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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

James A. Haley Veterans Affairs Hospital

Occupational Therapist NPI: 1346843968

March 2021 – Present

- Post Deployment Rehabilitation and Evaluation Program (PREP) – Occupational therapist providing inpatient services to active duty special operations members transitioning out of the military with mTBI. Scope of practice includes orthopedic conditions, headaches, insomnia, chronic pain; with a focus on improving overall functioning in meaningful activities for successful transition
- Outpatient Clinic – Occupational therapist providing care for veterans with a focus on upper extremity conditions afflicting shoulders, elbows, and hands; working w/surgeons to implement post-surgical protocols, splinting, modalities; neurologic conditions, post Covid-19 rehab and smell training.
- Polytrauma Transitional Rehabilitation Program (PTRP) – Occupational therapist providing pre-transitional care to include ADL/IADL training, vision, cognition, mental health, and upper extremity for veterans transitioning back into their home environment whom have a moderate traumatic brain injury

Florida Occupational Therapy Association

Chair, Mental Health Special Interest Section

2021 – Present

- Serving as chair of mental health SIS for the State of Florida. Activities include advocacy, building capacity, program development for mental health occupational therapy
 - Development of first pilot program in Broward County for inclusion of occupational therapy involvement in community-based mental health care through a county funding entity (Present)

Ginger Health

Occupational Therapist

November 2020 - March 2021

- Occupational therapist providing evaluations and treatment to persons across the lifespan ages 0- 100, and across specializations serving the pediatric, neurological impairment, orthopedic, mental health, workers compensation, and telehealth patients

Care Coordinator

August 2020 - November 2020

- Responsible for overall operation of clinic including scheduling, marketing, insurance authorizations, and inter/multidisciplinary workload balance and collaboration

Phoenix Counseling

Occupational Therapist

December 2020 - September 2021

- Occupational therapist working in pediatric mental health role providing mental health care to children at risk, and in need of mental health services in Hillsborough and Pasco Counties, Florida through home and school visits and telehealth correspondence.

Amazon

Occupational Therapist

October 2020-July 2021

- Providing primary prevention workplace conditioning and ergonomic training to Amazon delivery drivers of direct contracting groups to prevent workplace injuries and increase productivity and overall health and wellness of workers.
 - Provided training and education to 45 Amazon employees'

University of South Florida Office of Veteran Success

Community Outreach / Orientation Coordinator

September 2015 – August 2017

- Worked as mentor and role model for transitioning veterans and helped mentor veterans in a one-on-one environment
- Co-sponsored a networking event through the Pat Tillman Foundation, Tampa Chamber of Commerce, and 25 additional employers to help train transitioning veterans
- Developed and standardized veteran orientation procedures and content

PUBLICATIONS

Lead author of:

Sargent, J. & Valdes, K. (2021): Use of occupation-based outcome measure and strength-based self-report with persons with substance use disorders: a prospective cohort study. *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0164212X.2021.1875956>

Sargent, J., Wermers, A., Russo, L., & Valdes, K. (2020). Master's and Doctoral Occupational Therapy Students' Perceptions of Research Integration in Their Programs. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 8(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.15453/2168-6408.1614>

IN THE MEDIA

- *Announcement and interview about the Pat Tillman Scholarship:* <http://wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu/post/selfless-service-drives-latest-usf-tillman-scholar-0>
- *USF Beat TV Interview about Pat Tillman Scholarship:* <https://youtu.be/jp7GrOe2cQs> (minute 15:23 – 19:45)
- *Veterans Affairs (VA) Explore, Story of Military Transition:* https://youtu.be/9-771moGC_U

EDUCATION

Gannon University, Ruskin FL

May 2017-August 2020

Major: Doctor of Occupational Therapy

- **Fieldwork II** – WestCare – Residential inpatient treatment facility for Department of Corrections inmates with substance use disorders and serious mental illness
 - Developed first occupational therapy program at WestCare. Evaluated, assessed, and treated substance abuse and mental illness ages 18 to 75
- **Fieldwork II** – Ginger Health – Generalist outpatient clinic that specialized in the 0-100 lifespan. Evaluated, planned treatment, treated, and completed discharge planning for myriad of diagnoses in 90% of caseload: pediatrics, upper extremity, hands, neurological disorders, psychosocial, sensory integration.

University of South Florida, Tampa FL

August 2014 - May 2017

Major: Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences

- Pat Tillman Scholar
 - Largest military scholarship in the country, highly vetted, 60 chosen each year among several thousand candidates

CERTIFICATIONS

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) 2022

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Panelist, Florida Occupational Therapy Association (FOTA) Conference 2020 2020

- Served as panelist during FOTA20 conference to support roundtable discussion on how to develop and implement plan for state level inclusion of occupational therapy as qualified mental health providers.

President, Executive Advisory Board - National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) 2018

- Hillsborough County coordinator for Ending the Silence program which brings mental health awareness to children and teens

Regional Foundation Captain, Pat Tillman Foundation 2016-2018

- Florida regional captain in charge of organizing service projects, networking events, and guest speakers for the benefit of the community and the continuity of the Pat Tillman Foundation

Character Does Matter Ambassador, Travis Manion Foundation 2017-2019

- Presented the Character Does Matter campaign to high school students and below with a focus on the importance of character based off the mantra: "If not me, then who?"
 - Impacted 750 students in Tampa, and growing

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

United States Army, Various locations

New Equipment Training Instructor

April 2008 - July 2012

- Training facilitator for the army's new equipment training company
- Coordinated the new equipment training as liaison for civilian contractors, military personnel, and local nations as a global ambassador
- Adaptable with working in a multicultural environment including communication and awareness of diverse populations

Infantry Platoon Sergeant

April 2006 - April 2008

- Mentored and maintained the accountability of 39 military personnel through professional development, combat readiness, and maintained equipment worth 22 million
- Effectively coordinated triage procedures to provide treatment based on severity of injury to ensure priorities of care were met during combat operations and training
- Accountability to ensure junior soldiers/leaders were trained, certified and proficient in combat life-saving procedures