
Department of

COMMUNICATION SCIENCES and DISORDERS



News from the Chair

Doug Sladen, Ph.D., CCC-A

Hello and Happy Better Speech and Hearing Month! I'm delighted to be sending this along as my first-ever letter from the Chair. For those of who do not know, I took over as Chair of CSD in June of 2022 from Dr. Kim Peters, who stepped down after serving for six wonderful years. We are deeply indebted to her for the time and effort she gave to this position and for moving our department ahead in so many ways.

Among her many accomplishments, Dr. Peters ushered in the Doctor of Audiology program, which will enroll in its sixth cohort this fall. The Au.D. program is now the only one in Washington state and continues to grow in terms of local and national recognition. Dr. Peters was also instrumental in securing an electronic medical record (EMR) system so that our clinics could move away from paper charts to online medical records. Perhaps most importantly, Dr. Peters successfully guided the department through the pandemic. Her thoughtful responses to the well-being of the faculty, staff, and students through a difficult time did not go unnoticed, and we kindly say, thank you, Dr. Peters, for your leadership.

I have several updates related to comings and goings. First, as many know, Dr. Rieko Darling retired last year after 25 years of service to CSD and WWU. Dr. Darling was instrumental in the education of countless students, and her efforts will not be forgotten.

With Dr. Darling's retirement, we hired a new Audiology Clinic Director, Ashley Sobchuk-Hudson, Au.D.. She completed her Au.D. from Pacific University in 2016 and came to us from Oregon Health Sciences University. In addition to directing the Audiology Clinic, she also teaches the graduate level class on balance disorders, assessment, and treatment.

We also had to say goodbye to our Administrative Services Manager, Karen Smith, as she has taken a new position as Assistant to the Associate VP, Facilities Management. Replacing her is Ben Reed, who comes to us from Whatcom Community College. Ben completed his M.Ed. in Student Development Administration in 2017 from Seattle University. has several years of experience

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in higher education and is a welcome addition to our growing team.

In June of 2022 we hired a new audiologist, Melinda Bryan, M.A., '95. Melinda graduated from WWU with her B.A. '92, and her M.A. in Audiology. '95. Prior to joining WWU, Ms. Bryan worked at Cascade ENT for 23 years, then with Sedro Woolley Schools for 3 years. Her expertise is in the areas of adult and pediatric diagnostics and hearing aids, with a special interest in tinnitus. I would also like to announce the launch of our department and clinic Instagram account. Please consider following us for important updates on the department and our mission of educating new speech-language pathologists and audiologists! Please use the QR code provided below to connect to CSD on Instagram.

As many know, we are a no-fee-for-service clinic, which allows us to be a free clinic for the community. Our mission is to offer high-level care to patients, no matter their ability to pay. At present, we are the only clinic in Whatcom and Skagit counties able to do infant hearing tests, and one of the only clinics available for toddlers who have state insurance and need a hearing assessment. We would like to continue offering our services to as wide a group as possible and would welcome your donations to help offset the costs of equipment and materials! Please use the QR code below to access a donation form!

CSD Instagram



WWU Give Day



Audiology Clinic News

Director Ashley Sobchuk-Hudson,

Au.D., CCC-A

We are well into spring quarter and the excitement in the clinic is palpable! The first year Au.D. students are excited about having some time and effort in, the second year Au.D. students excited to soon be moving onto their internships, and the third year AuD students wrapping up the didactic component of their education about to head out on their final externship year.

Wait, what is that sound? Is that the click of a keyboard and not the rustle of papers? That's right, we are now a fully emersed Electronic Medical Record clinic in conjunction with the Speech and AR clinics. We did it! Integrating Point n Click into our clinic culture has taken time and patience, but here we are typing away and not looking back. This year has been one of great change, with the rearranging of clinic rooms, the addition of a hearing aid lab, new streamlined protocols, new equipment including a VRA

system, and a new caloric machine made possible by a generous donation from Bellingham Ear Nose and Throat. The support from Dr. Olson and his team has made it possible for our students to train on high caliber equipment and support our community members by offering quality vestibular diagnostics.

Not to mention, our faculty has had a strong influence in clinic while our clinical educators have been present in the classroom. It takes a village! We are now looking forward to some notable events including our Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) participating in a health fair in Maple Falls on May 20th, and our first White Coat Ceremony in conjunction with our Capstone Poster Presentations on May 22, 2023. To follow along in all the excitement, remember to follow us on Instagram, @wwusaachapter and @wwu_csd.

Speech-Language Clinic News ***Director Lesley Stephens, M.A., CCC-SLP***

Looking back and reflecting on re-opening our clinics since the COVID shutdown, I celebrate the hard work of the graduate students, clinical educators, and faculty who have continued to roll with the punches that accompany service delivery. We have reshaped clinical education; in person clinical services, telehealth, hybrid courses, clinical simulations, and much more. The perseverance is one that everyone should be proud of!

Aural (Re)habilitation Clinic News ***Director Kimberly Peters, Ph.D.,*** ***CCC-SLP/A, LSLS Cert. AVT, BCS-CL***

The Aural (Re)habilitation Clinic at Western Washington University is as busy as ever! We continue to see clients in person and remotely, with most of our clients coming to campus for their assessment and treatment services. In the AR Clinic we support clients who are using hearing technology and their families as they develop listening, language, speech, and social skills; self-advocacy; and strategies for optimizing communication. We have worked with a wide range of clients this year from infants to adults with cochlear implants, hearing aids, and auditory brainstem implants. Students collaborate with other providers and school personnel to optimally support communication and learning. Dr. Kimberly Peters, Dr. Douglas Sladen, Dr. Andrea Reed, Melinda Bryan, and Dawn Burgess supervised approximately 40 AuD and SLP graduate students in collaborative service provision and family coaching. At the start of winter quarter, and through the spring, clinicians started using the new electronic medical records platform, Point and Click. While there were some minor growing pains, this platform has increased efficiency for students and supervisors, as well as client access to their medical records. This summer, we look forward to updating our clinic and teaching materials to facilitate more collaboration between student clinicians.

CSD Research Corner

Heather Moore, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Heather Moore recently published two research articles with colleagues from the University of Oregon entitled, *Psychometric Properties of the English-Spanish Vocabulary Inventory in Toddlers With and Without Early Language Delay* (2022) and *Serving Young Children with Communication Disabilities from Latinx Backgrounds and their Families with Equity: Provider Perspectives* (2022). She is currently examining the short- and long-term outcomes of *Language and Play Every Day (LAPE)*, a naturalistic parent-coaching program for young children with language delay. Undergraduate and graduate students working in her lab are transcribing and coding home communication samples collected from both English- and Spanish-speaking families before, during, and after the LAPE program. She is also mentoring two undergraduate honor capstone projects examining the relationship between child rate of communication and parental use of environmental arrangement strategies.

Kimberly Peters, Ph.D., CCC-SLP/A, LSLS Cert. AVT, BCS-CL

Dr. Kimberly Peters is currently collaborating with Dr. Mona Oster, a new Research Associate in the CSD Department. They are collecting data on the quality of very early parent-infant interactions and how specific behaviors correlate with later language, executive functioning, and theory of mind in children who are deaf or hard of hearing, and children with typical hearing.

Hearing Aid Bank — Logan Dempsey, B.A. ***& Emily Jernigan, B.A.***

As a community service, Western Washington University offers donated hearing aids to those who would not otherwise be able to afford the expense of purchasing hearing aids and associated services. To date the Hearing Aid Bank Program has provided over 40 patients with hearing aids and assistive listening devices!

The program operates on a donation-based community clinic and relies on the support of our community members. Financial donations as well as donations of usable hearing aids and associated products from individuals, community audiologists and dispensers, and organizations are encouraged and appreciated.

We appreciate your consideration in supporting the Hearing Aid Bank Program's efforts to assist community members in need and provide the best technology to our clients. Find more information on how to donate or apply online at <https://chss.wwu.edu/hearing-aid-bank> or call (360) 650-3881.

Au.D. Internship Program — ***Megan Bennett, Au.D., CCC-A,*** ***Internship Coordinator***

Audiology students complete three part time internship rotations during their fall, winter, and spring quarters during the

third year. Each rotation is two days a week for 10 weeks. Students are placed according to their clinical interest and experience needs. Typically, each student has one educational audiology placement, one heavily focused on hearing aids and one at a hospital or medical center. Current and past hospital/medical sites include Seattle Children's Hospital, Harborview Medical Center, Swedish Hospital and Puget Sound ENT. Some of the educational audiology sites include Edmonds, Seattle, Shoreline, and Issaquah school districts. Private practice locations frequently used include Spencer Audiology and Hearing Northwest in Bellingham as well as Link Audiology, Puget Sound ENT, and the Hearing Speech and Deaf Center in the Seattle area.

Our fourth-year students' complete year-long externships at sites all over the country. The externship experience is full time where the students are completely immersed in the setting. Past and current sites include Yale Hearing and Balance, Mass Eye and Ear at Harvard, Mayo Clinic, Arizona State University, Puget Sound VA, Arkansas Children's Hospital, and NCRAR.

Clinical experiences at these offsite locations allow students to obtain clinical hours in audiology that are not available on campus. It offers exposure to a variety of audiology job settings to help students decide where they might want to seek employment. Finally, these settings allow students to obtain the minimum clinic hours to refine their clinic skills to the independent level and to meet ASHA requirements for graduation.

SLP Internship Program— Dawn Burgess M.S., CCC-SLP, Internship Coordinator

Community partnership in the development and refinement of student clinicians is paramount to Western Washington University's Speech-Language Pathology graduate program. We are grateful for the off-campus supervisors hosting students each winter and spring quarter, and 2023 continued to see SLP students placed in a range of professional settings (e.g., hospitals, schools, early intervention, and private practices). Twelve students elected to complete winter part-time internships two full days a week spread across Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, and King counties! This spring, 18 students are completing their full-time internships and anticipate graduating in June 2023. Internships provide students with multitudes of new learning experiences and opportunities to continue growing clinical skills. We are thankful for our "regular" host sites always willing to support our program and supervise students. This year saw the establishment of many new partners as well-Lewis County Special Education Cooperative in Grays Harbor County; Riverview Elementary in Durango, Colorado; Kids in Motion Pediatric Therapy in Torrance, CA; Snohomish Speech and Language in Snohomish, WA; Sandbox Therapy Group in Redmond, WA; and Children's Therapy of Woodinville in Bothell, WA. Are you an ASHA certified SLP and passionate about training future professionals? Contact Dawn Burgess, SLP Internship Coordinator at 360.650.3197 or burgesa2@wwu.edu to discuss the possibility.

Electronic Medical Records

Among numerous other accomplishments, we were proud to implement a new Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system this year. The new software from Point-n-Click Solutions, dubbed "PNC" by staff, faculty, and students, has allowed the WWU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic to transition from its paper chart processes to a cloud-based platform. In addition to improving record security and decreasing our carbon footprint, PNC allows for more streamlined communication between staff, graduate student clinicians, and supervising clinicians. It comes equipped with powerful reporting tools for analyzing data as well as numerous other features. Experience with the EMR also better prepares our graduate students for their internships and careers in our increasingly digital world.

The new EMR also comes with a huge benefit for our clients and their families: a patient portal. The freshly launched portal allows our clients to access their records at any time from the comfort of their home. It also allows them to securely message their providers, check their appointment times, and electronically sign forms.

Alumni Spotlight

Haley Prins-Schneider, Au.D., CCC-A

I graduated from the WWU Clinical Doctorate in Audiology program in 2021. Since graduating, I moved to Lake Stevens, WA, and am currently completing my second year as an educational audiologist for Everett Public Schools. It has been so rewarding getting to work with students of all ages and watch them grow. I love being a part of an interdisciplinary team that includes teachers, SLPs, OT/PTs, TODHs, vision specialists, and many others. No day is the same in educational audiology, which makes it so fun! I feel lucky to have found such a fulfilling career path. In my spare time, I love relaxing with my husband and our basset hound (Hank), spending time with family, trying new food, and playing board games.

Cammy Bliss, M.A., CCC-SLP

After waving Zoom-bye to my WWU cohort, my husband Kevin and I ventured east to the "Palm Springs of Washington" for my final internship at Yakima Memorial's pediatric clinic, the Children's Village. I shadowed at the hospital and quickly found myself drawn to the fast-paced, chaotic nature of the acute care setting. I began my Clinical Fellowship at Yakima Memorial Hospital (now part of MultiCare) in July 2021 and have been working full-time in acute care ever since. I love our small-but-mighty team of SLPs, buzzing around on my feet all day, and the opportunity to work with patients of all backgrounds and diagnoses, from acute strokes to tracheostomies. I never know what the next day (or hour) will bring! I have grown a deep interest in diagnosing and treating swallowing disorders through modified barium swallow studies. I am working on a proposal for a Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) program for our hospital, which will increase access to instrumental swallowing assessments for our most critically ill patients. There is little more satisfying than helping someone have their first (safe) sip of coffee after weeks on a ventilator or a feeding tube down their nose. I am still a new clini-

cian, overwhelmed by an unfathomable amount of learning I need to do. On the flip side, that's what I love about our profession: endless opportunities for learning and collaboration with other wicked-smart disciplines. Also, "east side" living has grown on me. Hard to complain about the wide-open skies, outdoor access, sunny springs and—ahem—fermented beverages. Cheers!

Student Academy of Audiology Update

This year, students Juliet Stanwood (President), Jayden Alexander (Vice President), Kelsey Boze (Treasurer), Irene Wright (Secretary), Cora Swindale (Community Outreach), and Sierra Tibbetts (Public Relations) became the new officers for the Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) WWU chapter. The SAA is a national organization branching from the American Academy of Audiology as a "collective voice for students and advances the rights, interests, and welfare of students pursuing careers in audiology." The SAA "introduces students to lifelong involvement in activities that promote and advance the profession of audiology, and provides services, information, education, representation, and advocacy for the profession and the public we serve." This year, SAA's goals were to focus on community outreach and student support. During winter quarter, a zoom Internship 101 meeting was held via zoom. The current third year audiology students shared about their experiences, what they would do differently next time, what they did well, and what to expect. Dr. Bennett also attended, addressing the logistics and opportunities attached to the internship process. Currently in progress is an externship workshop in which students will have assistance writing letters, resumes, and any other externship related documents and talk through some of the anxieties current first and second years might have regarding the process. SAA officers will be participating in the Catherine Mahaffey East Whatcom Wellness Fair, on May 20th. Students will work at a booth with resources about hearing loss, the WWU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, and Western's Hearing Aid Bank. Students will have access to an office where they can provide hearing screenings for those event attendees. As audiologists, our job is to serve our community. Our goal this year is to improve the foundation and support of the current students to better care for the community. If you know of any volunteer opportunities or would like more information about our chapter and organization, please contact Juliet Standwood at stanwoj@wwu.edu. Additionally, you can check us out on Instagram @wwusaachapter to get updates about our club and various events within the greater Bellingham area!

National Student Speech Language Hearing Association Update

This year, students Sierra Stecklein (President), Elise Sumner (Vice President), Dylan Revere (Treasurer), Jennifer Ruskauff (Secretary), Olivia Sanfelippo (Public Relations), Nayneli Lopez (Community Outreach), and Isabel Herrera Rivera & Anna Brillault Kenny (Event Coordinators) became the new officers for the Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) WWU chapter.

This year the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) chapter at WWU has been transitioning back to in-person club life! Our goal as a club is to empower CSD students while advocating for speech, language, and hearing access.

Our NSSLHA chapter has hosted many study nights and virtual events to facilitate community amongst the undergraduates. We are also in the process of setting up our second annual clinic tours of the WWU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, as well as hearing screenings for Western students! These events allow for our club to provide access to knowledge regarding a speech and hearing clinic which is of major interest for students aspiring to go to Graduate school! Lastly, for the first time in a few years NSSLHA will be hosting an in-person event for Better Hearing and Speech Month this May!

On May 26th from 5:30 to 8:30 pm NSSLHA will be hosting a Soiree in WWU's Miller Hall, free of charge! This event is open to students as well as community members. We are also very excited to have one of Western's own faculty members, Dr. Anna Diedesch, as our keynote speaker! At 5:45 pm, Dr. Diedesch will have the floor to share some of her recent research regarding binaural hearing, central auditory processing, amplification, and remote testing.

At this event, raffle tickets will be sold to help raise money for future NSSLHA events and the WWU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic. Any donation is greatly appreciated and all proceeds will benefit the clinic directly. For the raffle, three lucky winners will receive either a gift card bundle of Bellingham businesses (e.g., the Bagelry, Just Poke), a plant basket, or a local art piece. Food and beverages will also be provided at this event. We look forward to this night of community and can't wait to see you there! To RSVP, please use this link via the Western Involvement Network. If you have any questions or accommodations regarding the Soiree, please email Sierra Stecklein (NSSLHA President) at steckls@wwu.edu.

Philanthropy News

Scholarship Awards 2022-23

CSD Department Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 were awarded to Kelsey Boze, Jericho Escoton, and Emily Jernigan.

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders Waivers in the amount of \$900 were awarded to Yessica Hernandez Perez and Kristen Abbey Cendana.

Diana Pechthalt Scholarship in the amount of \$1,400 was awarded to Carolyn Monroe.

Dr. Barbara Mathers-Schmidt Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 was awarded to Andrea Bartel.

Dr. Lina Zeine and Family Scholarships this award was not dispensed this year, and will be dispensed twice in 2023.

Eva Baharav Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 was awarded to Kendra Sutton.

John D. Blankenship Fellowships in the amount of \$6,000 were awarded to Bonnie Egerer and Donald Schertz.

Pechthalt Family Scholarship in the amount of \$1,400 was awarded to Carolyn Monroe.

Dr. Loren Webb Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 was awarded to Logan Dempsey.

Sam Polen Memorial Scholarship for Audiology Students in the amount of \$1,300 was awarded to Lilly McCaffrey.

Sene and Louella Carlile CSD Graduate Fellowships in the amount of \$2,700 was awarded to Melissa Mullen.

Sene and Louella Carlile CSD Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 were awarded to Alexa Kazen, Jordyn McNab, and Abby Knutson.



-Thank you for your support!-

Donations Always Welcome

Gifts can be made:

Online at <https://foundation.wwu.edu/csd>

By phone at **(360) 650-3027**.

By checks, made payable to the WWU Foundation
(Please write CSD or scholarship name on the memo line)
mailed to:

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516 High Street, MS 9034
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WWU Give Day

