

# GW SOTA Newsletter

The George Washington University's Student Occupational Therapy Association

**JUNE 2025 Issue**

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### Written by Matt Eggers

Welcome to June! Yes, this month marks the start of high D.C. humidity and large crowds of tourists – but there is still an overwhelming amount to celebrate! Thriving and lush greenery, numerous cultural events and festivals, Juneteenth, Pride Month, Father's Day, National Egg Day (for real, this is not a *yolk!*), and extended daylight hours... just to name a few!!!

This month's issue also holds a special bonus... an *OTD-themed student comic strip* by one of our favorite local artists (who just so happens to also be a GWU OT student)!

So sit back in your favorite beanbag chair, sip on a refreshing fruity cocktail (or mocktail), and enjoy the June 2025 SOTA Newsletter.

# JUNETEENTH: AN AMERICAN CELEBRATION

Created by Juan’Nique Campbell, Yewande Sofola, and Matt Eggers



In June, we celebrate Juneteenth, an important milestone on the long journey toward freedom and equality. Every June 19th we honor the emancipation of the last 250,000 enslaved African Americans in Texas. These individuals were never informed of the Emancipation Proclamation that was issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863, over 2 years prior. On June 19th, 1865, these African Americans were finally informed that they were in fact free. After this day, all African Americans in the United States were free from slavery.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, we must recognize the continuing systemic racism and discrimination experienced by Black people in our country. Racism is a significant issue that plays a role in well-being for all who are victimized by it. Spend this Juneteenth recognizing that freedom is a holistic journey. With this, we must recognize the factors that influence trauma and healing whether they are in the past, present, or future. Be the person that fosters more inclusive, supportive environments where everyone can feel safe and all elements of cultures are celebrated in your presence.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, we can bring the values of justice and equity into our practice, advocating to dismantle health disparities which impact our clients.



**\*\*Note:** Please see the 'event details' page for a few Juneteenth celebrations in the D.C. area

# FINDING THEIR VOICE: AUTISM THERAPY FOR KIDS

Created by Matt Eggers

A University of Missouri researcher has adapted a traditional therapy approach to better support children with autism by actively involving them in planning their interventions. Sounds like a good idea to me!

Melanie Tkach, an occupational therapist and assistant professor, usually witnessed caregivers leading strategy development during intervention sessions. However, she's now including children directly in these conversations through telehealth meetings conducted in their homes.

During these virtual sessions, children set personal goals, such as remembering to pack their iPad or brush their teeth. They work *with* their caregiver(s) to find solutions. Tkach's goal is to work on children's problem-solving skills so that when challenges inevitably arise, they can confront the issue independently.

She found that giving children a voice in their therapy not only increased their engagement, but also helped them develop personalized strategies. For example, one girl learned to tie her shoes by creating her own steps, quickly mastering the skill and feeling proud. Overall, Tkach's approach showed positive results, with children reaching their goals more effectively when involved in their therapy planning. She says that letting children take an active role fosters greater independence and success. The remote format also made the sessions more comfortable for a lot of the kids. Her findings are published in the Occupational Therapy Journal of Research. Wear that OT lens proudly!

## Resources:

Consiglio, B. (2025, May 20). University of Missouri researcher adopts new approach to support children with autism through therapy planning. University of Missouri. Retrieved from <https://showme.missouri.edu/2025/giving-children-with-autism-a-voice-in-their-own-therapy-helps-them-overcome-everyday-challenges-new-study-finds/>



## Matt's Movement Trivia

**An injury to the fibular nerve would most likely result in which of the following?**

- a. plantar fasciitis
- b. circumduction gait pattern
- c. foot drop
- d. Trendelenburg gait pattern

Answer: c. foot drop

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS:

## KELECHI ENWEREZOR

Meet Kelechi! Not only is he a hard-working OTD student, he is also the artist of SOTA's **first-ever** OT-themed comic in this month's issue!

Kelechi says that he always knew he wanted to help people in healthcare. Initially exploring PT, it was only after volunteering at a hospital, working in a nursing home, and experiencing his own elbow injury that Kelechi realized occupational therapy was a more perfect fit for his values. OT combined Kelechi's passion for supporting recovery and modifying activities to promote independence.

Kelechi is especially interested in working in hospital or rehab settings, such as outpatient and acute care. The program has helped him appreciate the power of helping someone return to what matters most to them.

In his free time, he enjoys drawing, painting, and photography, as well as spending time outdoors and going on walks. If you hear a "crunch" from the back of class, blame Kelechi because his favorite study snack is tortilla chips.



## ACACIA WILLIAMS

Kay, Kay, what can we say? How about "Hello!" and "Welcome to SOTA!" Kay shared that her interest in OT was inspired by her nephew, who has autism. OT played a significant role in her nephew's ability to reintegrate into the musical field, ultimately leading to a performance on Broadway. *Whoa!*

When asked about her areas of interest, she expressed a particular fascination with neuro, hand therapy, and senior nursing facilities. She also mentioned that one of the most interesting experiences she's had in the OTD program was participating in UE cadaver lab. Kay found it remarkable to observe the complexity of the human hand and how its intricate structures work together to facilitate functional movement. Well said! Kay also finds joy in learning about the historical meaning of the word "occupation" and its cultural translations. Outside of OT, Kay has hobbies such as content creation, writing, recording music, and staying connected with friends through FaceTime. For study snacks, she favors sweet plantain chips, kiwis, and hummus.



# SOTA VALUES: VOLUNTEERING IS ADVOCACY!

Created by Matt Eggers

## Our Mission:

**To advocate for the profession of occupational therapy and foster a space for student leadership, development, and service to the community.**

SOTA is looking to organize and reprioritize our services within the community.

Firstly, a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you who has dedicated your time and energy to volunteer since joining the program. Your commitment and selflessness have made a difference in peoples lives, and we couldn't be more proud and grateful for your support. With that said, volunteer numbers have been low as of late. This is an issue because “*service to the community*” is such a large part of our mission. The E-board is hard at work to solve this dilemma. One possibility being discussed is the implementation of a new obligatory scheduling system to ensure consistent volunteer participation and effective resource allocation. The hope is to construct and inspire a culture of service and civic engagement as SOTA's foundation. Keep in mind that although this idea has been discussed, it's not yet active.

In the meantime, we need your input. Please follow the link below (inside the yellow box) and fill out a very short GW SOTA: Community Service Feedback form.

## **GW SOTA: Community Service Feedback Form:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSczh6A\\_YpSUAScS4S3I1zESnEZz9DOsNfT-YH6hXTKHMLEnZw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSczh6A_YpSUAScS4S3I1zESnEZz9DOsNfT-YH6hXTKHMLEnZw/viewform)

**\*\*Note:** If you are unable to click or copy this link, please email either of our Community Service reps (Bonny or Sam) and ask them to share the SOTA Community Service Feedback Form. Their contact info is on the last page.

**“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”  
- Elizabeth Andrew, American author**

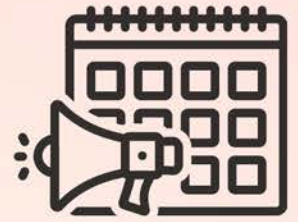


**Volunteering connects you to others.  
Volunteering is good for your mind and body.  
Volunteering can advance your career.  
Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life.**








# UPCOMING EVENTS

Created by Matt Eggers

Check back each month to see what's up and coming this month in SOTA!



# JUNE 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 National Egg Day 	4	5	6	7 WorldPride Parade D.C. 
8	9 SOTA E-Board 12p	10 Nicole's Bday! 	11	12	13 	14 Flag Day 
15 Father's Day	16 Raya's Bday! 	17	18	19 Juneteenth 	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Hijra New Year	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

## JUNE 2025 EVENT DETAILS:

### Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> @ 2p: WorldPride Parade

- Details:
  - Join one of the biggest parties of the year. 2025 marks the 50th Anniversary of Pride celebrations in Washington, DC! Our nation's capital will host WorldPride 2025 and share this momentous and exciting milestone with our international community.
  - [worldpridedc.org](http://worldpridedc.org)

Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>: Happy birthday, Nicole!!!

Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>: Happy birthday, Raya!!!

### Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup> @ 11a-5p: Juneteenth Celebrations

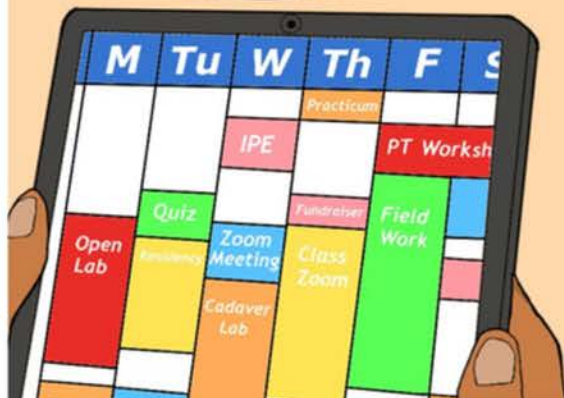
- Details:
  - There are many ways to celebrate Juneteenth in the D.C. area
  - More information can be found at [juneteenthdc.org](http://juneteenthdc.org) and [nationalharbor.com/events/annual-events/celebrate-juneteenth/](http://nationalharbor.com/events/annual-events/celebrate-juneteenth/) if interested.



# OCCUPATION OVERLOAD



So many occupations, so little executive functioning...



My only occupation right now is *surviving!*



# SOTA E-BOARD CONTACTS



## Executive Board Members '25-'26



**President:** Emma Screws ----- [emma.screws@gwmail.gwu.edu](mailto:emma.screws@gwmail.gwu.edu)

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