

# *THE OT OUTLOOK*

KOTA NEWSLETTER



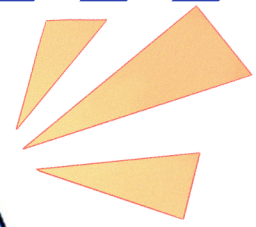
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Hello KOTA Members!

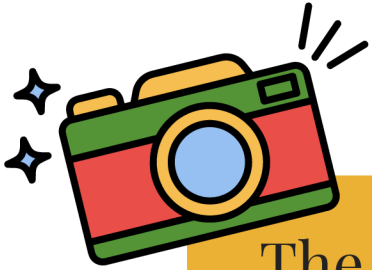
Closing out one year and beginning the next allows for the opportunity to reflect on where we have been and where we would like to go. Over the past year, KOTA has focused on creating opportunities and building community among Kentucky occupational therapy practitioners. Our Pediatric and School-Based Practice Special Interest Sections have continued to grow and offer continuing education and networking for setting-specific practitioners. Our District Chairs have offered more in-person meetings, allowing our district members to gain continuing education and socialize with their peers. We hope that you will take advantage of these wonderful opportunities. KOTA also worked hard to create value for our members and will continue to work towards that goal in 2026. Our annual conference, led by Vice President Josh Skuller, was fantastic! We are already in the planning phases for next year when we will be coming to Murray State University's Paducah campus. We initiated a new partnership with OT Potential to give our membership broader access to CEUs at a great price. Check out our membership area on our webpage to access our state-specific discount code. We continue to use our Teachable platform to provide free monthly CEUs to all members. We are also excited to announce that we will be starting a new Upper Extremity Special Interest Section in the new year. Stay tuned for more details. Finally, we will continue our advocacy efforts to advance the profession of occupational therapy as the upcoming Kentucky legislative session gets started. As we get closer, we will keep you informed about important legislation and happenings in Frankfort that may impact our profession. Thank you for your ongoing partnership with KOTA to advance the profession of occupational therapy in our state! Your membership and engagement is necessary and appreciated. Happy New Year!

# Meet the Executive Board Members

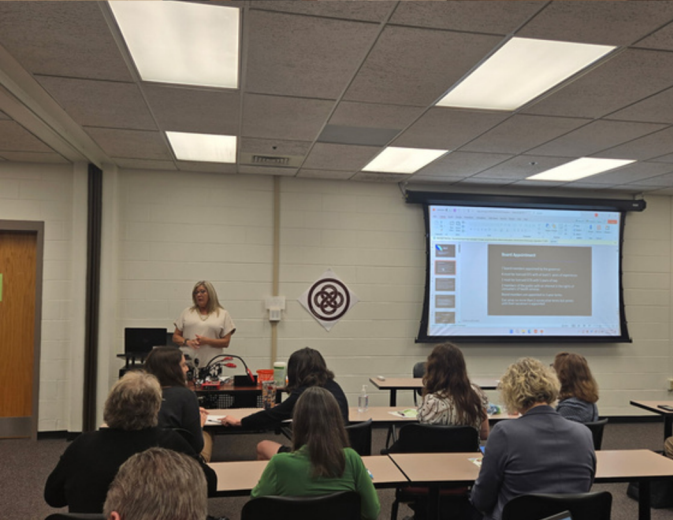


<b><i>President</i></b> Casey Humphrey	<b><i>Vice President</i></b> Joshua Skuller	<b><i>Office Manager</i></b> Karen Brian	<b><i>Secretary</i></b> Stephanie Olson
<b><i>Treasurer</i></b> Cassie Ginn	<b><i>Public Media</i></b> Sarah Hamilton	<b><i>Education Chair</i></b> Laura Bray	<b><i>Membership</i></b> Allen Keener Amanda Balsler
<b><i>Northern District</i></b> Angela Boyd Mark Kirby	<b><i>Research Chair</i></b> Cheryl Carrico	<b><i>OTA Representative</i></b> Caitlin Rothrock	<b><i>Nominations</i></b> Beth Boyle
<b><i>School-Based SIS</i></b> Shirley O'Brien	<b><i>Practice Chair/KBLOT Liaison</i></b> Geela Spira	<b><i>Recognitions Chair</i></b> Candace Alvey	
<b><i>Past President</i></b> Rhonda Edwards	<b><i>Ways and Means</i></b> Joshua Ramsey	<b><i>AOTA Representative</i></b> Jyoti Heiple	
<b><i>Legislative Chair</i></b> Camille Skubik-Peplaski	<b><i>Eastern District</i></b> Emma McClellan	<b><i>Reimbursement</i></b> Pam Marshall	
<b><i>Central District</i></b> Saima Ritchie	<b><i>Student Representatives</i></b> Isaac Osborne Laken Ellis Ruth VandenBerg Melinda Stancill	<b><i>Western District</i></b> Abigail Hernandez Maddy Murphy	

# 2025 KOTA Conference Highlights



The KOTA 2025 Annual Conference was held on September 12-13, 2025 at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky. It was a great weekend of networking, professional development, and collaboration between OTPs across Kentucky!



# KOTA Conference Sponsors



Thank you

# 2025 KOTA Student Future Leader

## Award Winners

Ava Meyer



Carly Tharp



Kaylee Caldwell



Makaylah Cason



Chandler Dant



Mallory Murphy



# Keynote Speaker Spotlight



## Dr. Elizabeth Rhodus

We were honored to welcome Dr. Elizabeth Rhodus as this year's keynote speaker. Dr. Rhodus, an Assistant Professor at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine, holds primary appointments in the Department of Behavioral Science, the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging, and the Center for Health, Engagement, and Transformation. Her innovative research has focused on developing assessments and non-pharmacological interventions addressing behavioral and psychiatric symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. In addition, Dr. Rhodus has led impactful community-engaged research examining lifestyle factors that influence brain health. Her expertise and dedication to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by cognitive decline made her keynote address a meaningful and inspiring highlight of this year's KOTA event.



# 2025 KOTA Award Winners



## Outstanding OTA of the Year



This award is given to the occupational therapy assistant who has demonstrated outstanding proficiency in his/her particular duties for the preceding year. The award is not for years of service but for the quality, proficiency, and contributions of that practitioner.

Congrats to Kelly Wheatley!



# 2025 KOTA Award Winners



## Distinguished Service Award



This award is presented to the member who has demonstrated, over many years, continuing and outstanding contributions to KOTA's development, growth, and progress.

Congrats to Elizabeth Grant!



# 2025 KOTA Award Winners



## Honorary Membership

This award recognizes members who have performed distinguished services to KOTA or the OT profession but are presently retired from professional practice.

Congrats to Colleen Schneck!



# District Highlights & Member Meet-Ups

Join us as we recap this month's district activities. Enjoy photos from meetings, member networking events, and the meaningful interactions that keep our KOTA community connected!



Western District learns about the STEDI Program



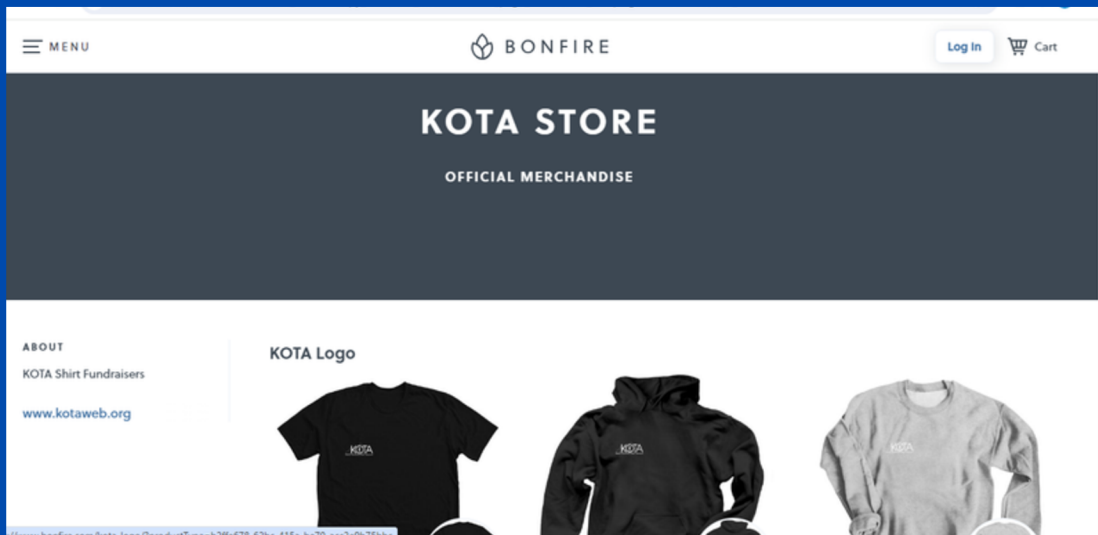
Western District Meeting and Networking Event

Northern District Meet & Greet



# Check out the new **KOTA Online Store!**

Shop shirts, sweatshirts, mugs,  
and more - All proceeds  
benefit KOTA.



## School Based Interest Group

**OT and OTA students are welcome to join in the learning, fun, and conversations. If you are thinking of changing practice setting or just want to learn more about schools or get a refresher, come to our online meetings, generally held the 4th Thursday of the month, at 4:00 PM EST/ 3:00 PM CST.**

### **Pediatric SIS Group**

Join the Pediatric SIS Group on Google Meet at the following meeting dates/times:

- Monday January 26th
- Monday February 23rd
- Monday March 23rd

Please reach out if you would like to be added to the email list to receive updates about meetings!



### **Monthly District Meetings Offer a Free CEU!**

Each of the four districts host virtual meetings open to ALL members, not just those who reside in that district. The presentations are recorded and offered virtually through our Teachable platform. Attendance earns you one hour of credit!

Are you looking for ways to get more involved with the Northern District of KOTA? Reach out to Angela Boyd, OTD, MOTR/L at [boyda9@nku.edu](mailto:boyda9@nku.edu)!

KOTA is eager to connect with members who want to make an impact in our community. Angela will be hosting exciting events at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) and is ready to coordinate with anyone interested in participating. Let Angela know you're interested, and she'll be happy to share upcoming opportunities to get involved!



**FOLLOW US ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA!**



**Have a Question?**

Have a question about anything you read in the newsletter? Reach out to [kotaweb@kotaweb.org](mailto:kotaweb@kotaweb.org) . We'd love to tell you more or check out our website.

