

## Communication Disorders Clinic Serves Clients with Special Language and Literacy Needs

One of the many services provided by the Communication Disorders Clinic addresses the needs of children and adults with severe disabilities in reading, writing and spelling, sometimes associated with developmental dyslexia or language-learning disabilities. Clinical supervisor SallyAnn Giess, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, prepares graduate clinicians in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of these disabilities.

According to Giess, typical reading clinic clients include school-age children who struggle academically or college-age students who previously could compensate for their disabilities but strain to do so while

meeting the demands of college course work.

Under Giess' guidance, graduate clinicians administer a comprehensive assessment battery that may take three to four hours. Test results allow clinicians to identify clients' strengths and weaknesses and create profiles that suggest a diagnosis of developmental dyslexia or language-learning disability.

Following the diagnosis, treatment is available at the clinic for either disability. Graduate clinicians learn how to carry out phonemic awareness training and multisensory reading intervention

designed to provide intensive, explicit and individualized instruction for struggling readers via visual, auditory and kinesthetic pathways. Length of treatment varies widely based on clients' personal goals. For many, a goal may be to perform at grade- or age-level in an area of weakness. Clients usually come to the clinic for therapy twice a week for 50-minute sessions, and the same graduate clinician works with a client for an academic semester.

According to Giess, "As (younger) clients progress, their parents notice they read more frequently and confidently; they (See "Communication Disorders Clinic," p. 2)



Clinical Supervisor SallyAnn Giess (left), with the assistance of Graduate Clinician Carol Caron (center), conducts an assessment of clinic client Sarah Grogan (right).

## Communication Disorders Clinic *(continued from p. 1)*

apply the reading techniques learned in treatment to reading material at home.”

This summer Giess and her students will offer an intensive intervention program to school-age children, which will include individual work on specific reading skills, such as word decoding and word recognition. Clients will also participate in group activities focusing on reading fluency, comprehension and the writing process. According to Giess, each client will receive a program tailored to meet his or her needs; overall, the program will target reading fluency, comprehension, spelling, writing and social language skills. The Einstein Montessori Charter School in Brevard County will be the summer reading program site.

Giess said, “We hope to have 24 clients and 12 graduate clinicians. During the regular school year, our clients are so busy; an intensive summer program allows us to focus on reading and language skills when clients have

fewer distractions and more time. Maintaining progress in reading and language requires frequent and sustained intervention.”

In addition to positive outcomes for clients, the department’s graduate clinicians also benefit from hands-on experience working with children and adults who have severe language and literacy needs.

According to department Chair Jane Lieberman, as future speech-language pathologists, graduate clinicians are acquiring the knowledge and skills



Thomas Alan Smithe

for collaborative work with educators, psychologists and other professionals on school-based literacy teams. Clinicians’ education takes them into the mainstream in meeting a top educational priority — teaching all children to read.

For Giess, a speech-language pathologist for 15 years, the opportunities to help others and give back to the community make her career and her work at the clinic rewarding.

She said, “I still remember a client’s grandmother telling me their family’s Thanksgiving tradition. In her family, everyone wrote down what he or she is thankful for and read it to the rest of the family at Thanksgiving dinner. The client used to skip her turn to read because she was afraid she would make a mistake while reading. This (past) Thanksgiving was different: for the first time in front of her family, the client read aloud what she was thankful for and read with confidence!”

## Donors Fund Scholarship to Support Research

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders has recently begun soliciting student applications for the inaugural offering of the Robert and Tyyne Hokkanen Scholarship for Advanced Research in Neurogenic Communication Disorders.

The \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to one student or divided between two equally talented students. This award will be made available for the summer 2007 semester and is intended to help pay for tuition devoted to directed readings and research.

Tyyne Hokkanen suffered a stroke several years ago and has been a client at the Communication Disorders Clinic since 2001, after she and her husband

Robert saw a letter from a client praising the clinic published in *Florida Today* newspaper.

The Hokkanens have established this scholarship to support graduate students who are interested in exemplary and innovative research that will benefit the speech and language abilities of stroke survivors.

“The (clinic’s) graduate student therapists have been so understanding and helpful with my wife’s speech problems. We felt that in appreciation we would assist by offering a scholarship,” Robert Hokkanen said. “Our hopes are that the recipient or recipients will add to the progress in speech therapy through research and mentor as they have been mentored.”

In addition to the therapeutic services Tyyne Hokkanen has received at the clinic, she has also benefited from social contact with other people facing challenges similar to her own. Both the clinic’s therapy services and the opportunity for camaraderie have been of great value to her and have helped in her recovery.



Don Beech

*(Left to right) Tasha Martin, Jeff Snow, Janet Whiteside and Robert Hokkanen*



## Alumni

*Communiqué* features “Stay Connected,” a section devoted to the news, information and updates provided by alumni. To have your information included in a future issue, please visit [www.cohpa.ucf.edu/alumni](http://www.cohpa.ucf.edu/alumni) and click on “Stay Connected.” Degrees in bold were awarded by UCF.

### 2003

**Christina Hartley, B.S., M.A. ('05)**, is a speech-language pathologist at Avante in Orlando, Fla.

### 2002

**Javier D. Peña-Garzyn, B.A., M.A. ('05)**, lives in Las Vegas, Nev., where he works as a speech-language pathologist for Progressus Therapy.

### 1998

**Bernard Rousseau, B.S., M.A. ('02)**, earned his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in communicative disorders in 2004. He currently works as an assistant professor in the Department of Otolaryngology at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. Bernard is featured as one of 19 individuals whose careers are profiled on the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association’s Web site.

**Kellie Meyer (Spencer), B.S., M.A. ('02)**, is a speech-language pathologist for Catholic Health Services in North Miami, Fla. She resides in Hallandale Beach, Fla.

### 1995

**Milaura Spelman (Baughn), B.S., M.S. ('99)**, works for the Seminole County Public Schools as a self-contained language teacher. In addition to working in the school system, she opened a private speech/language therapy and reading remediation practice in 2005. She has obtained the Florida Department of Education’s Reading Endorsement and also a Level 1 certification in the Wilson Reading Program. She lives in Oviedo, Fla.

## Alumni Spotlight: Bernard Rousseau, Enjoying a Career in Academics

Alumnus Bernard Rousseau was honored recently as one of 19 individuals working in academic/research careers profiled on the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association’s Web site. Rousseau is an assistant professor in the Department of Otolaryngology at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn.

Rousseau earned his Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts in Communicative Disorders from the University of Central Florida’s Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. He later received his Ph.D. in communicative disorders from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. In the AHSA profile, he attributes his choice of an academic career to mentorship he received at UCF as an undergraduate.

While in the profile Rousseau notes he had a number of helpful advisors, he names UCF Associate Professor Kenyatta O. Rivers as the catalyst for him to research and pursue an academic career.

“One afternoon while walking along campus, Dr. Rivers stopped to ask me if I had ever considered a career in research/teaching. Dr. Rivers went on to tell me that I displayed certain qualities that he felt would serve well in academia. It was the first time someone had ever pointed this out to me,” Rousseau stated.

Rousseau and Rivers began meeting regularly to discuss possible career paths. Now Rousseau devotes three weekdays to his research and two to providing patient care; he interacts with students from a variety of majors in the clinical setting.

*To read Bernard Rousseau’s full profile, please visit the profile section of ASHA’s Web site at [www.asha.org/students/professions/profiles/rousseau.htm](http://www.asha.org/students/professions/profiles/rousseau.htm).*

## Department Represented on For Your Health Show

Several faculty members and alumni from the department will appear on the new *For Your Health* television show that began airing on March 26. Below is a list of participants, topics and dates. For full viewing information, please go to the College of Health and Public Affairs home page at [www.cohpa.ucf.edu](http://www.cohpa.ucf.edu).

### Week of

**3/25** **Jane Hostetler**, clinical instructor, talks about her work at the Communication Disorders Clinic with clients who suffer from Parkinson’s disease.

**4/1** **Jane Lieberman**, department chair and professor, gives an interview about severe disabilities in reading and writing.

**Jennifer Oelfke ('00, '03)**, alumna, gives an interview for the “Career Corner” portion of the show about her private speech-language pathology practice in Maitland, Fla.

**4/8** **Melissa Riess**, clinical instructor, discusses hearing evaluations and other services she provides at the clinic.

**6/3** **Jennifer Kent-Walsh**, assistant professor and FFAST Center director, talks about assistive-technology devices for individuals with disabilities and the FFAST demonstration center at UCF.

**6/10** **Mike McCormick ('77, '82) and Kathy ReVoir ('84, '86)**, alumni, talk about their work as speech-language pathologists in the brain injury rehabilitation department at Lucerne Hospital in Orlando.

## Clinic Now Provides Cochlear Implant Mapping Services

The Communication Disorders Clinic has found another way to serve the Central Florida community through its newly offered cochlear implant mapping services. Central Florida residents previously had to travel to other Florida cities, such as Tampa, Jacksonville or Miami, to receive the services, but now they can get convenient, high quality cochlear mapping done at the clinic.

Cochlear implants are surgically implanted devices that electronically stimulate the auditory nerve of people who are deaf or who have profound hearing loss; the device enables them to hear speech and other sounds. Through mapping the cochlear implant's electrode frequencies are measured and adjusted. Patients' maps change with time as they become more accustomed to hearing and processing sounds, therefore the implants need to be mapped periodically, more often directly following implantation

and with decreased frequency as time passes.

Clinical Audiologist and Instructor Melissa Riess provides mapping services at the clinic for patients with Cochlear Corporation implants. Riess holds a Doctorate of Audiology and has been a practicing audiologist for 10 years.

The clinic offers its services to both adults and children, which saves many clients a long trip. Directly following implantation, patients typically see their surgeon and audiologist for follow-up care; however, patients still require mapping services for some time. Riess, with the aid of the clinic's graduate clinicians, is able to provide this service.

The clinic also has staff members who provide speech and language therapy for patients with cochlear implants.

Collaboration between patients' speech-

language pathologist and audiologist enables the mapping process to be even more effective and for the patient.

According to Riess, the opportunity for graduate clinicians to assist patients, especially children, as Riess maps their cochlear implants is invaluable.

"Helping children with sound recognition, playing games with them — these activities help prepare graduate clinicians for their careers. It also helps them eliminate any fears they may have about working with children by getting hands-on experience," Riess said. "It exposes our clinicians to other areas of specialization. Children with severe hearing impairment are mainstreamed in schools now and receive services from speech-language pathologists, so experience working with them makes it easier on the clinician in the future."

## National Student Speech, Language and Hearing Association UCF Chapter Update

Under the direction of faculty advisors Charlotte Harvey and Jennifer Kent-Walsh, the UCF chapter of the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association has had an eventful year, full of fund raising and participation in a variety of community volunteer activities. NSSLHA members participated in the Alzheimer's Memory Walk; Knight Strides, the UCF Multiple Sclerosis Walk; and the Walk Now Orlando autism walk.

Members also cooked for the Ronald McDonald House, taught homeless children to read through Hands On Orlando at the Coalition for the Homeless, made Christmas cards with the residents of the Bridge Assisted Living Facility, collected donated supplies for speech-language pathologists working in the school system, babysat for the Down Syndrome Association of Central Florida, and participated in numerous other events.



(Left to right) Jacqueline Grubbs, Tiara Bryant, Alicia Snyder, Dayana Garcia and Vinalisa Jimenez at the NSSLHA bake sale held at the Communication Disorders Clinic

According to Alicia Snyder, NSSLHA president, "Another rewarding experience for most of the NSSLHA officers and some members was attending the annual convention of the ASHA in Miami in November where we attended seminars and brought back valuable information for those who were unable to be there."

Throughout the year, the chapter's leadership made small but significant

changes within the organization, including having multiple meetings per month instead of just one. This schedule change allowed more members to get involved and stay informed of upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.

In addition to fund-raising and volunteering efforts, officers planned activities such as a bowling night and weekend barbecue.

Snyder said, "These social events have given our members and officers a chance to get to know each other even better. This is something we feel is very important and strengthens the bond of our local chapter of NSSLHA."

In the fall semester, NSSLHA raised over \$3,000 for various causes, and the chapter's leaders and members are working diligently this spring to make an even greater contribution to the community.



## Faculty Member Profile: Linda I. Rosa-Lugo



Associate Professor Linda I. Rosa-Lugo has accomplished a balancing act worthy of a tight-rope. She is the Department of Communication Sciences and

Disorders graduate coordinator, the project coordinator of a U.S. Department of Education personnel preparation grant, and the program administrator for the department's collaborative consortium with area public school districts, which was created to address the critical shortage of speech-language pathologists in schools.

Rosa-Lugo is participating in the Office of Diversity Initiatives Leadership Enhancement Program and was recently selected to be a 2007–2009 faculty fellow for the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for

Teaching and Learning. In addition to these activities, she finds time to teach, write and publish.

What motivates her to actively pursue so many commitments is her desire to give back. Her mentors, Robert Kretschmer of Columbia University and Raymond McDermott of Stanford University, reiterated to her the importance of remembering where she grew up, in the Bronx, N.Y., and the people of that community.

Rosa-Lugo explained, "My parents always stressed that when you have a talent or passion, it becomes one's responsibility to nurture and share it with others. I have had so many opportunities to accomplish things that matter most to me. In doing work that gives me satisfaction, I find myself 'giving back' to a profession that allows me to learn through people on a daily basis."

According to Rosa-Lugo, one way she manages the feat of balancing all of these obligations is by finding synergy. By finding opportunities to conduct research that will improve her teaching or by providing service that opens doors to new research possibilities, Rosa-Lugo efficiently uses her time and resources.

As part of the Leadership Enhancement Program, Rosa-Lugo has participated in a variety of seminars, specifically, in Stephen Covey seminars. From this experience, she learned how to plan.

Rosa-Lugo said, "I have participated in many seminars, however, this one allowed me to re-evaluate my values, mission and vision. In planning, I now try to ensure that my activities are in concert with my highest priorities. What are my highest priorities? Realizing a personal and professional life balance, and as Covey articulates, 'finding (my) voice and inspiring others to find theirs.'"

## FAAST Center Computer Refurbishing Program

### Attention Speech-Language Pathologists —

A central mission for the FAAST Center is to provide access to assistive technologies for clients with disabilities who strive to meet educational, social and vocational needs. One way the FAAST Center addresses this need is through a computer refurbishment program. The center accepts computer donations from local businesses and then works with individual clients and families to identify appropriate adapted software and hardware to tailor the computers for client use at home. Clients or families of individuals with disabilities may contact the FAAST Center to request a refurbished computer at any time.

This summer, the FAAST Center will offer a special refurbishment program with training for families of children with developmental disabilities who could benefit from the use of Mayer-Johnson's new version of Boardmaker® software. Parents will learn to use this popular software to make visual supports that will help their children to communicate and participate in daily routines; families will receive a refurbished computer with the software for a nominal fee.

For more information about FAAST Center's computer refurbishment program, please contact FAAST Center Speech-Language Pathologist Barbaralyn Harden at [bharden@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:bharden@mail.ucf.edu). The tentative schedule for the Boardmaker® training program appears below:

Friday, June 15 (3 to 6 p.m.)

Friday, June 22 (3 to 6 p.m.)

## New Accelerated Undergrad to Grad Program Approved

The department recently received approval for an accelerated undergraduate-graduate program that will provide a great opportunity for students. The program allows highly qualified undergraduate communication sciences and disorders majors to enroll in 18 credit hours of graduate-level courses while completing their bachelor's degrees.

By completing graduate course work during their undergraduate program, full-time students will be able to earn their master's degrees in one or two fewer semesters.

**For comments, questions or more information:**

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Joseph DiNapoli, M.S., CAGS, Instructor

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Jennifer Kent-Walsh, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

R. Jane Lieberman, Ph.D., Professor and Chair

Thomas Mullin, Ph.D., Associate Professor Emeritus

Chad Nye, Ph.D., Professor

David Ratusnik, Ph.D., Professor

Kenyatta Rivers, Ph.D., Associate Professor

Linda Rosa-Lugo, Ed.D., Associate Professor

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