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Melanie T. Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA

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In Memoriam
Melanie T. Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA



The staff of the *Open Journal of Occupational Therapy* (OJOT) are saddened to learn of the loss of a treasured member of our Editorial Review Board, Dr. Melanie Ellexson, who always brought much joy to her work with us.

We are honored to share the following tribute that was authored by Dr. Caren Schranz, Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy at Governors State University in University Park, Illinois.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Schranz for providing permission to reprint her recently published tribute that she shared with her professional community.

Dr. Melanie T. Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA age 75, passed away on October 30, 2021, in her family home in Naperville, Illinois. Melanie was an occupational therapist who made an impact during her many years of service in a field she loved.

Melanie received her bachelor's in occupational therapy, University of Illinois, and her MBA, Keller Graduate school of Business Management (1990) and her Doctorate of Health Science, from the University of Indianapolis in (2007).

Melanie began her career in Industrial rehabilitation and Ergonomics and her early work was focused on the development of workplace safety for the Railroad system and corporations. Melanie also had a special interest in working with Adults with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities and served in various settings.

Melanie then transitioned to academia where she was an Associate Professor at Chicago State University for 5 years and Governors State University for 12 years sharing her knowledge and training to the next generation of Occupational Therapists. During this time she also developed an international student service learning initiative to take students to Ukraine to service children and families under the mentorship of occupational therapists.

Melanie was a Pioneer and expert in the field and has several publications and has provided countless continuing education at state, national and international occupational therapy conferences. Melanie has numerous service awards from AOTA and from ILOTA including the Lifetime Achievement Award from

ILOTA (2016). She has been a leader in the industry with a list of accomplishments including: President of the Illinois Occupational Therapy Association, Chair of the Business and Industry Special Interest Section, Treasurer of AOTA, has held various volunteer positions on the Council on Practice and as an alternate for Illinois in the RA, AOTA representative to the National Safety Council Medical Section and on the Committee to Establish Ergonomic standards. Melanie was a social, active woman who enjoyed needlepoint, book clubs, water aerobics, fine dining, travel, diet coke and shopping. She was dedicated to her family, friends and her students. She will be remembered as a generous, giving and loving woman who would go out of her way to help and mentor those in need.

The family has set up the Dr. Melanie T. Ellexson Memorial Scholarship Fund for aspiring Occupational Therapy Students.

Please see this link for further information:

<https://www.drmelaniellexsonmemorialscholarshipfund.com>

Written by: Caren Schranz, DrOT, MS, OTRL, Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy, Governors State University, University Park, Illinois.