



# SNELL P&O OVERVIEW

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## In a Changing World, Change Is the Only Constant



Those who don't change with the times find themselves left behind. Those who proactively search for ways to not just keep up, but stay ahead of today's trends by anticipating tomorrow's, are usually recognized and respected as leaders.

Snell Laboratory has traditionally and consistently served in a leadership role in the O&P field, dating from our origins in 1911, nearly a century ago. We haven't

maintained that position by clinging to time-honored methods and watching the world advance around us.

We've succeeded by taking a page from the Starfleet manual: Like those who have commanded the Starship Enterprise, we are also committed to boldly going where no one has gone before—exploring, experimenting, analyzing and assessing new ideas, new technology and new designs.

That's why our newsletter looks a lot different this time. We're streamlining, modernizing, and updating our look to reflect our evolving capabilities and solutions for patient care and service. We're changing—and our newsletter is also changing.

Change is good—it keeps us fresh, young, and focused on new and better ways and means to live and to serve.

Sometimes it takes a gentle reminder to shock one out of a sense of comfortable complacency and bring about needed change; I received my own wake-up call from a charming elderly patient who accosted me in the hallway last week and asked me for directions to the restroom. Obliging, I pointed the way, saw her off in the right direction, and thought no more about it till later in the day, when a staff member reported that the same patient had later asked who was that “old white-haired man who acts like he owns the place”!

Hence the updated photograph accompanying this column. (Hopefully others who run into me in the hall won't suspect me of trying to impersonate a much younger man!)

Historically, Snell Laboratory has made a habit of embracing change, and thereby establishing benchmarks for quality and service in the fields of Prosthetics and Orthotics: When the first standards tests were established in 1948, the contemporary Snell Laboratory

president was among the first to qualify as a Certified Prosthetist and Orthotist (CPO). For many years, Snell Laboratory has been the site of research and development, testing new components and designs for the Veteran's Administration as well as for manufacturers seeking to introduce new and better products for O&P patients.

We've treated our responsibility to our patients with great care—no change is embraced for the sake of change itself, but is carefully examined and studied for value, even including our decisions to pursue geographical outreach, establishing new facilities situated conveniently across the state, in order to serve our patients and clients more effectively.

If we did not monitor, research, and implement worthwhile changes, our patients might still be wearing the original prosthetic limbs hand-crafted from wood and rawhide our founder, Pop Snell, fitted to his first patients in 1911!

As the world around us continues to change, grow, and progress at an ever-accelerating rate, it is our obligation to keep pace with that rate of change and progress—always alert for those new developments that can potentially serve our clients and referrals.

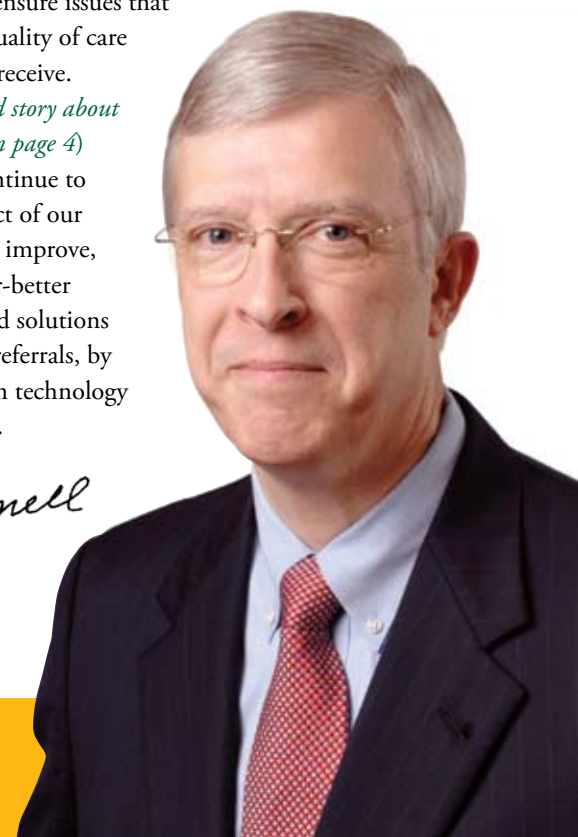
We must not only be aware of the winds of change as they bring us new O&P technology and techniques, but as they influence legal issues, administrative and reimbursement issues, government regulations, and licensure issues that directly affect the quality of care that O&P patients receive.

*(Please see the related story about Arkansas licensure on page 4)*

Change will continue to be an essential aspect of our mission to discover, improve, and implement ever-better service strategies and solutions for our clients and referrals, by utilizing the latest in technology and the best in care.

*Frank Snell*

Frank Snell, CPO,  
FAAOP  
President



*“Nothing endures but change.” — HERACLITUS*



## Table of Contents

### St. Vincent Amputee Clinic

Page 2

### AOPA Committees

Page 3

### O&P Licensure for Arkansas?

Page 4

### Facility Updates

Page 6

### SPOL Welcomes New Staff

Page 7

### Puzzle

Page 8

## St. Vincent Amputee Clinic: Partnering for Progress

Snell Laboratory is proud to announce its partnership with the new St. Vincent Amputee Clinic. Coupled with its amputee support group, St. Vincent's North Clinic is offering help toward a more mobile and active future for Arkansas amputees like 24-year-old Brian Whitfield.

When his vehicle was struck by a drunk driver in 2004, a piece of pipe penetrated his door and pierced his knee. As a result, Whitfield lost all of his knee and 50% of his femur. During the next two years he underwent 10 surgeries and two bone grafts, and battled a persistent staph infection.

Ultimately, the active outdoorsman and father of two young children faced the choice of (A) a life spent on crutches, painkillers and antibiotics, or (B) an amputation.

The St. Vincent system referred Whitfield to Frank Snell, CPO, FAAOP, President of Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Laboratory, to discuss Whitfield's possible future as an amputee fitted with an above-knee prosthesis.

"It had reached the point where my leg was starting to affect my overall quality of health," remembers Whitfield. "I wasn't going to have a working leg again even if there was no infection, and I would have to live with chronic pain for the rest of my life."

After exploring his prospects with Snell, and meeting the Snell Laboratory staff, Whitfield made the decision he felt would best serve his family's interests, and opted for the surgical amputation.

"It has worked out very well for me," said Whitfield. "I'm very proud that I have done it, with the help of Mr. Frank Snell and St. Vincent's rehab. I was fitted with my prosthesis about 4 weeks ago, and I'm going through therapy now and learning every day. The rehab specialist and Mr. Frank have gotten me to the point where I'll be able to walk very soon.

"I'm a big hunter and fisherman, and like to play with my kids; I'm active in children's ministry, too. I can't wait to be able to do it all again!" he concludes.

"Brandon has a very positive attitude, and everything to look forward to," said Snell. "As a devoted father and an active individual in otherwise good health, he is an excellent candidate to test a brand-new, state-of-the-art energy-storing prosthetic foot just available from Otto Bock. I expect Brandon to make great progress in returning to an active lifestyle with his new prosthesis."

Snell Laboratory looks forward to participating in the monthly St. Vincent Amputee Clinics on a continuing basis, and contributing to similar success stories for other St. Vincent patients.

## 95th Anniversary Campaign Gains Momentum!

In celebration of our 95th anniversary, our Snell Laboratory staff has pledged to provide 9500 hours of community service during 2006, covering the state with our volunteer efforts.

Our theme, "We're here to help—more than 9-5!" has been turned into a reality as our Team Snell members have enthusiastically embraced the challenge and devoted a growing number of volunteer hours for the benefit of others.

We're on track and gaining momentum to reach our goal by the end of the year—just two short months away! Watch for the full report in our next issue, early in 2007!

## Snell Leaders Participate On AOPA Committees

During this pivotal period for businesses in the Orthotic & Prosthetic field, when changes are being sought that will influence the future direction and development of O&P, Snell Laboratory leaders have stepped forward to lend their experience and insight to assist the national professional organization, AOPA (the American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association) in its efforts to effect needed change.

Snell Laboratory president Frank Snell, CPO, FAAOP, has recently accepted the Chair of the AOPA committee for Veteran's Administration relations. The committee is currently monitoring the status of the development of a national VA provider contract template for O&P service providers who provide service or wish to provide service to military veterans covered by the Veteran's Administration.

The committee also fields and assesses questions posed by AOPA members who have concerns about providing contracted service to VA patients, then acts as liaison in presenting those questions and concerns during regularly-scheduled meetings with high-level executives in the national VA program.

Snell will also be attending a November invitation-only conference in Chicago, where about 50 O&P practitioners will contribute to a "think-tank" designed to create a Shared Vision. The goal of the Shared Vision meeting will be to analyze the needs of patients and the O&P profession overall, and to develop plans that will benefit the business and primarily the patients of O&P through the years to come.

Snell Laboratory CFO/COO Rick Fleetwood has also been active on behalf of O&P businesses and their patients since his appointment to the AOPA Board of Directors



**Rick Fleetwood**

last December. As a director, he has been able to continue his work with organizations that strive to improve conditions and create opportunities for those with disabilities, and to use his skills and experience for the ultimate benefit and well-being of O&P patients.

Fleetwood's most recent service has been on an AOPA committee pursuing the Business Optimization Processes & Tools Initiative—which helps new O&P practices get started and also helps existing practices grow.

"The program aims to provide a set of business and practice management tools designed to help O&P companies and practitioners adapt to changing patient needs, competitive conditions, and payer requirements, and thereby improve their performance in the short term and optimize their business in the longer term in a cost effective manner, for better patient service," Fleetwood explained.

Please feel free to share any insights and concerns regarding the delivery of better O&P patient care with these liaisons to AOPA, so that they may effect change at a national level, bearing your concerns in mind!

## SPOL Receives 2006 KARK Community Service Award

Snell Laboratory was honored at a July banquet with other winners of the 2006 Arkansas Community Service Awards, in recognition of outstanding volunteerism.

The awards are sponsored by KARK-TV, St. Vincent's Health System, the Department of Health & Human Services Division of Volunteerism (DOV), and the Governor's Office.

Nine individuals, including Jermain Taylor of North Little Rock and Coach Doug Garner of Hot Springs were recognized with awards, as well as two corporations: Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Laboratory (less than 100 employees), and FedEx (more than 100 employees).

Corporate nominations were judged by a committee of involved community leaders throughout the state, who

examined such factors as corporate policies on community involvement, contributions of material resources, employees' volunteer time, and percentage of employees involved in community services, as well as the total impact of the corporation's contribution on the quality of life in their community and state.

We at Snell Laboratory are especially proud of this award, which recognizes not only our corporate commitment to community service, but the generous and committed individuals who are a part of our total effort.

Our employees consistently reach beyond themselves and their work environment in order to extend aid to others; we were pleased and proud to accept this award on their behalf.



# O&P Licensure for Arkansas?

Across the United States, more and more states are introducing legislation to require licensure for providers of orthotic and prosthetic services, and ten have already passed such legislation. Those states include our neighbor states of Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Texas.

This is not a situation that can easily be ignored, ostrich-like, nor would it be to anyone's benefit to fail to approach this matter proactively, believes Frank Snell, CPO, FAAOP.

"What we know about licensure is that it is a necessary step to protect the rights of O&P patients to care by a qualified service provider," he said.

"Otherwise, there is very little recourse for a patient who innocently purchases a prosthesis from someone conducting business out of a van parked on the shoulder of the road—and winds up with a costly doorstep."

A licensure bill has already been drafted for presentation to the Arkansas Legislature in 2007, and, following due process, it could soon become law. If so, it would require those who fit patients with orthotic and prosthetic devices to meet certain standards regarding education and professional competence before they can be licensed to serve orthotic and prosthetic patients.

Thus O&P patients would have a measure of legal protection from those with insufficient training and skills.

"This licensure initiative is one that I hope will receive the support of our colleagues, referrals and patients—and all those who partner with us in ensuring that those in need of orthotic and prosthetic care receive the best possible care," Snell added. "Because that's really the bottom line—making sure that patients receive quality care from qualified providers—the kind of care they are entitled to."

Ironically, barbers and hair stylists are licensed in all states, and such licensure has been required in their profession for many years; yet the person who makes a prosthesis or straightens a child's spine with a custom-fitted brace does not have to be licensed nor, indeed, to meet any legal criteria that would confirm his or her competence to do so.

One of the reasons for delay in pursuing such licensure before now has been the high cost of organizing and administering such a state program—most of which cost

would be borne by O&P facility owners. But in the face of the historical record of literally millions and possibly billions of dollars that have already been paid by state and federal agencies (like Medicare and Medicaid) on fraudulent O&P health claims from non-qualified providers, it would appear that we can't afford NOT to pay the cost, notes Snell.

Lack of licensure protection impacts the pocketbook of every taxpayer. When unqualified individuals provide care that does not adequately serve Medicare or Medicaid patients, causing them to need further services later that

might not have been necessary had they been cared for correctly the first time, the taxpayer winds up footing the bill twice—and often paying extra in order to correct damage done by the initial unqualified provider, since the potential for real harm to medically complex patients exists as well. Insurance premiums also can rise for the same reason, and individuals who are paying out-of-pocket likewise are forced to pay more.

Licensure is thus an important and, we believe, a necessary step," concludes Snell. "Our goal is not to infringe on anyone else's scope of practice, nor to change our own scope of practice, but to protect those patients whose welfare is a cause of concern to all of us. We can do that best by ensuring that quality care is being provided to

them by qualified providers. O&P licensure appears to be the most effective way of doing that."

If you have concerns about the effect of licensure on patient care in Arkansas, please contact Frank Snell or Rick Fleetwood, who will be happy to discuss the impact and effects of the licensure initiative on Arkansas patient care.

## States with Licensure (1/06)

Alabama	Ohio
Florida	Oklahoma
Georgia	Tennessee
Illinois	Texas
New Jersey	Washington

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## Thanks for Your Patience

The price freeze on Medicare goods and services, which was implemented nearly three years ago by the government (CMS), is still in force, but we are hoping to see an end to these difficult times very soon.

Because, while reimbursements were frozen, the cost of products and services have continued to rise, leaving us with reimbursement rates that are sometimes lower than our cost to obtain the product for our patients.

Snell Laboratory initially absorbed the increased costs, and then worked to contain and control the differential by asking for the cooperation of our referral sources.

We are delighted by the response we received from our partners in care, whose willingness to work with us through centralizing the items ordered for patients has made it possible for us to reduce costs while still ensuring the quality we have long been committed to provide.

Thanks to all of our patients and referral sources during these difficult times. We are hopeful that the price freeze will be lifted in the next year, when we can again look forward to increasing the latitude of product selection, as well as maintaining the high quality of care we continue to provide.

## Easter Seals Ambassador Visits Little Rock Office



Easter Seals ambassador Amanda (center) visited our Little Rock office in August and talked about the benefits of Easter Seals.

If you would like a supply of coupons for your patients, please call us at 501-664-2624 in Little Rock, or statewide toll free: 1-800-342-5541. Alternatively, you or your patients can mention this ADA coupon program when shoes are bought at any Snell Laboratory facility, and we will count this mention when generating our donation to the Arkansas Affiliate of the American Diabetes Association. The coupon below may also be clipped and photocopied for use.

**\$5** Donated to the American Diabetes Association

Your use of this coupon supports the American Diabetes Association (ADA) in their continuing efforts to reach the estimated 150,000 diabetics in Arkansas.

For each coupon presented to Snell Prosthetic and Orthotic Laboratory at the time of any diabetic shoe purchase, Snell Laboratory will donate \$5 to the Arkansas Affiliate of the ADA.

Date

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Business Phone

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Who initiated?

Snell staff  Patient  Agency

Present this coupon or mention this offer at Snell Laboratory with your diabetic shoe purchase to benefit the American Diabetes Association.

 **American Diabetes Association®**

**1-800-DIABETES**

Call Snell Laboratory toll-free at 1-800-342-5541.  
Snell Laboratory has offices located in Little Rock, Russellville, Fort Smith, Mountain Home, Fayetteville, Hot Springs, North Little Rock, Jonesboro, and El Dorado.



## Little Rock

625 North University Avenue  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72205  
(501) 664-2624  
1-800-342-5541

## Russellville

2300 West Main Street  
Russellville, AR 72801  
(479) 968-1713

## Fort Smith

1411 Dodson Avenue  
Fort Smith, AR 72901  
(479) 785-1881

## Mountain Home

333 Highway 5 North, Suite 4  
Mountain Home, AR 72653  
(870) 424-7010

## Fayetteville

1792 East Joyce Street, #2A  
Fayetteville, AR 72703  
(479) 442-4435

## Hot Springs

3810 Central Avenue, Suite B  
Hot Springs, AR 71913  
(501) 525-7943

## North Little Rock

4420 East 43rd Street  
North Little Rock, AR 72117  
(501) 945-5462

## Jonesboro

900 Professional Acres Drive  
Jonesboro, AR 72401  
(870) 268-0001

## El Dorado

416 B West Main Street  
El Dorado, AR 71730  
(870) 875-9900

## Facility Updates

- June 10 – Snell Laboratory staffers from all nine locations gathered in Little Rock for training provided by representatives from Freedom Innovations and Townsend Design.
- July 7 – KARK Community Service Awards Banquet honored Snell Laboratory as a leader in community service at the corporate level.
- July 31-August 6 – Snell Laboratory played a vital role in the production of the national Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant which was held in Arkansas.
- August 11-12 – PrimeFare East, the PrimeCare O&P Network's annual educational conference for O&P professionals in the Eastern half of the United States, was held in Nashville, and attended by numerous Snell Laboratory staff members.
- August 26 – A large turnout of Snell Laboratory employees attended to support the Easter Seals Rollin' on the River fundraiser event.
- September 4 – Thanks to the nine Snell Laboratory volunteers who generously donated their time on Labor Day to answer phone during the MDA Telethon.
- September 16 – A lengthy list of Snell Laboratory team members brought their families to the Little Rock Zoo to participate in the Alzheimer's Arkansas Walk.
- October 7 – The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure drew many Snell Laboratory supporters to downtown Little Rock to participate in the fundraiser. We are proud to have sponsored this event for the past four years.
- November 2 – Easter Seals Art & Soul benefit event.



Snell staff and family members gather to participate in the The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Snell Laboratory was a proud sponsor.

## SPOL Welcomes New Orthotic Resident and New Prosthetic Practitioner

Rhonda Robinette, orthotist, and David Robinson, CP, have joined the staff at Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Laboratory.



Rhonda Robinette

Robinette began serving a one-year residency at the Little Rock facility on July 17. She is a May graduate of the Northwestern University certificate course for Orthotics, and had previously served for five years as Orthotic/Prosthetic Technician and Assistant Orthotist at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock.

Robinette currently serves pediatric and adult patients while actively supporting the Big Brother/Big Sister program in her leisure time.

Robinson, a seasoned practitioner with more than 30 years' experience in the field of Prosthetics and Orthotics, began his duties on September 5 as primary practitioner in the Fort Smith Snell Laboratory office, where he is serving patients five days a week. He is already active in the local amputee support group, and looks forward to participating more fully in similar activities in the area.

Robinson learned his craft as a youth, working beside his prosthetist father on weekends and summers throughout junior high and his subsequent school years. He qualified as a technician in 1974, and after 15 years of working with patients, he tested within the prosthetic program at Northwestern University in Chicago, and earned the designation of Certified Prosthetist in 1995 from the American Board for Certification in Prosthetics & Orthotics.



David Robinson

Robinson and his father together owned and operated an independent New Orleans practice from 1978-1991. He and his sister continued to operate it after his father's death. After selling the business, Robinson worked for its new owners until 2004, when he moved to northern California briefly before relocating to Arkansas.

Currently, Robinson's daughter is studying prosthetics in Dallas, and his sister continues to practice Prosthetics and Orthotics at Children's Hospital in New Orleans.

Call or drop in to introduce yourself to these new members of Team Snell!

## A Special Thanks



Snell Laboratory would like to thank all of our patients who participated in our recent photo shoot. They were very generous with their time and effort and talent! The photos will be used in our informational materials which we are in the process of updating, so be watching this newsletter and other communications to see these great shots of Snell Laboratory patients in action.

Snell Laboratory patient Robert Byrd demonstrates his coaching skills for the camera.



# Last Issue's Puzzle Solution

- 1) STURPCOD = PRODUCTS
- 2) CRANSUINE = INSURANCE
- 3) NESSROPES = RESPONSES
- 4) TOONILSUS = SOLUTIONS
- 5) VAGDANEAST = ADVANTAGES
- 6) SEARSWENA = AWARENESS

### Bonus

The overall goal of Team Snell:  
SUPERIOR SERVICE

## It's a Puzzle to Me! Winds of Change

We challenge you to unscramble the letters to create six words that pertain to the winds of change that are influencing not only our newsletter design, but our new direction. (Enjoy a bonus for unscrambling the circled letters in each word to form a final, secret phrase.)

\*It may be possible to form more than one word from the letters given, so be sure to choose the word most applicable to progressive improvements!

- 1) HERSNEF = ( ) ( ) \_ \_ \_ ( ) \_
- 2) DETPAU = ( ) \_ \_ \_ ( ) \_
- 3) ISERVE = ( ) \_ \_ \_ \_ ( )
- 4) REDZINEOM = \_ \_ \_ ( ) \_ \_ \_ ( ) \_
- 5) DRAUGEP = ( ) \_ ( ) \_ \_ \_ \_
- 6) IPACTATIEN = \_ ( ) \_ \_ \_ ( ) \_ \_ \_ ( )

### Bonus—Our Goal:

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