

are living longer. This will cause more and more elderly people to seek out therapy that will help them maintain a healthy and happy lifestyle.

#### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Occupational Therapy Association  
P.O. Box 31220  
Bethesda, MD 20824  
Phone: (301) 652-2682  
Web: [www.aoto.org](http://www.aoto.org)

American Occupational Therapy Foundation  
4720 Montgomery Lane  
Bethesda, MD 20824-1220  
Web: [www.oatf.org](http://www.oatf.org)

Mississippi Occupational Therapy Association  
921 N. Congress Street  
Jackson, MS 39202  
Phone: (800) 455-1679

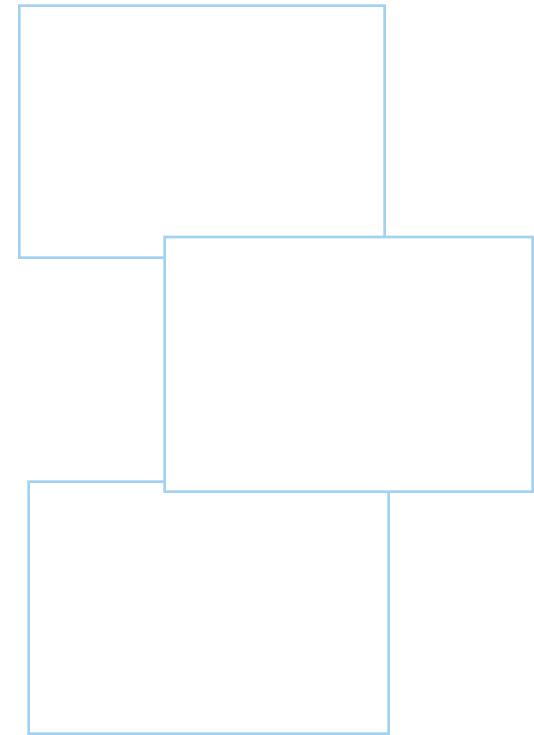


#### MHA HEALTH CAREERS CENTER

6425 LAKEOVER ROAD (39213)  
P.O. Box 16444  
JACKSON, MS 39236-6444  
PHONE (601) 982-3251  
FAX (601) 368-3200

[WWW.MSHEALTHCAREERS.COM](http://WWW.MSHEALTHCAREERS.COM)

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**YOUR**  
*choice...*



*Choose to care!*

...

*Promoting Health  
Careers in Mississippi*

*A division of Mississippi Hospital Association*

## POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Occupational therapist assistants (OTAs) work under the direction of an occupational therapist in an effort to restore, reinforce, and enhance the performance of patients with disabilities. They facilitate learning of the skills and functions that are necessary for a patient's adaptation and productivity in a real world environment. They also assist in evaluating a patient's daily living skills and capabilities so that the prescribed therapy can be custom tailored to a particular patient. Occupational therapist assistants are called upon to help patients whose abilities to carry on a normal way of life are threatened by physical injury or illness, developmental defects, the aging process, psychological and social disability, or poverty and cultural differences. They order supplies and help maintain tools, equipment, and records. They may also be responsible for monitoring a patient's progress and reporting any concerns they have to the occupational therapist. OTAs might also be called upon to direct activity programs that will ensure that the therapy goals are being met. Anyone interested in this field of work should have good communication skills and enjoy working with people with a wide range of rehabilitative needs.

## WORK ENVIRONMENT

Occupational therapist assistants work in a variety of environments. These may include hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation facilities, long term and intermediate care facilities, private homes, community mental health agencies, schools and camps, and private practice.

## HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

High school students interested in becoming an occupational therapist assistant should concentrate on courses in biology, algebra, chemistry, English, physical education, computer skills, physical science, psychology, sociology, and health occupations/medical professions education.

## COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

Occupational therapist assistants must obtain an Associate's Degree from a certified program. Following the completion of all educational requirements, individuals must take a national examination in order to become a certified occupational therapist assistant (COTA). This certification is required to practice in the State of Mississippi.

## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Pearl River Community College  
101 Hwy 11 North Box 5120  
Poplarville, MS 39470  
Phone: (601) 795-1211  
Web: [www.prcc.cc.ms.us](http://www.prcc.cc.ms.us)

Holmes Community College  
412 W. Ridgeland Avenue  
Ridgeland, MS 39157  
Phone: (601) 856-5400  
Web: [www.holmes.cc.ms.us](http://www.holmes.cc.ms.us)

## SALARY RANGE

Average Annual Salary--\$26,900  
Salary Range--\$25,000-\$30,000

## CAREER OUTLOOK

The career outlook for an occupational therapist assistant is excellent. With an increasing number of individuals with disabilities or limited function, the demand for OTAs is exceeding the number of qualified personnel. There is an expected job market growth of over 36% over the next eight years. A major reason for this demand is the advances in medicine that have allowed patients to survive in greater numbers, and in turn increase the demand for therapy. Another reason for this expected increase is the fact that more people