The Occupational Therapy Graduate Program has been awarded a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support student scholarships in the amount of $650,000 per year from 2020 to 2025. The intention of the award is to provide financial relief to students who come from disadvantaged economic or environmental backgrounds. Students may qualify for funding under a number of guidelines including but not limited to:

1. Having received a Pell grant for an undergraduate degree and or being a first generation college student
2. Having attended a high school with low graduation rates and or where the majority of students received free or reduced lunch
3. Qualifying as having a financial need based on the FAFSA

Students who receive this award will be given funds of at minimum 50% of tuition, and possibly more depending on need and available resources.

Also, this award represents the OTGP’s commitment to an intentional learning environment that supports students from all backgrounds, but especially those students who are racially, ethnically, and or culturally underrepresented in the OT professional world.

The work we will be doing is not just funding scholarships, but also partnering heavily with the HSC Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to improve recruitment and support our student body. Our hope is that this avenue to occupational therapy’s entry level degree will increase the number of local New Mexicans who are able to attend our program and improve access to OT services throughout our state, which has many medically under-served areas.

If you are a prospective student and have questions please email our senior student success specialist, Janet Werner (werner@salud.unm.edu).

This project is a collaboration between many of our faculty and staff as well as the HSC Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. So, big thank you to Janet Poole, Diane Parham, Carla Wilhite, Patricia Siegel, Sofia Jaureguiberry, Sylvia Nolasco, Janet Werner and Teresa Madrid.

Grant mechanism funded through the HRSA-SDS (T08HP39290-01-01). The project co-PIs are Timothy Dionne (tdionne@salud.unm.edu) and Mark Hardison (mhardison@salud.unm.edu).

The current Advisory Board is Octavio Muñoz (Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), Desirey Archuleta (2nd-year OTGP student), Gaylene Tool (OTGP Alumna working in rural NM), Heidi Sanders (Admissions Committee), and Mary Thelander-Hill (OTGP Faculty).