

Look Who's TALKING

2008 Speech-Language Pathology

Alumni Association Newsletter University of Toronto

You're Invited...!

A message from the Chair of the SLP Department, Dr. Luc De Nil

It all started with a few dedicated individuals in 1955 who decided to convince the University of Toronto to initiate a professional training program in speech pathology. As can be expected, the university was a bit skeptical at first but this group of very stubborn professionals prevailed and the first students (all 7 of them) were admitted into the diploma program in 1958.

That was exactly 50 years ago this year, and of course we could not let this milestone pass without a proper celebration. That's exactly what we are doing in May of this year (conveniently, also Speech and Hearing month!). We will kick off the celebration with a Gala Dinner on Thursday night, May 29th at the Metropolitan Hotel. Other than for the excellent food, we hope that you will join us at the dinner and celebrate our many accomplishments, which to a large extent are your accomplishments as students and alumni of our department. Joining our dinner celebration is the Honourable Mr. Bob Rae who will provide a keynote address, the Barbershop Harmony Society who as always are ready to liven up the evening, as well as a few surprises (bring your dance shoes!). The Alumni Association is busily preparing a silent auction, so do not forget your checkbook to bid on some wonderful items!

On Friday, May 30th, we are pleased to offer a free day-long symposium on innovations in communication sciences and disorders. We have some excellent speakers lined up (please see the enclosed invitation), and topics ranging from the human-machine interface and how it can benefit nonspeaking individuals, future opportunities and

challenges in speech-language pathology, and culture and its implications for knowledge, theory and clinical practice. In addition, you will be able to interact with our faculty and students and learn about all the academic and research initiatives that are under way in our department.

Most of all, this day will be a wonderful opportunity to meet old friends and make a few new ones. I hope to welcome many of you for these celebrations. The formal dinner and symposium invitations are included with this newsletter. If you know someone who did not receive an invitation, let us know and we will be happy to make sure a copy is sent and that contact information is updated in our database. Don't wait too long to sign up as space for the dinner is limited! More detailed information will be posted on our departmental website (www.slp.utoronto.ca). This site will be updated regularly, so keep checking. See you in May!



ALUMNI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Deryk Beal, (president)	OT0
Beth McMillen, (treasurer)	OT1
Lynn Mark & Julie Impey, (Year One representatives, newsletter committee)	OT9
Joy Hanna, (Year Two representative, newsletter committee)	OT8
Dr. Alice Eriks-Brophy (faculty liaison, 2008-9)	
Janice Waugh Bennett, (newsletter editor)	OT4
Sonja Molfenter, (newsletter committee)	OT7
Erin Yeates, (newsletter committee)	OT7
Elizabeth Tran, (webmaster)	OT5
Ian Roth,	OT0
Gail Gumphrich,	OT6
Pamela Rahn,	OT6
Karen Brayshaw-Marshall,	OT7
Layout by Ken Carriere	

Welcome to a new feature of the Alumni Association newsletter...

So what do YOU think?

...in which we will present a topic currently generating discussion in our field, and solicit YOUR opinion. *see next page*

So what do **YOU** think? Late last year those of us working in Ontario received a new consent guideline from the provincial regulatory body, the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO), entitled "Obtaining Consent For Services: A Guide for Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists." It is a new interpretation of the Health Care Consent Act.

Among the points generating discussion, the Guide states that an SLP is prohibited from screening, assessing or treating a person who is incapable of providing informed consent unless the individual's substitute decision maker (SDM) has been contacted to provide it. As care proceeds, any change in the management plan that was not presented to the SDM at the time consent was given, necessitates a new contact to the SDM to obtain it. Where circumstances prevent timely contact with the SDM, SLP service must not be provided, except in the case of emergency as it is defined in the Guide. The Guide states that SLP services can rarely be considered emergency services.

POINT

The College has a duty to serve and protect the public interest. It is the driving force behind everything we do. We look at the public interest in all our decisions. We regulate, support and assist our members so they can better serve the public. (CASLPO Core Values, Sept. 12, 2003)

COUNTERPOINT

An inpatient in an acute care hospital whose SDM is difficult or impossible to contact, and whom a physician has deemed at risk of aspiration pneumonia, can not be seen by an SLP until either the SDM is contacted or until the Public Guardian and Trustee assumes responsibility. This places the public at risk. (CASLPO member)
 Outpatients attending hospital clinics from nursing homes or group homes for the developmentally delayed are frequently accompanied by paid caregivers and travel by ambulance or other specialized vehicles. If the SDM is not available by telephone the appointment must be re-scheduled. This places the public at risk by creating a barrier to service for these vulnerable populations. (CASLPO member)

So... what do YOU think?? Let us know at slp_alum_association@hotmail.com.

Watch for more information from CASPLO, and look for or request a CASLPO Regional Seminar in your area. CASLPO is presenting at various locations to answer your questions about the new Guide on obtaining consent.



**Alumna
of the Year ...**



I am extremely honored to have been nominated for the Outstanding Alumnus Award and certainly humbled by having been chosen to receive it. It seems like yesterday, rather than over 30 years ago, that I was a student at U of T.

No matter what area we work in, as practitioners, researchers, or administrators, we deal with the most important of human functions - human communication. What a privilege and responsibility. When I think of the important work we do, two quotes have always stayed with me. For many years Ruth Sienkiewicz-Mercer was institutionalized and assumed to be very delayed in all aspects of her life. As an adult she was introduced to Augmentative Communication and was able to demonstrate her true self and her true intelligence. "If I were granted one wish and

one wish only, I would not hesitate for an instant to request that I be able to talk if only for one day, or even one hour." Another quote, comes from Daniel Webster: "If all my possessions were taken from me with one exception, I would choose to keep the power of speech, for by it I would soon regain all the rest."

Many opportunities in my wonderful career of over 30 years are directly related to important things I learned at U of T. I learned first and foremost that learning never stops. We must always pursue learning if we are to be true to our profession. I learned about working together, first with my classmates in projects and then with others who had goals similar to mine. Most importantly, I learned that it is all about the people for whom communication is a problem. My role, no matter where in an organ- > *continued next page*

continued from previous page > ization, is to make sure that the individual person stays at the centre of what I am doing. For all these things I am grateful.

For the last 20 years, I have begun to appreciate the issues faced in countries much poorer than our own. Most recently, I have taken on the challenge as Director and one of the founders of the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation at U of T. This new initiative has been a real labour of love for me. Many people have asked me why, at this stage of my life, would I undertake such a challenge? Two reasons come to mind. One is that I was fortunate to have many unique and interesting opportunities in my career, and I felt it was time to share them with others. Not many SLPs have had the opportunity to work in

places like India, Bangladesh, Tanzania and other poor countries. We have an important role to play there and I want to help others to...actualize it. The second reason is more personal, [and perhaps best expressed by] another quote which has hung above my desk for years and helped me keep things in perspective:

"No one has the right to take for granted his or her own advantages over others in health, in talents, in ability, in success, in a happy childhood or congenial home condition. One must pay a price for these boons...those of us who have experienced good in our life must feel an obligation to dedicate some of it (our life) to alleviate the suffering in the lives of others." - Albert Schweitzer, 1947.

I thank you for all you have given me and for this outstanding honor.

Year 1 ^A balancing ^ACT

By Lynn Mark (Class of 2009)

Embarking on a new journey is always an exciting prospect and for the Class of 2009 this was no exception. Just a few short months ago we found ourselves in orientation sessions eager to get started and wondering what the future would hold. Amid the welcome greetings, curriculum meetings and getting-to-know-you activities a consistent theme was woven into the fabric of the day – you need to strike a balance. It wasn't long before we realized this was a tall but essential order to fill.

It became crystal clear within the first week of classes that there was no easing into the program; the workload of Unit 1 hit hard and fast. It seemed insurmountable to juggle the scheduled classes, labs, and assignments, along with the inter-professional education sessions, the student council commitments and the social activities that had been planned by our Year 2 buddies. Add to that the building of new relationships, adjusting to life in a new city and/or commuting to and from outlying areas and it looked as if the idea of balance was becoming a distant memory.

But wait! What quickly emerged was a remarkable group of 38 young women and 1 young man who rose to the challenge. As someone who returned to school later in life, I am fascinated and encouraged by the fervour with which my classmates meet and embrace the opportunities before us. The natural leaders immediately surfaced and activities have been planned and goals set that will help us to achieve the all-important balance that will sustain us through the demands of a graduate program while providing us with an enriched experience.

When anxiety and sleep deprivation are taking hold, there are always ways to lighten the load and bring perspective; a food rep to arrange a pot luck lunch, a sports

Members of the Year 1 class demonstrate striking a balance between academics and...



...a culinary trip 'round the world in classroom 420 ...

rep to promote a yoga class or a social rep to organize some fun. We even have a tea centre in class to enjoy a soothing cup of hot tea during the cold winter months.

We leave you with some words of wisdom:

"The best and safest thing is to keep a balance in your life, acknowledge the great powers around us and in us. If you can do that, and live that way, you are really a wise man."

- Euripedes



...group karaoke singing...



...and fine dining in Little Italy!

YEAR 2

Year 2 class members continue a (new) SLP Dept. tradition - the Buccinators Dragonboat Team ... and celebrate a 2nd place win! Congratulations!!



By Joy Hanna (Class of 2008)

Another year has come and gone and Year 2 is quickly drawing to a close. With only one more academic unit left to go, the Class of 2008 is well on their way to the finish line. The past year has been full of both fun and challenging experiences, and more group projects than we ever thought humanly possible! The following are just a few of the highlights from the past 12 months.

Eager to try our hand at something new, 20 of us gathered together in the Spring of 2007 to form a Dragonboat team. Carrying on the tradition from the previous year's class, we called ourselves the Buccinators. We practiced hard and it paid off in the end. It was a very close race in our division, but we chewed up the competition and walked away with 2nd place medals. It was a great accomplishment for all of us and we hope this tradition will continue in the department for years to come. To all the Year 1s out there who think they've got what it takes - consider this your official challenge!

The summer months brought more festivities including a pool party, and a great BBQ in the Hamlet of Whitevale. We all immensely enjoyed our few precious

weeks of vacation and returned ready for a fresh start in September. Other highlights of the year included our numerous potlucks, the Thanksgiving food drive in cooperation with the PT and OT students, and our annual

Halloween party complete with fashion show. Of course, we can't forget our Non-Denominational Holiday week, featuring the most raucous dreidel tournament I've ever seen.

In between all the socializing and sharing good food we somehow managed to keep up with the fast pace of Unit 6. We studied hard and managed to squeeze in the countless group meetings required to complete our 7 group projects along the way. We entered our Unit 7 placements with new knowledge and a readiness to take on what was for many of us an entirely new client population. Now, as our final clinical



placement looms ahead we are excited to be sending 3 of our classmates out on international placements in cooperation with the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation. As we look ahead to the end of the program we can't help but look back and see how far we've come. We are another year closer to achieving our goals and stepping out into the world as SLPs, and thanks to all of our professors and clinical educators who enriched us with their knowledge and guidance, we are ready to do so with confidence. Look out world - here comes the class of 2008!

Recently, we were fortunate to be able to attend the 4th annual National Interprofessional Healthcare Student Conference, hosted by the National Health Sciences Students Association (NaHSSA), in London, Ontario. Many thanks to Susan Wagner and the Office of Interprofessional Education for sponsoring our attendance! We attended various student-run workshops focused on patient-centred care, patient safety, and inter-professional education (I.P.E.). We were also able to hear wonderful keynote and plenary speakers, including U of T's own Dr. Ivy Oandasan from the Department of Family and Community Medicine! She was excellent!

Throughout the conference, we had a chance to learn about the impressions and attitudes of students from around the country regarding interprofessional practice. We found it somewhat surprising that groups of students from universities that are quite large and well known seemed new to the concept of I.P.E. On the contrary, we feel as though I.P.E. is one of the cornerstones of our graduate studies at U of T - a concept fairly ingrained in our heads! At this point, it comes so naturally to us that it is difficult to believe that it was

once a term outside of our vocabularies! We were happy to hear of the successes that certain student groups experienced with the 'new idea' of interprofessional practice, yet were grateful that the concept had been introduced to us as soon as we began the M.H.Sc. program. In our opinion, we are lucky that U of T has prepared us for this growing trend, as it is being implemented at all levels of health care.

We also learned about community programs and services offered in Toronto by other students in the Faculty of Medicine, but were surprised that we in the SLP Dept. had not been made aware of it. We therefore met with the medical student presenting the session and discussed how the med students can better inform other departments as to their community programming. In particular, we expressed that M.H.Sc. students in S.L.P. would likely be interested in the "Kids2Hear" audiology screening program offered throughout the city. Hopefully we will have more information soon!

The NaHSSA conference was a wonderful chance to meet and learn from other student leaders in health care. We certainly recommend S.L.P. student involvement in the future!

Learning About Interprofessional Practice

By Jessica Zawalicz-Mowinski & Becky Pearson (Class of 2008)

The Speech-Language Pathology Alumni Association is constantly striving to improve student life at the Department of Speech-Language Pathology, University of Toronto. The Margaret Stoicheff Bursary is presented to a student in the final year of the clinical M.H.Sc. program who demonstrates financial need to help offset the cost of completing the program. The Paula Square Travel Award is bestowed upon a doctoral student who has had research accepted for presentation at a conference and requires significant travel expenditure to attend. Our goal is to raise a total of \$50,000 for each of these two awards, and we are within \$10,000 - \$15,000 of that goal for each of them now! The Speech-Language Pathology Annual Fund is used, in part, to support the ongoing activities of the Alumni Association. Your help is invaluable in helping us reach our goals. If you wish to participate in improving the student experience you can do so by completing the pledge form below. You can mail or fax the form to the address listed.

You can also give online! Please be sure to select Speech-Language Pathology from the drop-down menu and then type the name of the fund and the fund number listed on the pledge form in this newsletter in the "gift instructions" box to direct your funds accordingly.



<https://www.donations.utoronto.ca/medicine/medicine.aspx>

Yes! I would like to support the Speech-Language Pathology Alumni Association at the University of Toronto.

GIFT INFORMATION

I have enclosed a gift of \$ _____ to be directed to:

- Speech-Language Pathology Annual Fund 0560002755
- Margaret Stoicheff Bursary 0560006980
- Paula Square Travel Award 0560010817

PAYMENT METHOD

- Cheque (made payable to the University of Toronto)

or

- VISA MasterCard AMEX

Credit Card# _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ Expiry Date ____/____

Name on card _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TEL.: _____

Please reply by mail or fax to:
Office of Advancement, Faculty of Medicine
University of Toronto
Medical Sciences Building, Room 2306
1 King's College Circle
Toronto ON M5S 1A8

FAX 416-946-7722

RESEARCH

CORNER



AN ENGINEER WORKS WITH SLPs ON user-friendly SOFTWARE

By Erin Yeates (Class of 2007)

Dr. Dave Fernandes completed his post-doctoral research with Dr. Pascal van Lieshout in the Oral Dynamics Lab at the Graduate Department of Speech-Language Pathology last May. With Dr. van Lieshout, Dr. Fernandes is developing a voice analysis software product that should prove to be an exciting new tool for clinicians working with voice disorders. Originally, his post-doctoral work was to revamp the commonly used Praat system to be more clinician focused and easier to use. Dr. Fernandes says, "What we've done is build an interface from scratch that used the Praat library of algorithms."

Dr. Fernandes is an engineer and scientist, with a background in the software industry and varied previous training in the fields of physics, occupational therapy, and now speech-language pathology. Today, Dr. Fernandes manages the Centre for Computational Biology at the Hospital for Sick Children (HSC). Although many different voice analysis software programs currently exist, including Praat and Kay's Computerized Speech Lab (CSL), Dr. Fernandes' aim has been to produce a new application that is easier for clinicians to use. The new software, dubbed SpeechClinic, is in development for commercialization in the near future. It has been uniquely designed with the help of input from Toronto-area voice clinicians. Says Dr. Fernandes of building the user interface, "The whole design came from clinicians and it's gone through a number of iterations. Every time we come up with a new way to do something, we give it to the clinicians and we look at what's easy to understand and what's confusing." The program allows a clinician to record a voice sample, and then analyse that sample for various basic parameters, such as jitter, shimmer, fundamental frequency and intensity, and generate a full assessment report that includes these measures. Most importantly, Dr. Fernandes

says, the program is so user-friendly, that these features can be pulled out "with one or two clicks of the mouse. You don't have to go to menus and scroll down and find commands in obscure places."

An additional longstanding problem inherent in many voice analysis applications is the absence of peer-reviewed normative data. Dr. Fernandes comments: "The other thing that we found was really difficult with the current systems is comparing data, finding norms and understanding where your client falls compared to the normal population, or a diseased population. So we've developed some ways to do that graphically, and that are really based on the research literature. For instance, the Kay tool, CSL, they have their own norms built in, but they've never said where those come from. They've never published that data."

On the topic of the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration between engineering and health sciences, Dr. Fernandes says: "Even in

the basic classes in speech-language pathology programs, they start out with the physics of sound. You need to apply information about basic sciences in healthcare. It's always useful to have a new set of eyes take a look at a problem. And engineering is all about measuring things. Which is something that's important in healthcare. Particularly relating to evidence-based medicine, we need objective measures."

Without engineers such as Dr. Fernandes, speech-language pathologists would be unequipped to tackle the technological challenges necessary to forward our field in this era of instrumentation and evidence. Says Dr. Fernandes, "I would love to have people that are interested in this idea talk to me or Pascal, because we really want to promote the idea of objective measurements in voice quality."



Dave Fernandes can be reached at:
dave.fernandes@utoronto.ca.