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Lillian Hoyle Parent, M.A., OTR, FAOTA

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Sponsor Profile: Lillian Hoyle Parent, M.A., OTR, FAOTA



Dr. Melanie T. Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA, is sponsoring Lillian Hoyle Parent, M.A., OTR, FAOTA, for the spring 2015 issue of *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*. Lillian has worked in the field of occupational therapy for nearly 40 years. Lillian has been a source of encouragement and inspiration throughout her career, not only to her students but also to countless colleagues. She has multiple publications and is recognized for encouraging both students and colleagues to publish. Lillian appreciates the importance of a literature review; she is legendary for having the ability to identify an article based on the recitation of a few key lines.

Lillian obtained her certificate in occupational therapy from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles in 1952, and she earned her master's degree in occupational therapy from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston (UTMB) in 1972. From 1972 to 1984 Lillian worked for the University of Illinois at Chicago. She was involved with physical disabilities, independent studies, research methods, and neurology. Lillian returned to Galveston in 1984 to work with Randy Strickland until her retirement in 1991.

While at UTMB, Lillian served as the Department of Occupational Therapy's director of research and education. She would encourage clinicians to engage in research or write interesting case studies. If it was a new procedure, diagnosis, or splint, for Lillian, it was worth writing about. She was known for mentoring individuals in writing their first article; without her support, the words would not have made it onto the paper. She personally mentored staff with an estimated 40 publications/presentations from UTMB during that time. During her tenure at UTMB, Lillian was on the board of the Texas Occupational Therapy Association. She played a key role in having occupational therapists speak at the association's conference, as in prior years it was mostly physicians. She was instrumental in progressing the members of the association to recognize and develop their own scholarship. She also assisted therapists in gaining the confidence and ability to share information from clinical and research experience.

Lillian has a great commitment to students. While orienting a new group of level II students at UTMB, she slipped and broke her wrist. In lieu of immediately going to the hospital, however, she completed the student tour. She then had surgery and an external fixator attached to her wrist. She is known for her crisp, starched white lab coat and for holding herself to a high standard, both professionally and personally. Sara Brayman, who worked with Lillian in Galveston and remains a close friend to her, said "[Lillian is] influential in an underground way in enhancing OT's careers." In 1981, during his Eleanor Clarke Slagle lecture, Robert Bing thanked his "cherished colleagues, Lillian Hoyle Parent and Jay Cantwell" who, he said, "constantly stimulate me and insist on a high level of constructive activity" (499).

Lillian received a fellow award in 1977, and in 1979 she received the first prestigious Cordelia Myers American Journal of Occupational Therapy (AJOT) Best Article Award. The award is given to encourage professional writing and contributions to AJOT. It is also given to

recognize outstanding professional writing in AJOT (<http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/EducationCareers/Awards/CordeliaMyersAJOTBestArticleAward.pdf>).

In 1980, Lillian compiled a bibliography of books and articles published by occupational therapists outside of AJOT. She did this in order to understand where occupational therapists were being published and to provide additional resources for clinicians. Lillian was a part of both the California and Illinois occupational therapy associations, and she served on a conference committee and the publications committee for AOTA. Further, she contributed chapters on orthopedics and burns for two editions of Catherine Trombly's book on physical disabilities.

Lillian graduated from the University of California, Berkley, with a bachelor's degree in history in 1943. She worked a variety of jobs before becoming an occupational therapy student. Her jobs included working for a shipyard, working in a radiation lab where the atomic bomb was created, writing a script for short wave news broadcasts for the Office of War Information, translating Spanish labels, and working as a receptionist. While figuring out her career path, she decided to take a vocational interest test, which revealed an interest in therapy. Not surprisingly, she went to the library and studied the field of occupational therapy.

Lillian also worked in numerous settings as an occupational therapist throughout her career. She initially worked for a physiatrist involved with industrial accidents. She then worked with clients with polio and spinal cord injuries, many of who were from the United Mine Workers Association. In this setting, in true occupational therapy accord, Lillian set up a cooking program. She then worked with clients who had polio, CVA's, and back pain. She had a talent for not making children cry in this setting because she understood the importance of an occupation. She would engage the child in an occupation while she removed his or her cast. She then moved to an orthopedic setting and worked at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation

Center in Downey, CA. Her next job was working with people with coccidioidomycosis, also known as valley fever, in a small hospital setting. In the 1960's she worked at the San Fernando Veterans Administration Hospital with clients who had tuberculosis, emphysema, and chest disease.

Lillian has had a profound impact on many individuals in the field of occupational therapy, as well as the field of occupational therapy itself. She has a quick wit, and her ability to recall information from over fifty years ago is remarkable. Her ongoing commitment throughout her career to encourage others to publish is truly progressive. Her message of “just write it down” still demonstrates a passion for publication. In order to advance the field of occupational therapy, Lillian inherently understands the importance of research and encourages clinicians to publish.

References

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