

Life History of LaDonna Bannach, OTR/L

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Introduction

- This life history is one of 29 life history interviews which are a part of a larger project, *Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming*. The purpose of the project is to gather information about the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states. It is anticipated that the life history process will be a powerful way to gather this information.
- This study is intended to provide current and future generations of occupational therapists a view of the history and how occupational therapy practice has evolved from its inception to current practice in North Dakota and Wyoming.

Description of Participant

- OT practitioner for almost 17 years.
- CEO and president of Beyond Boundaries Therapy in Fargo, North Dakota (2004-Present).
- Started House of Everyday Living in 2009 with her husband, a non-profit organization that provides a comprehensive range of support services for individuals of all ages.
- Has experience as an Assistive Technology Specialist and Autism Specialist in Fargo Public Schools.
- Has provided services for populations across the lifespan, addressing psychiatric, pediatric, and physical disabilities.
- Accomplishments relating to her practice include Outstanding Allied Provider of the Year, Vice President of Public Relations for NDOTA, and has been consistently rated top provider in Patient Satisfaction Surveys for the Heartland Healthcare Network.
- Notable presentations include ND Annual Autism Conference as well as numerous pediatric focused conferences and workshops.
- Memberships include Children's Services Coordinating Committee, American Occupational Therapy Association, and North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association.

Literature Review

- LaDonna graduated from the UND OT program in 2000.
- At the time that she graduated, the OT profession increased its understanding of its own roles and functions and its ability to advocate and translate the function of OT to other professions (Reed & Peters, 2010).
- Presently, OT expands in emerging areas, especially in digital technologies. This influenced the models, which are geared towards different cultural perspectives, development of online education, and the shift toward clinical doctorates (Christiansen & Haertl, 2014).
- Current practice is driven by federal reimbursement regulations and insurance policies.



Methodology

- This is a qualitative study using a life history approach.
- The participant was assigned from a list developed by the course instructors through purposive sampling.
- There were no specific gatekeeper issues – initial contact was made by course instructors.
- Informed consent was given.
- The questions on the interview schedule were designed to be used with all the individuals interviewed as part of the larger project. The researchers were allowed to modify or add interview questions as needed for each specific interview. The interview was semi structured.
- The data was gathered via phone interview and was audio recorded on multiple devices.
- The interview was conducted in a private room in the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences building by Kelsey Raymond and Shelby Wassink. The interview lasted 55 minutes.
- The interview was transcribed verbatim.
- The data was coded by two student researchers.



Findings

- The data analysis and findings were influenced by the Kawa model, which looks at turning points within an individual's life.
- The researchers coded the data, grouped the codes into categories, and developed patterns and themes within the data. Those patterns and themes are highlighted below under the corresponding category.

Patterns and Themes

- Business owner:
 - Logistics of business ownership can lead to challenges that take away from the practitioner's ambitions.
 - LaDonna has a strong desire to provide for all those in need.
 - Insurance guidelines and policies influence her practice and the care she can provide.
 - She built a pediatric practice based on the principle of providing best quality care.
- Clinical practice:
 - Empathy and compassion are essential qualities she exhibits that make a difference in care.
 - Recognition as a successful practitioner comes from a drive to serve others.
 - Looking at the bigger picture of a client yields best care.
 - Her personal love for working with the pediatric population drives her clinical practice.
- Practice dynamics:
 - LaDonna is actively involved in community and state organizations.
 - Collaboration between other disciplines and family members of clients is key to successful treatment in her practice.
 - She emphasizes the importance of being a hands-on mentor and a strong leader.
 - OT presents many personal and physical challenges.
- Professional Journey:
 - LaDonna came into the OT program with more OT and life experiences than many of her classmates.
 - She views supports as being essential to her success.
 - Experiencing tragedy involving a friend brought forth inspiration to be an OT.

Discussion and Conclusions

- The purpose of the project is to gather information about the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states.
- This is a qualitative study that utilized a semi-structured interview to gather information about the life of LaDonna Bannach.
- The interview was conducted via phone call, and data was transcribed and coded by two student researchers.
- The Kawa model was used as a guide to develop interview questions, which yielded information about the participant's life.
- LaDonna graduated in 2000, and her private practice has been influenced by insurance and federal reimbursement regulations.
- The codes were analyzed and put into categories and patterns/themes, and resulted in one final assertion.

Assertion

- LaDonna is an occupational therapist who is actively involved in the OT profession, exhibits compassion and empathy to treat her clients in a holistic manner, and utilizes interdisciplinary collaboration among co-workers and clients to provide the best care for all those in need through her private pediatric practice.

Thank You

We would like to thank LaDonna Bannach for her time and participation in this life history study. We enjoyed the experience to learn about an influential member in developing occupational therapy in North Dakota. We would also like to thank our course instructors Dr. Janet Jedlika and Dr. Gail Bass.

References

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