

Our winner for the 11th Annual Undergraduate Research & Scholarship Symposium (URSS) held on April 3, 2019 was:

Developing Occupational Identity in Refugee Youth

Anna Fish

Rangos School of Health Sciences | Occupational Therapy Faculty Advisor: Jamie Munoz, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT:

This research focuses on identifying challenges that refugee youth face, along with some of the approaches to overcome these challenges with an Occupational Therapy perspective. Specifically my research focuses on the challenges facing refugee youth's of adjusting to a new home and school environment. To overcome this challenge, my research focuses on implementing Occupational Therapy related health and educational activities. The goal of these activities is to develop occupational identity in refugee youth and improve their occupational roles as a student, family member and friend. The health and educational activities centered around self-identity, love, goal setting, teamwork, conflict resolution and communication. Throughout the semester, I was able to plan and implement these activities with refugee youth at ARYSE's after-school program. ARYSE is a non-profit organization that focuses on supporting immigrants to become academically successful and engaged members of the community. Overall, understanding the challenges that refugee youth face, and implementing activities to overcome these challenges with the refugees at ARYSE gave me a better understanding of the role that an Occupational Therapist can have with the refugee population.

Our winner for the 6th Annual Graduate Student Research Symposium (GSRS) held on March 15, 2019 was:

Novel comprehensive treatment program for a homeless population suffering with acute and chronic pain

Nicole Bensen

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Faculty Advisor: Paula Sammarone Turocy, Ed.D, LAT, ATC

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ABSTRACT:

With the opioid epidemic on the rise, it is paramount to explore treatment options that comparably decrease acute and/or chronic pain but do not increase require the use of opioids or other narcotics. At the Washington City Mission drug-free Pain Clinic, the goal is just that- to alleviate musculoskeletal pain in a population of homeless adult shelter residents who have previously abused opioids and other legal and illegal substances. This highly vulnerable patient population seeks care once a week to help them manage their pain, benefitting from services such as positional release manual therapy, alpha stimulation, traditional physical therapy, and

prayer. This unique menu of treatments provides patients with consistent care provided by an inter-professional team made up of nursing, athletic training, physical therapy, and lay volunteer health providers. Since the Clinic's opening in October 2018, 30 patients have received multiple treatments at the drug-free pain clinic receiving a range of one to all four of the available treatments. Each member of this multi-disciplinary group of volunteers works to create a positive and spiritually-driven healing environment for the homeless patients sheltered in the Mission without the use of drugs. Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that any other clinic provides these similar services with this same approach to care. While patient feedback and anecdotal evidence suggests that this treatment approach is effective and valued, it is crucial that we examine the methods and outcomes moving forward in order to assess the efficacy of the program so as to confirm suspected outcomes and determine other methods to better aid this high-risk homeless population