

Fellowships in Leadership Development For Occupational Therapy Educational Program Directors Accepting Applications for 2010

**Jointly Sponsored by the American Occupational Therapy Foundation
and
the American Occupational Therapy Association**

A Special Invitation from Presidents Ruth Ann Watkins and Penny Moyers Cleveland

The American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF) and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) are once again jointly supporting a Leadership Fellowship Program specifically designed for leadership development. Program directors from both professional and assistant level academic programs are invited to apply. This fellowship program will foster the emergence of strong occupational therapy leaders within the academic community while simultaneously building the profession's capacity to influence and lead. The Leadership Fellowship Program is especially designed for occupational therapy program directors who are enthusiastic about advancing their academic careers, who want to more effectively address their challenging administrative and programmatic responsibilities, and who wish to assume increased leadership roles within their professional, academic, and civic communities.

AOTF and AOTA will select 16 Leadership Fellows for participation in this unique program and guide them as they prepare for increasing levels of influence within their academic settings, the profession, and the communities in which they live.

Leadership Through Mentoring

The current AOTF/AOTA Leadership Fellowship Program is based on Mentoring Circles[®] an innovative group mentoring method developed by the Mentoring Company. This process introduces participants to contemporary leadership theory and practice and engages them in a standardized leadership assessment process. Participants will use *The Leadership Practice Inventory* as a reliable tool for identifying personal leadership practices from five general categories: *Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, Modeling the Way, and Encouraging the Heart.*

An important feature of this Leadership Fellowship Program is the opportunity to participate in a series of 16 mentoring sessions. The group mentoring process is grounded in the needs of the participants who will identify specific leadership challenges. The catalyst mentor will use stories from his or her personal experience to efficiently transfer best practices that promote leadership. From time-to-time, guest mentors will join the mentoring circle to address specific topics identified by the group.

Program Outcomes and Lasting Contributions

Participants will create a personal leadership development plan based on the results of their leadership inventory, past leadership experiences, current needs, and experiences that most effectively support their learning. The 16 Mentoring Circles will serve as catalysts through which the participants will share their authentic and personal experiences and refine their unique leadership practices. Two opportunities for face-to-face sessions, plus guided personal study and group interaction as the program evolves, create rich opportunities for personal and professional growth. Upon completion, leadership fellows will have transformed their identities and skills as competent professional with respect and influence. More importantly, they have developed lasting friendships and collegial networks that will serve them well long after the completion of this formal experience.

This Leadership Fellowship Program addresses a critical need in the profession by:

- Reinforcing best leadership practices and applying them to academic leadership
- Enhancing open communication that strengthens internal and external program relationships
- Infusing the profession's academic community with confident, influential leaders
- Serving as a platform for developing the next generation of academic leaders
- Creating cross-functional collaboration and building networks of academic leaders.

Comments from Program Directors' who received fellowships for the 2008 Leadership Fellowship Program:

"The experiences have given me a sense of self, and potential as a leader. Rather than comparing my 'limited' skills to past leadership experiences of others, the process has enabled me to contextualize my strengths and talents and envision unknown possibilities."

"Focusing on my strengths has helped me see the ways that I can impact my department and OT students. I know that I have good ideas about roles and tasks for my program. I am also 'good at' developing ways to show progress. The topic of authentic leadership helped tremendously to develop strategies to work on those areas in which I need growth—that of storytelling and vision."

"The support and encouragement has been invaluable, especially since I had very little in my own position. The resources that were shared over the last 9 months (articles, books, exercises, assignments) have greatly added to my knowledge and skill base."

Launching the Leadership Fellowship Program

AOTF and AOTA will launch the program with a face-to-face meeting to be held on January 21–23, 2010 in Denver, Colorado. Fellowships will cover the program expenses for the initial meeting, 16 mentoring sessions to be held by teleconference between January and August 2010, and a closing meeting in September. Selected leadership fellows are responsible for the cost of their travel and hotel expenses (estimated at \$2,000) to attend both face-to-face meetings in Denver.

Nomination Process and Selection Criteria

Interested applicants should submit a **Letter of Nomination** describing prior leadership experience and potential for future leadership roles. The letter should specifically describe what you hope to accomplish in your future academic career relative to leadership. In addition, please discuss how or why you think your selection as a leadership fellow will help you grow in your current role and achieve your goals. Please also discuss how these goals support the mission of your college or university. Finally, provide information on current or past mentoring experiences. The review panel invites applicants to include one letter of support from a member of your institution's administration. Please also include a curriculum vita and e-mail address. *Applicants must currently occupy a position involving program leadership responsibilities in an ACOTE-accredited program.* To qualify for selection, fellowship applicants must be members of AOTA.

Nomination Deadline December 1, 2009

Send nominations to LMPApplication@aota.org or to The American Occupational Therapy Foundation, 4720 Montgomery Lane, PO Box 31220, Bethesda, MD 20824-1220—Attn: Mindy A. Hecker.

New leadership fellows will be announced on or before December 15, 2009.