo.com](mailto:ltgkimmie@yahoo.com)



*"The role of OT in research can extend beyond what we traditionally view as research..."*

-Karen B. DeChello, MS,  
OTR/L, CEA

October 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5 <b>SOTA Meeting @ 12pm</b>	6	7	8
9	10 Columbus Day	11	12 <b>E-board Meeting @ 12pm</b>	13	14	15
16 <b>Breast Cancer Walk (see page 4)</b>	17	18	19	20	21	22 <b>Spooky Walk @ 6:30 in Moriches</b>
23	24	25	26 <b>Program Meeting @ 12pm</b>	27	28	29 <b>Halloween Party @ 12:30 in room 121</b>
30	31 Halloween	1	2	3	4	5



## Notes from the Chair by Dr. Eva Rodriguez

There will be a meeting for first and second year students on Wednesday October 26<sup>th</sup> from 12-1pm held by Dr. Rodriguez. Room location is to be announced on Blackboard. This is an opportunity for students to bring their questions, concerns, and suggestions for the program in general. Pizza will be provided.

## First Year Student of the Month



Jessica Hammer  
Weekday Class of 2014

1. Where is your hometown?  
**Holtsville, NY**
2. Where is your favorite place to be?  
**Anywhere my friends are**
3. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be?  
**Spain**
4. Why did you choose OT?  
**I had OT after my last two surgeries, found the profession interesting and wanted to learn more about it.**
5. What field of OT interests you most?  
**Pediatrics**

1. Where is your hometown?  
**Merrick, NY**
2. Where is your favorite place to be?

**Trying something new**

3. Why did you choose OT?

**I like having the ability to change the area in which**

**I practice; i.e. hands, in-patient, out-patient etc.**

4. What is one item you could not live without?  
**iPhone...what doesn't it do?**

5. If you could give one piece of advice or message to the world, what would it be?

**I once had a boss who would always say... "for those who can't". Every time I feel too tired or lazy to go for a run, or study etc... I think back to that!! ... kind of like the handicap door on the 2nd floor that see everyone push the buttons to walk through the door... be grateful you don't have to walk through it and use the other door!**



Raquel Mahon  
Weekend Class of 2014

## Second Year Student of the Month

1. Where is your home town?  
**I live on Shelter Island.**
2. What are you doing when not at school?  
**Home with kids.**
3. Did you have a career or path before OT? If so, please explain briefly.  
**I have a BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design. I worked in the city as a designer and art director for many years before having kids and moving to Shelter Island.**
4. Why did you choose OT?  
**Because of my background in art and design I am fascinated by the development/rehabilitation of fine motor and visual perceptual skills. OT is a great field for a creative person.**
5. If you won a million dollars, what would be the first thing you would do with it?  
**Happily pay my fair share of federal income taxes first. Next, buy an outrageous pair of shoes. :)**

Kyle Karen  
Weekend Class of 2013

1. Where is your hometown?  
**Selden, NY**
2. What is your favorite song?  
**Into the Mystic by Van Morrison. Gets me every time!**
3. If you could live anywhere in the world where would it be?  
**Australia! My college roommate lives in Melbourne and she loves it. It would be strange to have a balmy Christmas, though.**



Zoe Speed  
Weekday Class of 2013

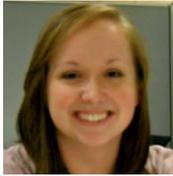
4. Did you have a career or path before OT? If so, please explain briefly.  
**In 6th grade, my plan was to join the WNBA. I worked really hard at it for about a year, practicing every night. I didn't get very good, except shooting backwards over my head. From there I wanted to be a marine biologist, a songwriter, and when I went to college I thought I would major in physics. But it's been OT for awhile now.**
5. What field of OT interests you the most?  
**Neurorehabilitation, and animal-assisted therapy**

## Third Year Student of the Month

1. Where are you from? **Garden City via Rochester**
2. Where are you currently placed for your field work level 2?  
**Nassau University Medical Center- I am on the Physical Medicine and Rehab floor. I work with orthopedic and neurology patients, this includes CVA, TBI, SCI, THR, TKR, fractures, and general debility. It is a great team of OT, PT, ST, RT, MD, and nurses up there. My favorite patient so far was a TBI (unknown cause), I did almost exclusively cognitive therapy and ADL retraining with him.**
3. Do you think you will pursue an OT career in this type of placement? Why or why not?  
**I could definitely see myself working in this type of setting. However, I like working with the neuro patients more than orthopedic, so I would prefer to work at a site that specializes in neurorehab. In addition, I have enjoyed nearly all of my FW sites... so I feel like I have lots of great choices.**
4. Any tips for the 1st or 2nd year OT students?  
**Don't be nervous going into fieldwork, confidence is everything. If you are confident and friendly this will go a long way with your supervisor and your patients. Enjoy your time and learn as much as you possibly can even if it isn't your favorite site. OT is holistic so something you learn at one site will end up helping you somewhere else. On the rehab floor I have used things I learned at community based mental health, school based mental health, nursing homes, and ICU, so take it all in.**



Hannah Bulle  
Weekday Class of 2012



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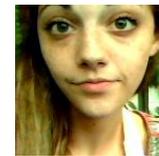
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# S O T A

STUDENT OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION  
- Stony Brook University Chapter -

## "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer" Walk at Jones Beach By Allison Chemick

This month the students of S.O.T.A will be participating in the "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer" walk for the American Cancer Society on Sunday, October 16, 2011 at Jones Beach. This event has a rolling start between 8-11 A.M. However, we will meet at parking lot Field Four at 7:30 A.M. We will get there at 7:30 A.M. to assure time for everyone to get a parking spot. For those who cannot make it at 7:30 A.M but would still like to participate email me at [allison.chemick@yahoo.com](mailto:allison.chemick@yahoo.com).

The pink represents the breast cancer fight. The green represents the generosity it takes for the fight to continue. The "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer" walk is your opportunity to add fuel to that fight by raising awareness. This event is not a race; it is a celebration of survivorship, an occasion to express hope, and a shared goal to end a disease that threatens the lives of so many people we love. While there is no registration fee or minimum fundraising amount, people of all ages are

welcome to participate and encouraged to raise funds. If you'd like to help us create more pink in your community, email me with interest and walk with us.

*For further information;*

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