

Influential Women profiles Randi Johnson Hanson, OTD, Clinical Assistant Professor of OT at Rocky Mountain College.

BILLINGS, MT, UNITED STATES, June 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Advancing Rehabilitation Education Through Clinical Expertise, Mentorship, and Lifelong Commitment to Patient Independence

Randi Johnson Hanson, PP-OTD, OTR/L, is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Occupational Therapy and Doctoral Capstone Coordinator at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana. She joined the institution in July 2025 following a distinguished 27-year career as a practicing occupational therapist. Dr. Hanson's transition into higher education came after completing her Post-Professional Doctorate of Occupational Therapy at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and she continues to maintain her clinical expertise through pro bono clinics and community-based programs. This ongoing engagement ensures that her teaching remains grounded in real-world application and current clinical practice.



Dr. Hanson's professional expertise spans geriatric rehabilitation, adult mental health, assistive technology, and wheelchair seating and positioning. She is deeply committed to helping individuals maintain independence and improve quality of life through personalized interventions, adaptive equipment solutions, and evidence-informed care strategies. Her work emphasizes function, dignity, and patient-centered outcomes, particularly for individuals navigating complex health and mobility challenges.

A strong advocate for bridging clinical practice and academic instruction, Dr. Hanson is recognized for her ability to translate scholarly research into meaningful, practical applications. Her dedication to advancing the field was recently honored with the Mary J. Bridle First Research

Award from the American Occupational Therapy Foundation for her doctoral capstone research, which she will present at the upcoming American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Conference. This recognition underscores her commitment to innovation, scholarship, and advancing occupational therapy practice.

Dr. Hanson attributes her success to several foundational influences. She credits her upbringing in the 1970s, when she was raised by parents who fully supported her ideas and never limited her potential based on gender. She recalls never being told, “you can’t, won’t, don’t, couldn’t, shouldn’t because you’re a girl.” Instead, she was consistently encouraged to explore her interests and pursue her goals. Even when mistakes occurred, her parents provided constructive guidance, helping her learn and grow while reinforcing resilience and confidence.

Education played a central role in her development, as both of her parents were teachers. Dr. Hanson also acknowledges the profound influence of her own educators, many of whom served as lifelong mentors. She remains closely connected with her 8th grade English teacher, describing her as an extraordinary woman whose encouragement continues to resonate decades later. Throughout her academic journey, college professors and mentors similarly reinforced her belief in her abilities and helped shape her professional trajectory.

Growing up in a household rooted in education and shaped by the emerging ideals of women’s empowerment during that era, Dr. Hanson experienced a supportive environment that encouraged independence and confidence. She fondly recalls her father as a particularly strong advocate who consistently supported her ambitions and defended her and other women in professional settings when necessary. She describes his influence as enduring and meaningful, noting that although he passed away nearly three years ago, his presence remains a guiding force in her life.

The best career advice Dr. Hanson has ever received came from mentors and educators who consistently reinforced the importance of focus, persistence, and lifelong learning. Their guidance emphasized that success is built through dedication, resilience, and a willingness to continuously grow. These principles have remained central throughout her professional journey, helping her navigate both clinical practice and academic leadership.

Dr. Hanson encourages young women entering occupational therapy and related fields to approach their careers with openness, curiosity, and confidence. She describes her own experience in occupational therapy as transformative, shaping both her professional identity and personal outlook in profoundly positive ways. She emphasizes that embracing challenges with an open mind and heart can lead to meaningful growth and fulfillment.

She also highlights the importance of redefining confidence and assertiveness. Dr. Hanson notes that women have often been labeled as “opinionated” or “bossy” when expressing leadership qualities, but she reframes these traits as strengths rooted in assertiveness and self-direction. She encourages women not to be discouraged by outdated perceptions, emphasizing that

leadership requires clarity, confidence, and the courage to advocate for oneself and others.

Mentorship is another cornerstone of Dr. Hanson's philosophy. She considers herself fortunate to have been guided by numerous mentors throughout her career and now takes great pride in mentoring students and emerging professionals. She describes mentorship as a deeply impactful relationship that fosters growth, encouragement, and professional reflection. In her view, mentorship not only strengthens individual careers but also enhances the overall quality and collaboration within the profession.

In discussing the current landscape of occupational therapy, Dr. Hanson identifies several key challenges, including evolving professional expectations and the need to maintain a strong focus on patient-centered care. She also notes the ongoing need to raise awareness of occupational therapy's essential role in improving health outcomes and quality of life. At the same time, she sees significant opportunity in the growing recognition of holistic, interdisciplinary care models and the increasing emphasis on mentorship and collaboration across healthcare and academic systems.

The values most important to Dr. Hanson in both her professional and personal life include support, encouragement, mentorship, openness, and a strong commitment to uplifting others. She believes in creating environments where individuals feel empowered, included, and guided toward success. These principles shape her approach to teaching, clinical practice, and leadership.

Dr. Randi Johnson Hanson's career reflects a lifelong dedication to compassionate care, academic excellence, and the advancement of occupational therapy. Through her continued work in education and community practice, she remains committed to preparing future professionals while promoting inclusive, patient-centered approaches that enhance independence and well-being across diverse populations.

Learn More about Dr. Randi Johnson Hanson:

Through her Influential Women profile: <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/randi-hanson>

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