



Dr. Rachel Thibeault O.C. receives honorary Doctor of Science

First UBC Honorary Doctorate to an Occupational Therapist. The conferring of Doctor of Science, honoris causa on Dr. Rachel Thibeault on November 27th, 2015 coincides with the UBC Centenary celebrations.

Dr. Thibeault is well known in Canada as an occupational therapist, professor, and community developer, and internationally as an activist for health, well-being and social justice in the global community. Her impressive career of international service is grounded in the founding principles of client-centred occupational therapy, collaboration, respect for human dignity, and the power of occupation to improve health and meaningful participation. Her community-based programs and research in Africa, Asia, and South America are particularly noteworthy as she has co-created small businesses with local youth and adults affected by war and conflict, disease, and disability by introducing novel microcredit programs and using client-centered values to help establish sustainable employment. In Laos, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Zambia, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone she focused on skill development and vocational training programs for girls and women. While advocating for these communities she has helped Canadian occupational therapists recognize the links between social justice and meaningful occupations. She is both a pioneer and advocate for community development and eloquently shares with others ways to restore and sustain social enterprise to promote



Chancellor Lindsey Gordon, left, confers honorary Doctor of Science upon Dr. Rachel Thibeault, OC; applauded by Dr. Martha Piper, President, right.

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FROM THE HEAD

Catherine Backman

This last newsletter of 2015 also marks the conclusion of my time as Head, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. I'm pleased to advise that **Dr. Susan Forwell**, Associate Professor and Associate Head, will step into the role of Department Head effective January 1, 2016. **Dr. Liisa Holsti**, Associate Professor, will assume the role of Associate Head. Sue and Liisa will make a great leadership team to advance the Department's goals in education, research, and service to the university and community.

Dr. Thibeault Continued...

Not surprisingly, Dr. Thibeault has received numerous awards in recognition of her achievements. In 2001 she was awarded the Muriel Driver Lectureship, the highest award given by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists. Her teaching excellence has also been recognized with several awards in 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2008. Most notably, in 2013 Rachel Thibeault was named an Officer of the Order of Canada, for “expanding the boundaries of occupational therapy and advocating for persons with disabilities,” with the following citation extracted from the Order of Canada Archives:

Rachel Thibeault has empowered marginalized people around the world. An occupational therapist and professor at the University of Ottawa, she has developed rehabilitation and social integration programs for landmine survivors, war-affected children, and people living with HIV/AIDS and leprosy. She shares her experiences as a speaker, inspiring a generation of occupational therapists and other professionals to expand their practice beyond traditional boundaries.

During her 3-day visit at UBC, Dr. Thibeault met with Dr. Gavin Stuart, the Vice-Provost Health, and numerous faculty and students. She gave a public lecture to the UBC community titled “Going against the flow: Low-cost, accessible strategies for building resilience” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuoSQ1Gw6Kg>) where she profiled her research on resilience drawing from the fields of psychology, neuroscience and occupational therapy, and explored low-cost, accessible and user-friendly strategies for resilience and well-being. Her visit included a reception for honorary degree recipients and special guests hosted by UBC Chancellor, Lindsey Gordon.

Here is the link to the graduation webcast . President Martha Piper reads Rachel Thibeault’s citation at 26:20 and Rachel’s remarks at congregation at 32:25. You can also fast forward to see our PhD, MSc, MRSc, and MOT graduates.

<http://graduation.ubc.ca/event/live-webcast/event94/>

It was a tremendous honour to host Dr. Rachel Thibeault in Vancouver and celebrate her distinguished achievements. Many students and clinical faculty were inspired by her lecture. We are extremely proud that the University’s tribute committee recognized the important work of occupational therapists and applauded Rachel’s specific contributions to health through occupation. The MOT Class of 2015 was pleased to share their ceremony with Dr. Thibeault.



UBC Chancellor Lindsey Gordon presenting certificate to Dr. Rachel Thibeault at reception for honorary degree recipients November 2015.



Dr Rachel Thibeault, centre, with colleagues from UBC Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, Drs. Bill Miller, Susan Stanton, Catherine Backman, and Susan Forwell



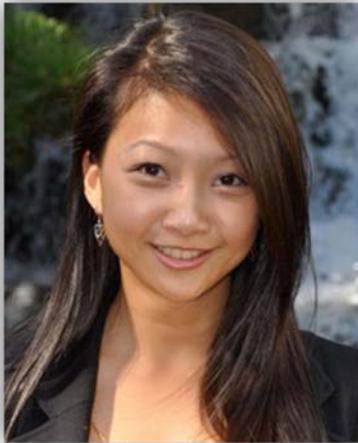
MOT Graduates celebrate with Dr. Thibeault and OSOT Faculty; Dr. Catherine Backman, Dr. Melinda Suto and Dr. Sue Forwell.

Text by Cynthia Lin



Where are the Grads of 2015 going?

MOT GRADUATE: LINH HUYNH



Hometown: Vancouver, BC
Program: Master of

Occupational Therapy, class of 2015.

What's next for you?

I'm working for Vancouver Coastal Health as a casual occupational therapist and am enjoying my time outside of work to reconnect with close friends and family. I recently presented my [capstone research](#) project at an international conference and just submitted the research for publication – very exciting!

What have you enjoyed most about your experience at UBC and specifically your time in your program?

The amazing people I met during my time at UBC have made for lifelong friendships. The opportunity to travel abroad in my program to complete a fieldwork placement in Australia was definitely a lifetime experience.

What's one piece of advice you would offer to incoming students?

Reprioritize – instead of placing grades at the top, consider putting 'fun' and 'experience' at the top.

Have fun and enjoy the process every step of the way – take each opportunity and challenge as a unique learning experience.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years from now?

Happily working as an occupational therapist in community mental health and maybe even private pediatrics.

What's one thing we might be surprised to learn about you?

I went skydiving in Hawaii the summer before starting my program and it was absolutely amazing.

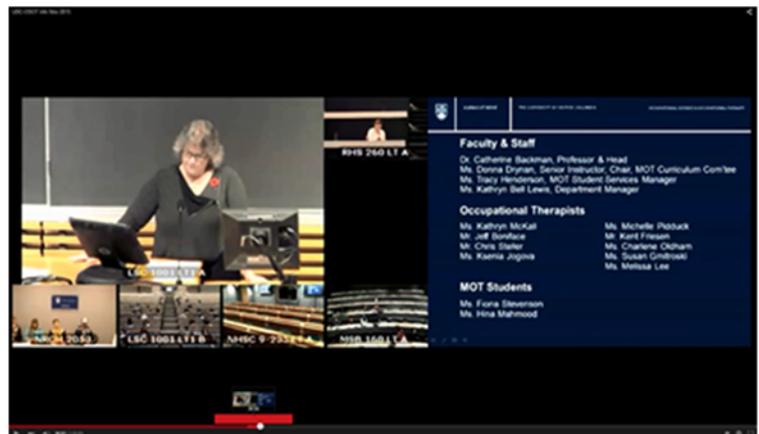
To learn more and to see other profiles please visit the FoM Graduation Web Series

<http://www.med.ubc.ca/fall-grad-2015/>

Kerry Blackadar

UBC Faculty of Medicine Communications Team

Holiday marathon coming up? The OSOT YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/ubcosot/videos> carries all of our videos. Look for Rachel Thibeault's talk "Going Against the Flow" as well as the MOT students' submissions to the gOT Spirit challenge for the past four years. Mini-documentaries on occupational therapy can also be found there.



Never too late to support a cause! Consider contributing to student bursaries and awards, clinical supplies for learning, or research projects. It's easily done online from our web site <http://osot.ubc.ca/> - just click on the hot pink "Donate Now" button!

From the Head Continued...

I remain a Professor in the Department, although I will take an administrative leave beginning February to re-engage with my research activities and take time to update my teaching interests. I'm looking forward to the change of pace! The last four years as Head have been full of opportunities and 'occupational demands.' I've now accumulated more than 11 years as head and I'm sure new energy and ideas will be welcome.

Recently, we have been recruiting for two new Assistant Professors, one to begin in July 2016 and the other to begin in July 2017. We had a deep pool of talented applicants to draw upon and have just completed interviewing 5 impressive candidates. Our future is in good hands! They share an enthusiasm for teaching and sharing their research interests, innovative research accomplishments, and outstanding potential to advance the scholarship of occupational science and occupational therapy. Competitive applicants in today's market not only have a doctoral degree but have complete one or more postdoctoral training programs, accumulated clinical or other experiences relevant to the Department's responsibilities, a growing record of publications, and a record of sharing research through collaborative activities with clinicians, public forums, and/or media interviews. The successful candidates will be announced in the new year. I want to thank **Sarabjeet Charchun**, from Fraser Health, for representing the clinical faculty on the Search Committee, and **Laura Bulk**, PhD student, and **Hina Mahmood**, MOT student, for representing student interests. **Melinda Suto** and **Liisa Holsti** served as academic faculty representatives.

As you'll read elsewhere in the newsletter, occupational therapy made a big splash at the Friday morning ceremony at the University's November Congregation with the conferral of MOT, MRSc, MSc, and PhD degrees, and an honorary doctorate to Dr. **Rachel Thibeault**. Rachel's moving remarks at the ceremony had graduates and their families take notice of the contributions health professionals make to improving lives, every day. A moment of professional pride was shared by all occupational therapists in attendance.



Dr. Rachel Thibeault at the Reception

UBC has accomplished a lot in its first 100 years and continues to be ranked among the top 20 to 40 universities worldwide – depending the authoritative list you read! In this centenary year there are several activities tracing our history and accomplishments. For alumni and friends, the new Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre welcomes you to the Point Grey campus – a place to explore your history on the interactive wall in the lobby, meet a friend for coffee, book an event, view the timeline of landmark events, and more.



2015 MOT graduates at Capstone Reception

From the Head Continued...



Catie Lynch (MOT '15), Melinda Suto & Neysa Hale (MOT '15)

See <http://alumniculture.ubc.ca>. Right next door is the new student union building, The Nest, <http://www.ams.ubc.ca/nest>. UBC student contributions to build this remarkable facility make students the largest donor to the University's start an evolution campaign, which concluded this fall after raising over \$1.6 billion to invest in learning and research.

You were part of the impressive figure. In our 2015 annual fundraising campaign, faculty pledged to match donations to the Department up to \$7500 – and you outpaced us, pledging \$7600! That's over \$15000 that we raised to support student bursaries and awards for our students, the annual Capstone Conference, and the OSOT research initiatives fund. I am grateful to all those who contributed.

Thank you. There are a limited number of bursaries for which MOT students are eligible, and students are very appreciative of financial support. Likewise, it takes time to develop research, and our research initiative fund helps launch new ideas. Last spring, thanks to a contribution from Clinical Professor Emeritus Ginny Fearing, matched by the OSOT research initiative fund, our first grants were awarded (see summer newsletter) and with your support, 2016 will be year two and establish a tradition of scholarship.

This fall we've been happy to support CAOT-BC's public awareness campaign and share the benefits of occupational therapy to promoting health, occupation, and quality of life. This includes participating in a public forum in Kelowna, meeting with politicians, and supporting CAOT-BC members in their local advocacy efforts. As the demand for occupational therapy grows we want to be ready to meet it with well-educated, enthusiastic graduates ready to serve the people of the province. Those of you who are preceptors – or want to be preceptors – are an important part of making the UBC program responsive to client needs and ensuring that we have a province-wide program. Follow **Donna Drynan's** fieldwork blog, often featuring students as guest bloggers, to stay connected with fieldwork news.



MOT 2016 Students Sophia, Jennifer, Aja, Catharine & Julie volunteered at Graduate Reception 2015

This fall we hosted a poster presentation at the COTBC annual general meeting and professional networking day. We look forward to growing this networking opportunity in the future, in collaboration with the College and CAOT-BC. We see the poster presentations as a way to promote scholarly exchange and hope more of you will participate next year.

Warm wishes for a healthy, happy, new year.

Catherine Backman, Professor & Head

Master of Rehabilitation Science (MRSc) Online Program

Change Your Thinking, Change Your View, Change Practice

Earn University Credit Course by Course



Dr. Skye Barbic

Do you have gaps in your knowledge and skills are limiting your ability to provide optimal client services?



PhD Student Leslie Duran

Consider reviewing UBC's online course offerings on Rehabilitation Sciences. UBC's online graduate courses are designed to fill such gaps and are directly relevant to practice. They can be completed at home, and at a time of day that fits your schedule. If one course is what you need, **taking just one course is an option** if you meet academic requirements for admission.

One area which practitioners often feel they have less skill is assessing the evidence on **measurement tools** and selecting appropriate tools for assessing clients, predicting who can benefit most from OT and for measuring outcomes. [RHSC 505, Measurement for Assessment, Planning and Evaluation](#) is designed to fill this gap. A sample of learner responses to the course is shown to the [left](#). Measurement experts, clinician and doctoral student [Leslie Duran](#) and post-doctoral fellow [Dr. Skye Barbic](#) are two OTs who have facilitated this course.

The course is offered in January to April each year. Want to take one course? Contact us at info@mrsc.ubc.ca at least 3 months before it starts.

Gaps in other areas? Check out the other core [Graduate Certificate in Rehabilitation \(GCR\)](#) and [Master of Rehabilitation Science \(MRSc\)](#) courses, and MRSc electives.

Text by Sue Stanton

Learner Feedback for the Measurement Course...

This course was very valuable to my individual practice. I definitely wasn't using measures effectively prior to this course and this course has really helped me to understand how to be confident when choosing a measure...Very valuable course!

Again, a tremendously valuable course to better my practice. The critical thought I am now empowered to apply to evaluative measures in my practice will (be) invaluable to my patients and their outcomes.

I have developed a noticeably greater appreciation for the value and potential draw backs of measurement tools and have developed confidence in my ability to research, choose and evaluate tools for use in my practice.

Research Relays

Webinars where graduates present their research to the community. View archived Fall 2015 webinars at [Research Relays](#) and watch for the **Spring 2016** schedule and registration

It's time... Your Master's is Just a Click Away!

Check out course-based and research study options at www.mrsc.ubc.ca or email us at info@mrsc.ubc.ca

MRSc: Apply by April 30 for September entry; September 30 for January entry

GCR: May 15 for September entry; October 15 for January entry

Dr. Tamar Weiss visit to the UBC OSOT Department



From November 4-18 2015, the Department was pleased to welcome Dr. Patrice L. (Tamar) Weiss, PhD, OT, from Israel, who was visiting UBC with the support of the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies. Dr. Tal Jarus, Professor, invited Dr. Weiss with funding from the International Visiting Research Scholar Program. Dr. Weiss directs the Laboratory for Innovations in Rehabilitation Technology (LIRT) in the Dept. of Occupational Therapy at the University of Haifa, where she and her team develop and evaluate novel virtual environments, haptic interfaces, co-located and online technologies to explore the effect of individual and collaborative rehabilitation.

While here, Dr. Weiss had an opportunity to meet with clinicians and researchers in the area of stroke, spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, developmental coordination disorder, autism and head trauma. She visited the GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre, as well as the Sunny Hill Health Centre where she gave a series of presentations on her work. One highlight of her visit included a joint presentation with another visiting scholar, Dr. Emily Keshner Professor and Chair, Department of Physical Therapy, Temple University, Philadelphia. Both engaged in a lively debate/discussion on the use of virtual reality in rehabilitation and brain health. This, along with a public presentation to the UBC community on technologies to aid in social action and rehabilitation research, rounded out a very productive and collaborative visit.

Text by Cynthia Lin



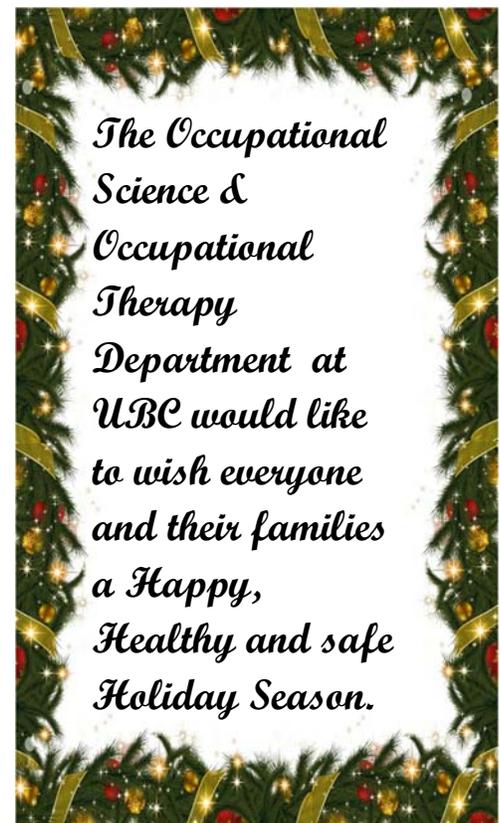
Dr. Susan Forwell Recipient of the 2016 Townsend & Polatajko Lectureship

Congratulations to Dr. Susan Forwell on being named the recipient of the prestigious 2016 Townsend & Polatajko Lectureship from the Canadian Society of Occupational Scientists (CSOS). The Townsend & Polatajko Lectureship is named in honour of Drs. Elizabeth Townsend and Helene Polatajko, the founders of CSOS, and their efforts to promote and foster occupational science in Canada. It is awarded every 2 years to a person who has made similar contributions to occupational science in Canada.

Dr. Forwell serves as sub-editor for the *Journal of Occupational Science*, and was a guest editor for a special issue. She served on the board of CSOS from 2005-2006, and has also served on and currently chairs the board of the International Society of Occupational Scientists.

Sue will deliver her lecture during the 2016 Joint International Conference in Portland, Maine, co-hosted by CSOS and the Society for the Study of Occupation: USA. The conference will run from September 29 to October 1, 2016.

Text by Cynthia Lin





Article by PhD Student Reviewed in Psychology Today

Kristine Theurer is a PhD Candidate and a recent recipient of the UBC Public Scholars initiative. <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/psi>
Along with Dr. **Ben Mortenson**, Dr. **Melinda Suto** and colleagues, she published an article entitled 'The Need for a Social Revolution in Residential Care' in the December online issue of the Journal of Aging Studies. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0890406515300347>

This conceptual article explores growing concerns about loneliness and depression among residents in long-term, assisted living and retirement homes. In the article Kristine proposes a revolutionary model for designing interventions to help residents regain a sense of self and purpose.

The article was picked up and reviewed in Psychology Today. Read the full review here: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/friendship-observation/201511/how-help-lonely-and-depressed-seniors>

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Text by Cynthia Lin

OSOT Staffing Update



Tracy Henderson



Isabella Roque



Helen You

The last few months have been a whirlwind in the office as some people have said goodbye and others have said hello. The Department would like to take the opportunity to thank Sonia Dhillon and Aimee Wesley for their service to OSOT and the university, and wish them all the best on their new endeavours. **Tracy Henderson** will now be the MOT Students Services Manager and **Isabella Roque**, former departmental assistant, will be the MOT Curriculum Assistant. **Helen You** is the new MOT Program Assistant, who started on Dec 7, 2015. Helen will assist with the MOT admissions and fieldwork. Welcome to the office Helen!

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We offer three graduate academic programs.

- The **Master in Occupational Therapy (MOT)** program, for those looking to practice professionally as an Occupational Therapist;
- The **Master of Science (MSc) and PhD** programs in Rehabilitation Sciences, for those interested in research credentials and the science of occupation; and
- The online **Master of Rehabilitation Science (MRSc)** for practitioners interested in obtaining a graduate degree that will advance their career and be obtained while working.