

CAPT Bonnie C. Thornton will be retiring after thirty years of dedicated service to the United States Public Health Service. It is with great honor that the Therapy Category recognizes CAPT Thornton for her many accomplishments and illustrious career.

CAPT Thornton has been assigned to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland since completing her Bachelor of Science Degree in Occupational Therapy from the Virginia Commonwealth University in 1973. As a young officer, she paved the way for the utilization of Neurodevelopmental Treatment concepts to improve upper and lower extremity bracing and specialized seating modifications in patient care. She also created a developmental treatment program for failure-to-thrive infants.

As a Senior Staff Therapist at the NIH from 1980-1984, CAPT Thornton is credited for collaboration and application of the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO). The MOHO project led to the development of the Occupational Therapy Functional Screening Tool. This screening tool is recognized nationally and internationally. She also assisted on the development of the first upper extremity prosthetic program at NIH in support of the National Cancer Institute and patients with surgical amputations.

Because of her clinical specialty in the management of people with rheumatoid arthritis, CAPT Thornton has strongly influenced the assessment and treatment of patients diagnosed with rheumatological disorders as well as mentored many occupational therapists and rheumatology fellows in research and clinical practice. Her work in hand rehabilitation focusing on pathomechanics of arthritis and neuromuscular disease has aided thousands of patients to improve their function. In addition, her work has led to many innovations in splint design and a patent for a device to protect health care workers from accidental needle sticks. She has co-authored over 16 research articles and presented over 40 national-level podium presentations.

CAPT Thornton is a highly decorated Officer. She has been recognized with the following awards:

- 1) Three Commendation Medals
- 2) Unit Commendation Medal
- 3) Rehabilitation Medicine Department Chief's Award for Outstanding Leadership
- 4) Quality of Work Life award from the Department of Health and Human Services
- 5) Recognition of Achievement Award from the American Occupational Therapy Association
- 6) Community Service Award
- 7) Superior Work Performance Award

CAPT Thornton will be continuing her career as the Chief Therapist with the Occupational Therapy Section of the Rehabilitation Medicine Department at the NIH after her retirement from the Commissioned Corps. Her plans are to extend her collaborative research into hand transplantation.

The Therapy Category would like to extend a sincere thank you to CAPT Bonnie C. Thornton for her contributions. Through her work, she has brought recognition and acclaim to her profession and the United States Public Health Service.