

Look Who's TALKING

2003 Speech-Language Pathology
Alumni Association Newsletter University of Toronto

It's So Hard To Say *Au Revoir* So Let's Just Say *Au Contraire*

Hello!

I write to you at the end of my four-year term as president of the Department of Speech-Language Pathology Alumni Association.

As one who has never been good at good-byes, I naturally struggled to pull this piece together. How had other presidents signed off from their posts? What had they said? Unfortunately, as I sifted through memories of near-impeachments and corporate leaders being led in front of the cameras in handcuffs, I couldn't find a like-comparison (perhaps I should have started this sentence with 'Fortunately!'). Obviously I was aiming too high. I just needed to think of how people have said goodbye. Sue's final 'Survivor' speech was definitely not appropriate, Seinfeld's "time of your life" seemed a bit much, and Sam turning out the lights on 'Cheers' seemed not enough.

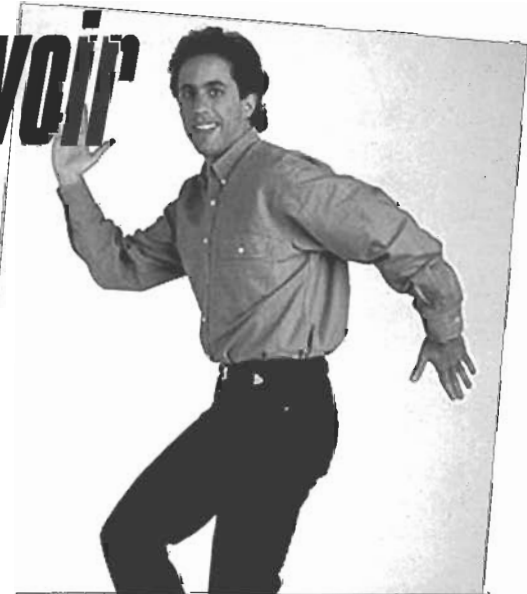
Although at this point it may seem hard to believe, I did find some clarity in all this confusion. I realized that what I really wanted to say wasn't goodbye . . . after all, I am sticking around as a member of the committee. I wanted to say thank you. Thank you to the students who have par-

ticipated enthusiastically in all our alumni-sponsored events, and who have given valuable feedback that has helped us tailor and improve our offerings. Thank you to the Department, who has remained committed to offering financial support and ongoing encouragement for the alumni association and its activities under both Paula Square's and Luc De Nil's tenures as chair, and to our faculty liaisons (Luigi Girolametto, Elizabeth Rochon, and Pascal van Lieshout), who always knew the right person to contact when we needed help.

Thank you to the Barbershoppers for their continued sponsorship of our graduation reception. Thank you to alumni for staying in touch, attending our annual J.F. Walker Lectures, and supporting our fundraising efforts. Last, but certainly not least, thank you to the alumni executive committee. Your dedication, hard work, humour, and creativity will always inspire me.

Best regards,

Jennifer Barker, 9T7
President, Alumni Executive Committee



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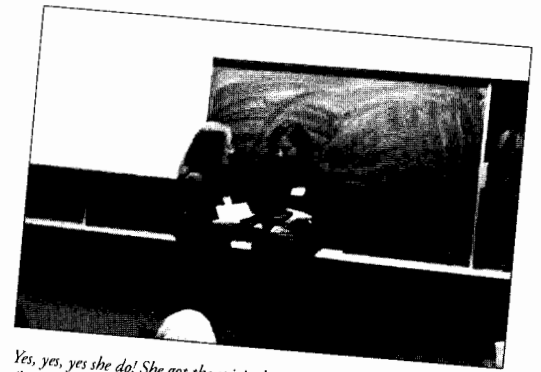
I Love You Guys . . .

Year Two's resident smart aleck shows her maudlin side at the thought of leaving

my classmates hold regarding the final year of courses, practica, and the dreaded portfolio. To be true to myself, I wanted to write something sarcastic, witty, and slightly edgy, but my mood is sombre and my reflections deep, so I am directed toward a somewhat more subdued, mature, and personal end. So, as I think about my classmates, I am left with the impression that I have been surrounded by a group of the most outstanding people I will ever meet.

I came into this class with a good five years (well, all right, eight J) on many of the students, and unfortunately I will be leaving with the same head start. I have witnessed engagements, a pregnancy, break-ups, and academic disappointments. What never ceases to impress me is the constant support and concern that is demonstrated by this group of people for their fellow students. We faced some significant challenges in the past two years over and above those expected in a graduate program. And although solutions were frequently less-than-ideal (often due to the restrictions that are bound to exist but are of no fault to the department), there was always a "team" of SLP students willing to look for other potential solutions, offering an ear, or providing a supportive shoulder to whomever needed it.

My readers may come across this little composition and utter to themselves "no different than our year," and I truly hope that is the case. It has been my experience, however, that what I think



Yes, yes, yes she do! She got the spirit, how 'bout you? Amanda Frumkin (l), receives the 2002 Spirit Award from Alumni Executive Treasures, Susan Tingley



ABOVE: Executive Smiles: Alum. exec. members (l-r) Ian Roth, Jenny Barker, and Lisa McQueen pretend they want to have their pictures taken at the fall Stressbuster event



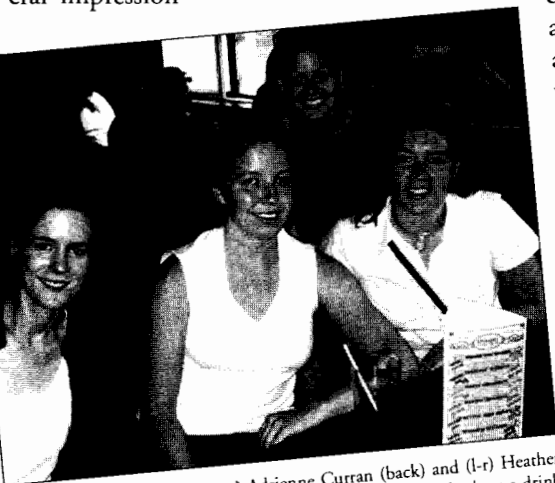
LEFT: Is this the cast of 'Friends'? Almost, it's (l-r) Jennifer Guevarra, Sam Williams, Amanda Frumkin, and Stephen McAteer

By Amanda Frumkin, OT3

W hew! What an ominous two years it's been!

We all knew from the onset that the M.H.Sc. Speech-Language Pathology program at U of T was the most competitive and certainly one of the most prestigious programs in Canada. We were all painfully aware that we would have sleepless nights, caffeine-induced days, and reams and reams of paper to read and absorb. We did not, nor could we, have any idea that as we were beginning the long and rocky path to a brighter and more fulfilling future our world would begin a metamorphosis of its own.

I will not address the state of the world, since I am not an expert in that area, nor do I wish to delve into the general impression



One drink for the four of you? Adrienne Curran (back) and (l-r) Heather Flowers, Carolyn Kienholz, and Melissa D'Amelio apparently share a drink at the Stressbuster!?

is, or should be the "norm" is not always the reality.

This program has afforded me the opportunity to learn things that extend beyond speech and language pathology, to develop in ways I never thought possible, and it placed me alongside the finest students and speech-language pathologists I have had the pleasure of meeting. This may very well be the last opportunity I have to write to or on behalf of my classmates (they breathe a sigh of relief). To the students, I say it has been a veritable honour to learn, work, and evolve with you. May we all develop into the types of clinicians we hold in high regard, and ensure that the essence of what was formally taught (e.g., respect, dignity, professionalism, life-long learning, and excellence) is carried with us and implemented as part of our daily practice. May these qualities be how we forever measure success.

...I Love You More

By Rachele Charland, OT4

The year one class gets the equivalent of a verbal group hug



As many U of T graduates remember, meeting the first year class for the first time was very intimidating. After all, these were people brilliant enough and ambitious enough to have been accepted into this extremely competitive department. Nearly every one of us felt as though we didn't really belong, and that we had been selected by accident. Surely the minute classes began our classmates and professors would recognize their mistake! Not only that but these were the people that we would be talking with, studying with, eating with, socializing with, breathing with for the next two years! For Timothy Poon, the sole male in a class of 30, this would pose an extra challenge! However, we soon discovered that we were very lucky: not only is our class full of friendly, social, and smart people but we have been blessed with a beautiful new building, a wonderful faculty, and an extremely supportive environment.



Who needs a beverage when you can drink up this relaxation?: Lynn Buckle (top), (l-r) Mary Bender, Maureen Evans, Tim Poon, and Laurie Walsh-Grubum



Say "O'Gradeees": Judging by the smiles on their faces, for Catherine Uy (back), and (l-r) Marilou Jack, Candice Fernandez, and Mumtaz Ahmad, stress has been BUSTED!

Our class began to bond with weekly socials at O'Grady's watching 'Survivor.' However, this soon extended into parties for every occasion at people's houses, at restaurants, for Christmas, for Halloween, after exams, after we handed in big assignments . . . Our friendships have grown and developed, and when placements began in March, there was much sadness when we were not able to see each other on a daily basis. In fact, in the first week of placements, there were at least 30 emails sent out by members of our class with every single one of them ending by 'I miss you guys!'

Our warm, accepting environment allowed us to feel comfortable enough in our classes that we could ask as many questions as we liked, to explore many different academic ideas. This continues to enhance our learning experience tremendously.

The affection in our class was truly felt this February when two of our students, Jessica Atloft and Irini Shehata, organized a day called 'Living Life and Loving It.' On the morning of February 11th, we were all shocked when we walked into a classroom filled with pink and red streamers and loot bags all around the walls with our names and a special adjective for each of us written on each bag. Our bags were filled with inspirational quotes and personal notes. These notes were so beautiful that some people began to get teary eyed after reading them (not me of course!).

Our class also spends much time bonding over food. We are very lucky to have some extremely gifted cooks and bakers in our class. Our cooking abilities all came together at our multicultural potluck at the end of February, which was a roaring success!

In addition to our involvement with and commitment to each other, our class has taken as many opportunities as possible



Stay cool. Love ya: Mitsuko Takeuchi signs an autograph for a classmate at the Stressbuster event at O'Grady's Pub

to become involved in the activities available at the University and Faculty of Medicine. Many of us went to see our classmate, Catherine Uy, in the Faculty of Medicine's Daffydil Talent Show. As well, we participated in the Faculty of Medicine Open House representing the Department of Speech-Language Pathology for the first time at such an event. There, we increased awareness of our field and formed some close friendships with other students in the Faculty. We are currently planning a dinner for the Faculty where we will show off our new building, 500 University Avenue (which also houses the Departments of Physical and Occupational Therapy) to further establish our connections.

The class of 2004 is one that is involved, enthusiastic, and full of mutual admiration and respect. We truly hope to continue our journey in our chosen field, and maintain our friendships along the way.



Those pearly whites: (l-r) Mitsuko Takeuchi, Tricia Atherton, Cindy Clements, and Kirsten MacKenzie demonstrate that speech paths have the nicest teeth.



Hail to the Chiefs: Jessica Atloft takes advantage of a photo-op with the Alumni Executive's president-elect, Deryk Beal, and current president, Jenny Barker, at the Stressbuster event

A 12-year-old writes in to talk about her experiences with speech therapy

By Jehaan Shaw, ?T?

Every Wednesday and Friday I woke up at 6:00 am, got dressed, and grabbed my "stuttering" binder. Then we took that 45-minute trip downtown to Sick Kids Hospital.

After waiting for five minutes it was time for class. Me and four other children attended the intensive fluency program twice a week for three hours.

At first we didn't know what the

"skills" were but soon we knew all of them. We learned them from easiest to hardest. We started with "full breath," which is where we learned how to breathe. Then easy onset, where you start a word off softly, gradually get louder and end it softly. Light contact is where we try not to smack our articulators together. And smooth blending is to make our speech less choppy.

I must admit in the beginning I thought it was a waste of time. I would have to wake up early for practically my whole summer. But soon I got to like it because I was spending time with kids just like me – kids who didn't laugh or talk about my stuttering problem.

This program really helped because I had people to talk to who understood me, and a teacher who cared. It really wasn't only the "skills" that helped, it was also my fabulous teacher, Connie. But through it all the most helpful teacher and person was my mommy!

THANKS!!!

Jehaan Shaw is a 12-and-a-half year old girl who still periodically sees Connie, her speech-language pathologist.

SLP STUDENTS GAIN VALUABLE INSIGHTS INTO WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH APHASIA

By Bruce Edwards, OT3, Katie Maggiacomo, OT3, and Naomi Tenenbaum, OT3

The Toronto Rehabilitation Institute recently hosted an information session entitled "Connect for a Day" for individuals with stroke and aphasia and their caregivers. The special guest presenter was Tom Penman, director of the London Centre of Connect, the communication disability network.

On the morning of February 5, 2003, Tom welcomed a group of approximately 30 attendees to the University of Toronto's Centre for Function and Well-Being to encourage participants to meet others who live with stroke and aphasia, ask relevant questions, obtain new information and ideas, and have a good time. As Speech-Language Pathology students completing our clinical placements at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, we were invited to use supported conversation techniques with attendees, to help facilitate communication.

Tom started the day by asking the group to think of one burning question, one tip for life after stroke, and one hope for the day. Some of the questions raised from the group included the following:

- How do you inform others of your aphasia?
- Does speech therapy work (What type? How much? When to start? How long should you continue for?)
- What should be the role of the caregiver in speech therapy?
- Is there life after speech therapy?

Tom concluded the question period with a brief yet informative presentation on topics such as "What is stroke?," "What are the effects of stroke?," and "What are the current topics in stroke research?"

After a short break, the participants split into two "break-out" groups: One

for individuals with stroke and aphasia and the other for caregivers.

Bruce and Katie helped facilitate conversation among the individuals with aphasia, and gained some valuable insights from their experience.

"It was challenging to communicate with individuals that we didn't know," admitted Katie, "as we were unfamiliar with the unique characteristics of their aphasia. Consequently, we were unsure of which techniques would be most successful in enhancing communication." The speech-language pathologists from Toronto Rehab, who were familiar with those who attended, were quick to offer suggestions that would enable each individual to participate fully within the session.

Bruce and Katie were left with the impression that support groups, because they are comprised of individuals with varying degrees of aphasia and at different stages of recovery, can be both informative and supportive for all involved, especially those individuals and their families most recently affected by stroke.

Naomi participated in the discussion with the caregiver group and identified a central theme expressed by the caregivers during the session. "Many caregivers expressed frustration and disappointment with the lack of knowledge regarding aphasia demonstrated by physicians during the acute stages post-stroke," she said. Naomi also noted that the caregivers were in agreement regarding the services offered at TRI. "All caregivers found the services at TRI to be high calibre, and appreciated the holistic team-approach to patient care."

Overall, we found our participation in the information session to be a worthwhile and insightful experience. Questions and comments from both the large and small group discussions increased our awareness of the importance of providing education and emotional support regarding stroke and aphasia to both patients and caregivers. We would like to thank Toronto Rehabilitation Institute for providing us with this excellent educational experience.

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Dr. Alice Brophy

U of T's New Aural Rehabilitation Professor Finds Sheer Pleasure As She Weaves Her Way Into Toronto

By Deryk Beal, OTD

What did you do before coming to U of T?

My background is in teaching. I did my one-year B.Ed. here at U of T. My husband did his original degree in anthropology. Both of us did our BA and went up and taught on a Cree reserve in James Bay where we were classroom teachers.

I had my first kid while I was up there. And because it was very isolated and medical services were very poor we decided it might be a good idea to try and find work down south. So we taught for a while at Tapostasny, a Mohawk reserve outside of Cornwall. At that time I decided that I wanted to do something else other than just be a classroom teacher. So I applied to McGill and I got into their Auditory Oral Rehabilitation and Education Program. It no longer exists but it was a program that was specifically for educators who were interested in working with the deaf and hard of hearing. It was run originally by Dan Ling and his wife, so it had a very oral philosophy.

In the time that I was there the McGill program decided that they wanted to offer a research option for master's degree students. So the only option was to do an additional year. There was a woman named Martha Crago who's known across the

country and probably across the world for her knowledge and expertise of Inuit. She asked me if I wouldn't be interested in doing a master's research option with her. So I did. I finished that while I was an Internet teacher for the Montreal School of the Deaf.

Martha kept bugging me to come back to do a Ph.D. Finally I said I would. I essentially looked at the same Inuit kids that I followed who were now being taught by non-Inuit teachers at various levels and how the difference in interaction and turn-allocation led to serious misunderstandings in the classroom.

When I was into my third year I collected my data but I hadn't finished writing up my thesis. There was an open position at the University of Ottawa in their speech-language pathology program, which also has an audiology program. The program is taught exclusively in French to train Francophone clinicians to work with the Francophone population. I went into that with a full teaching load where I was responsible for the entire child language component plus one course that was for both audiology and speech in aural rehab. I enjoyed that program. It was small and the students were very bright and very committed to *les orthophonies*, I felt that there should have been more faculty to help with the child language disorders because, after all, my background is really hearing loss.

What brought you to U of T?

They were recruiting here, and this is an outstanding program. It's a program that has lots of people who are interested in issues that are related to child language, which is great. They really are becoming committed to having more of an emphasis on childhood hearing loss.

I have two courses that I teach. The way the curriculum is organized, it permits a lot of time when you're not teaching to work on research. So I have a project that's looking at long-term outcomes of children who are seen in Auditory Verbal Therapy to see at what point those children show the benefits of oral, written, and reading language. It's connected with another project that is also ongoing, which is following children identified through the neonatal hearing screening.

Do you have any long-term plans?

Well I'm really very keen to make some links with people who are working in the clinical world. I think that it's really important for me to know what's happening in Toronto. The other thing I'd really like to do is get back to my multicultural roots. It's something that I really love. And the cochlear implant thing is really of interest to me, of course.

Another area that I'm really keen to look at is phonological awareness in oral deaf kids. There's that famous statistic out there that deaf kids don't learn to read beyond the grade three level and all that old messy research that seems to set a kind of a limit.

What hobbies do you have outside of teaching?

I'm a big reader. I like to read a lot of female Canadian authors, like Carol Shields. There's a few people in the department who are readers so we're talking about having a little book discussion group and circulating books and stuff.

In the past I used to be a hand weaver. But I haven't had time to do that in awhile. We had 35 sheep. We used to shear them and send the wool out. So, that's a big change.



How can she not be a great professor with a smile like that?: Dr. Alice Brophy.

U OF T STUDENTS

By Beth McMillen, OTI

A large group of U of T speech-language pathology students turned out to participate in International Stuttering Awareness Day (ISAD) in Toronto on Sat. Oct. 19, 2002. They joined the Canadian

Association for People Who Stutter (CAPS) along with children who stutter, their families, adults who stutter, and speech-language pathologists. This one-day workshop entitled, "Don't Let Stuttering Stop You!" featured Dr. Gary Rentschler from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, who is both a professor of speech-language pathology and a person who stutters.

Exciting activities were arranged for the children with the help of the eager and enthusiastic students, who had volunteered to roll up their sleeves and join in the festivities. Kids had a chance to


meet others who stutter in a safe and comfortable setting. The workshop was held at the Barbershoppers' East York headquarters.

Thank you to all those who volunteered their time and made ISAD a huge success and those who are already working on making this summer's conference an exciting time for all!

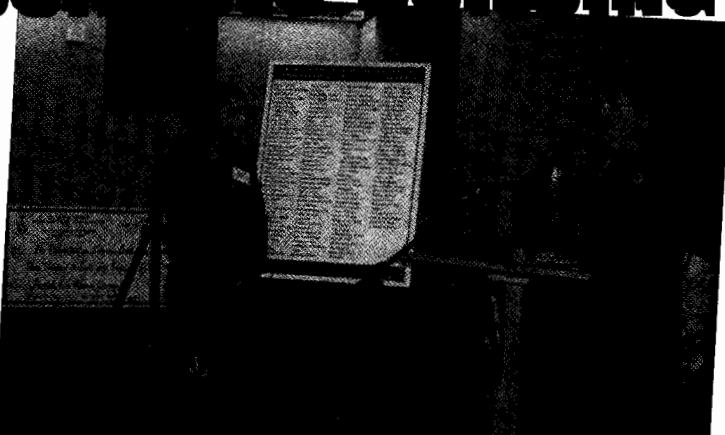
CAPS will be holding a three-day conference in Toronto from Aug. 6-10, 2003 entitled "Moving Forward with Confidence." For more information contact: www.caps.webcon.net

Official grand Opening of the Alumni Café at 500 University Avenue,

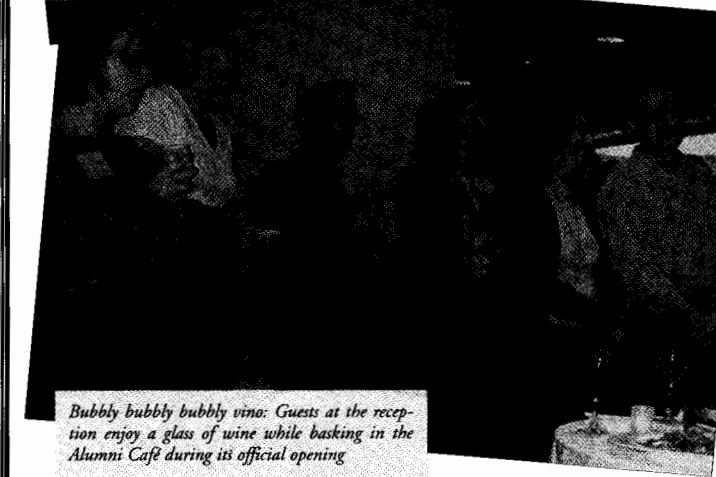
REHABILITATION SCIENCES BUILDING



Show me the money: Jennifer Barker, president of the SLP Alumni Association, and Marg Shaw, president of the OT and PT Alumni Association, unveil the temporary Alumni Plaque, which recognizes lead donors to the alumni campaign for 500 University Ave.



Giant Cheque: Marg Shaw speaks while Jenny Barker stands between the list of donors and giant cheque for \$265,000.



Bubbly bubbly bubbly vino: Guests at the reception enjoy a glass of wine while basking in the Alumni Café during its official opening

CHECK US OUT!

WEBSITE AT: <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/speech-language-pathology/People/Alumninews/links.htm>

or follow the link from the Department's homepage: <http://www.slp.utoronto.ca/>

By Janis Oram, PhD, OT3

After I handed in the final copy of my M.Sc. thesis at McGill, I thought, "No more research. Never again. I'm going to be a clinician. I'm going to get a real job." In fact, I was consumed by an overwhelming desire to hold a bonfire and burn my thesis as a symbol of this commitment. But the benefits of having both clinical and research qualifications in speech-language pathology soon became clear. I was able to land a clinical job with rich research opportunities at the Hospital for Sick Children despite being fresh out of graduate school. There, I saw clinically based research firsthand, and, despite my earlier vow, I liked it! Three years later, my passion for research had consumed me enough (and the memories of my last thesis had faded enough) that I enrolled in the doctoral program at University of Toronto.

This time, pursuing a research degree was different. I had my own questions about similarities and differences in children with SLI (Specific Language Impairment) and ADHD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) that I had generated from my

own clinical experiences. My supervisor, Dr. Carla Johnson, guided me in translating these questions into research for my dissertation, and lo and behold, I got answers! Of course, I was also left with a host of new and unanswered questions. These have led me along a new path as a CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research) post-doctoral fellow in medical imaging at University of Toronto, where I am learning to apply MEG (magnetoencephalography), fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging), and ERP (event related potentials) technologies to understanding children with language disorders.

Was pursuing a Ph.D. all a bed of roses? Of course not. But the good days far outnumbered the bad. The faculty, staff, and my classmates were enthusiastic and supportive. Now I understand the importance of clinician-scientists and I am proud to be one of them. This thesis will be safe from the bonfire!