

DEPARTMENT *of* OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 8 | FALL 2025

Hello from the UNE MSOT Program,

I am delighted to share this update as I step into the role of OT Program Director. This transition follows Dr. Kris Winston's move into her new position as Director of UNE's LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) program. We are grateful for her many years of leadership and excited for her continued teaching in the OT program.



I am thrilled to share that the MSOT program was granted the maximum 10-year accreditation by ACOTE. The program was commended for our strong emphasis on interprofessional education and collaboration, fostering a supportive and inclusive community, and our dedication to justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, access and belonging. I extend my deepest gratitude to our alumni who participated in this accreditation process.

The past several months have been filled with wonderful milestones for our OT community. In addition to celebrating our newest UNE MSOT alumni in our May commencement ceremonies, our students showcased creativity and compassion at the Pediatric Adaptive Projects Expo, attended the AOTA Inspire Conference in Philadelphia, engaged in international travel to explore global health and climate change, and our faculty earned well-deserved recognition through new grants, awards, and scholarly achievements.

Looking ahead, I'm eager to continue strengthening our community partnerships and expanding our curricular offerings building on the strong foundation of this program. Our alumni network is central to the continued success of our program, and we look forward to hearing about and celebrating all the news, updates and accomplishments that you share with us. Thank you for the dedication you bring to UNE OT, and to our alumni whose ongoing contributions enrich the profession and inspire our community.

All my best,

Caroline Bergh

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UNIVERSITY OF
NEW ENGLAND

INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) Reaccreditation



After a two-year departmental and curricular intense self-study, the UNE MSOT Program hosted on-site ACOTE accreditors in April 2025. This visit and our self-study documentation resulted in the maximum reaccreditation status of 10 years with no areas of non-compliance nor suggested areas of improvement. Thank you to all our faculty, professional staff, fieldwork supervisors, employers of graduates, current students, alumni, and UNE leadership for their help in creating such a successful outcome!

Transition of Leadership

Dr. Kris Winston is now the Director of the Maine Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program. LEND is a federally funded project aimed at expanding resources to people with autism spectrum disorder and other neurodevelopmental disabilities. LEND provides year-long traineeships to students and practitioners who receive mentoring and leadership development opportunities, and work closely with community partners. Dr. Winston's role with the LEND program will be 50% of her time, with the remaining 50% of her time as a faculty member in the OT program. UNE is grateful to Dr. Winston for agreeing to take on this very important leadership role, and for her years of outstanding service as the OT Program Director.

OTD Curriculum Development

We are hiring
a Full-Time Doctoral Capstone
Coordinator for the new OTD Program

- Located in Portland, Maine
- Focus on Interprofessional Education & Collaboration
- Opportunity for Community Engagement at Local, Regional, & International Levels

Contact: Caroline Beals cbeals@une.edu
Apply here: <https://une.peopleadmin.com/postings/23140>




We are in the process of developing an entry-level Occupational Therapy Doctoral (OTD) degree track, while also maintaining the current Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) degree. The MSOT program will also move to a fall start date in 2027.

UNE OT Hosted the MEOTA Fall Conference October 4, 2025

UNE was proud to host the Maine Occupational Therapy Association (MEOTA) Fall Conference featuring keynote speaker, Katie Brandt, discussing "Connecting for Care: Integrating Person Centered Care Across the Lifespan." Several UNE alumni, current students, faculty and faculty emeriti participated including presentations by Program Director Caroline Beals, PhD, OTR/L, CHSE "Occupational Needs of College Students Following Concussion" and Professor Emerita Judith Kimball, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA "Self-Treatment for Global Arousal Issues in Persons with PTSD." We look forward to continued collaboration with MEOTA in the coming years!



Katie Brandt, Keynote Speaker



Members of MEOTA Leadership



Conference Attendees



Sarah Grinder, MOT, OTR/L "Exploring Ethics and Justice in Occupational Therapy"

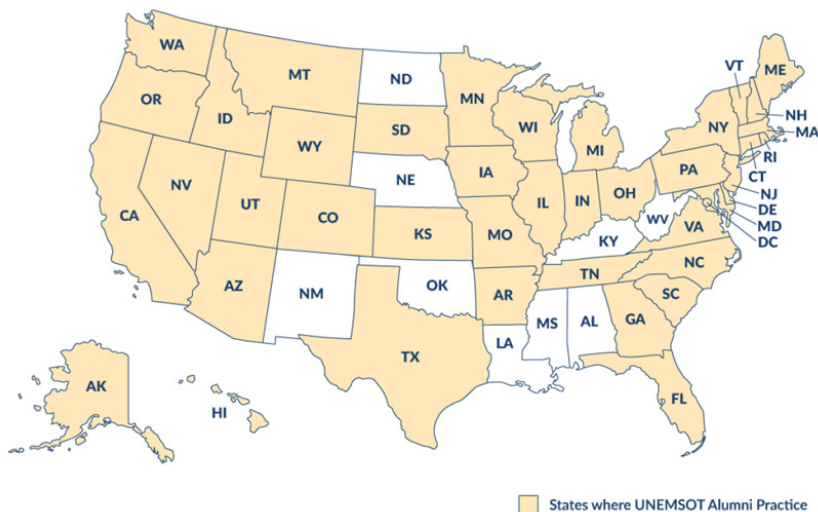


Class of 2027 Students Sydney Tooze, Erin Libby, Nathan Tolosky

News from the Fieldwork Office

Level II fieldwork placements have been secured for the Class of 2026, and we continue to expand our site network for the future cohorts. We deeply value the connections our students can make with UNE alumni through Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences and are thankful to those who have offered placements. **If you are interested in providing field work placements, please contact Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Jessica Walton at jwalton5@une.edu.**

Help us fill in the map by letting us know where you are currently practicing, and if you have interest in mentoring a student, guest lecturing, or adjuncting for our program. Even if you just have an address update, keep us in the loop by [completing this form](#)!



Do you employ UNE MSOT Alumni? We would love to hear from you!

As part of our accreditation tracking, we are seeking input from those who employ graduates of the UNE MSOT program. Your participation in a very brief survey (less than 10 minutes to complete) will provide our program with data and insight as to how our graduates are entering the workforce and their preparedness. We sincerely value your feedback and time! If you or someone you know employs graduates from the UNE MSOT Program, please consider responding to and sharing this link to the [Employer Survey](#).



Judith Giencke Kimball Endowed Scholarship and UNE OT Dream Financial Aid Award

The Judith Giencke Kimball Endowed Scholarship is presented every November to a second year UNE OT student to provide financial support during Level II Fieldwork placements. This scholarship was established in 2018 by the family and friends of Dr. Judith Kimball in honor of the 36 years of service she provided to UNE. All alumni are welcome to contribute to the Judith Giencke Kimball Endowed Scholarship at any time at <https://www.une.edu/giving>. Just click "Make a gift" and then in the "Designations" field choose "Westbrook College of Health Professions Scholarships" and select this scholarship.

Judith Kimball, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA



The new UNE OT Dream Financial Aid Award provides financial assistance to a recent graduate of the MSOT program to cover the cost of their first OTR certification exam administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). This award, administered through The American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF), was created by an occupational therapist who knows the reality of facing financial hardships associated with higher education and wanted to support new graduates as they begin their careers. Congratulations to **Alexandria Antonucci, MSOT '25** who was the inaugural winner of the UNE OT Dream Financial Aid Award. The application for the 2026 OT Dream Award will open in February 2026.

College of Osteopathic Medicine

In June, the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine moved into the new Harold and Bibby Alfond Center for Health Sciences on the Portland campus, uniting all of the UNE health professions on one campus and allowing for even more interprofessional education and collaboration. [Read all about this new state-of-the-art center here.](#) Our occupational therapy students are already benefiting from the interprofessional learning environment in the Gross Anatomy Labs, bringing their learning and understanding of the human body to a whole new level.

Center to Advance Interprofessional Education and Practice

The Center to Advance Interprofessional Education and Practice (CAIEP) has also moved into this new building, empowering UNE health professions students to lead in collaborative, patient-centered care—building career-ready skills that improve outcomes across clinical and community settings. Upcoming events, both in person and online, are posted here: <https://www.une.edu/caiep>

Follow us:

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

<https://www.instagram.com/UNECollaborative/>

UNE Occupational Therapy Students Lead in Interprofessional Excellence

Over the last three years, **19 OT students earned the Interprofessional Honors Distinction**, a nationally accredited digital credential upon graduation. This distinction allows them to showcase their understanding of advanced teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. The required immersive projects and public presentations helped prepare them for collaborative clinical practice—skills employers increasingly seek.

Peer reviewed publications with faculty mentors



Dakota Rodgers, MSOT '22 (left) contributed to a published study in the Journal of Interprofessional Education and Practice, revealing that students who participated in intensive IPE rated their collaborative skills significantly higher than peers, and saw benefits of that expertise as they moved into clinical practice. Alumni reported applying these skills directly to improve patient care, team dynamics and leadership in the workplace.



Impactful community interventions

Hannah Hutchins, MSOT '24 (left) presented nationally at the **National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education Nexus Summit**, highlighting her work on harm reduction kits for individuals reentering the community after incarceration. Her interprofessional team addressed urgent personal needs of people experiencing substance use disorder and partnered with the Cumberland County Jail to support improved public health through safer transitions back to the community.

FACULTY RECOGNITION

Jessica Walton

Assistant Program Director, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and Associate Clinical Professor Jessica Walton, MS, OTR/L recently served as an advisor for the new Accessible Stages Collaborative. This program, part of Yarmouth's Royal River Community Players, offers free theater workshops to empower all individuals, with or without disabilities, to shine on stage. Learn more about their inclusive model:

[Workshops](#) | [RRCP](#)

Faculty Awards



Dr. Carol Lambdin-Pattavina received the Florida International University Alumni Award for Excellence in Occupational Therapy Education. The award was presented during the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Department of Occupational Therapy at FIU. Dr. Carol Lambdin-Pattavina graduated from the Professional Masters Occupational Therapy program in 1999. Carol is truly honored by the recognition, and she remains a proud panther!

Left: Carol Lambdin-Pattavina, OTD, MSOT, OTR/L, CTP, FAOTA and FIU colleagues

Dr. Caroline Beals was awarded the M. Lisa Pagnucco Service Award alongside an interprofessional group of faculty working to develop simulations to promote interprofessional practice. Lisa Pagnucco was an early interprofessional champion at UNE.

Dr. Jennie Dapice was awarded a UNE Faculty Mini-Grant for her project entitled “Canine-Assisted Intervention in Public School Settings: Policies and Perspectives.” Dr. Dapice will work with Dr. Nancy Shore of UNE Online (School of Social Work) and Professor Krysten Gorrvan of UNE College of Arts and Sciences (School of Education) on a qualitative research project examining the experiences of school personnel in Maine K-12 public schools who have implemented Canine-Assisted Intervention programs.

DEPARTMENT EVENTS - SUMMER AND FALL RECAP

AOTA INSPIRE 2025 Annual Conference & Expo, April 3-5, Philadelphia, PA



UNE had a strong delegation attend the American Occupational Therapy Association’s (AOTA) Inspire Annual Conference & Expo. Students had the opportunity to network with professionals, attend educational sessions, and explore the latest innovations in the field. The event provided valuable insights into emerging trends, research, and best practices in occupational therapy. Students returned inspired and better equipped to apply new knowledge and techniques to their coursework and future clinical practice. A highlight of the conference was the UNE alumni gathering, where UNE alumni and current students were able to network, reconnect, and share their experiences.



MSOT Class of 2026 Students



MSOT Class of 2026 Students and Carol Lambdin-Pattavina, OTD, MSOT, OTR/L, CTP, FAOTA, Kris Winston, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA



Jessica Walton MS, OTR/L and Kris Winston, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Pediatric Adaptive Vendor Fair

On April 4, 2025, in collaboration with UNE Physical Therapy faculty, Dr. Jennie Dapice and Professor Jamie Harmon hosted UNE's 4th annual Pediatric Adaptive Vendor Fair. The fair provides the opportunity for PT and OT students to interact with local vendors who manufacture or utilize adaptive equipment. We truly appreciate the twelve local organizations who attended, including Maine Outdoor Education Center, Timbernook, National Seating and Mobility, Saco Bay PT, Special Surfers, and Hanger.

UNE Brain and Body Fair

That same day, Dr. Erin McCall and Dr. Jennie Dapice joined MSOT graduate students and undergraduate Occupational Studies students at the University's Brain and Body Fair as they educated the UNE community about changes in occupation after brain injury. Attendees could experience concussion symptoms by playing cornhole while wearing specialized goggles.



Mohamed Shaikh, MSOT '26 and Corey Markland, MSOT '26



Erin McCall, OTD, MSOT, OTR/L and UNE Occupational Studies Students

Pi Theta Epsilon Event

On April 10, 2025 the Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE) chapter at the University of New England hosted Dr. Reese Walter, a Certified Hand Therapist, for an insightful session on hand therapy. The event brought together students and faculty to emphasize the importance of occupation-based hand therapy in occupational therapy. We were excited to invite members from the Temple University PTE chapter to join us, which strengthened connections within the PTE community. It was a fantastic opportunity to collaborate, share knowledge, and build a supportive network of future occupational therapy leaders.

Adaptive Projects Expo

On April 15, 2025, first-year students hosted the annual Adaptive Projects Expo highlighting their creativity and compassion. More than 25 interactive, adaptive projects were on display, all designed to promote occupational engagement for children and families, particularly those navigating sensory processing differences or neurodevelopmental conditions. As Professor Jamie Harmon noted, the Expo not only showcases student innovation, but also reinforces UNE's commitment to preparing future professionals to lead with empathy, collaboration, and hands-on problem solving. [Click here to read all about the Class of 2026 event.](#)

Save the Date – April 14, 2026 Adaptive Projects Expo



Are you a practitioner working with pediatrics/young adults who could benefit from an adaptive project in your community clinic? Contact Professor Jamie Harmon at jharmon5@une.edu to let us know what your needs are!

S.E.E.D.S. of Growth - Students Educating, Empathizing, Destigmatizing, and Supporting for Growth of Mental Health Awareness



What is S.E.E.D.S. For Growth?

- **WHAT DOES S.E.E.D.S. STAND FOR?**
Students Educating, Empathizing, Destigmatizing, and Supporting Growth of Mental Health Awareness
- **OUR MISSION**
S.E.E.D.S. for Growth is a community event that brings together students in healthcare professions to learn, reflect, and connect around mental health. Through education, empathy, and shared experience, the event provides a supportive space to explore mental health resources, reduce stigma, and prepare future practitioners to care for both their clients and themselves—including learning from and engaging with individuals who have lived experience.

On April 26, 2025 UNE MSOT students and faculty advisor Dr. Carol Lambdin-Pattavina organized a S.E.E.D.S. for Growth event with tabling opportunities, resources, helpful coping strategies, therapy dogs, and more, all aimed at smashing mental health stigma for healthcare professionals.

UNE Student Organization Awards



Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) won the “Best New Student Organization” Award and UNE Occupational Therapy Student Association (UNESOTA) won the “Program of the Year” Award for their Yellow Tulip Project.



UNESOTA partnered with the UNE nursing students to develop a yellow tulip garden sponsored by the Yellow Tulip Project. The mission of the Yellow Tulip Project is to “smash the stigma surrounding mental illness and to build a community of people who realize that hope happens when youth and community leaders work together.” For more information about the Yellow Tulip Project go to <https://theyellowtulipproject.org/>

Welcome & Congratulations to our newest alumni - MSOT Class of 2025!

Congratulations to the UNE MSOT Class of 2025! We had an amazing time celebrating the accomplishments of this class, culminating in the WCHP Graduation Ceremony on Friday, May 16th and the UNE Commencement Ceremonies on Saturday, May 17th. For the week leading up to graduation, we hosted the class of 2025 for various celebrations and information sessions related to NBCOT preparation and career preparation. Congratulations all, we look forward to hearing about what your next chapter includes. Please keep in touch by [completing this form](#) and pop in to visit anytime! We love seeing our alumni!



Health Careers Exploration Camp

In June, UNE OT students came together to expose high school students to the amazing profession of occupational therapy during the annual Health Careers Exploration Camp. This camp is free and serves students from rural and underserved communities in Maine. The students did a wonderful job engaging the campers and the activities they presented, including a rousing relay race filled with adaptive equipment reflecting the interactive nature of OT. We hope to see some of the campers in the future as OT students.

UNE Students Engage in Global Health and Climate Change Courses in Brazil & Norway

In August, Gabriela Puentes, MSOT '26 and Sara Grenier, MSOT '26, joined UNE physical therapy students and faculty for a 10-day, grant-funded travel course in Itajaí, Brazil. Working alongside peers from Brazil and Norway, participants examine the intersection of climate change and health care. Through this global learning experience, students gained new perspectives on research, practice, and collaboration while building lasting professional connections.

Sara Grenier explained “Brazil was an amazing experience with the opportunity to work with and learn from differing cultures and disciplines. My team was tasked with addressing healthcare disparities across migrant/immigrant/refugee/displaced individuals in Brazil. During our time at the institute, we learned about the rise of Dengue fever, a vector borne illness, in Brazil due to recent climate changes. Given its increase in prevalence, we chose to create a resource to educate individuals on this disease to better prepare them and help minimize their risk. A highlight of the trip was the opportunity to interview with members of the local community, which consisted of both older adults and migrants. These interviews provided a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by members of the community. Overall, the opportunity to participate in this institute provided a unique immersive experience to the Brazilian culture.”



Carol Lambdin-Pattavina, OTD, MSOT, OTR/L, CTP, FAOTA and MSOT Class of 2026 and 2027 Students



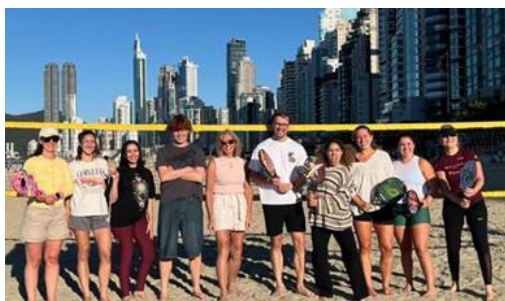
Sara Grenier, MSOT '26 and colleagues



Sara Grenier, MSOT '26 and colleagues



Gabriela Puentes, MSOT '26 and colleagues



OT & PT students in Brazil



Itajaí, Brazil

Alexis Tardy, MSOT '26 traveled to Bergen, Norway as part of the Climate and Health Interprofessional Learning, Innovation and Collaboration (IP LINC) project for a one-month exchange this fall. Alongside students from Brazil, Norway, and the U.S., she explored how climate change impacts health and worked on developing interprofessional action plans to address these challenges. Alexis also had the chance to learn about Norway's healthcare and education systems, engage in cultural exchange, and collaborate across professions and countries on global health solutions. She feels this experience strengthened her skills in teamwork, communication, and leadership while deepening her passion for making a difference through occupational therapy.



Alexis Tardy, MSOT Class of 2026

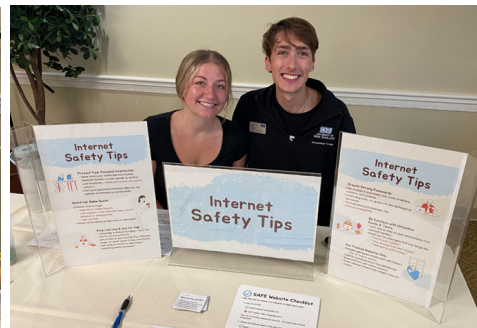


Alexis Tardy, MSOT Class of 2026 and colleagues



Park Danforth Fair

In July, our second-year students hosted the second annual UNE OT Health and Wellness Fair designed specifically for older adults at The Park Danforth, a senior living community in Portland that supports older adults who are living independently or in assistive living levels of care. [Read all about this interactive experience here.](#)



Park Danforth Clinic Pilot

From September through November, nine first year MSOT students have volunteered to help pilot a pro-bono Occupational Therapy Clinic at The Park Danforth. Students are running this drop-in clinic under direct supervision from faculty Elise Ostensson and Erin McCall. They provide group education and general quality of life information and assistance with specific conditions. Topics include changes in vision, exercise for all abilities, no-stove healthy cooking, managing grief and loss, home safety concerns, and managing chronic pain symptoms. Students have been having great discussions with the residents who show OT students what life looks like as we age and remain vital.

Jojo Picone in Pumpkin Man Half Marathon

Jojo Picone, MSOT '25, was spotted participating in the Pumpkin Man Triathlon and Running Festival in South Berwick, Maine this fall, completing a 0.3 mile swim, 15 mile bike, 5k run. This race is a celebration of endurance, community, and the vibrant spirit of autumn. Way to go Jojo!

KAT-Walk & Karo 5K & NAMI Walk

This September, UNE MSOT students, faculty and staff participated in the annual NAMI Walk in Augusta and Kat-Walk & Karo-5K in Portland. Both events are rich networking opportunities with other organizations and an important way to support

their causes, respectively brain aneurysm awareness and research and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. If you are interested in walking/running with the UNE MSOT team next year please contact Melissa Walsh, mwalsh18@une.edu, and learn more about these organizations here: <https://maineba.org/> | <https://namimaine.org/>



Top: Carol Lambdin-Pattavina, OTD, MSOT, OTR/L, CTP, FAOTA and MSOT '27 Student Kristin Mannschreck

Middle: UNE MSOT Team consisting of UNE faculty, professional staff, Class of 2027 Students and family members.

Right: Kristin Winston, Previous UNE OT Program Director and Caroline Beals, Current UNE OT Program Director



Homecoming Tailgating

We had a great time on October 25, 2025 at UNE Homecoming Tailgating on the Biddeford campus! All departments within the Westbrook College of Health Professions (WCHP) came together to offer fun and food to attendees before the football game. We love celebrating UNE, but one of our favorite parts is reconnecting with alumni. We hope to see you there next year! Go Nor'easters!



Top left: Elizabeth Crampsey, Caroline Beals, Avery Laperle, MSOT '21, Kris Winston

Top right: Provost Mahon, AT Program Director Lamarre, President Herbert, AES Program Director Pierce, OT Program Director Beals, Maine LEND Program Director Winston, PT Program Director McCormack Tutt, and NA Program Director Flavin

Middle left: Elizabeth Crampsey, Bella Crugnale, MSOT '24, Kris Winston, Caroline Beals

Middle right: Sally McCormack Tutt, Mike Lawrence, Caroline Beals, Kris Winston, Elizabeth Crampsey

Bottom right: Kris Winston, Elizabeth Crampsey, Nate Pickett, MSOT '23, Caroline Beals





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QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER?

We would LOVE to hear from YOU!

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