

# Communiqué

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Central Florida

Fall 2011, Volume 8 Number 1



Grant awardee  
Linda I. Rosa-Lugo

## \$1.1 M Grant to Prepare Listening–Spoken Language Specialists

The University of Central Florida and University of South Florida have secured a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to train future speech–language

pathologists so they can help deaf and hard-of-hearing children whose families do not speak English.

“It really is a wonderful blessing,” said UCF Associate Professor Linda I. Rosa-Lugo, a lead investigator for the study. “This grant will give us the chance to train students to partner with families and their children to develop foundational listening, (Continued on p. 2)

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## Doctoral Program Offers Unique Emphasis in Language and Literacy

*The doctoral program in communication sciences and disorders at UCF prepares graduate students for leadership roles in language and literacy. Here, program Director Barbara Ehren offers updates about the discipline and program.*

What are some of the latest findings in the study of language and literacy disorders? We have much more information now on interventions that are effective with children and adolescents with language and literacy disorders, although the research with adolescents lags a bit behind research with younger children. As a professional dedicated to the older population, I’m excited to have data that demonstrate that intervention can be effective even at later stages. One of the arguments against spending time, energy and money on adolescents has been that it’s a waste of resources. Now we know it’s not! Of course we want to

do intervention as early as possible. But for some students, early intervention won’t be enough. And for others, they won’t begin to have problems until the going gets rough in secondary schools.

**Why is doctoral education in language and literacy disorders important?**

There’s an urgent need to address the poor literacy rates in our country and speech-language pathologists have a lot to (Continued on p. 2)



Director Barbara Ehren (right) with doctoral students Bahar Seyfi Nouferest (left) and Lynne Telesca



## We are Marshall @ UCF

A group of three faculty members and four graduate students from the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Marshall University in Huntington, W.Va., recently visited following an invitation extended by UCF's CSD department.



UCF Interim Chair Tom Mullin stated, "They toured our clinic and were particularly impressed with our 'Aphasia House' and the wide range of research being conducted by our faculty."

The visit was timed to continue the football rivalry between the two schools. "The Marshall folks presented our faculty with T-shirts advertising the MU vs. UCF 'Communication Disorders BOWL,'" Mullin noted. "We treated them to a pre-game barbecue and a mighty victory on the gridiron for the UCF Knights."

## Doctoral (Continued from p. 1)

offer. We desperately need professors at universities and leaders in many venues who understand the language basis of literacy and literacy difficulties to lead the way in expanding the knowledge base in this area and in effecting change in practice. The goal of the doctoral program is to produce scholars as researchers and leaders who specialize in language and literacy. This is a new area of focus in our profession and having a doctoral program emphasize this area is unique. There are only a few other programs in the nation that would describe their doctoral programs in this light.

### The doctoral program also emphasizes collaboration. How have students been engaged with practitioners?

We really encourage collaborative work with local, state and national education agencies. For example, Kim Murza worked with Orange County Public Schools to research the effectiveness of a professional development program and to guide future efforts. Cheran Zadroga worked with an OCPS school to research effective vocabulary instruction in fourth grade. Karen Davis conducted a national

## Grant (Continued from p. 1)

speech, spoken language and early literacy skills in children with all levels of hearing loss."

While there are many speech-language pathologists in Florida, few have the specialized knowledge to help children with hearing losses who come from homes where English is not the primary language.

The UCF-USF collaborative grant will train 40 new speech-language pathologists over the next five years to address this pressing need, specifically with children ages 0 to 3.

The new program also will help meet a new Florida law that took effect this past July. It requires that public schools provide students with access to appropriately trained specialists (<http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2011/1254>).

Rosa-Lugo is launching the program in collaboration with Theresa Hnath

workload survey of over 3,500 speech-language pathologists in collaboration with a national group. Janet Proly worked with Bridges Academy in Seminole County to study effective reading intervention with adolescents. Currently, Melissa Malani is conducting her dissertation study at a middle school in Seminole County to investigate the impact of a strategy on comprehension of digital text.

### What else is new in the doctoral program?

Stacey Pavelko (right) is our first doctoral program graduate [in August 2011]. Her dissertation focused on the writing abilities of prekindergarten children and was directed by Professor Jane Lieberman. Pavelko is now an assistant professor at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va.



Thomas Alan Smittle

We're very excited about our new Scholar-in-Residence Program, which we launched this fall with Bridges Academy. In this program, a doctoral student with a CCC-SLP is placed at the school for 20 hours a week every semester. The doctoral student provides clinical

Chisolm, chair of USF's Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Chisolm has been working with children with hearing loss since 1988. She was instrumental in bringing The Bolesta Center, which specializes in developing listening and spoken language in children with hearing loss, into USF's clinic services.

"I believe the program we have developed, including the concept of cross-university collaboration, would serve as an ideal model for other institutions," Chisolm said. "By combining our expertise, we were able to develop a unique program meeting a national need."

UCF and USF are recruiting students who will begin the program in January. Each university will be selecting qualified graduate students in speech-language pathology to receive scholarship funding that is part of the grant.

(For more grant news, see p. 5.)

## Did You Know?

The department's doctoral program was launched as a Communications Sciences and Disorders Track in UCF's education Ph.D. program in 2007. Since then, its doctoral students have amassed an impressive record of accomplishments, including 16 publications, 47 presentations (many national) and 16 awards.

supervision for approximately six master's degree students in communication sciences and disorders each semester, promoting evidence-based practice in language and literacy. The doctoral student also engages in research and professional development activities to promote literacy outcomes at the school. Lynne Telesca, one of our new doctoral students, is our first scholar in residence.

We also are pleased to welcome our first international doctoral student, Bahareh Seyfi-Nouferest, who is from Iran. Bahar has a master's degree from UCF in teaching English to speakers of other languages. She brings both a wealth of knowledge in language and a very interesting perspective to our program.

## Student Service to the Community

The stories below reflect just a few of the ways UCF communication sciences and disorders students recently have served the Central Florida community.

**1** Katherine Long and Alesie Roman worked with residents with early-onset Alzheimer's disease at Arden Courts in Winter Springs in a service-learning project for their spring 2011 course, "Cognitive Communicative Disorders." The undergraduates created a memory program to target cognitive functions of memory and a family scavenger hunt to promote family interaction. "This project reflects how well they were able to apply the classroom contents to the outside world," said Assistant Professor Anthony Kong, their faculty advisor. The students' efforts earned them a Service-Learning Scholarship Award of \$100 from the campus and a Recognition of Excellence Award from the college. (Left to right: Kong, Long, Roman and Interim Chair Tom Mullin)



**2** In a partnership with Florida Hospital Cancer Center, 25 master's degree students assisted at an April 26 event in Winter Park that included free oral, head and neck cancer screenings for the public and a lecture and panel discussion on the latest treatments. "In two hours, we screened 86 people, and 12 of them were referred for further evaluation," said Associate Professor Bari Hoffman Ruddy, who helped coordinate the event.

**3** More than 20 members of the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association at UCF Cocoa held a children's festival in honor of Better Speech and Hearing month, according to Instructor Joe DiNapoli. More than 130 children and their families attended the May 14 event at Cocoa's Riverfront Park, where they browsed informational tables and enjoyed free activities. (Clockwise from left, NSSLHA student leaders Simone Schmidt, Rob Moreleda, Alexia Carew and Vianny Gordon)

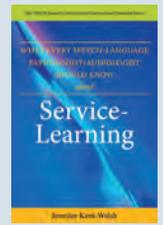


## New Faculty Book

Associate Professor

**Jennifer Kent-Walsh**

is the author of a new text, *What Every Speech-Language Pathologist/Audiologist Should Know About Service-Learning*, published this fall by Pearson/Allyn & Bacon. Learn more at <http://ucflink.me/2a>.



**4** Recognizing the need for transitional support for individuals with a traumatic brain injury, master's degree students Heather Field and Michelle Cleghorn developed a support club, under the guidance of Clinical Educators Janet Whiteside and Pamela Resnick, to help TBI survivors reintegrate back into the community. Among the participants is Sean VanGerena, who survived a cervical vertebral fracture in a car accident in 2008. With therapy, hard work and determination, VanGerena emerged from the trauma as a competitive athlete. Inspired by his story, NSSLHA at UCF in Orlando raised funds to support him at the Triathlon World Championship in Nevada on Nov. 5. "We found his story absolutely incredible," said NSSLHA President Danielle Hills. "He made our members feel they chose the right path to their futures." (Left) VanGerena after his accident and (right) today, competing as a runner.



## Welcome in Fall 2011

**Diana Barreneche-Doniger (Au.D., Nova Southeastern University) (left)** is the new audiologist and a clinical educator in the Communication Disorders Clinic. For 20 years, she has specialized in hearing aids and developed proficiency in bone-anchored hearing aids and assistive listening devices. She also has expertise in vestibular and tinnitus diagnosis and treatments. Most recently, she was a clinical audiologist at South Florida ENT, Mercy Hospital, in Miami. At UCF, her goal is to lead a "state-of-the-art clinic in technology and services."

**Elena L. Moore (M.A., Interdisciplinary Studies; Professional Writing Graduate Certificate; UCF) (right)**

is the new lead American Sign Language instructor. She brings nearly 15 years of experience in the field of deafness to her new position. Moore has worked as the business development director for an all-deaf residential psychiatric treatment center, an ASL interpreter and a sign-language educator.



Photos: Abi Bell



## UCF Wins Again At FLASHA Conference

Once again, UCF earned key awards at the Annual Convention of the Florida Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, held this year from May 26 to 29 in Marco Island, Fla. UCF also won recognition for having the most new student members.

### HONORS OF THE ASSOCIATION AWARD

Associate Professor **Linda I. Rosa-Lugo** was chosen by her peers to receive the Honors of the Association Award for her contributions and service to the profession and association. She serves as director of the department's master's degree



program and is the principal investigator for two federally funded programs to train graduate students.

Rosa-Lugo (above, left) is shown here with FLASHA President Sue Snover.

### FIRST-PLACE, POSTER COMPETITION

**Karen Davis** (below, left), a doctoral student in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Track; **Michele Cardona** (right), a master's degree student in the discipline; and Professor Barbara Ehren won first place in the poster competition



*At three of the past four FLASHA conferences, peers have awarded the Honors of the Association Award to a faculty member from UCF*

for their poster, "Moving Towards a Workload Approach in Schools: A National Survey."

### SECOND-PLACE, PRAXIS BOWL COMPETITION

#### Individual Award

**Gary Adams** (right), accelerated B.A./B.S. to M.A. track

University Award  
University of Central Florida



### THIRD-PLACE, POSTER COMPETITION

Nine students in the ELL program, led by principal investigator **Linda I. Rosa Lugo**, took third place for their poster, "Preparing School Speech-Language Pathologists to Serve English Language Learners with Communication Disorders." Pictured below are (left to right) **Sherilyn Williams**, **Michelle Cardona**, **Ashlee Farina**, **Megan Northcutt**, **Alexandra Arredondo**, **Alexis Weiland**, **Giselle Lugo**, **Michelle Ranc** and **Caroline Krohne** with Celia Santini (far right), chair of the FLASHA Foundation and poster session.



Photos: Charlotte Harvey

## Lloyd Makes 'Singing Voice' Presentations

At the 2011 FLASHA conference, master's degree student Adam Lloyd gave a "stellar" presentation on the evaluation and treatment of the singing voice. "He did so well, he may present a course on the topic at next year's FLASHA conference," said Associate Professor Bari Hoffman Ruddy. The following month, he gave his first presentation at an international symposium, The Voice Foundation: Care of the Professional Voice meeting in Philadelphia, which was attended by physicians, speech-language pathologists and singing voice specialists.



## Honors and Awards

### FACULTY

Associate Professor **Kenyatta Rivers** has been awarded "The Israel Tribble Award for Outstanding Alumni Support" by the Florida Education Fund. Rivers is a graduate of the FEF's McKnight Doctoral Fellowship Program.



Professor **Barbara Ehren** has been selected a fellow of the International Academy of Research in Learning Disabilities. The organization and its fellows are dedicated to conducting and sharing research about individuals who have learning disabilities.

**Jason Hurdich**, instructor of American Sign Language, has obtained Facial Action Coding System certification. FACS is a method to categorize and measure facial behaviors and is used by researchers to study the face, nonverbal communication and emotion. Hurdich is believed to be the first deaf and ASL-fluent person to be FACS certified.



### STUDENTS

Master's degree students **Michelle Cardona** and **Brittney Nesch** and doctoral student **Karen Davis** are among the 32 students selected from 80 applicants to participate in the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Minority Student Leadership this fall. The program is designed to recruit and retain racial and ethnic minorities who have been historically underrepresented in ASHA-associated professions.

**Brittney Nesch** also is the recipient of the 2011 Progressus Therapy Scholarship for 2011 from the National Black Association for Speech-Language Hearing. The \$3,000 scholarship is awarded to a graduate student whose primary career interest is in providing speech-language services to children.



Accelerated undergraduate **Gary Adams** applied for and was selected as the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association Region 3 Alternate Councilor for 2011-12.



## Research News

Associate Professor **Jennifer Kent-Walsh** was selected to attend the first Summer Research Training Institute on Single-Case Intervention Research Design and Analysis sponsored by the National Center for Special Education Research in the U.S. Department of Education. She attended the weeklong institute from June 27 through July 1 at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Assistant Professor **Anthony Kong** is a co-investigator for a new research project

funded by the prestigious Hong Kong SAR Government Research Grants Council. He and colleagues from Hong Kong, Australia and Ireland were awarded \$51,736 (U.S.) to conduct a yearlong study of the unique relationship between brain and language behaviors among speakers of Chinese.

In a study with the Hong Kong Association of Speech Therapists, Assistant Professor **Kong** and his colleagues found that one out of three secondary school teachers in Hong Kong has voice problems. In addition, the more students a teacher has in a class, the more likely she or he will

have voice problems. The researchers announced their findings at a press conference in August in Hong Kong.

Associate Professor **Jamie Schwartz** successfully completed the college's 2010–11 Faculty Research Fellows program and submitted a research proposal to the NIH, which is currently pending. Three members of the department — Assistant Professor **Kong**, Professor **Jane Lieberman** and Associate Professor **Kenyatta Rivers** — are participating in the 2011–12 Faculty Research Fellows program.

## Alumni Corner

*"I don't think I could be a writer without being a speech-language pathologist."*

— Michelle Young (B.S. '93, M.A. '95)

As a speech-language pathologist (SLP) specializing in literacy, alumna Michelle Young (below) uses visualization techniques to help children picture text to improve their reading comprehension. She relies on the same sorts of techniques when writing her fantasy novels.

"I'm known for my vivid characters," said Young, author of *Dragonstone* and *The Dragon's Heart*, a two-book series available on Amazon.com. Her novels immerse the reader in a world filled with magic, dragons — and romance. (Learn more at [www.michelleyoung.org](http://www.michelleyoung.org).) Her third novel is under way.

Young somehow finds the time to write when she's not working as an SLP at Good Shepherd Catholic School in Orlando; supervising UCF externship students at Whole-Sum Therapies — an Orlando-based company she and her "incredibly supportive husband," Bill, (B.S., physical therapy '96), co-own; or spending time with their two children, ages 10 and 13, who, she noted, aren't old enough to read her books.



## Report of Gifts July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011

*The department and college appreciate the generous financial contributions of the individuals listed below. This list includes both donors to the department and communication sciences and disorders' alumni who have made donations to the department or college.*

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Enhance the department's academic programs, facilities, and support for students and faculty members by making a gift online at <http://ucflink.me/1c>.



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- Jessica C. Wood '05

### Why I Give

*"The clinic not only helped my husband with his speech, but with his total well-being. I want the clinic there for whoever should need it."*

— Gloria Wilkinson, who generously donated to the Communication Disorders Clinic. She appears here (center) with her daughter Norma (left) and son-in-law Mike Holloman at a family celebration of her 80th birthday.



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