

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 2, 2006

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## **NBC TODAY SHOW HIGHLIGHTS OLDER DRIVER SAFETY**

### ***Albany OT and Her Mother Discuss Ways They Have Addressed Driver Safety***

(Bethesda, MD)—The top-rated morning news show TODAY performed an important public service by highlighting the issue of older driver safety on February 2. The report featured Linda McCumber, an occupational therapist from Albany, New York, and her mother, Alma Raab from Long Island. They are working together to address the proper actions that will enable Alma to keep driving safely as she gets older.

“My work as an occupational therapist gives me special insight into the aging process,” said McCumber. “My mother would often drive from her home on Long Island to visit me, but the aging process was making the drive more difficult. I knew that there were steps we could take that would enable her to continue driving safely.”

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), in conjunction with National Highway Transportation Safety Administration and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has been promoting the use of occupational therapy as an intervention for older drivers.

Occupational therapists have the science-based knowledge to understand age-related progressive conditions and life changes that can affect driving. Because occupational therapists understand the role that driving plays in a person's life, they are able to help people to continue driving safely or make the transition from driving to alternatives such as public transportation. In doing so, they help people to maintain their daily activities, independence, and sense of self-worth.

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Occupational therapists can help families address safety for older driver by:

- **Evaluating** older adults to determine if there are physical, visual, or cognitive limitations that could affect driving
- **Conducting** an on-the-road driving test to determine how problems identified in the evaluation affect a person's ability to drive safely
- **Providing** training to drivers to improve their ability to drive safely
- **Recommending** adaptive equipment and training older drivers to use the equipment to help them continue to drive safely
- **Helping** the older adult identify alternate forms of transportation, such as public transportation, if it becomes clear that the client should no longer drive or should modify when they drive
- **Consulting** with the friends and family of an older driver about his or her driving abilities and inform them as to how they can assist the older adult to continue participating in meaningful activities
- **Assisting** the older adult who is no longer able to drive safely to identify other meaningful life activities that do not require driving

**For more information on older driver safety, please visit AOTA's resource site on older driver safety at <http://www.aota.org/olderdriver>.**

**View [photographs](#) from the Feb. 2 TODAY show on Older Driver Safety.**

### **About the American Occupational Therapy Association**

Founded in 1917, the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is the nationally recognized professional association of approximately 35,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students of occupational therapy. AOTA advances the quality, availability, use and support of occupational therapy through advocacy, education and research on behalf of its members and the public. For more information, visit us on the Web at [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org).

### **About Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy is a proven, recognized therapy that enables people to overcome the disabling effects of mental, physical, developmental, and emotional conditions by helping improve their ability to perform tasks in their living and working environments. Practitioners work with individuals to improve their basic motor functions and reasoning abilities, and also to compensate for permanent loss of function. The goal of occupational therapy is to help individuals lead independent, productive and satisfying lives through participation.

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