

October 2025



MASSAGE THERAPY
FOUNDATION

Communicator

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH • EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES • COMMUNITY SERVICE

Dr. Niki Munk Appointed MTF Research Director

We are excited to announce the appointment of Niki Munk, PhD, LMT, as MTF Research Director! In her new role, Dr. Munk will lead the Foundation's research programming, which has greatly expanded in recent years in response to additional research grant funding from American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA).

Additionally, Munk's new role provides oversight and development for MTF's MassageNet Practice-Based Research Network and consultation aid to the MTF supported scientific journal, the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (IJTMB)*.



We are thrilled to have her and her expertise on our staff!

[Learn More](#)

2025 Case Report Contest Winners Announced



MTF is excited to announce the winners of the 2025 Case Report Contest for students and practitioners. Two case reports have been chosen, both in the student category. The winners are:

Silver Award:

Massage Therapy for Multiple Sclerosis

Hailey Robertson – MacEwan University, Edmonton, AB, Canada

Honorable Mention:

Effects of Massage Combined with Muscle Energy Technique for Cervical Disc Herniation: A Case Report

Jinjoo Moon, Vancouver Career College, Burnaby, BC, Canada

The annual contest provides an opportunity for those with a client case of interest to deliver evidence-informed findings to the public. Winners at the Gold, Silver, and Bronze levels are eligible to receive a cash prize, contingent upon their report's publication by the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork (IJTMB)* or another peer-reviewed scholarly journal.

[Read More](#)

MassageNet Member Event: Register Now

Are you a MassageNet Member? Join Dr. Niki Munk and Sami Zabel on Wednesday, November 5 from 7:00-9pm EDT, and give your input on ideas for the first MassageNet-generated research study, as well as learn a little about the case series research design.

[Register Today](#)

Can't make it? An additional session will be held in December. Please take the poll to let us know which date and time work best for you. We will finalize the date and send out the registration link by Friday, November 7. **Take the poll here:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PZ739KQ>



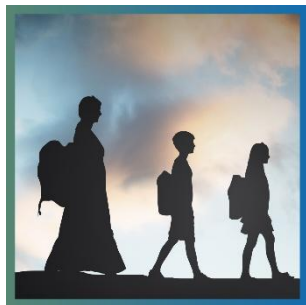
Highlights from the *IJTMB* Special Issue on Mental Health

One year in the making, the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork (IJTMB)* Special Issue on Massage Therapy and Mental Health is now available! Check out highlights from a few of the articles below:



[Touching the Mind—Exploring the Intersection of Massage and Mental Health](#)

"Massage therapy, traditionally associated with musculoskeletal pain relief, is emerging as an effective modality to support psychological well-being. Growing evidence suggests that massage and bodywork approaches can help alleviate symptoms of psychological distress, regulate the autonomic nervous system, reduce stress hormones, and boost the production of mood-enhancing neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine.^(1–3) In other words, massage does not just feel good—it changes the way the brain and body communicate."



Mental Health and Massage Therapy for Refugees, Immigrants, and Asylum Seekers

Learn more about the use of massage therapy for mental health in refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers. This article reviews data, definitions and evidence concerning the mental health challenges experienced by this population in the United States. The article summarizes data and evidence on the effects of massage therapy for mental health issues.



Mental Health Impact of Massage and Massage Therapy for Survivors of Domestic and Family Violence and/or Sexual Abuse: A Scoping Review

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. In this article, learn about the nature, scope, quality, and potential reach of publications within the massage therapy and research fields that focus on massage therapy treatment for those who have or are currently experiencing domestic and family violence or sexual abuse.

Sign up to receive *IJTMB* updates, including notifications when new issues are released, at www.ijtmb.org. *IJTMB* is free, peer-reviewed, and PubMed Central indexed. It is the official journal of the Massage Therapy Foundation and the Registered Massage Therapists Association of British Columbia (RMTBC).

Grants and Contests

The following MTF grants and contests are now open, with application deadlines as follows:

- **Case Report Contest:** Submit year-round with next deadline June 1, 2026
- **Community Service Grant:** Opens Dec 1, 2025, closes February 28, 2026
- **Research Support Grant (up to \$30k):** Opens Dec 1, 2025, closes February 28, 2026
- **Research Grant (\$30k-\$300k):** Opens Dec 1, 2025, LOI due by February 28, 2026

Additional grant opportunities to open late Fall 2026.

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