



2022

ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

The American Hand Therapy Foundation's mission is to improve patient outcomes by promoting evidence-based practice through funding clinical and scientific research and education.

Inside...

Chairman's report	pp. 2-3
AHTF major contributors	p. 4
2022 grant recipients	p. 5
Grant recipient testimonials.....	p. 6
List of grants	p. 7
AHTF Board of Directors.....	p. 8



2022 Chairman's Report

James W. King, OTR, PhD, CHT

The American Hand Therapy Foundation is currently funding eight major studies and expanding our support of educational events. We experience amazing support from so many people who generously donate their time, talents, and money to help AHTF achieve its goals and promote its mission, to improve patient outcomes by promoting evidence-based practice through funding clinical and scientific research and education. Thank you to everyone who has contributed by volunteering and / or made a financial donation to the Foundation this year. We are only able to continue this great work with your help.

The year started with AHTF supporting the American Society of Hand Therapists' 2021 annual meeting with a \$10,000 sponsorship of the Annual Scientific Sessions at the ASHT Annual Meeting in St. Louis. AHTF recognizes ASHT's on-going and unwavering support of the Foundation. AHTF and ASHT continue to work closely together to support each other and both organizations' goals. AHTF will once again sponsor the Annual Scientific Session at the 2022 meeting – supporting a highly valued educational event and the latest research in our field. This support is made possible by generous contributions to the AHTF Chairman's Fund.

I wish to invite you to meet our Board of Directors, including our newest board member, Marc Bartholdi, OTD, OTR/L, CHT, (<https://www.ahtf.org/about/board>). These volunteers give hundreds of hours each year to guide the Foundation's work and perform the majority of the day-to-day work of fundraising and administering our research grants and educational support. I also want to recognize the AHTF Advisory Board Chair, our Immediate Past-Chair, Greg Pitts, OTD, OTR, CHT. See our entire Board on [page 8](#).

The Foundation is pleased to announce a recent \$100,000 donation from North Coast Medical, Inc., Mark E. Biehl, President and CEO. With this contribution, North Coast Medical will generously underwrite the AHTF annual fundraiser, Happy Hour with a Scholar, the Evelyn Mackin Grant for Education by a Traveling Hand Therapist and will be our official website sponsor. Thank you North Coast Medical.

AHTF continues to support research that benefits you and our profession. See for yourself, by clicking the link below, the amazing impact that the Foundation has had on the way YOU practice (<https://www.ahtf.org/resources/#publications>). Two excellent studies supported by AHTF grants were published recently in the *Journal of Hand Therapy*, and are listed below:

Flinn SR, Goodman G. Effective assessments to identify overuse injuries in unaffected limbs of persons with unilateral upper limb amputations. *J Hand Ther.* 2021 Apr-Jun;34(2):298-308. doi: [10.1016/j.jht.2021.05.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jht.2021.05.006). Epub 2021 May 16. PMID: 34148738.



McVeigh KH, Kannas SN, Ivy CC, Garner HW, Barnes CS, Heckman MG, Brushaber DE, Murray PM. Dynamic stabilization home exercise program for treatment of thumb carpometacarpal osteoarthritis: A prospective randomized control trial. *J Hand Ther.* 2021 Jul 23;S0894-1130(21)00083-1. doi: [10.1016/j.jht.2021.06.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jht.2021.06.002).

AHTF is currently funding many major research projects and looks forward to informing the hand and upper extremity rehabilitation community on topics such as elbow flexion contractures in infants with brachial plexus injuries, graded motor imagery in distal radius fracture patients at high risk for CRPS, and the benefit of prevention education in reducing overuse injuries in musicians.

Each year AHTF's grants increase in value due to the generosity of our sponsors and supporters. A list of AHTF's grants is posted on our website, <https://www.ahtf.org/grants/>, along with ample and helpful information about the application process. We encourage all of you to apply and / or help spread the word about these generous grants to your colleagues who are involved in research.

We want to thank all of you who support the Foundation through our fundraising events. This year's Virtual Run / Walk for Hand Therapy Research was our most successful ever due to so many of you getting your teams together and participating during Hand Therapy Week. We look forward to seeing you in person or virtually at our upcoming events, Happy Hour with a Scholar, Underwritten by North Coast Medical (<https://www.ahtf.org/ahtf-2022-happy-hour-with-a-scholar/>) and the holiday Silent Auction extravaganza. A donation to AHTF is a wonderful place to make an investment to honor or memorialize a colleague or family member. AHTF has benefitted greatly from its first major endowment (<https://www.ahtf.org/doris-ann-slack-fund/>) and welcomes the opportunity to discuss legacy giving with you.

In summary, your Foundation continues to grow and serve the profession. We can only do this important work with your help. Please donate (<https://www.ahtf.org/donations/donate/>) to the American Hand Therapy Foundation today! Your contributions make a difference, and we promise to be good stewards of your contributions.

AHTF remains the only professional organization with the sole mission of supporting researchers to expand the scientific evidence for hand and upper extremity rehabilitation. Our important work together with researchers, educators, and all of you enhances quality and optimizes patient outcomes.

In its over 30-year history, AHTF has provided thousands of dollars in funding for over 100 projects. These projects have impacted our profession and many of your colleagues have been recipients of an AHTF grant or scholarship. The Foundation is grateful to all who participate by donating to fund AHTF grants and volunteer their time to support the Foundation's mission and our collective professional future.

2022 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



American Hand Therapy Foundation

Graciously Acknowledges Our

Major Contributors in 2021 - 2022

Dorit Aaron
Houston, TX

Dr. Peter Amadio
The Mayo Clinic
Rochester, MN

American Association for Hand
Surgery
Dr. John Lubahn, President
Laura Downes Leeper, Executive
Director

American Society for Surgery of the
Hand
Dr. Jeffrey Greenberg, President
Mark C. Anderson, CEO

American Society of Hand Therapists
Diane Coker, President
Gene Terry, Executive Director

Associated Italian American Charities
of Maryland
Chesapeake Medical Products
Eric and Faye Johnson - Principals
Baltimore, MD

Contributors to the Michael J. Epstein,
MD Memorial Fund

Commonwealth Hand Therapy
Greg Pitts
Louisville, KY

Doctors Demystify
Dr. Roy Meals
Los Angeles, CA

Jenny Dorich
Cincinnati, OH

Doris Ann Slack Upper Extremity
Education and Research Innovation
Fund

Donald and Martha Freedman
Charitable Fund
Houston, TX

Elon University School of Health
Sciences

Rebecca Neiduski, Dean
Elon, NC

Kirk Gober
Houston, TX

Hand Therapy Association of
California

Hand Therapy Certification
Commission
Mary Dimick, President
Marty Walsh, Executive Director

Hand Therapy Society of Greater Los
Angeles

The Hospital for Special Surgery
Hand Therapy Department
New York, NY

Indiana Hand to Shoulder Center
Nancy M. Cannon – 2022 Honorary
Run for Research Chair
Indianapolis, IN

Jim and Beverly King
Houston, TX

Naked Prosthetics, Inc.
Dulcey Lamotte, Chief Marketing
Officer

North Coast Medical, Inc.
Mark Biehl, President and CEO

Graham and Kelly Reeve Foundation
Boerne, TX

Select Medical
Susan M. Blackmore

Barbara Winthrop
Houston, TX

Dr. Scott W. Wolfe
New York, NY

T. Michael Young
Houston, TX

3-Point Products, Inc.
Julie Belkin, CEO
Stevensville, MD

American Hand Therapy Foundation Proudly Announces Our 2022 GRANT RECIPIENTS



BURKHALTER NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARD GRANT

This grant is generously supported by the Doris Ann Slack Upper
Extremity Education and Research Innovation Fund.

RECIPIENTS:

Christine Mulligan, OTD, CHT
Celeste Freeman, OTR/L, CHT
Giovanna Fichera, OTD



“IMPLEMENTING A NOVEL SPLINTING TECHNIQUE USING 3D MODELS FOR PATIENTS WITH SCLERODERMA AND ARTHRITIS”

The study aims to determine the feasibility of a non-contact custom splint fabrication method for patients with chronic diseases suffering from hypersensitive skin or compromised skin integrity. Custom splinting by occupational therapists involves molding low-temperature thermoplastic material directly on patients’ skin; however, skin sensitivity is a contraindication for splint fabrication. This study substitutes the traditional splinting methods by avoiding fabricating the splint directly on the patient’s hand. Instead, the fabrication of a resting hand splint on a 3D model of the patient’s hand provides patients with hypersensitive skin the opportunity to benefit from a custom-made splint. Each participant will wear one resting hand splint during hours of sleep for six weeks.

The primary hypothesis of this study is that: Individuals who wear a custom fabricated hand splint while sleeping will experience a decrease in pain, an increase in hours of sleep, maintenance of range of motion of the hand joints, and an overall increase in the ability to complete occupation-based tasks by the end of the study.

JUDY BELL-KROTOSKI “GRAB THE EVIDENCE” AWARD

This grant is generously supported by the Doris Ann Slack Upper
Extremity Education and Research Innovation Fund.

RECIPIENTS:

Tara Packham, OTReg(Ont.), PhD
Isabelle Quintal BSc erg., MSc



“RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF SOMATOSENSORY MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES: A PROOF-OF-PRINCIPLE MEASUREMENT STUDY OF NOVEL TOOLS TO EVALUATE ALTERED SENSATION”

Is sensory loss or sensory gain the driver of neuropathic pain in my client? What treatments work for neuropathic pain conditions in the hand and upper limb? To answer these questions, reliable and valid screening and outcome measures of both hypoesthesia and hyperesthesia are required. The somatosensory pain rehabilitation method has proposed using calibrated monofilaments to evaluate the extent and severity of hypo and hyperesthesia: these methods are known as esthesiography, allodyniography and the rainbow pain scale. However, these procedures have not been validated extensively using robust methods. This project will use double-blinded, placebo-controlled testing where healthy volunteers will be evaluated for areas of induced numbness or allodynia on the forearm to provide robust estimates of inter-rater reliability and discriminative validity in a controlled setting. Temporary sensory alterations will be induced with EMLATM for numbness and ZostrixTM for allodynia, with IcyHotTM as an active placebo creating a tingling or cooling sensation without altering mechanical sensitivity. If the proposed evaluation methods can consistently and accurately screen for and map the extent of known (induced) sensory alterations, this will add support for their use in clinical practice, and justify use in future research on the associated treatment methods.

JANET ALBRECHT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

RECIPIENT:

Andrew Naylor, MS, OTR/L



“I am incredibly fortunate to be the recipient of the Janet Albrecht Memorial Scholarship, which will allow me to pursue my dream of becoming a certified hand therapist. This funding for educational resources significantly eases the financial burden of pursuing a CHT certification. AHTF’s mission of improving patient outcomes by promoting evidence-based practice through funding clinical and scientific research and education has a direct impact on my career aspirations and is assisting me in gaining the education required of a CHT. Additionally, this will benefit the organization of which I am employed should I pass the examination and become a certified hand therapist. I am grateful for this opportunity and would like to thank the board of directors for providing me with the funding necessary to accomplish my goal of providing the best possible care to patients through certification in hand therapy.”



TESTIMONIALS of Past Grant Recipients



BURKHALTER NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARD GRANT

This grant is generously supported by the Doris Ann Slack Upper Extremity Education and Research Innovation Fund.



RECIPIENT:

Joseph M. Day, PhD, PT, OCS

THE EFFECT OF SCAPULAR MUSCLE STRENGTHENING ON FUNCTIONAL RECOVERY IN PATIENTS WITH LATERAL EPICONDYLALGIA



“I am honored to receive the Burkhalter New Investigator Award Grant for Clinical Research in Hand and Upper Limb Rehabilitation. The award is particularly special to me as it is my first extramural funded project as a researcher in physical therapy and will no doubt open other doors in my career. The funding will provide our team with the necessary means for hiring a part time assistant to help manage some of the daily tasks of the project. It is our hope to advance clinical practice by providing the latest evidence based treatment as it relates to lateral epicondylalgia and the scapula. I would like to thank the American Hand Therapy Foundation and my entire research team for their ongoing support.”



BURKHALTER NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARD GRANT

This grant is generously supported by the Doris Ann Slack Upper Extremity Education and Research Innovation Fund.



RECIPIENT:

Received 2019
Brocha Stern, OTR, MOT, CHT

SELF-MANAGEMENT IN ADULTS AFTER DISTAL RADIUS FRACTURE: A MIXED METHODS EXPLORATION



“I am an Occupational Therapist, Certified Hand Therapist and a Post-Doctoral research fellow at Northwestern University. I was a recipient of the 2019 Burkhalter New Investigator Award Grant for my dissertation completed at NYU. My project explored self-management after distal radius fracture using mixed method. My findings contributed to understanding self-behavior recovery for hand injury. Receiving the Burkhalter Grant was a huge professional win for me. It made me competitive for my current role and position need for future funding. I am deeply grateful for the support of the AHTF and for everything that the foundation does to advance the science for hand therapy practice.”

LIST OF GRANTS



Grants and Scholarships Funded/Administered by the AHTF:

- Tri-Alliance Grant Honoring ASHT Founders, Co-funded by AHTF, the American Society of Hand Therapists, and the Hand Therapy Certification Commission <https://www.ahtf.org/grants/asht-founders-award/>
 - Judy Bell-Krotoski “Grab the Evidence” Award <https://www.ahtf.org/grants/judy-bell-krotoski-grab-the-evidence-award/>
Supported by the Doris Slack Research Innovation Fund
 - Burkhalter New Investigator Award for Clinical Research in Hand & Upper Limb Rehabilitation <https://www.ahtf.org/grants/burkhalter-new-investigator-grant/>
Supported by the Doris Slack Research Innovation Fund
 - Evelyn Mackin Grant for Education by a Traveling Hand Therapist <https://www.ahtf.org/grants/evelyn-mackin-grant/>
Underwritten by North Coast Medical, Inc
- 
- Janet Albrecht Memorial Scholarship <https://www.ahtf.org/grants/the-janet-albrecht-memorial-scholarship/>
 - Ida M. Stern Research Education Scholarship <https://www.ahtf.org/the-ida-m-stern-research-education-grant/>
 - Joint AFSH & AHTF Collaborative Research Grant <https://www.afsh.org/s/ahtf-grant>
 - Mary Kasch Hand Therapy Certification Scholarship www.htcc.org/mary-kasch-hand-therapy-certification-scholarship

Your Foundation at Work

COMING in 2023

AHTF Research Agenda Survey

In 2020, the AHTF Board voted to repeat the 2002 research agenda survey – which has been instrumental in providing guidance for the profession’s research initiatives since that time.

A task force was formed consisting of Caroline W. Jansen, PT, PhD, CHT, Elaine Fess, OTD, MS, OTR, FAOTA, CHT, Marsha Lawrence, PT, DPT, CHT, and April C. Cowan, OTD, OTR, CHT.

The survey included 28 questions comprising clinical practice, research and educational needs, and perceived barriers to conducting research.

The survey was sent out to all Certified Hand Therapists, and members of the ASHT. We are thankful for the 397 therapists who provided their thoughtful responses.

The research agenda team is currently analyzing the responses and will publish the results in 2023.

The results will guide AHTF’s research priorities in the future.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Alexandra Mackenzie
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Board Member



Barbara Winthrop
OTR, MA, CHT, FAOTA
Board Member



Anna Shnayder Executive Director

Anna Shnayder is an account executive at Association Headquarters (AH). AH is a professional services firm that specializes in helping non-profit organizations achieve their mission, create value, and advance their causes, industries, and professions. She currently serves as Chief Operations Officer for the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society™ (WOCN®) and Executive Director for the American Foundation of Hand Therapy (AHTF). In her 20 years of professional experience in managing non-profit organizations, she spent most of her career in the area of continuing education and operations for healthcare organizations. Anna is a proud member of ASAE and MASAE.



In memory of **Michael J. Epstein, MD**

1938 – 2022

AHTF and the entire hand surgery and hand therapy communities mourn the recent passing of AHTF Board Member, Michael J. Epstein, MD.

Dr. Epstein (“Mike” as he preferred to be called) was a pioneer in hand surgery in Houston, Texas. He was a leader in hand surgery techniques and patient management, and a valued mentor for many medical students, residents, fellows, and therapists. He generously and graciously served on the AHTF Board since 2017 and was an incredible colleague and friend. AHTF will be honoring Mike’s lifetime of service with tributes to be announced in the coming months. Thank you to all who have honored him with a gift to AHTF. We share our continued condolences with his family, colleagues, and friends.