



Advocating for Occupational Therapy Services in the South Bronx, NY

Huong Pham, OTDS¹, Lorraine Street, PhD, OTR/L, BCP¹, Sloan Hedrick², and Katy Meyers²
University of Mississippi Medical Center¹ and A House on Beekman²



OVERVIEW OF CAPSTONE SITE

POSTER OVERVIEW: The aims of this project were to advocate for occupational therapy services for children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) yet were not receiving services at A House On Beekman (AHOB) in the South Bronx, NY due to lack of resources. A core component of this project was to establish partnerships with occupational therapy (OT) and occupational therapy assistant (OTA) schools in the state of New York by introducing them to AHOB's mission and vision, as well as discussing health disparities present in the community. These goals were achieved by meeting with fieldwork coordinators via video call applications, sharing my personal and professional experience at the site, and advocating for OT/OTA to students to consider fieldwork placements at AHOB in the future.

Overview of Capstone Site: AHOB is a ten-year-old organization that offers academic and life skills programs from birth to career in the South Bronx, New York. According to United States Census Bureau (n.d.), 19.8% of Bronx residents reported having a bachelor's degree or higher. The median household income in 2018 was \$38,085 with 27.3% of the Bronx's population living in poverty.

LITERATURE SUMMARY

It is imperative that children in the South Bronx receive OT services if needed. St. John & Ausderau (2018) states children from low SES families are less likely to be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and experience delayed diagnosis. This can further exacerbate the health disparities already experienced by residents of the Bronx. Furthermore, Drainoni et al., (2006) suggests that individuals with disabilities experience increased barriers to accessing health care, citing issues with transportation, communication, and insurance.

The Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model was proposed by Mary Law and states occupational performance is heavily shaped by the dynamic interaction between three factors- person, environment, and occupation (Law et al., 1996). The PEO model is useful for OTPs to help identify any factors in these three constructs that help or hinder occupational performance (Case-Smith, 2015). Since AHOB is located in an area where many families have histories of low socio-economic status (SES), this model could help to benefit the community in identifying elements of their environment which effect their occupational performance and identifying strategies to improve their occupational participation.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment was conducted with the OTD student and mentors utilizing a semi-structured interview via video conferencing application. The interview included open-ended questions to assess needs, characteristics, challenges, and desired programs at AHOB. The purpose of the interview was to ensure synchronicity between the needs of the capstone site and the capstone project. The following is a summary of identified needs:

1. Establish partnerships with the community/ local OT schools and or therapists that could possibly provide pro bono services and or donate equipment.
2. Provide OT interventions for preschoolers.
3. Screen 0-3 y/o for developmental milestones and provide caregiver education.
4. Provide one-on-one sessions and lead group activities for children attending after school program.
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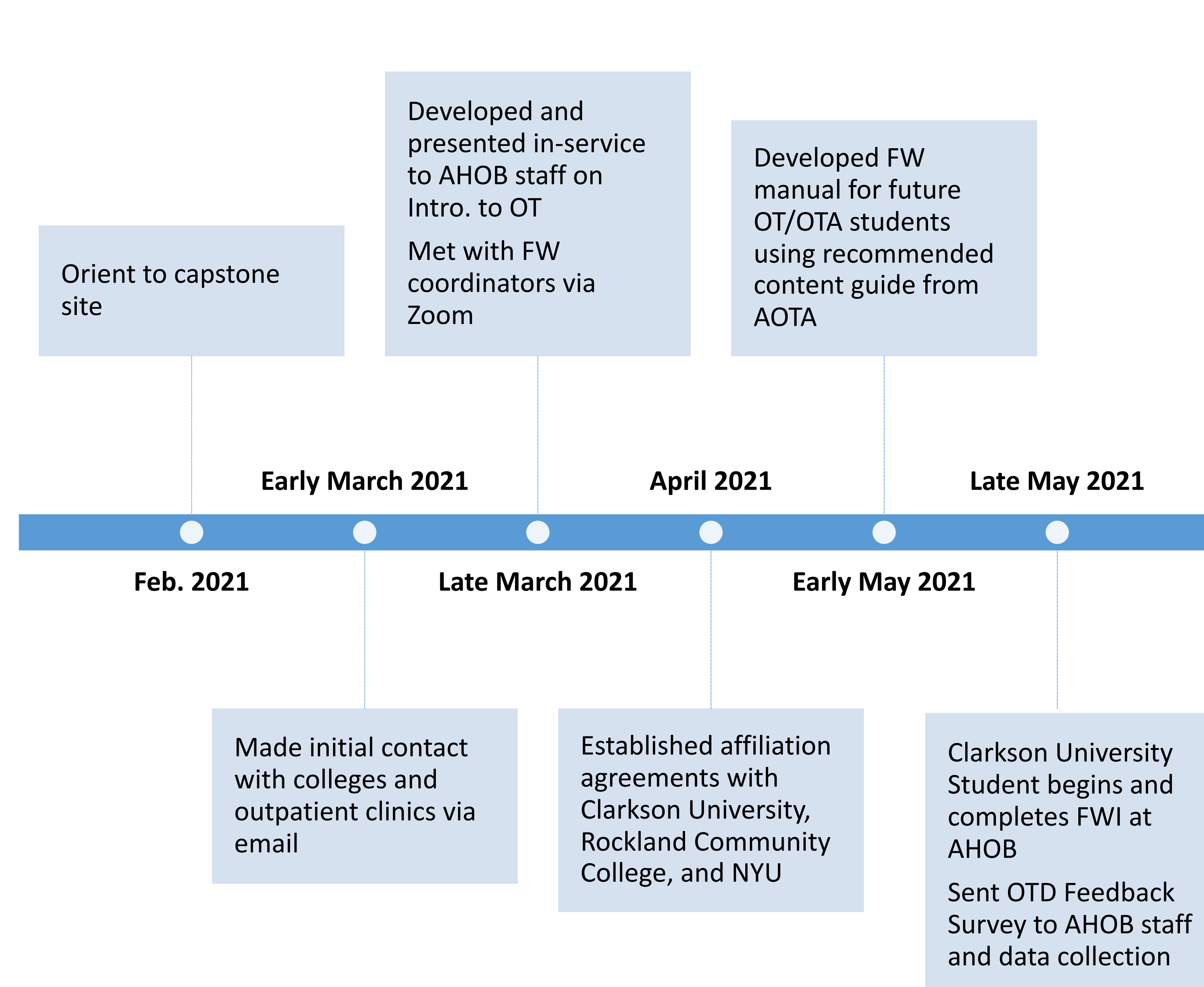
PROJECT GOALS / OBJECTIVES

The DCE student will meet the following objectives through dissemination of capstone project:

1. Provide evidenced-based interventions incorporating sensory-integration techniques to preschoolers at AHOB.
2. Make initial contact with in-state OT and OTA schools and provide a brief introduction of AHOB by week 4.
3. Collaborate with other DCE student to create and present an informative presentation to pre-school and primary-ed teachers by week 5 (i.e. intro to OT, common childhood diagnoses, and strategies to support students.)
4. Meet (via videocalls) with FW coordinators to advocate for OT/COTA students to serve as FW students by week 6.
5. Disseminate OTD student feedback survey to AHOB staff to discuss and evaluate the DCE student's Capstone project and its effectiveness. Collect responses on how future Capstone students can best serve AHOB by week 14.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT and/or IMPLEMENTATION

None of the children at AHOB with individualized education plans (IEPs) were receiving OT services in-house due to insufficient resources. The role of the OTD student was to provide OT services for current students and to find a sustainable method to provide OT services for future students after DCE was complete.



4 out of 11 colleges responded to my request to discuss a potential partnership with AHOB

Clarkson University, Mercy College, NYU Steinhardt, and Rockland Community College

1 out of 7 outpatient clinics responded when asked to donate therapy equipment

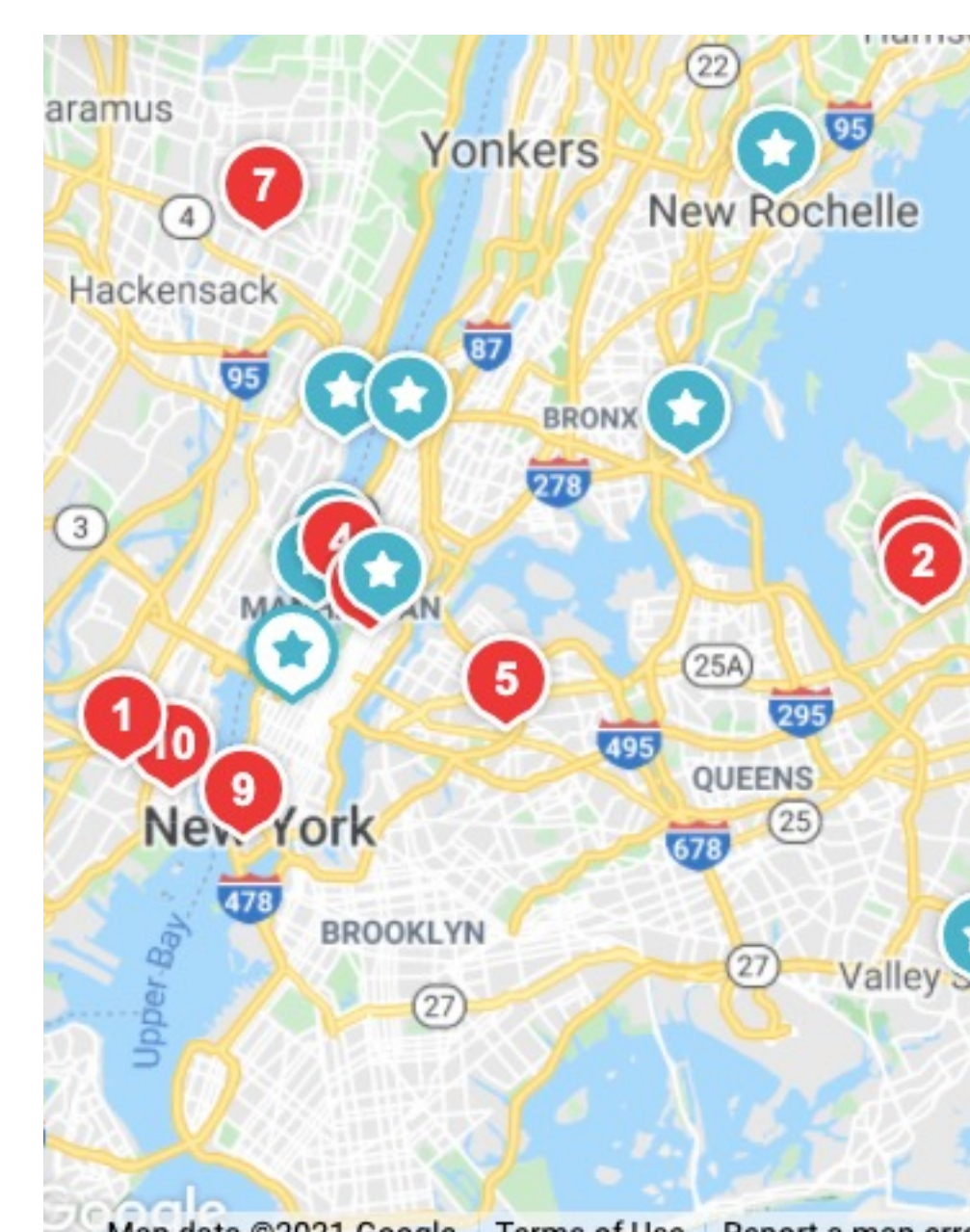
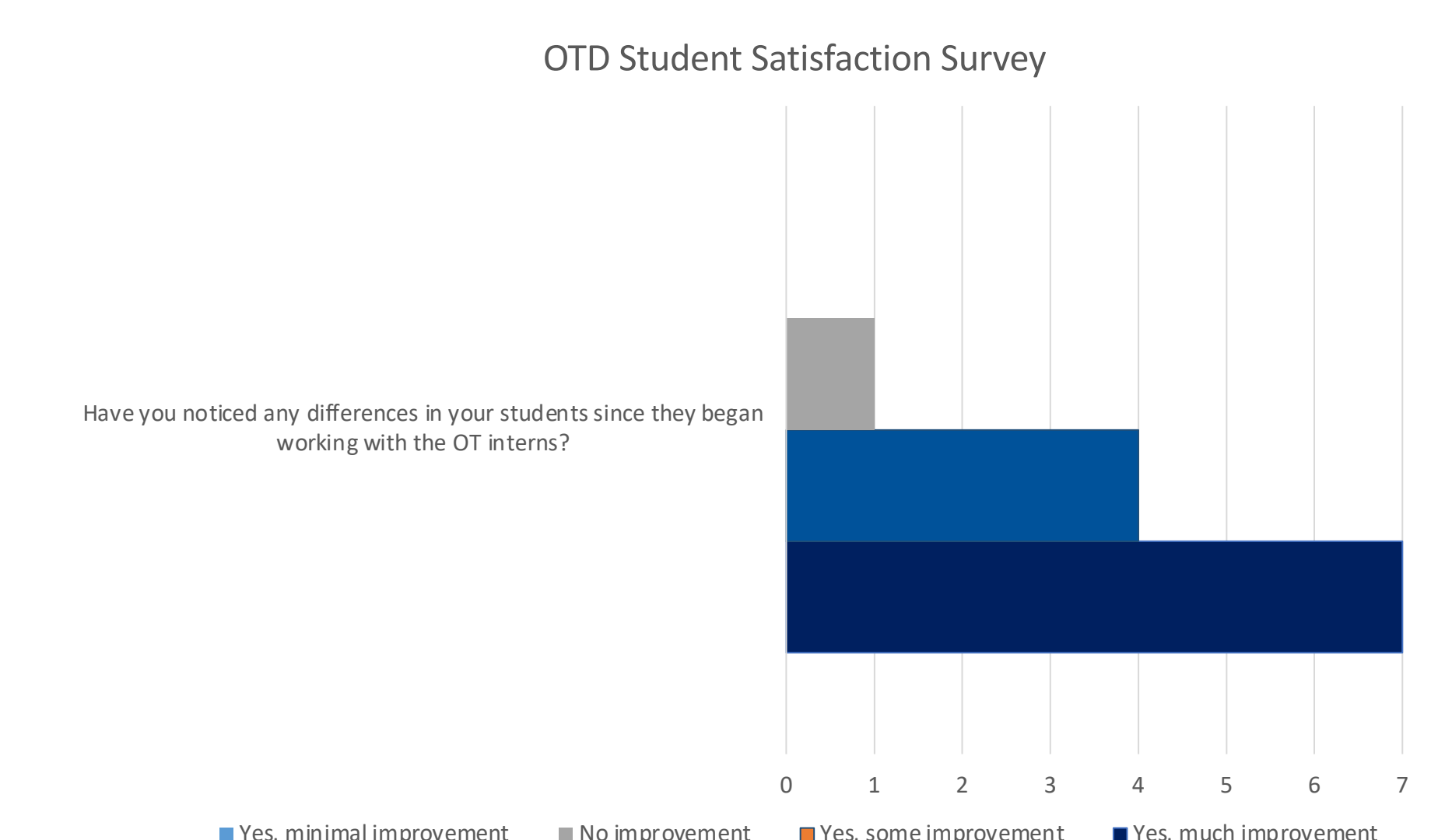
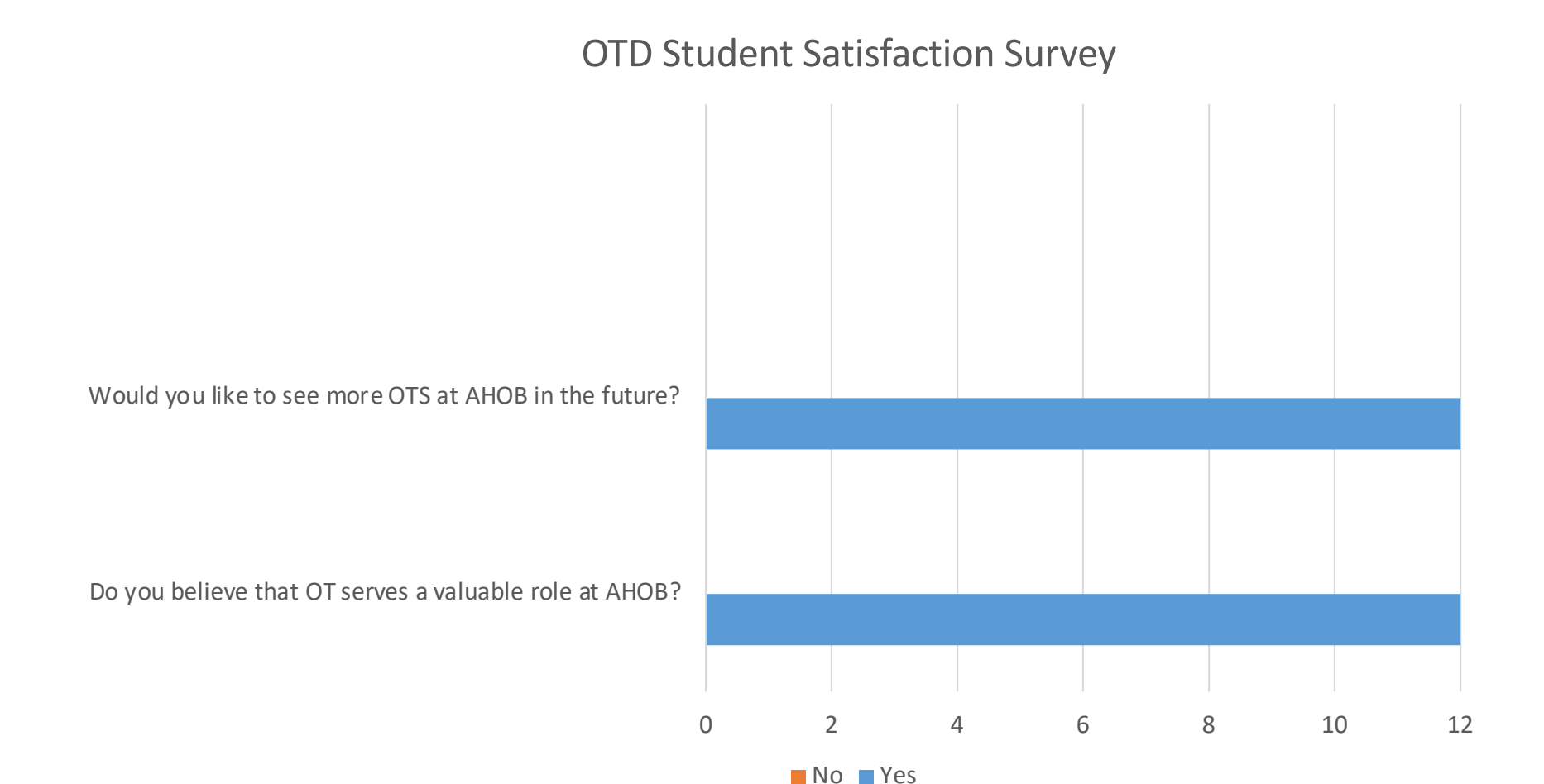
Clinic was willing to donate toys and books but no therapy equipment

Established 3 affiliation agreements with colleges in NY during DCE

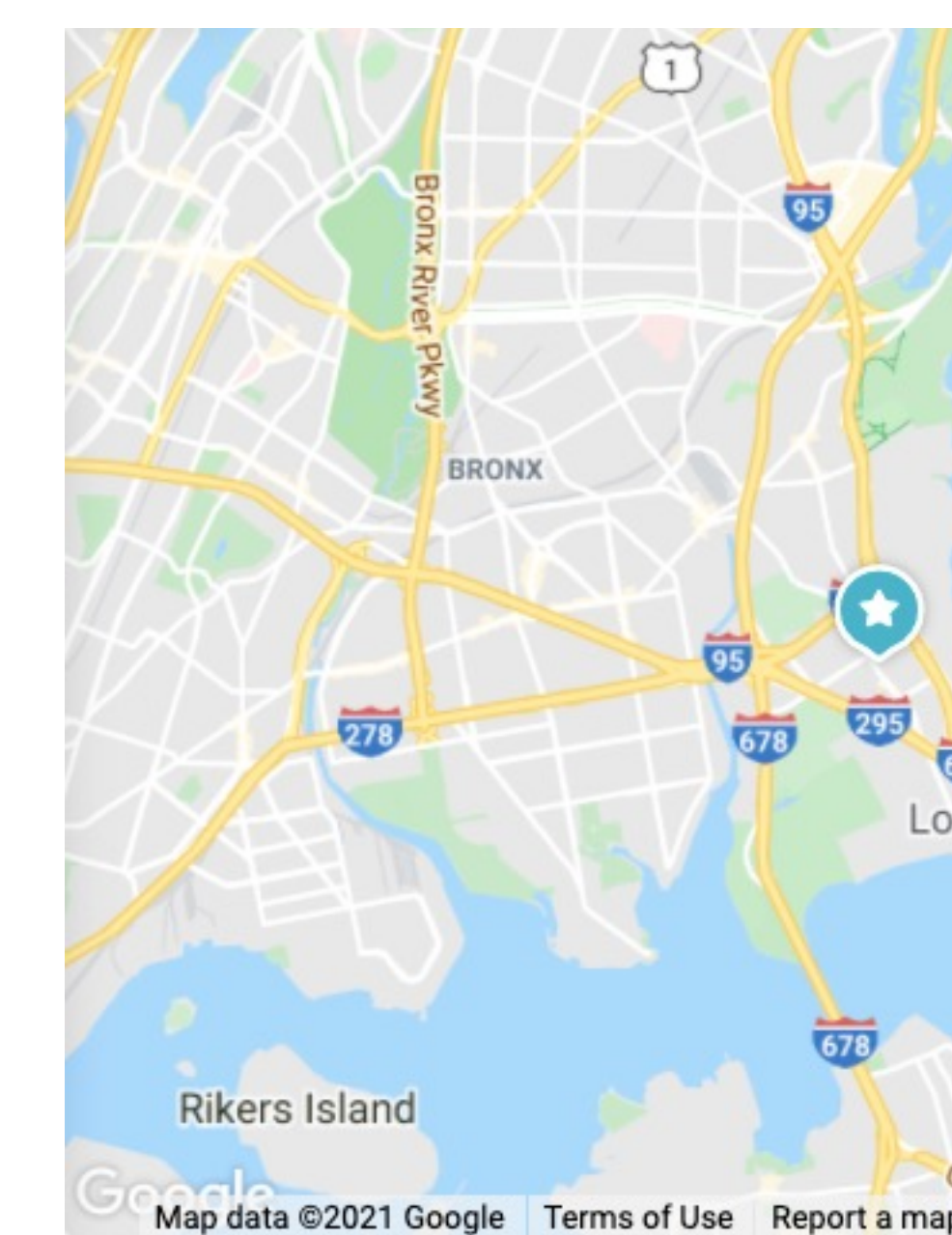
1 MSOT student from Clarkson University completed FWI placement at AHOB prior to completion of DCE

PLAN FOR PROJECT EVALUATION

To evaluate my capstone project, a 7-question survey via Google Forms was developed to gauge AHOB's staff perception of OT's value and role at AHOB. An online survey was the most effective way to evaluate my project as it would be anonymous, quick, and easily accessible.



Search results for Pediatric Occupational Therapy outpatient clinics in various boroughs of NYC (L)
Search results for Pediatric Occupational Therapy outpatient clinics in Bronx, NY (R)



PROJECT SUMMARY AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

By disseminating this doctoral capstone project, I was able to develop the following entry-level OTD skills:

1. Advanced clinical reasoning skills
2. Advocate for OT profession
3. Interprofessional collaboration
4. Program development and implementation
5. Theoretical application

Future Recommendations:

1. Healthy Eating and Cooking Program
2. ADLs and life skills
3. In-service on Sensory Integration/
4. Sensory Processing