



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA AWARD FOR 2000
LOIS M. BARBER, OTR, FAOTA
(HEIDI PENDLETON)

This past May, Lois M. Barber, OTR, FAOTA was honored by the Dean of the San Jose State University's College of Applied Sciences and Arts as Distinguished Occupational Therapy Alumna of the Year 2000. Lois was recognized for her professional excellence, innovative and entrepreneurial skill and her outstanding contributions to the profession of occupational therapy. She earned her BS in Occupational Therapy at San Jose State College in 1952, and practiced in adult and pediatric physical disabilities rehabilitation at Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center. An interest and skill in treating the Upper Extremity emerged during her clinical practice and she subsequently participated in research and equipment development as the Co-Director of the Patient Engineering Services at Rancho. She went on to pioneer one of the first, and most highly imitated, Hand Rehabilitation Centers in the nation -- at Downey Community Hospital. Later she would take her original ideas for wire foam pre-fabricated hand splints and other hand products and found her own company, the highly successful LMB Hand Rehab Products. She served as the company's president until her retirement in 1995. Throughout her career Lois presented at numerous conferences and published extensively producing treatment guides and protocols that continue to be used in treatment settings today. The profession recognized Lois for her accomplishments inducting her into the prestigious Roster of Fellows of the American Occupational Therapy Association. She was also elected as an Honorary Member of the Society of Hand Therapists. Most importantly, she has given unstintingly of her time, enthusiasm and expertise, mentoring and inspiring numerous occupational therapists, many of them her fellow alumni of San Jose State University.

On May, we were privileged to have Lois (accompanied by her good friend and colleague Dr. Elizabeth Yerxa) spend the day with us touring the campus and department noting and admiring the many changes that have transpired since her graduation. Lois then joined one of the graduate student labs where she shared numerous stories of her amazing career. These students later commented that they were very



inspired by her enduring enthusiasm for occupational therapy and her lifetime commitment to and belief in the importance of occupation – it is a memory they will cherish throughout their careers. After the Dean’s Award Ceremony our faculty hosted a celebratory dinner at La Pastai in Lois’s honor – it was a wonderful day for all involved. How proud we are to have such a distinguished alumna!

Since its inception in 1995, previous Occupational Therapy Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients have included the following celebrated occupational therapists:

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| Georgette Dufresne, MS, OTR, FAOTA | 1995 |
| Susan Lang, MS, OTR | 1996 |
| Alice Kibele, MS, OTR | 1997 |
| Donna M. Jackson, MS, OTR | 1998 |
| Bonita Kraft, OTR | 1999 |

