

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

# Occupational Therapy Program



Creighton  
UNIVERSITY

School of Pharmacy  
and Health Professions

NOTE FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIR

## Greetings from Omaha, Nebraska!

With honor, I am very pleased to share with you this special newsletter from the Department of Occupational Therapy at Creighton University.



The Creighton University Doctor of Occupational Therapy program is an academic pioneer. Creighton was the first in the nation to offer an entry-level OTD program and the first hybrid entry-level OTD program of its kind in an innovative collaboration with the University of Alaska Anchorage. Our occupational therapy program is recognized for its excellence with a Top 15 national ranking by *U.S. News & World Report*.

I am very proud of the faculty and students in Creighton's Occupational Therapy Department and the many achievements of our program. Please read on to see a glimpse of the program's outstanding development. I wish you the best in your professional journey.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keli Mu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



**Keli Mu, PhD, OTR/L**

*Professor and Chair of Occupational Therapy  
Creighton University School of Pharmacy  
and Health Professions*

[spahp.creighton.edu/ot](http://spahp.creighton.edu/ot)

## Health Professions Pioneer

Since launching the doctorate of occupational therapy program in 1999, Creighton University has set new standards in the profession. We were the nation's first entry-level OTD program and the first innovative hybrid pathways program. Our unique interprofessional approach to health care focuses on patient care, values-centered teaching by an exceptional faculty and a deep commitment to community service. Through a combination of educating students in the Jesuit tradition with academic rigor, clinical opportunities, access to affiliated health systems and a focus on career placement, Creighton University's doctorate in occupational therapy puts students on the path to a challenging and rewarding profession.



## Program Pathways

### Entry-level OTD Program: Campus

Since 1985, the occupational therapy program allows students to earn their degree with innovative study in a full-time, traditional campus setting. In 1995, the School initiated one of the first post-baccalaureate Doctor of Occupational Therapy programs in the country to phase out the Bachelor of Science degree that was currently being offered.

### Entry-level Distance OTD Program: Alaska

In 2008, Creighton launched the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)-Creighton University Distance Initiative. The entry-level program includes asynchronous and synchronous teaching and learning in a unique hybrid model bringing 10 years of occupational therapy education to Alaska's largest city and surrounding areas.

### Entry-level Distance OTD Program: Regis

Following the success of the Alaska Pathway, Creighton launched a collaboration with Regis University in Denver in 2015. The Regis Pathway, the first Jesuit-to-Jesuit partnership of its kind, is available to students who wish to continue their occupational therapy education in Denver.

### Entry-level Distance OTD Program: Phoenix

Starting in fall 2021, the occupational therapy program will open a new pathway in Phoenix. Serving around 900 health sciences students across multiple professions, the 180,000-square-foot campus will address growing shortages of Arizona health care professionals while sparking significant economic growth throughout the region.

## Amy Lamb, BSOT'98, OTD'00



Amy Lamb, president of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), received her Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy and her post-professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy from Creighton University. Lamb previously served the AOTA on its Board of Directors as its president-elect for 2015–2016 and vice president for 2012–2015.

Lamb is an associate professor of occupational therapy at Eastern Michigan University, and owner of AJLamb Consulting. She is a past chair of the American Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee (AOTPA), 2006–2012. Her experience is a valuable combination of clinical practice as a licensed occupational therapist with health care policy experience at the state and federal levels. Lamb's expertise includes health policy, prevention and wellness, and occupational therapy as a career.

Through her academic and clinical work, Lamb helps practitioners, students, educators and researchers identify their role as influencers of change in their daily work and in the OT profession.

*“I chose Creighton Occupational Therapy because they were known for their innovation and I knew they would not only prepare me for the realities of current practice but equip me to be on the front line of creating change for practice of the future.”*

**—Amy Lamb, BSOT'98, OTD'00**



## Brittany Stryker, BSHS'98, OTD'06



Brittany Stryker earned her Bachelor of Science in Health Services and Doctor of Occupational Therapy from Creighton University. She also attended Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine's Prosthetics and Orthotics Program. She completed her residency at Hanger Clinic Prosthetics and Orthotics in Las Vegas, and completed specialty rotations in pediatric trauma and rehab at St. Louis Children's Hospital–Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

Specializing in neuromuscular, idiopathic and congenital scoliosis, she is currently owner and practice manager for Orthopedic Motion, Inc., an orthotic and prosthetic practice serving every hospital in Las Vegas. Stryker is one of only four providers in the country certified in the LA Brace, one of the most innovative bracing systems, and is credentialed in the treatment of plagiocephaly, brachiocephaly, scaphiocephaly and craniosynostosis.

She is the executive director and founder of KIDDOS (Kids in Dire Difficult Orthopedic Situations), an organization dedicated to providing top-quality orthotics and prosthetics to low-income pediatric patients. She has partnered with local fire departments and the Safe Kids Foundation to ensure infants are provided safe car seats, and she has served with Project MediShare for Haiti and Project SAVEarth. Stryker also often houses many students during their rotations in Las Vegas.

Stryker received the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions Young Alumni Appreciation Award in 2010 and became a member of the SPAHP Alumni Advisory Board in 2013. In 2016, she was honored as the first occupational therapist to receive the Alumni Merit Award for the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions.

*"I feel that the world has given me so much that I try to live every day giving back." Stryker says.*

## Carina Watson, OTD'20

Regis Pathway



While Carina Watson was in the Regis Pathway, she and other students in the Class of 2020, were awarded a \$1,200 Pharmacy and Health Professions Student Government grant to create a sensory room at Pizzability, a Denver restaurant staffed by people with intellectual disabilities. The work was featured on ESPN's *50 Game Changers*.



## Helene Lohman, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA



Helene Lohman, a longstanding professor and faculty member who helped launch the occupational therapy program at Creighton, continues as a role model to other colleagues through her outstanding scholarly productivity. Lohman, already an author of three published OT textbooks, co-authored the fifth edition of *Introduction to Orthotics: A Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Approach* with Brenda Coppard, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, professor of occupational therapy and associate dean in the Office of Assessment in the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions.



## Vanessa Jewell, PhD, OTR/L



The Creighton University type 1 diabetes research team aims to improve child health outcomes, family quality of life, and access to specialized health care. Led by Vanessa Jewell, the team includes occupational therapy, pharmacy, nursing, medicine and community stakeholders. The team is currently conducting two funded studies: The first is a \$247,020 funding award through the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards program, an initiative of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI); and the second study, a randomized control trial examining the effectiveness of telehealth occupation-based coaching, is being partially funded by Dexcom.



## Alaska Pathway

The inter-institutional collaboration between Creighton University and the University of Alaska Anchorage celebrated its 10 anniversary in 2019. The Creighton-Alaska pathway program provides the state of Alaska with doctorate-level occupational therapists to meet the identified health care needs of a largely rural and underserved population.

The Creighton-Alaska pathway accepts up to 12 students annually and provides a hybrid educational program to the students. The pathway and its students and graduates have been recognized with a number of awards and competitive scholarships, locally, regionally and nationally, including the Mary Fiorentino Scholarship, the American Occupational Therapy Association and the American Occupational Therapy Foundation first annual Summer Institute of Future Scientists in Occupational Therapy.

Students in the pathway have received competitive scholarships from the Alaska Early Intervention Program and been awarded scholarships to participate in the University of Alaska Anchorage Leadership program (LEND), a national program funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration,

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Our graduates are Fellows of the Alaska Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND) program, and affiliated with the University of Alaska Anchorage's Center for Human Development.

Since the initial entering Class of 2008, a total of 53 students have graduated from the Creighton-Alaska pathway, and 80 percent of graduates have stayed in Alaska for employment. Most graduates have secured employment in a variety of pediatric positions throughout the state, including hospitals, school districts, private practices and state supported special needs programs. Other graduates have been employed at area hospitals, outpatient orthopedic clinics, private practice and the native Alaskan health system.

Alaska's job market for health professionals and occupational therapists will continue to grow and expand. A transient health care workforce, rural health care needs and program development, aging general population and aging occupational therapy workforce will require the sustainable growth of the joint Creighton-Alaska pathway.



## New Lab Spaces Enhance Education

In 2018, remodeling to the OT campus labs resulted in two larger lab spaces allowing for designated learning spaces for physical rehabilitation, pediatrics and splinting. The new labs, which comfortably hold 40 students, include new plinths, expanded mat table access and a large apartment space to simulate home environments.

New features include hooks for demonstration of suspended equipment in the pediatric lab, as well as monitors and a specialized camera that allows for close-up projection of manual movements and hand placements for manual therapy techniques.

Beyond the collective lab space expansion, the project included classroom remodeling, complete with bright, fresh paint and new carpet. The redesigned spaces, new equipment and advanced technology support teaching and provide students with better opportunities to apply their skills.



## Omaha: Big-City Benefits with a Midwestern Heart

With a metropolitan area population of nearly 1 million, Omaha is Nebraska's largest city and is the major urban hub between Chicago and Denver and between Kansas City and Minneapolis. *Forbes* has praised Omaha for its "modern culture" and called it "one of the most technologically advanced cities in the country."

Ranked one of the top 10 best states, Nebraska offers its residents a lot of opportunity. Omaha is highly ranked as well, for its economy, entertainment and low cost of living compared to other metropolitan areas around the country. It's convenient, too. Most everything in the city—including the airport—is a short drive from Creighton's campus, accessible in less than 20 minutes by car.

Omaha combines big city convenience with a small town feel and has the amenities to fit. A thriving food scene supported by some of the nation's best local produce. A long list of excellent public and private schools throughout the city. Three entertainment districts, all within close proximity of Creighton. Omaha is home to one of the world's leading medical communities, and Creighton is at its center. We offer training opportunities in cutting-edge facilities and one of the nation's best teaching hospitals. As a result, students in the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions are well positioned for success across a wide variety of career paths.

**No matter what you're looking for, you'll find it here in Omaha.**



**#5** U.S. city where employees are the happiest  
*Fortune*

**8%** lower cost of living than the national average  
*Payscale*

**2x** the average national job growth  
*Omaha Chamber*

**#5** Top state to get an education  
*CNBC*

## CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM

**1st** entry-level OTD program in the country

**TOP 15** ranking of all OT programs  
*U.S. News & World Report, 2020*



### 10-year partnership

with the University of Alaska Anchorage to bring OT education to the state of Alaska

**More than 1,800** hours of student community engagement service

**98%** of students employed within 6 months of graduation  
*based on survey responses, 2018*

**800+** domestic and international clinical sites

**One of the 1st** post-baccalaureate OTD programs in the country

**More than 10 alumni are serving as program chairs.** Graduates of the post-professional OTD program are well prepared for leadership roles.

**100%** pass rate on National Occupational Therapy Examination

**5** faculty members have FAOTA status

# Creighton UNIVERSITY

---

School of Pharmacy  
and Health Professions

[spahp.creighton.edu/ot](http://spahp.creighton.edu/ot)

*The entry-level program in occupational therapy is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA) located at:*

*6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 200 | North Bethesda, MD 20852-4929  
accred@aota.org | 301.652.2682*

*More information on ACOTE can be found at [acoteonline.org](http://acoteonline.org)*