



Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity's Toolkit

Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse OT Student Body and Workforce

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Learning Objectives

- Identify practical tools for recruitment and retention of diverse occupational therapy students and workforce professionals.
- Apply practical tools for recruitment and retention of diverse occupational therapy students and workforce professionals.
- Facilitate creation of an action plan tailored for increasing diversity and inclusion in practice.

COTAD Board Members



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COTAD Mission & Vision

COTAD aims to promote a diverse workforce and meet society's occupational needs through aligning diversity initiatives with key stakeholders to ensure occupational therapy services are provided to all people by having a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve.

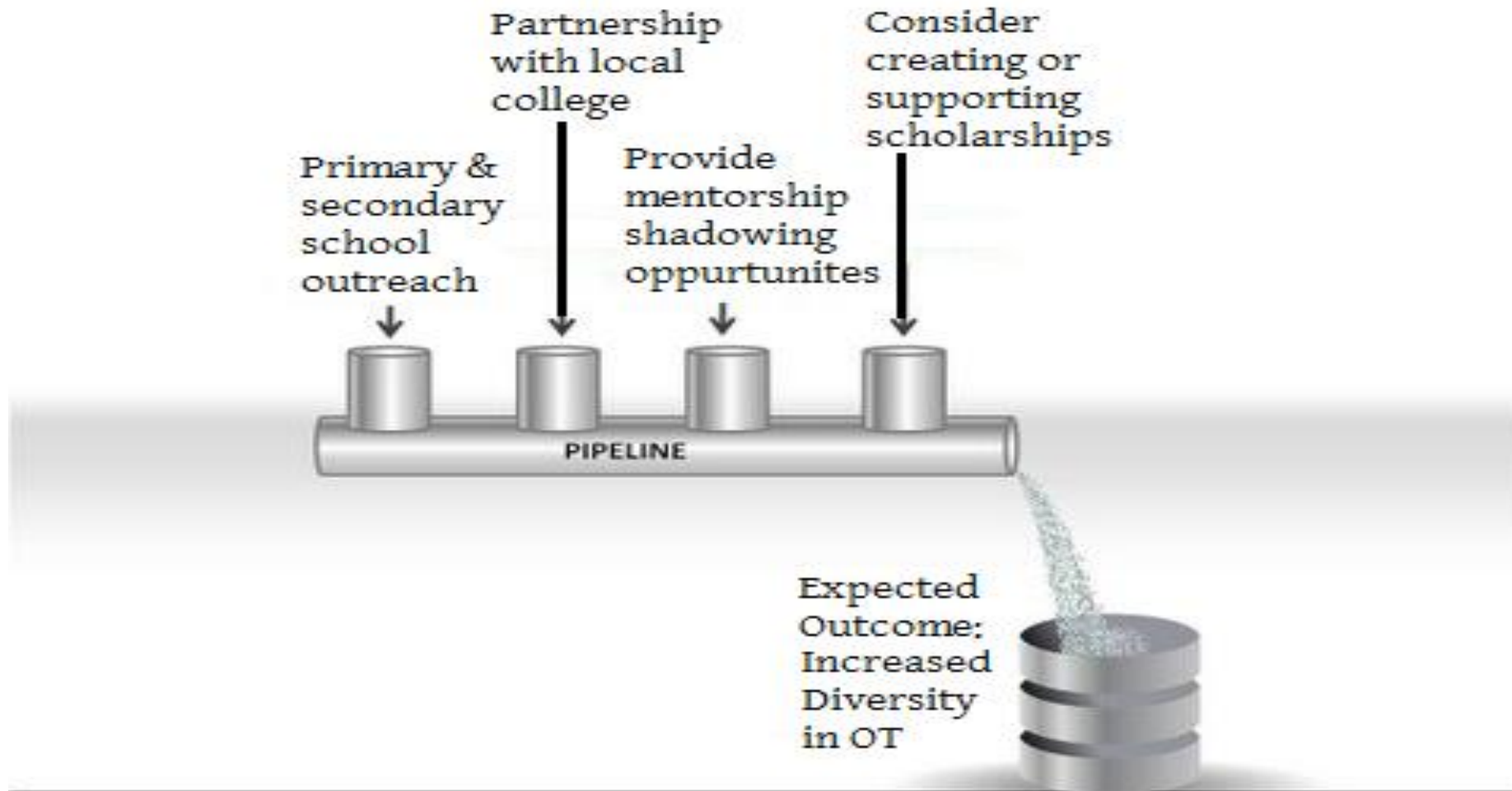
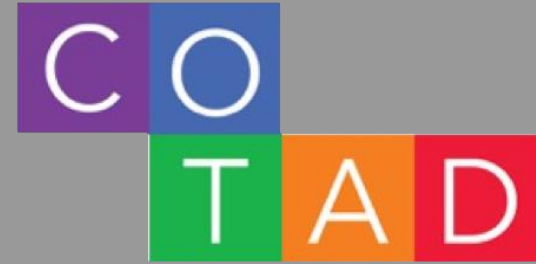
*Increase diversity within the occupational therapy workforce **by empowering** occupational therapy practitioners, educators, and students to enhance cultural humility and promote diversity and inclusion.*

Toolkit Phase I

- Political and community level
 - Recruitment presentation
- Clinical level
 - Shadow day
- Academic and student level
 - Students recruiting students



COTAD Diversity Pipeline



Primary & Secondary School Outreach

- Empower OT's and OTS to educate primary and secondary school students in underrepresented groups to consider occupational therapy as a profession
- Consider ways to incentivize outreach programs in academia and in the workplace
- Foster ongoing relationships with schools

Toolkit Phase II

- Increasing OT awareness and career opportunities
- Student outreach opportunities
- Students living with disabilities
- Minority Mentoring Program



Minority Mentorship Program



Purpose

- Designed to **support underrepresented individuals** in our workforce including:
 - OTR and OTA students
 - New practitioners
 - Prospective students
- Offer **guidance and support**
- Provides the **opportunity to learn** about other groups, professional organizations or associations
- **Ignite** academic careers
- Formal, **national mentoring program** to support URM

Minority Mentorship Program

Progress to Date: Mentees



“I hope to **develop working relationships** with diverse OTs working in the field.”

“I hope to find answers to my questions and to **discover where I really belong**. To feel more competent so I will be able to help others as I am being helped.”

“**I am excited** to start this mentorship with my mentor !”

“Just want to thank you for having the mentorship program. **It is not as easy** to transition between being a student and become a competent practitioner when facilities do not offer the kind of mentorship one requires during the first year.”

“I am glad to be a part of MMP. I truly believe that by being surrounded by others with similar goals and experiences as my own will **help me to learn** more about myself and how I can contribute to the OT profession.”

Toolkit Phase III

- Case studies
- COTAD Glossary
- Tips for students to increase diversity and inclusion in their academic experience
- COTAD Chapters



COTAD Chapters

Purpose



- Support for students to develop and promote diversity and inclusion
- Create opportunities and resources to foster open conversation
- Increase awareness of different lived experiences
- Collaboration and access to COTAD resources

COTAD Chapters

Progress to Date: outcomes



“ I have learned about other cultures and topics”

“This is my favorite committee”

“It creates a safe space to have meaningful discussions”

“This committee will expose me to experiences different from my own and help me to be a better clinician”

“It will open my eyes to new perspectives”

“The committee will allow me to better understand other students and connect with them”

“I’ve learned more about privilege and cultural fluidity”

“Being open-minded in the workforce has benefitted me to be more client-centered”

“ It has allowed me to be more aware of different people, environments, and situations”

“ It has increased my cultural humility; more comfortable conversing about uncomfortable topics”

Applying the Toolkit

Do you see yourself implementing this in your practice area, communities, universities?



Future COTAD Plans

- Article submission on diversity and inclusion theory to AJOT, JOTE, and SIS Quarterly publications
- COTAD Chapter growth
- Inclusive fieldwork collaborative model between university and the community
- Additions to COTAD resources, media and COTAD-ED
- Creation of more scholarships to increase aid for under-represented groups in OT

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