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Bonus!

DIVERSITEA



honoring black lives and black champions

DIVERSITY



MOYO B. TILLERY PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT

Graduated from Duke DPT in 2011 and is now an assistant professor and director of clinical education at Elon University. While at Duke, she took on a role as the Diversity Task Force president. She has since served as a Summer Discovery Program alumni mentor and continues to bring awareness to DEI issues in our profession, engaging in the NABPT (National Association of Black Physical Therapists), and participating in the Rizing Tide selection committee to support BIPOC students seeking residencies in the profession. She holds a number of memberships within the APTA including the Manual, Education, and Occupational Health interest groups.

VILMA EVANS, PT, ED.D

Vilma Evans was one of the first black physical therapists in America. At a time when black students were not allowed to enroll in physical therapy programs, Evans went on to obtain her physical therapy certificate, master's in physical therapy, and a doctorate in education. She has been recognized as advocate for minority representation in our profession. She held a number of leadership positions within the field including 26 years as Director of Physical Therapy at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Danville, IL. She served on committees within the APTA and was a member of the APTA sections for education, geriatrics, and health policy and administration. She believed getting involved within an organization was the best way to bring about change. "If you want change in your organization, you have to get involved."



DEANDREA BULLOCK, PT, DPT, CCI, CDP & REMI ONIFADE, PT, DPT, M.ED.



Dr. Bullock and Dr. Onifade are the co-founders of the National Association of Black Physical Therapists. The NABPT was founded to support underrepresented minorities in the physical therapy profession with the hopes of increasing representation within the field, leadership, and creating community. Dr. Bullock is a graduate from Emory's DPT program, works in the neuro setting and enjoys mentorship and service opportunities. Dr. Onifade is also a graduate of Emory's DPT program, is currently a clinic director, and was integral in creating a bridge program between Spelman College and Auburn University for students to pursue allied health.



JERRY BENTLEY, MS, OTR, FAOTA

Jerry Bentley is the co-founder of AOTA's Black Occupational Therapy Caucus in 1974 and has been advocating for issues related to social justice for decades. The NBOTC focuses on fostering representation, creating avenues for communication, and promotes and encourages leadership and equal employment opportunities for black occupational therapy practitioners and students. She continues to champion for student growth through leadership development and addressing minority recruitment in the profession.

GILLIAN RAI MS.ED., OTR/L, RYT

Dr. Rai is an occupational therapists, educator, consultant, coach, and speaker. She is a community and social service advocate and is passionate about diversity and inclusion and addressing inequities in education and health. She owns and founded a holistic occupational therapy practice and is also an adjunct professor at NYU. She has a passion for empowering families and creating opportunities for improved quality of life through coaching, advocating for occupational justice, and promoting self-efficacy. Dr. Rai has provided advisory assistance to both domestic and international health associations.



ADAM CISROE PEARSON, OTD, OTR/L

Dr. Pearson is an instructor at Washington University and the chief operating officer at Peter and Paul Community Services (PPCS). He previously held a position leading clinicians in efforts to provide occupational therapy to unhoused individuals and he now oversees the 7 other programs at PPCS. He is an advocate for local and national policies that advance affordable housing for those seeking it. His publications center around housing, disability and policy. He applies an OT lens toward housing equity and parity.



Prompt Submissions



Tell us about an influential Black leader (that you know personally or not) that has inspired you. How has this leader influenced you to advocate and take action for diversity in your community, future profession, or beyond?

What does Black History Month mean to you?

Share what Lunar New Year means to you.

An influential Black leader that has inspired me is Nikole Hannah-Jones, acclaimed journalist and author of the 1619 project. During a time when teaching Black history is being legislative out of schools, she has created multiple forms of media to educate and teach that Black history is American History. She has also stood up to public and political backlash with professionalism and determination and I admire that so much!

What does black history month mean to me? To steal a quote, "Black history is celebrated all year, February is just our anniversary!"

Lunar New Year: I always think of the word "New" as a time to change, shake things up and progress. Set new goals and find new challenges.

- Dr. Gary Johnson

Lasting Impacts



ROLE MODELS: MORGAN AND ALEXIS

There are two folks that have inspired the most along my journey to PT school: Alexis Lacewell and Morgan Nettles. Both are Appalachian State grads and alumni of the Appalachian and the Community Together (ACT) student organization like myself. Alexis was the one who originally mentioned her involvement in ACT to me- I never heard about it until late sophomore year. By my senior year, I held a leadership position and considered the organization my favorite and most impactful portion of my collegiate career (side note: also met my gf of 2+ years through ACT lol) I thank Alexis for outstanding work at App State and look up to her. I did everything I could those final two years to be just like her: ACT leader, PT SIG leader, potential Duke student, EVERYTHING. She is an icon and I can't wait to reconnect with her.

Morgan was the ACT leader the year I joined and instantly became one of my best friends, especially when I found out she was pre-PT as well. She inspired me to stay active in my communities and always consider outlets for social justice in whatever position I end up in. Morgan is now a second-year DPT student at Winston-Salem State University and I was ecstatic to see her at the APTANC Fall Conference last year (pictured below). I just know she's going to do amazing things in her career.

Morgan and Alexis are impressive people just from their credentials alone. When you factor in the reality of being Black women in white-dominated spaces, both at App State and in PT school, they become superstars. They are role models, heroes, agents of change; regardless word you choose to describe them, I'm just happy I've been able to know and learn from them.

Lucas Saacks

