

# North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association



## A MESSAGE FROM THE NDOTA PRESIDENT

Greetings fellow OT's!

Happy New Year to you all! I know that the recent year has been a difficult one for us all. I hope that 2022 can be a time we are all able to come together and advocate for the profession of OT.

As President of NDOTA, I work hard to encourage increased participation in membership with NDOTA. We have recently updated the By-Laws and are working toward implementing a strategic plan to improve the function and mission of NDOTA.

NDOTA has worked hard during these difficult times to provide education opportunities whether it be in person or online to ensure that everyone is safe. We will be continuing to offer great opportunities, whether it be state-wide or in your district for education.

NDOTA has the support of a great lobbyist, Levi Andrist, who is a vital part of our ability to remain on the front lines of legislation to ensure there is no legislation that could impact our profession.

NDOTA is also excited to let you know we are now on Instagram, follow us at [\\_ndota\\_](#) for any updates on education or events that may be happening. We are also active on Facebook, find us at North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association.

We are also working on updating our website, so be on the lookout for a new and improved website. We want to make the process seamless and an easy transition. We will let you know more about that transition when it occurs.

NDOTA does rely on you as the members to continue to support NDOTA with your membership, support of the events we hold. We always look for suggestions or if you know of anyone wanting to join the board of NDOTA we would love to have new ideas and suggestions.

Again, I would like to personally thank you all for all your support of NDOTA and look forward to continuing to serve as the President of NDOTA for the upcoming term.

Kind regards,  
Sheri Martin MS, OTR/L  
NDOTA President

## LEGISLATION & PRACTICE INFORMATION

Greetings from your Co-VP's of Legislation and Practice! Cindy, your newly-elected Co-VP, is learning the role and excited to be a part of NDOTA leadership team. Megan and Cindy have been collaborating on what we would like to pursue for our term in office. The NDOTA Board is looking to increase the responsibilities of our position, and we would love to hear from our members regarding what would be more supportive of their practice in North Dakota. We would like to update our members on current legislation affecting OT practice in North Dakota.

Many of you may have been keeping track of the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact that has gone through legislation in some states. Recently, AJOT published an article describing the process and intent of this compact. It is an interesting read and talks about AOTA and NBCOT's involvement in the drafting process. Although there are several states that have passed the legislation or are in process for legislative sessions 2022-2023, the NDOTA board is not pursuing the Compact for the 2023 legislative session in North Dakota. At this time, we have not heard enough support for the compact from state practitioners to feel comfortable going forward against the North Dakota licensure board's recommendation. In the year ahead, we plan to discuss the process to gauge our member's interest in pursuing the compact. Levi Andrist, our lobbyist, will be an excellent resource to us.

Congressional representatives have introduced the Stabilizing Medicare Access to Rehabilitation and Therapy (SMART Act, H.R. 5536) just this year. The purpose of the legislation is to mitigate the impact of recent budgeting cuts to Medicaid Part B occupational therapy assistant services. The SMART Act would permanently exempt rural and underserved areas, like those found in our state, from receiving these cuts. It would also delay the existing cuts to 2023. We will continue to update you on this bill's process. If you are looking to advocate for our profession, more information can be found on AOTA's website under Federal News and Legislative Updates.

Telehealth has been an important part of our practice during the COVID-19 epidemic. As a result, multiple bills have been introduced in federal legislation regarding telehealth services and reimbursement. Currently, the Senate is considering the Telehealth Extension Act (HR 6202). AOTA reports that this bill would extend OT telehealth services Medicare reimbursement to "2 years after the end of the public health emergency." We are considering what legislation, if any, we would like to pursue regarding telehealth reimbursement in North Dakota, especially during a time where telehealth is at the forefront of healthcare practices.

Thank you for supporting our efforts through membership in NDOTA. We look forward to collaborating with you in this coming year.

Megan Boucher, M.A., OTR/L and Cindy Anderson, OTD, OTR/L

Co-VPs of Legislation and Practice

North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association

## EDUCATION INFORMATION

Hello everyone!

Our NDOTA conference planning has been going well the past few months. We were able to pull off another live weekend conference in October of 2021. Thank you to all who participated and attended this conference held in Bismarck. Our theme was Mental Health Awareness. Both adult and pediatric speakers focused on this particular area of practice, and it was well received. Thank you to Val Meyers from the Kid's Therapy Center and Annie Schlecht from Zen Sleep Consulting. They were our outstanding pediatric speakers and did an amazing job. Dr. Samantha Tupy, a psychologist from the VA in Fargo was present for our adult track. She is a wealth of knowledge and we appreciate her time and efforts as well.

Our upcoming spring conference is fast approaching! We have been busy this past year planning an exciting event to not only promote the wonderful profession of Occupational Therapy but also bring awareness towards Autism simultaneously. On April 1-2, 2022, we look forward to collaborating between various professionals in the state and also the general public. Our weekend begins on Friday April 1, 2022. A vendor expo will kick off the weekend at the Baymont Inn in Mandan, ND. This is an opportunity to showcase your place of employment and market services towards the public! Our hope is to fill 30 of these vendor spots and provide a list of resources for the public. All vendors will be geared towards state wide agencies and businesses to help families with their autism journey. Also, what a great opportunity to network with others across the state! The vendor displays will be up and available to the public both Friday evening and into Saturday. If you are interested in participating, please visit the [www.ndota.com](http://www.ndota.com) webpage for vendor registration information.

Friday evening continues with our keynote speaker, Dr. Temple Grandin!! We are so pleased to be able to have her with us for this event! Dr. Grandin has been a huge advocate for Autism Awareness during her career. She will be presenting at the Baymont Inn from 7:00-8:30pm. Plan to stop by the vendor expo first and stay for Dr. Grandin's presentation! Saturday the weekend continues with additional speakers and presentations. These will be geared more towards professionals and will provide an opportunity to gain some CEUs. Topics of presentations will lean more towards sensory processing and the autism field. For a complete list of speakers and their presentations/objectives, please visit the [www.ndota.com](http://www.ndota.com) webpage. A brochure is available for your viewing.

Thank you to all who have come out to support NDOTA! We appreciate your continued support, as well. Please spread the word towards this upcoming spring conference. We are looking forward to a successful event and need your help to get us there!

Please email me, Shawna, with any conference questions you may have --->  
[shawna.wing@sanfordhealth.org](mailto:shawna.wing@sanfordhealth.org).

Please email Sheri Martin if you should have any registration questions --->  
[sheri\\_lynn277@hotmail.com](mailto:sheri_lynn277@hotmail.com).

Thanks to my education committee for helping organize this April weekend! It definitely takes a team to make this happen. You are all amazing.

Much appreciation,  
Shawna Wing, MS, OTR/L  
VP of Education

## WELLS FARGO DISTRICT

Fargo NDOTA District held a Holiday Potluck on Friday 12/3/21 at The Healing Studio located across from west acres mall. Approximately 8-9 Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy faculty, and Occupational Therapy students gathered for networking. Snacks and laughs were had. Everyone shared their preferred occupations and expressed interest in ongoing special interest groups, networking events, and CEU opportunities.

Follow NDOTA Fargo District on Facebook for events/CEU's in your area!

Upcoming Event: Thursday, February 24, 2022, from 5:30 to 7:00 CEU Opportunity in Fargo, ND

Integrating Polyvagal Theory into Occupational Therapy Practice

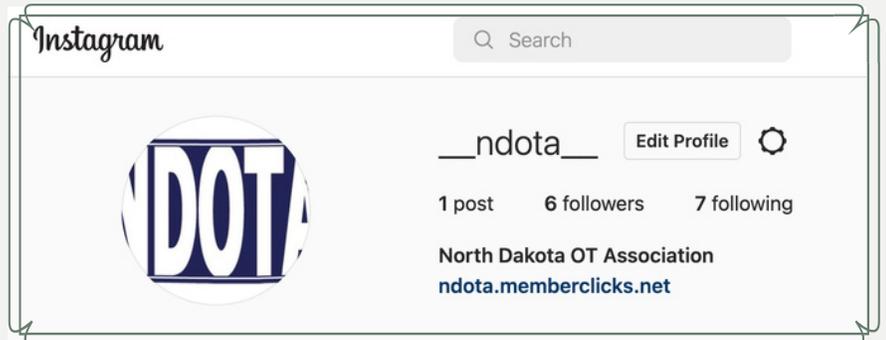
## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Total: 208

OTA: 11

OTR: 101

OTS: 97



## COME FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Facebook: North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association

Instagram: [\\_ndota\\_](#) (NDOTA's is now on Instagram!)

Wells Fargo District Facebook Page: NDOTA Fargo District

Red River District Facebook Page: NDOTA Red River District Group

Farwest Facebook Page: NDOTA Farwest District

Northwest Pioneers Facebook Page: NDOTA-Northwest Pioneers

Website: [www.ndota.com](http://www.ndota.com)

\*Follow our social media pages to stay updated on current practices, upcoming NDOTA events, and overall information related to occupational therapy!

## PROPOSED NEW AOTA GOVERNANCE

From ND Representative to the AOTA Representative Assembly, Scinda (Cindy) Janssen AOTA is proposing major governance restructuring, something that has not been done in over 40 years. There is an AOTA Governance Enhancement Task Force Report for members posted on AOTA's website, under "About AOTA", and menu item "Governance Enhancement Initiative." The restructuring work group has worked extensively with planning and disseminating information through town hall meetings with major AOTA bodies.

Below are the proposed committees operating under the board of directors, as well as a proposed timeline for changes and voting, and some questions that North Dakota AOTA members might have.

Please, contact me to share your voice about the restructuring. It is important that this major change be analyzed thoroughly by members prior to the May, 2022 member vote.

Thank-you for your attention to this matter.

Scinda (Cindy)

701-215-2758

Scinda.janssen@und.edu

### Board of Directors

- Committees
  - Finance & Audit
  - Education
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: \*New
  - Practice Commission
  - Volunteer Development
  - Ethics
  - Awards/Recognition
  - Representative Assembly (will be renamed): Reduced to 12-25 members, not geographically based. Instead will be a representation by key practice/issues area
- ACOTE
- OTACC (OT Advanced Certification Commission)

### Timeline:

- Spring 2021: Governance restructuring steering group formed with members from diverse backgrounds (culture); started work on restructuring
- Summer/Fall 2021: Started town hall meetings but no materials shared at the meetings are accessible for communicating with constituents
- Fall 2021: Governance restructuring report posted on AOTA website to members. Specific bylaws proposed changes not included.
- February Bylaws revision and vote to approve
- Spring: disseminate changes to members
- May: member vote

## PROPOSED NEW AOTA GOVERNANCE CONT.

### Questions and Answers:

- How will AOTA communicate with state associations if there is no state RA?
  - AOTA will communicate through state association presidents (Affiliated State Association Presidents [ASAP])
- How can AOTA have more diversity when reducing numbers in RA? Increasing diversity is usually attained by increasing numbers of representation, not reducing it.
  - AOTA will have a specific committee for DEI, made up of members from diverse backgrounds
- How is rural included in the DEI representation?
  - Work group members said there are people from rural areas
- How will materials for restructuring be vetted to members?
  - The work group's report is on the AOTA website, under "About"
    - The report has overall diagram of organizational framework for governance
    - Specific details, such as committee memberships, will come out of Bylaws committee in February
- What checks and balance systems are being used to analyze proposed changes?
  - Legal experts in organizational governance structures
  - Comparisons to other similar professional organizations
  - Town Hall meetings
  - "Office Hours" to ask questions

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, February 24, 2022**

CEU Opportunity in Fargo, ND from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.  
Integrating Polyvagal Theory into Occupational Therapy Practice.

**April 1, 2022, from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm**  
Vendor Expo at Baymont in Mandan, ND

**April 1, 2022, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**  
Temple Grandin Keynote Speaker

**April 2, 2022, at 8:00 am**  
Vendor Expo at Baymont in Mandan, ND

**April 2, 2022, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm**  
2022 Spring Conference

## 2022 CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Sarah Meinhardt, OTR/L : Sarah graduated from the University of Illinois Medical Center in Chicago and has decades of experience in pediatric OT. She has been trained in the SIPT Administration, the trainings of the 8-week NDT and 3-week advanced NDT with infants and toddlers and is a certified Infant Massage Therapy instructor. She has taken several continuing education seminars on a variety of feeding therapy approaches, sensory processing and treatment, oral-motor coordination, Safe and Sound Protocol by Stephen Porges, iLs, DIR and Floortime, Musculo-skeletal evaluation and treatment, gut health, nutrition and diet for children with special needs, anxiety, sleep, Verbal Behavior, MNRI, business management and leadership classes. Work experience includes Early Intervention in Illinois, Early Childhood Special Education in Philadelphia, PA, Fargo Public Schools in Fargo, ND, and private practice in Fargo, and is currently with Great Kids Therapy in West Fargo, ND. For her passion for health and belief in the biophysical value of nutrition, she is a distributor for USANA Health Sciences. She grew up with siblings with high functioning Asperger's (officially diagnosed in his adult life) and Bipolar Mood Disorder and has a heartfelt understanding of the dynamics this plays on family relationships. Through the biochemical impact of chemotherapy for cancer, she experienced firsthand sensory processing ramifications of hypersensitivity, impairment, pain, and hypo-responsiveness. She is married to a super supportive, helpful, loving husband and is a proud parent of 3 incredibly smart, social, and independent adult children.

Kelsey Hoffmann MS, OTR/L: Kelsey is an occupational therapist with Great Kids Therapy in West Fargo. She graduated from the University of North Dakota in 2013. Since graduation, she has worked in a variety of outpatient pediatric settings serving children on the Autism Spectrum. Kelsey has training in Trauma, Sensory Approaches, Reflex Integration, D.I.R., Floortime and Sensory-Based Feeding Strategies.

Megan K. Boucher, M.A, OTR/L: Megan is an early interventionist in Fargo, ND. She serves as Co-VP of Legislation and Practice on NDOTA's board of management, a position she has held since 2019. Megan's special interests include the neurodivergent population, early childhood trauma, and family-based treatment in mental health settings. Megan describes herself as a goofy intellectual who enjoys dinosaurs, tea parties, and rounding out her lists with a third idea.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association is excited to kick off Occupational Therapy month and autism awareness month with Dr. Temple Grandin providing a keynote address in a weekend filled with Autism education.

Dr. Grandin was diagnosed with autism in 1950, at that time her parents were told she should be institutionalized. Dr. Grandin did not speak until she was three and half years old. She received early speech therapy services and did attend mainstream kindergarten at age 5. She found a mentor in her young school years, who recognized her interests and abilities. Dr. Grandin later developed her talents into a successful career of designing livestock handling equipment and facilities as well as went on to become a professor of animal science at Colorado State University. Dr. Temple Grandin has played a key role in the livestock industry facility designs focusing her designs on livestock handling to reduce stress on the animals to ensure animal welfare.

Dr. Grandin has gone on to write many books and articles about growing up with autism. She has become a prominent author and speaker on the subject of autism. As the number of children diagnosed with autism continues to rise nationally, Dr. Grandin is sharing her message about the disorder and “differently-abled brains”.

NDOTA hopes Dr. Grandin’s keynote address will leave a lasting impact on professionals and parents for years to come. We hope to see you all there.

\*1.5 Professional development CEU’s are available for Dr. Temple Grandin’s keynote address.

