World Massage Conference 2009
Research and Massage

Diana L. Thompson, President
Massage Therapy Foundation

Foundation Mission:
- The Massage Therapy Foundation advances the knowledge and practice of massage therapy by supporting scientific research, education, and community service.

Principles that guide the Foundation:
- Upholding the principles of philanthropy
- Contributing to the understanding and appreciation of massage therapy
- Increasing the Foundation's influence, credibility, and visibility in health and wellness
- Sustaining the Foundation's organizational effectiveness
- Fostering the spirit of collaboration

Foundation Goals:
- Advance research on therapeutic massage & body work (TMB)
- Foster massage therapy initiatives that serve populations in need
- Promote research literacy & capacity in the profession
- Support the evidence-informed practice of TMB based on available research, client factors, & practitioner experience & judgment
- Fortify the Foundation's financial resources & organizational effectiveness

Founded in 1990
- 501 (c) 3 public charity
- Independently governed eleven-member board of trustees
- Broadly serves the profession & public
- Granted nearly $1,000,000 for research & community service projects, research conferences and case report contests
- Publishes the International Journal for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork: Research, Education, and Practice

We fund/promote/publish research in order to:
- Steadily build the body of knowledge
- Provide practitioners with knowledge to help us advance our practice and skills
- Support the theoretical foundation of our discipline and help distinguish useful practices from those that offer little or no benefit or may even prove harmful
- Educate clients, healthcare providers, third party payers about massage & create more demand/opportunities for employment
Evidenced-based practice = Evidence-informed practice
- Research data is only one aspect
- Clinical experience & judgment
- Client factors
- We understand that research has yet to catch up to what our clinical experience tells us and we must remain open to refining what we believe to be true

Translational Research: bench to bedside & bedside to bench
- Research data informs clinical practice
- Clinical practice/studies inform basic/mechanistic research
- We have a responsibility to create a cache of case reports that explain who we are and what we do in common practice and in unusual circumstances

2009 Case Report Contest winner
- Erika Larson, “Massage therapy effects in a long-time prosthetic user with fibular hemimelia”
- Low back pain is common with lower limb amputees (LLA)
- Massage for low back pain has been widely studied, but no studies have been conducted on massage for LLA

“Massage therapy effects in a long-time prosthetic user with fibular hemimelia”
- Measurement tools—quantitative: VAS, HRQOL, pedometer
- Findings: decrease in pain, increase in quality of life, no change in number of steps per day
- Qualitative findings: participant felt less restricted by the condition at the end of the seven massage sessions

2008 Research Grant Recipient—Report on findings: WIN WIN
- Project addressed four specific aims:
  - Assess the feasibility of incorporating massage into a community-based public health intervention for Latina/Hispanic and African-American adolescent girls at risk of developing diabetes.
  - Assess the acceptability of massage as an intervention for this group of girls.
  - Examine the impact of incorporating massage into a comprehensive program that included exercise classes and nutrition education.
  - Develop guidelines and recommendations for community-based providers to integrate massage into their services for adolescents who are at risk of diabetes.

WIN WIN Conclusions—
- It is possible to successfully integrate massage into comprehensive programming to promote health and fitness for adolescent girls, but that “it takes a village”
- It is essential to gain their trust through relationship-building and communication with girls and their families
- Massage can be acceptable, desirable and a feasible modality to integrate with comprehensive programming for nutrition education and weight control, and may play a role in reducing risk of diabetes for vulnerable adolescent girls by introducing them to healthy habits and practices for self-care
WIN WIN Conclusions—
Massage was associated with:
- Promoting increased physical activity among girls involved in the project
- Reinforcing peer messages about remaining smoke-free and not using cigarettes
- Improving nutritional intake through increased addition of fruits and vegetables into the diet
- Enhancing participants' positive feelings about themselves

2009 Research Grant Recipient
- "Effect of Massage on Postural Control in Older Persons" JoEllen Sefton, PhD
  - Hypothesis: Does massage improve balance and postural control in older persons
  - Measures: functional and static balance, heart rate, blood pressure

2009 Research Grant Recipient
- "Feasibility Study of a Massage Therapy Research Network" Jerilyn Cambron, LMT, DC, PhD
  - Purpose: to initiate an innovative multisite, multistate practice-based Massage Therapy Research Network (MassageNet) that will ultimately expand the body of knowledge in the massage profession and establish mechanisms to ensure that new knowledge is integrated into massage practice
  - Additional potential outcome: enhance communication between massage therapists and researchers

2009 Community Service Grant Recipient—Highlights
- "Massage Does a Body Good", Susan Ann Raszewski
  - Massage for seniors in rural Texas and caregivers
- "Healing Hands for HIV/AIDS", April Grant
  - Massage for Hispanics in East Philadelphia
- "Helping Hands Community Massage", Shane Convery
  - Immune Enhancement Project in San Francisco for people with HIV/AIDS
- "Bonding with Baby Program", Jennifer Greene
  - Moms from high-risk environments learn infant massage