

Level I Fieldwork Collaboration
Between the
American Occupational Therapy Association
And
Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April

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Background Information

About the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

AOTA represents 45,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students who are studying occupational therapy. The mission of AOTA is to “advance the quality, availability, use, and support of occupational therapy through standard setting, advocacy, education, and research on behalf of its members and the public.” AOTA’s vision statement is that “the contributions of occupational therapy to health, wellness, productivity, and quality of life are widely used, understood, and valued by society.”

About Rebuilding Together with Christmas In April (RT)

RT has 260 affiliates across the United States serving 865 communities. These affiliates are community-based nonprofits that organize volunteers who make needed repairs to the homes of low-income elderly and disabled residents. These quality-of-life repairs enable the homeowners to remain in their homes longer and safer. Many of the homeowners want to age in place, but their home may not be accessible or have the assistive devices they need to get around. RT volunteers may install hand railings, better lighting, nonskid strips in bathtubs, grab bars, wheelchair ramps, and more that will ease their difficult daily activities.

Why Collaboration Between AOTA and RT?

Occupational therapists are part of a health care profession that is dedicated to helping individuals gain the skills needed to participate more fully and independently in their activities of daily living. RT is committed to assisting older homeowners to age in place in a safe manner. Occupational therapists can help facilitate this goal. This is a great partnership as occupational therapists bring knowledge and expertise about the aging process to the house and homeowner assessment. Rather than just looking at the house from a repairs needed perspective, an occupational therapist is able to assist the RT House Captain determine what modifications and assistive devices the homeowner might need now or in the near future.

Value of an Occupational Therapy Student Affiliation with RT

Occupational therapy students are the future practitioners. The opportunity for students to be involved with RT will allow them to have exposure to a community-based organization. It will allow the students to put to use their new found knowledge in aging, disability, home assessments, and home modifications. It will provide them with real life, hands-on experience in an emerging practice area. Any occupational therapy student who has been trained in activity/task analysis and who has completed an assessment course (or has had course content covering the basic components of assessment) can participate in this Level I Fieldwork experience.

The Purpose of this Packet

In this packet, occupational therapy educational programs and affiliates of RT will find all they need to establish an agreement between their programs. The packet provides the basic information that RT affiliates and occupational therapy educational programs will be able to model their Level I Fieldwork agreements in a way that will meet their program needs.

Definition of Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is the health care profession dedicated to helping individuals regain or achieve the ability to function more independently in their communities, schools, homes, and at work. Occupational therapy intervention helps people master the necessary skills to enable them to lead productive and satisfying lives.

Age-related health problems or disabilities in general can have a sudden onset, such as with a stroke or an accident, or a gradual onset such as with progressive diseases like arthritis, multiple sclerosis, or diabetes. By introducing innovative techniques and equipment, occupational therapy can show these individuals how to perform daily self-care, leisure, and work activities more independently. Safety is another concern that occupational therapy addresses. An individual's risk for falls, especially in the home environment, can be dramatically reduced through occupational therapy intervention.

Community-Based Level I Fieldwork Experiences

The goal of Level I Fieldwork is to introduce students to occupational therapy practice possibilities. Through the Level I process students should develop a basic comfort level with and understanding of the needs of individuals, groups, and communities with whom they are working. These experiences are not intended to be independent, but rather should occur under the supervision of a variety of professionals. Supervisors can include but are not limited to occupational therapists, architects, teachers, engineers, psychologists, nurses, legislators, and physical therapists.

Establishing a Level I Fieldwork experience with Rebuilding Together will expose students to a community-based setting. The goals of Rebuilding Together mesh very nicely with occupational therapy. Both bring unique abilities and skills to this setting and are committed to keeping individuals functioning in their community. This is an excellent opportunity for occupational therapy students to think “outside of the box” and see how they can interact and collaborate with individuals who do not have a medical background. This will also facilitate behavior that is entrepreneurial.

In the last several years, there has been a renewed emphasis in the occupational therapy profession to return to community-based settings. It is felt that this is a major area for future employment. As the profession moves to entry-level postbaccalaureate degrees, occupational therapists will have increased confidence in being able to assume community-based therapist roles.

Expectations of Student Participation

Expectations of Level I Fieldwork student participation in a Rebuilding Together experience include:

- Demonstration of professional behaviors
- Ability to follow through on proper procedures/protocols for designated job(s)
- Submit necessary documentation in a timely manner
- Coordinate schedule with appropriate persons
- Complete any required training prior to beginning the fieldwork experience
- If unsure of role or expectations, discuss with supervisor

Suggested Student Roles

1. Prior to home repair days, perform home safety inspections. Interview homeowners, assess needs for home safety, and make recommendations to house captains that will improve the safety and independence of the homeowner and residents.
 - a. Recommendations should be in collaboration with the homeowners so that they are in agreement with any recommendations.
 - b. This is not a patient treatment model. Observation of the homeowner's routines and demonstration of alternate methods is acceptable. Hands on intervention is not.
2. Provide *Home Safety Tip Sheet* to homeowners and review the materials with them.
3. Assist in the home repair days (generally the last weekend in April), making final recommendations or assisting with the home safety recommendations such as placement of grab bars, removal of tripping hazards, etc.
4. Redesign or create forms or brochures related to the program that would be helpful to target audiences. This should be coordinated with the specific Rebuilding Together affiliate. These could include:
 - a. Flyers to encourage qualified homeowners to apply to the program.
 - b. Materials to assist house captains in addressing home safety needs or when to utilize an occupational therapist (or occupational therapy student) to identify and make recommendations about home safety.
 - c. Checklists or tip sheets for homeowners about home safety.
 - d. Promotional information or articles to encourage occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants to volunteer their skills.
5. Provide presentations to community groups about simple modifications that can make a home safer so that residents who are elderly or disabled can continue to live in their homes with greater independence and safety. Let the audience know how Rebuilding Together and future occupational therapy professionals are working together to provide information and expertise to make needed repairs, especially those that promote safety, to homeowners who need assistance and qualify for the program.

Sample Goals/Objectives for Occupational Therapy Students

1. Students will identify and review appropriate resources about home modification, accessibility, falls prevention, and other related topics to prepare for this Level I Fieldwork experience.
2. Students will individually or in pairs interview a minimum of three homeowners or residents to identify needs related to safety and independence in the home.
3. Students will provide house captains with a list of suggested recommendations to enhance homeowner safety and independence. Suggestions should include specific information on placement of grab bars and railings if appropriate.
4. Students will review the *Home Safety Tip Sheet* or related materials with a minimum of three homeowners or family members.
5. Students will identify an additional role for students or occupational therapy professionals within the Rebuilding Together program and make recommendations to strengthen and improve this Level I Fieldwork experience.
6. Where possible, students will review the use of adaptive equipment or other modifications with the homeowners after the equipment has been installed or changes have been made.

Supervision

Students participating in this Level I Fieldwork supervision may be supervised by occupational therapists from their educational program, other occupational therapists from the community, or staff/volunteers from the local affiliate of Rebuilding Together. During a Level I Fieldwork experience, the supervision does not need to be provided by an occupational therapist. Who provides the supervision will be decided between the local affiliate and the occupational therapy educational program. In addition, there will be agreement on amount and type of supervision that will be provide. This can vary depending upon the tasks being performed and the competency of the students participating in the fieldwork.

The “Professional Behavior Competence Document” is one tool that can be used to evaluate student performance. Occupational therapy educational programs are welcome to use whatever format they wish; however, there must be a formal mechanism for evaluation of student performance.

Recommended Resources

- American Occupational Therapy Association; *Consumer Fact Sheets*; www.aota.org/featured/area6/links/link02.asp
- A Blueprint for Action: A Resource for Promoting Home Modifications (August 1997) <http://www.huduser.org/publications/destech/blueprin.html>
- Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines; <http://www.hud.gov/fhe/fhefhag.html>
- National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification; <http://www.homemods.org>
- Principles of Universal Design; http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/univ_design/princ_overview.htm
- Rebuilding Together; www.rebuildingtogether.org

Home Safety Checklist

Use this list to identify fall hazards and accessibility issues of the homeowner and family members. Home modification strategies on the reverse side of this page can help prioritize your work. Underline or use a highlighter to note problems and add comments.

1. EXTERIOR ENTRANCES AND EXITS

- Note condition of walk and drive surface; existence of curb cuts
- Note handrail condition, right and left sides
- Note light level for driveway, walk, porch
- Check door threshold height
- Note ability to use knob, lock, key, mailbox, peephole, and package shelf
- Do door and window locks work?

2. INTERIOR DOORS, STAIRS, HALLS

- Note height of door threshold, knob and hinge types; clear width door opening; determine direction that door swings
- Note presence of floor level changes
- Note hall width, adequate for walker/wheelchair
- Determine stair flight run: straight or curved
- Note stair rails: condition, right and left side
- Examine light level, clutter hazards
- Note floor surface texture and contrast

3. BATHROOM

- Are basin and tub faucets, shower control and drain plugs manageable?
- Are hot water pipes covered?
- Is mirror height appropriate, sit and stand?
- Note ability reach shelf above, below basin
- Note ability to step in and out of the bath and shower
- Can resident use bath bench in tub or shower?
- Note toilet height; ability to reach paper; flush; come from sit to stand posture
- Is space available for caregiver to assist?

4. KITCHEN

- Note overall light level, task lighting
- Note sink and counter heights
- Note wall and floor storage shelf heights
- Are undersink hot water pipes covered?
- Is there under counter knee space?
- Is there a nearby surface to rest hot foods on when removed from oven?
- Note stove control location (rear or front)

5. LIVING, DINING, BEDROOM

- Chair, sofa, bed heights allow sitting or standing?
- Do rugs have non-slip pad or rug tape?
- Chair available with arm rests?
- Able to turn on light, radio, TV, place a phone call from bed, chair, and sofa?

6. LAUNDRY

- Able to hand-wash and hang clothes to dry?
- Able to access automatic washer/dryer?

7. TELEPHONE AND DOOR

- Phone jack location near bed, sofa, chair?
- Able to get to phone, dial, hear caller?
- Able to identify visitors, hear doorbell?
- Able to reach and empty mailbox?
- Wears neck/wrist device to obtain emergency help?

8. STORAGE SPACE

- Able to reach closet rods and hooks, open bureau drawers?
- Is there a light inside the closet?

9. WINDOWS

- Opening mechanism at 42 inches from floor?
- Lock accessible, easy to operate?
- Sill height above floor level?

10. ELECTRIC OUTLETS AND CONTROLS

- Sufficient outlets?
- Outlet height, wall locations
- Low vision/sound warnings available?
- Extension cord hazard?

11. HEAT, LIGHT, VENTILATION, SECURITY, CARBON MONOXIDE, WATER TEMP CONTROL

- Are there smoke/CO detectors and a fire extinguisher?
- Thermometer displays easily readable?
- Accessible environmental controls?
- Pressure balance valve available?
- Note rooms where poor light level exists
- Able to open windows; slide patio doors?
- Able to open drapes or curtains?

COMMENTS:

Home Modification Suggestions

HELP PREVENT FALLS: *Use this list to prioritize work tasks. Leave a copy of this list with the family so they can make further improvements.*

1. EXTERIOR ENTRANCES AND EXITS

- Increase lighting at entry area
- Install stair rails on both sides
- Install door lever handles; double-bolt lock
- Install beveled, no step, no trip threshold
- Remove screen or storm door if needed
- Create surface to place packages when opening door
- Install peephole on exterior door
- Repair holes, uneven joints on walkway
- Provide non-slip finish to walkway surface
- Add ramp

2. INTERIOR DOORS, HALLS, STAIRS

- Create clear pathways between rooms
- Apply color contrast or texture change at top and bottom stair edges
- Install door lever handle
- Install swing-clear hinges to widen doorway. Minimum width: 32 inches
- Install beveled thresholds (max 1/2 inch)
- Replace or add non-slip surface on steps
- Repair or install stair handrails on both sides

3. BATHROOM

- Install swing-clear hinges to widen doorway. Minimum width: 32 inches
- Install secure wall reinforcement and place grab bars at toilet, bath and shower
- Install adjustable-height shower head
- Install non-slip strips in bath/shower
- Secure floor bathmat with non-slip, double-sided rug tape
- Elevate toilet height by adding portable seat or raising toilet base on a pedestal
- Adapt flush handle or install flush sensor
- Adapt or relocate toilet paper dispenser
- Round counter corners to provide safety
- Insulate hot water pipes if exposed
- Create sitting knee clearance at basin by removing vanity door and shelves underneath
- Install mirror for sitting or standing view
- Install good-quality non-glare lighting
- Install shower with no threshold if bathing abilities are severely limited

4. KITCHEN

- Increase task lighting at sink, stove, etc.
- Install D-type cupboard door handles
- Install adjustable shelving to increase access to upper cabinets
- Increase access to under counter storage space by installing pull-out units
- Insulate hot water pipes if exposed
- Install hot-proof surface near oven
- Install switches and outlets at front of counter
- Install pressure-balanced, temperature-regulated, lever faucets

- Create sitting knee clearance under work sites by removing doors or shelves
- Improve color contrast of cabinet and counters surface edges for those with low vision
- Add tactile and color-contrasted controls for those with low vision

5. LIVING, DINING, BEDROOM

- Widen or clear pathways within each room by rearranging furniture
- Secure throw and area rug edges with double-sided tape
- Improve access to and from chairs and beds by inserting risers under furniture legs
- Use side bed rail or chairs with armrests
- Install telephone jack near chair or bed
- Enlarge lamp switch or install touch-control lamp at bedside
- Install adjustable closet rods, shelving and light source for better storage access
- Install vertical pole adjacent to chair and sofa
- Raise furniture to appropriate height using leg extender products
- Install uniform level floor surfaces using wood, tile or low-pile rugs

6. LAUNDRY

- Build a counter for sorting and folding clothes
- Adjust clothesline to convenient height
- Relocate laundry appliances

7. TELEPHONE AND DOOR

- Install phone jacks near bed, sofa, and chair
- Install peephole at convenient height
- Install flashing light or sound amplifier to indicate ringing doorbell for those with visual or hearing problems
- Install mailbox at accessible height

8. STORAGE SPACE

- Install lights inside closet
- Install adjustable closet rods and shelves
- Install bi-fold or pocket doors

9. WINDOWS

- Install handles and locks that are easy to grip, placed at appropriate heights

10. ELECTRICAL OUTLETS AND CONTROLS

- Install light fixtures or outlet for lamps
- Install switches at top and bottom of stairs

11. HEAT, AIR, LIGHT, SECURITY, WATER TEMP, CARBON MONOXIDE CONTROLS

- Install smoke/CO detectors, fire extinguishers
- Increase residents' access to environmental control systems

Matched Rebuilding Together Affiliates with Occupational Therapy Educational Programs

Rebuilding Together Affiliate Located Nearby	School Name	City	State
none	University of Puerto Rico	San Juan	PR
Springfield, MA	Bay Path College	Longmeadow	MA
"	American International College	Springfield	MA
"	Springfield College	Springfield	MA
Worcester, MA	Worcester State College	Worcester	MA
Boston, MA	Tufts University-Boston School of Occupational Therapy	Medford	MA
"	Boston University, Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences	Boston	MA
none	University of New Hampshire	Durham	NH
Portland, ME	University of New England	Biddeford	ME
"	Lewiston-Auburn College, University of Southern Maine	Lewiston	ME
Hartford, New Britain, or Manchester - CT	University of Hartford	West Hartford	CT
none	Quinnipiac University	Hamden	CT
Newark, NJ	Seton Hall University	South Orange	NJ
Newark or Woodbridge	Kean University	Union	NJ
none	Richard Stockton College of New Jersey	Pomona	NJ
Manhattan	New York University	New York	NY
Manhattan	Columbia University	New York	NY
Bronx or Stamford/Greenwich, CT	Mercy College	Dobbs Ferry	NY
Bronx or Manhattan	Dominican College	Orangeburg	NY
Brooklyn	Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus	Brooklyn	NY
Brooklyn	State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn (SUNY-Downstate)	Brooklyn	NY
Brooklyn	York College, The City University of New York	Jamaica	NY
Long Island	New York Institute of Technology	Old Westbury	NY
Long Island	Touro College	Bay Shore	NY
Long Island	State University of New York at Stony Brook	Stony Brook	NY
Albany	Sage Colleges	Troy	NY
Mohawk Valley	Utica College of Syracuse University	Utica	NY
Buffalo	D'Youville College	Buffalo	NY
"	University at Buffalo, State University of New York	Buffalo	NY
none	Keuka College	Keuka Park	NY
none	Ithaca College	Ithaca	NY
Pittsburgh	Chatham College	Pittsburgh	PA
"	University of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	PA
"	Duquesne University	Pittsburgh	PA
none	Saint Francis University	Loretto	PA
none	Gannon University	Erie	PA
none	Mount Aloysius College	Cresson	PA
none	Elizabethtown College	Elizabethtown	PA
none	Pennsylvania State University, Mont Alto Campus	Mont Alto	PA

Rebuilding Together Affiliate Located Nearby	School Name	City	State
none	University of Scranton	Scranton	PA
none	College Misericordia	Dallas	PA
Philadelphia	University of the Sciences in Philadelphia	Philadelphia	PA
"	Thomas Jefferson University	Philadelphia	PA
"	Temple University	Philadelphia	PA
"	Philadelphia University	Philadelphia	PA
None	Alvernia College	Reading	PA
Washington, DC	Howard University	Washington	DC
Baltimore	Towson University	Towson	MD
Loudoun County	Shenandoah University	Winchester	VA
Harrisonburg/Rockingham	James Madison University	Harrisonburg	VA
Richmond	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond	VA
Roanoke	College of Health Sciences	Roanoke	VA
None	West Virginia University	Morgantown	WV
None	Winston-Salem State University	Winston-Salem	NC
Wake County	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Chapel Hill	NC
None	East Carolina University	Greenville	NC
None	Lenoir-Rhyne College	Hickory	NC
St. Paul's Parish	Medical University of South Carolina	Charleston	SC
None	Brenau University	Gainesville	GA
None	Medical College of Georgia	Augusta	GA
Columbus	Medical College of Georgia at Columbus State University	Columbus	GA
None	University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences	St. Augustine	FL
None	Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	Tallahassee	FL
None	University of Florida	Gainesville	FL
None	Barry University	Miami Shores	FL
Greater Miami	Florida International University	Miami	FL
Broward County	Nova Southeastern University	Ft. Lauderdale	FL
None	Florida Gulf Coast University	Fort Myers	FL
Birmingham	University of Alabama at Birmingham	Birmingham	AL
None	Tuskegee University	Tuskegee	AL
Montgomery	Alabama State University	Montgomery	AL
Mobile	University of South Alabama	Mobile	AL
Nashville	Tennessee State University	Nashville	TN
"	Belmont University	Nashville	TN
Cleveland County	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	Chattanooga	TN
None	Milligan College	Milligan College	TN
Memphis	University of Tennessee Health Science Center	Memphis	TN
Jackson	University of Mississippi Medical Center	Jackson	MS
None	Spalding University	Louisville	KY

Rebuilding Together Affiliate Located Nearby	School Name	City	State
None	Eastern Kentucky University	Richmond	KY
Columbus	Ohio State University	Columbus	OH
None	Medical College of Ohio at Toledo	Toledo	OH
Cleveland	Cleveland State University	Cleveland	OH
None	Xavier University	Cincinnati	OH
None	Shawnee State University	Portsmouth	OH
None	University of Findlay	Findlay	OH
Indianapolis	Indiana University	Indianapolis	IN
Indianapolis	University of Indianapolis	Indianapolis	IN
None	University of Southern Indiana	Evansville	IN
Washtenaw County	Eastern Michigan University	Ypsilanti	MI
Oakland County, Washtenaw County	Wayne State University	Detroit	MI
Saginaw	Baker College of Flint	Flint	MI
Saginaw	Saginaw Valley State University	University Center	MI
None	Western Michigan University	Kalamazoo	MI
None	Grand Valley State University	Allendale	MI
Quad Cities	Saint Ambrose University	Davenport	IA
Milwaukee	Concordia University Wisconsin	Mequon	WI
Milwaukee	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Milwaukee	WI
Milwaukee	Mount Mary College	Milwaukee	WI
None	University of Wisconsin-Madison	Madison	WI
None	University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse	LaCrosse	WI
Twin Cities	College of St. Catherine	St. Paul	MN
Twin Cities	University of Minnesota	Minneapolis	MN
None	College of St. Scholastica	Duluth	MN
None	University of South Dakota	Vermillion	SD
None	University of North Dakota	Grand Forks	ND
Bismarck/Fargo/Mandan Area	University of Mary	Bismarck	ND
Chicago	Governors State University	University Park	IL
None	Midwestern University	Downers Grove	IL
Chicago	University of Illinois at Chicago	Chicago	IL
Chicago	Rush University	Chicago	IL
Chicago	Chicago State University	Chicago	IL
St. Louis	Saint Louis University	St. Louis	MO
St. Louis	Washington University School of Medicine	St. Louis	MO
St. Louis	Maryville University	St. Louis	MO
Kansas City	Rockhurst University	Kansas City	MO
None	University of Missouri-Columbia	Columbia	MO
Kansas City, MO	University of Kansas Medical Center	Kansas City	KS
None	Newman University	Wichita	KS

Rebuilding Together Affiliate Located Nearby	School Name	City	State
Omaha	College of Saint Mary	Omaha	NE
Omaha	Creighton University	Omaha	NE
New Orleans	Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center	New Orleans	LA
Calcasieu Area	Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Shreveport Campus	Shreveport	LA
Calcasieu Area	University of Louisiana at Monroe	Monroe	LA
None	University of Central Arkansas	Conway	AR
Oklahoma City	University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center	Oklahoma City	OK
Fort Worth	Texas Woman's University	Denton	TX
none	University of Texas School of Allied Health Sciences at Galveston	Galveston	TX
San Antonio	University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio	San Antonio	TX
Harlingen	University of Texas Pan-American	Edinburg	TX
Amarillo	Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Amarillo Campus	Amarillo	TX
none	Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center	Lubbock	TX
Odessa	Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Odessa Campus	Odessa	TX
El Paso	University of Texas at El Paso	El Paso	TX
Denver	Colorado State University	Fort Collins	CO
none	Idaho State University	Pocatello	ID
Salt Lake City	University of Utah	Salt Lake City	UT
Phoenix	Arizona School of Health Sciences (Kirksville College)	Mesa	AZ
Phoenix	Midwestern University-Glendale Campus	Glendale	AZ
Albuquerque	University of New Mexico	Albuquerque	NM
South Central LA	University of Southern California	Los Angeles	CA
Long Beach	California State University, Dominguez Hills	Carson	CA
Riverside	Loma Linda University	Loma Linda	CA
Oakland	Samuel Merritt College	Oakland	CA
Petaluma	Dominican University of California	San Rafael	CA
South Bay	San Jose State University	San Jose	CA
Portland	Pacific University	Forest Grove	OR
Seattle	University of Washington	Seattle	WA
Tacoma	University of Puget Sound	Tacoma	WA
Spokane	Eastern Washington University	Spokane	WA

To contact a local Rebuilding Together Affiliate please call 1-800-473-4229 or go to www.rebuildingtogether.org

For contact information for the nearest occupational therapy education program go to www.aota.org/nonmembers/area13/links/LINK28.asp