The Department of Audiology & Speech Pathology

Spring 2016

Annual Newsletter

Drs. McCarthy & Schwarz Receive another U.S. Department of Education Training Grant

The grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs titled, Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Language, and Literacy Initiative to Prepare Speech-Language Pathologists provided $1,020,351 to support the training of 32 master's-level students over the next five years. Upon completion, the students will graduate with specialty training to improve the language and literacy outcomes for children with complex communication needs (CCN) who would benefit from augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies, which include computerized speech and language systems, and picture support systems.

Check out the UT-AACL (https://uthsc.edu/health-professions/asp/research/aacl/index.php) for more information about the research being completed by the students, Emily Noss, and Drs. McCarthy and Schwarz.

Announcing the Tamika Catchings Endowed Scholarship

Jerry J. Faerber, a current member of the ASP Community Development Board, and his wife, Margaret, initiated the Tamika Catchings Endowed Scholarship to support students training to work with individuals with hearing impairment. The Faerbers named their gift in honor of Tamika to recognize her work as an honored University of Tennessee women’s basketball player, as well as her connection to the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology and Hearing and Speech Center. As a student and athlete at The University of Tennessee with hearing loss, Tamika built lasting relationships with people in our department.

Tamika’s ability to overcome the overwhelming obstacles associated with a lifelong hearing disability is just one of the many reasons she is touted as a champion on and off the court. Tamika is one of the most decorated athletes in history earning numerous awards. Despite her success, Tamika never lost sight of her desire to support others and her active community outreach program, Catch The Stars, is a perfect example. She is dedicated to helping the youth of the world reach their dreams by staying physically and mentally healthy, and constantly growing.

The department is proud to have an endowed scholarship in Tamika Catchings’ name and grateful to the Faerbers for recognizing the need to support the education of our students who will become the next audiologists or speech-language pathologists to help children with hearing loss overcome their challenges and achieve lifelong success. A room in the new ASP building will be named after Tamika Catchings.

If you are interested in contributing to the Tamika Catchings Endowed Scholarship or any ASP scholarships, please contact Michelle Nixon (mnixon@uthsc.edu) or Dr. Ashley Harkrider (aharkrid@uthsc.edu) for more information.

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Katie Faulkner, Ph.D., joined ASP in August as an assistant professor in audiology. Dr. Faulkner earned her Ph.D. in 2012 at the University of Washington, Seattle, and recently completed a postdoctoral research fellowship in the speech research laboratory of the Psychological and Brain Sciences department at Indiana University. Dr. Faulkner’s research is focused on exploring ways to improve outcome and benefit for adults and children who have cochlear implants. According to Dr. Faulkner, “not all cochlear implant users achieve the same levels of success for a variety of reasons that are not well understood.” Her research seeks to identify these sources of individual variability to help develop more effective clinical rehabilitation approaches. Recently her work has focused on the roles of perceptual and cognitive skills on understanding speech in noisy conditions.

James Lewis, Ph.D., also began his appointment as an assistant professor in audiology in August. Dr. Lewis earned his Ph.D. in Speech and Hearing Science at the University of Iowa in 2013. More recently he was a postdoctoral research fellow at Boys Town National Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. Dr. Lewis’ research interests include the development of non-invasive techniques that rely on sound pressure measurements made in the ear canal to differentially diagnose middle-ear pathologies in both children and adults. He also is interested in cochlear processing of sound in both normal ears and ears with hearing loss. To do this, he uses a combination of physiological measures including acoustic impedance, otoacoustic emissions (soft sounds that are generated by the ear), and the auditory brainstem response.

Jennifer Wilson, M.A., CCC-SLP, has joined the faculty as a clinical instructor in the Hearing and Speech Center. Ms. Wilson has over twenty years experience treating children with speech, language, and feeding disorders, most recently in the Knoxville area. She will be providing clinical supervision of graduate students as well as diagnostic and treatment services. Ms. Wilson is looking forward to working in ASP and brings expertise in early intervention programming and pediatric dysphagia.

Pediatric Language Clinic has added two new SLP members. Libby Beidelschies, M.A., CCC-SLP and Molly Spears, M.S., have joined Pediatric Language Clinic as a clinical instructor and clinical fellow, respectively. Ms. Bedelschies earned her Master of Arts in Audiology and Speech Pathology from the University of Memphis. Before joining ASP, she worked as a speech language pathologist for Tennessee Early Intervention Systems identifying and providing treatment to infants and toddlers with developmental delays. Ms. Spears received her M.S. in Speech Language Pathology from the University of North Carolina in May, 2015, and will be completing her clinical fellowship year at PLC.
The department held its second Volunteer Your Voice Camp during the first week in June. The program began in 2014 as a day camp for children with fluency disorders and was held at the Hearing and Speech Center. Last year, the camp expanded to include children with a variety of communication disorders and included a two-night stay at The Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont. Eleven children participated with the first two days spent at UT before moving to Tremont. Campers participated in group and individual therapy sessions while also participating in traditional summer camp experiences. The camp program is directed by Tricia Hedinger, Assistant Professor, and provides practicum experience for graduate students. Scholarships for campers were provided through donations and fund raising activities. The next camp is scheduled for June 6-10, 2016.

SAVE THE DATE
Sol Adler Conference
April 8, 2016
Jennifer Kent-Walsh, CCC-SLP, from University of Central Florida, will be presenting on Fostering Functional Expressive Language Skills for Children Using AAC: Direct and Indirect Interventions

Tom Davidson Conference
September 23, 2016
Jeanane Ferre, Au.D., will be presenting on Auditory Processing Assessments

Celebrate Sound Walk
On Saturday, April 11, ASP faculty and students gathered to support the annual Celebrate Sound Walk in Maryville, Tennessee. Tennessee's Hands & Voices coordinated snacks, drinks and fun activities following the Walk. Our department team raised the most money in support of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. We look forward to participating again this year on April 9, 2016. You may watch the website to donate and support this worthy cause at www.celebratesound.org.

Literacy Workshops Provided for the Community
Since October of 2015, two literacy workshops per month have been provided for university students, families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing, and professionals working with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Dr. Jillian McCarthy, Emily Noss, and Dr. Ilsa Schwarz have developed sessions to provide attendees with materials, including selected books and instructional techniques that enhance language and literacy outcomes. Included in the training are 6 literacy topics, resources, important research articles and references, video examples, and lesson plans that accompany 8 selected books. This outreach has trained over 30 parents, deaf educators, and graduate and undergraduate students in various degrees of study. A quote from a student attendee stated, “The lesson plans were very useful in helping me with ideas for literacy.” Financial support for the workshops was provided by the UT Alliance of Women Philanthropists foundation.
Dean Noma Anderson, Ph.D., 2015 Recipient of Honors of the Association

Dean Anderson received the Honors of the Association, which recognizes members for their distinguished contributions to the discipline of communication sciences and disorders and is the highest honor bestowed by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Members of the ASP faculty and many of Dean Anderson’s colleagues and friends from around the world gathered at a reception in her honor at the annual meeting in November to celebrate this well-deserved recognition.

Cochlear implant (CI) users are affected more than their normal hearing peers by the negative consequences of background noise and distance on speech understanding. Cochlear implant sound processors can exploit microphone systems such as adaptive directional microphones and wireless remote microphones to improve speech recognition in challenging listening environments for adult CI users as compared to T-mic alone. The suitability of these microphone systems for use in children and adolescents with CI is not well understood nor widely accepted. Advanced Bionics, LLC has funded two research experiments with children and adolescents who wear CI to measure the effectiveness of microphone technology to facilitate word recognition in background noise and at various distances.

Dr. Patti Johnstone awarded $24,180 over the past year for cochlear implant research

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Dr. Patrick Plyler was awarded a $65,000 grant to evaluate new hearing aid technology

Two Au.D. students and one Ph.D. student will assist Dr. Plyler in collecting data, gaining research experience as part of the requirements for their degrees.

Research Team: Kelly McElligott, Amy Pierce, Emily Jones, Dr. Beth Humphrey, Dr. Patti Johnstone, Dr. Kelly Yeager, and Kristen Mills

Update on New ASP Building

In August 2015, the Tennessee State Building Commission approved the design of the $65 million state-of-the-art facility designed by Lewis Group Architects in Knoxville for the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology and two other UTHSC programs. The 135,000 square foot, five-story building primarily will house the academic, clinical, and research programs of our department, with additional space for UTHSC’s Colleges of Medicine and Dentistry which have programs in Knoxville. The building, to be located on the campus of the UT Medical Center, will feature a four-story atrium, connecting it to the existing UTHSC College of Pharmacy. Plans for the building include state-of-the-art classrooms and clinical treatment areas, research labs, a 100-seat auditorium, and an elevated outdoor playground. Construction is slated to begin June 2016 with an estimated occupancy date of late Fall 2018.
Following graduation, I joined Farragut ENT in Knoxville, TN. After one year, I became Director of Audiology and we now practice under the name Farragut Hearing Aids & Audiology. I also supervise graduate students from UT. The hands-on clinical instruction is fun. I enjoy getting to see fresh faces every semester and I appreciate the challenge of bringing classroom knowledge into a real-world clinic. Supervision is my way of supporting the UT program. I’m proud and privileged to participate with UT's students each year.

I currently work for Amedisys Home Health at the Oak Ridge, TN location. I have been employed with Amedisys for 6 years. Prior to that, I worked for Life Care Center of Morgan County (SNF) and PRN for Select Specialty Hospital. I value the experience I gained from each setting, however, I absolutely love home health! Home is where my patients want to be, and I feel like I am able to make more of a difference and personal connection in their lives.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy the collaboration with ENT physicians, delivering excellent care, working with the best technology available, and staying in touch with the UT program.

More than anything, I value the relationships I am able to build with my patients and their families by caring for them at home. It’s amazing when you are not only able to help someone progress towards their goals for therapy, but also feel like a member of the family.

Tell us about your family and where you live now.

My wife, Laura (UTK ’07), and I have been married since 2006. We have two little girls, Frances Grace (3 years) and Polly Faith (18 months). We live near downtown Knoxville and enjoy weekends on Market Square.

After getting married in April 2014, my husband, Levi, (from Claiborne County) and I bought a house in West Knoxville. We have a cat named Hickory and a dog named Piper. My parents are still in Eastern North Carolina. My younger sister lives in Denver, Colorado.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Tell us a little about your employment background and your present employer:

What is "free time?"

There is little free time these days! Following my graduation from UT, I learned how much I loved Knoxville, and enjoy serving and giving back to the community. I am currently President-Elect of the Jr. League of Knoxville, in which I have been a member for 7 years. I am the Recruitment & Marketing Advisor for the UT chapter of Alpha Delta Pi sorority. And, my new role is serving as the Secretary for the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology Community Development Board.

I remember the long, endless curving hallway at South Stadium Hall. I think everyone is looking forward to seeing the new building!

Awesome teachers, amazing friends, clinicals, and football!
Ann Michael, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, retired in July after 13 years in the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology where she served as Clinical Professor and Director of Clinical Services. During her tenure, Dr. Michael provided leadership and innovation to the department’s clinical education programs and was instrumental in overseeing expansion of both on-campus and off-campus clinical training. She facilitated development of a variety of service delivery models in the department including specialty clinics, out-of-state practicum site placements, and clinical oversight. Dr. Michael taught clinical and academic courses and was active at the national level, chairing several committees. She was honored at a retirement dinner which was attended by department colleagues and friends. Dr. Michael’s retirement plans include travel, visiting with family and friends, and meeting new and interesting people.

ASP held its convocation ceremony on May 7, 2015 in the Alumni Memorial Building on the Knoxville campus. Dr. Steve Schwab, Chancellor of UTHSC, presided over the ceremony, along with Dr. Ashley Harkrider, Professor and Chair; Dr. Noma Anderson, Dean of the College of Health Professions; and Dr. Don Thomsen, Dean of Graduate Health Sciences. Degrees were awarded to 59 undergraduates, 38 Masters of Science in Speech Pathology, and 11 Doctors of Audiology. Student speakers selected by their classmates were Anna Katherine Kerlin who represented undergraduates, Paul Joseph Gaudiano who spoke for audiology, and Kate Casper Rattner for speech pathology.
Life Experiences Lead to Career Choices

**Tiffani Kittilstved:** Initially, my decision to pursue a career in speech pathology was received with opposition. Due to my stutter, I was advised to choose a career path where my stutter would not prevent me from being successful. This discouragement did not dissuade me. Instead, I found strength in what they considered to be my greatest weakness and used my stutter as a means of helping others. My passion to overcome adversity and help others facing similar struggles has made me a better person, researcher, and clinician. I believe that having a communication disorder has made me a more empathetic and understanding professional. I have personal insight into the daily struggles of living with a communication disorder. Additionally, my battles with my own disorder have given me the desire to understand what causes stuttering and advocate for those affected in hopes that others do not share my story of adversity and discouragement.

**Cailin Shanahan:** My journey to becoming an audiologist began the day I failed my kindergarten hearing screening. At the Children’s Hospital Philadelphia, I was diagnosed with a permanent bilateral mild-moderate conductive hearing loss and received hearing aids at age four. Driving home after my initial fitting, I started laughing. My mom, somewhat concerned, asked, why. “Mommy, I can hear the wind!” was my response. Ever since I can remember, I have wanted to give the gift of “hearing the wind” to children with hearing loss. Because of my own experience, I can build a rapport and relationship with patients and families based on commonalities. I am not shy about sharing my story and can be empathetic and understanding to their journey. As a student clinician, I have seen a patient’s perspective change when they realize I too wear hearing aids and that I am on their team and here to help.

**Emily Jones:** At age 15 months, my parents received the news that I had a bilateral severe-profound sensorineural hearing loss. In other words, I was deaf. Since then, I was fit with hearing aids, received a cochlear implant in my right ear at the age of eight, and had the left ear implanted 17 years later. A friend, who is an audiologist, asked if I had considered being an audiologist during college. My initial thought was, “how can a deaf person be an audiologist?” She said, “there are more things you can do than you can’t.” I later met an audiologist with bilateral cochlear implants and talked with her about the advantages and limitations. After our conversation, I knew that I wanted to be an audiologist. I was truly inspired by her. I anticipate that my personal journey with hearing loss will be a huge advantage as I serve individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. I will be able to relate to my patients in a unique way because of our similar experiences.

Meet Lori Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Vice Chancellor of Academic, Faculty & Student Affairs at UTHSC

*What is your background as an SLP?* I worked as an SLP in a variety of settings before pursuing a doctoral degree. I worked in the public schools, in private practice, at a facility for individuals with intellectual and development disabilities and in a hospital setting. Each work environment helped me strengthen my clinical skills and led me to hone in on an area for my doctoral studies. I found the career to be ever-changing, challenging, and rewarding.

*What has been the most rewarding experience during the first 6 months in your position?* I find the greatest professional satisfaction in helping the colleges create a high-quality learning environment for our students. The students are the reason we are here and they are also our greatest asset. Building or enhancing programs is highly rewarding and makes a difference for the citizens of Tennessee and beyond.

*What do you like best about living in Memphis?* Memphis is a fantastic city. It is a wonderful foodie town that has a rich history in the arts. We love prowling around at arts fairs and discovering a new restaurant. The Bluff City is an exciting city with so much to see and do. And, don’t forget, Memphis is the Land of Elvis and Barbeque!

Welcome Michelle Nixon

Michelle joined UTHSC as Assistant Director of Development for the College of Health Professions in December 2015. Previously, she served as Director of Alumni Programs from 2013-2015 and Assistant Director of Alumni and Annual Giving from 2012-2013.

Prior to joining the UTHSC, Michelle worked for ServiceMaster as a Marketing Consultant. Michelle holds a BBA from the University of Mississippi and a MBA with a concentration in Marketing from Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee.

Michelle can be reached at (901) 448-2596 or mnixon@uthsc.edu.
To create awareness about hearing loss, UT National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) hosted an Audiology Open House in South Stadium Hall on October 23. Graduate students performed free hearing screenings for a record 313 people and provided pertinent hearing health information to our UT and Knoxville community.

In response to the ever growing demand for speech-language pathologists in the community, UT NSSLHA hosted Career Fairs at the Hearing and Speech Center. Employers from across the East Tennessee region shared information with approximately 100 undergraduate and graduate students. 2015 was the ninth year NSSLHA has hosted a Career Fair.