From The Chair’s Office

I hope you enjoy reading Volume 15 of the Annual Intercom Newsletter. This edition as in previous years showcases the groundbreaking research of our faculty, the creativity and dedication of our students, the contributions of our alumni, and the impact of our valued benefactors.

As Chair, I am privileged to be working with an outstanding group of people in our Department, the Rehabilitation Sector, the Faculty of Medicine and the University of Toronto as a whole. I also took over the role of Executive Chair of the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector in July of this year and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in the sector towards building our capacity and raising more awareness for our professions within and outside the Faculty of Medicine.

As I mentioned last year, we have been getting strong support from Dean Young, who on a regular basis highlights members of our professions in both oral and written form, as most recently in his Deans Report, which you can find online on the Faculty of Medicine website. Some of our outstanding graduates have also been featured on the Faculty of Medicine website. I expect this positive relationship to continue allowing us to build a strong representation in the community.

As we near the end of 2017, I would like to highlight a few important events from the past year.

Faculty

Last July, our newest faculty member, Dr. Monika Molnar, joined our department and is currently teaching our first-year students in Child Language. We are very happy Monika decided to become part of our community.

On a sad note, we said goodbye to Dr. Luigi Girolametto who finished his last term before going into retirement in June. He is currently living in Rome and I’m sure you are not surprised to read that as professor emeritus he is still very active writing, co-supervising a post-doc, and presenting his research to clinicians and researchers throughout Italy.

This year was again a very successful year for our faculty in terms of research productivity and funding.

“As Chair, I am privileged to be working with an outstanding group of people in our Department, the Rehabilitation Sector, the Faculty of Medicine and the University of Toronto as a whole...”
You will find the evidence listed elsewhere in this edition. Unfortunately, space does not permit me to mention all the accomplishments but allow me to highlight one particular recent achievement as our Canada Research Chair, Dr. Rosemary Martino and her team, received a very prestigious 8.5 million US dollar PCORI award on comparing the Effectiveness of Prophylactic Swallow Intervention for Patients Receiving Radiotherapy for Head and Neck Cancer. Needless to say, we are all very proud of Rosemary’s accomplishment.

Research Stream

The SLP research stream programs (MSc and PhD) in the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute (RSI) under the leadership of its Director, Dr. Angela Colantonio are doing very well. This year we saw four PhD students finishing their program with a successful defense of their thesis: **Gillian de Boer, Hilary Ganek, Elaine Kearney and Teenu Sanjeevan.** We wish them all the best in their future career and also congratulate their supervisors (Tim Bressmann, Alice Eriks-Brophy, Yana Yunusova and Elina Mainela-Arnold) with the graduation of their students.

MHSC Program Highlights

This year we increased our target for enrolment of incoming students from 50 to 55 with a further increase to a final number of 60 planned for 2018. This 20% increase over two years was deemed appropriate to meet demands for professionals in our discipline in the future as indicated by both provincial and federal government projections and also as a necessary step to support our program in the future. A similar proportional increase in enrolment is happening with our cognate departments in Physical Therapy and Occupational Sciences & Occupational Therapy. Although our target was set to 55, this year saw a large number of students accepting our first offer and we have a final group of 61 students in our September 2017 class. Accommodating this larger group required us to identify a suitable room that has been transformed into a modern teaching space that is now used by our first-year students. I am very thankful for the support we received from Dean Young and my colleagues in the rehabilitation sciences sector to make this happen. We will need to accommodate the second-year larger class starting in September 2018, and have started the process for determining the best and most cost-effective way of doing so.

Alumni News

I would like to congratulate Stefanie Haws UT10 (left), former President of the Alumni Executive, for receiving an **Arbour Award** for her many contributions as a volunteer with the Alumni association in various roles since 2007.

I also want to thank our Alumni Association, who, as in previous years, organized several events in support of our students, including a successful Graduation Reception at the Muzzo Family Alumni Hall. As in previous years, students, family and guests were treated to an engaging performance of the Barbershop Quartet, led by our good friend and loyal supporter, Mr. George Shields.

The Barbershop Quartet and Mr Shields were recently featured in U of T Med in an article title “Standing Up to Stuttering”, Carolyn Morris

Deryk Beal, assistant professor (status) was honoured with the **Annual Alumni Association Distinguished Service Award** at the Departments Awards Ceremony this past month at the JJR Macleod Auditorium. This award goes to alumni who have made outstanding contributions to the fields of communication disorders and swallowing.

Community

Last May, our department together with the Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA) organized for the second year two special lectures in celebration of the Speech- and Hearing Month. Both were a great success with active participation from faculty, students and guest speakers who talked about their perspectives and experiences working with patients suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury and helping children overcome
As the year comes to an end I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our donors for their continuous efforts to support the department and our students. Without their contributions and passion for our discipline and for those who benefit from our research and clinical practice, we would not be in the strong position we find ourselves at this time. Speech-Language Pathology may be a relatively young and small field of study and practice, but our impact on the quality of life for those affected by speech, language, hearing and swallowing disorders is significant. We hope to have more occasions in the new year to bring this important message to the attention of the public, funding agencies and governments at all levels.

On that note, I would like to highlight the fact that in 2018 we will celebrate our 60th anniversary and I hope you will all join us for a full day celebration. See the crossword puzzle on this page and please, stay tuned for further information over the next months.

Finally, a big thank you to all of you for your support, your efforts and your successes in keeping our department on track to fulfill our mission. We hope to release soon our new Strategic Plan and I welcome your input on our strategies and priorities for the next 5 years. Without you we wouldn’t be able to deliver the best education and training for our students and generate innovative and ground-breaking research.

As always, I encourage you to let me know how we are doing and how you wish to be involved in our departmental activities. I would like to end by sending you my best wishes for the upcoming holidays and a successful, healthy and Happy New Year!

Pascal van Lieshout

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**Crossword Puzzle**

Across
1. How old will our department be in 2018?
2. The Department of Speech-Language Pathology is part of the Rehabilitation Sciences, ________ of Medicine, University of Toronto
3. Who was the first full faculty member in our program (hint: the Alumni Association sponsor a lecture on her behalf)?
4. Last name of the current chair of the Department of Speech-Language Pathology
5. Updated title for a former professor, having retired (hint: see research corner in this newsletter)

Down
1. Speech-Language Pathology (Abbr.)
4. “Use your indoor___________”
6. Assessment (Abbr.)
7. Formerly CASLPA (Abbr.)
8. Newest faculty member to our department
   Monika_________
9. Speech and Hearing Awareness Month (CA)
10. Treatment (Abbr.)
11. Figured it out, exclamation ___!

First complete the crossword above then, using the letters in coloured squares and the white numbers solve the puzzle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Finally don’t forget to Mark Your Calendars for this FULL day event!
In October 2017, Tim Bressmann, associate professor in the department, was invited by Transforming Faces Worldwide to serve as an external reviewer for one of their projects. Transforming Faces Worldwide is a Toronto-based charitable organization that funds surgery and rehabilitation for patients with cleft lip and palate and other craniofacial syndromes.

Together with Courtney Mollenhauer, Program Officer for Transforming Faces, and Dr. Bryan Tompson, Orthodontist, Dr. Bressmann travelled to Sri Ramachandra Medical University (SRMU) in Chennai where he met the project team. The team was made up of the project founder, Roopa Nagarajan, Course Chairperson and Professor, Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, Suraj Subramaniyan, project lead and Senior Assistant Professor, Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, Akilan Rajendran, project speech-language pathologist, and Dr. Siva Subramanian, Associate Professor, Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics. They then travelled to the project sites in Tiruvannamalai and Cuddalore, where the reviewers were able to see the team’s work in action. The team’s aim is to provide patients from rural areas with speech therapy, audiological evaluations and orthodontic treatment closer to their home.

After the visit, Tim had an opportunity to give a presentation at a conference on voice disorders back at SRMU.

Dr. Bressmann had previously visited the project in 2007, shortly after its inception. “It was great to see how far the project has come over the last decade and to meet the patients at the two sites. It was also wonderful to reconnect with the colleagues at SRMU.”

A Partnership on Behalf of Advocacy

A group of year 1 and year 2 University of Toronto MHSc students have partnered with a group of MCISc students from Western University to submit a proposal to the Ontario Budget Talks Competition (Ontario Ministry of Finance). The papers are in Phase Three of the 5 stage competition and the group could receive up to 1 Million in funding. MHSc student Allie shared their story for our website...
Dr. Gillian de Boer

On behalf of all of us in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology, we congratulate Dr. Gillian de Boer on successfully completing her PhD program. The work for Gillian’s thesis “Assessment, Control and Modification of Oral-Nasal Balance in Speech” was completed in the Voice and Resonance Lab under the supervision of Dr. Tim Bressmann. Gillian also went on a 3-months research visit to the UNESP Marilia and the USP Bauru in Sao Paulo State, Brazil. We wish her all the best for her next endeavours! Tim Bressmann

Dr. Hilary Ganek

The Department of SLP is pleased and proud to congratulate Dr. Hillary Ganek on the successful completion of her dissertation and final PhD defence that took place on Friday, September 8, 2017. Her thesis, “A mixed-methods investigation of conversational turn taking in families of children with hearing loss” was defended with great distinction. Dr. Ganek was supervised by Dr. Alice Eriks-Brophy in the Childhood Hearing Loss Lab. Dr. Ganek is currently completing a post-doctoral position with Dr. Karen Gordon in the Cochlear Implant Lab at HSC. We extend her our sincere congratulations and wish her every success in the future! Alice Eriks-Brophy

Dr. Elaine Kearney

The Department of SLP and Speech Production Laboratory congratulates Dr. Elaine Kearney on the successful PhD defence of her thesis, “The Speech Movement Disorder in Parkinson’s Disease and its Rehabilitation Using Augmented Visual Feedback” completed under the direction of Dr. Yana Yunusova. Dr. Kearney is transitioning to the Guenther Lab at Boston University to study the neural bases of speech production in Parkinson’s disease. Best of luck and make U of T proud, Elaine! Yana Yunusova

Susan J Wagner Leadership Award

SLP MHSc graduate Faiza Ali (UT17) was a co-recipient of the Susan J. Wagner Student Leadership Award in 2017. The award honours a student at the University of Toronto who demonstrates leadership, dedication and excellence through promotion and engagement of interprofessional education (IPE) and care. Faiza went above and beyond completing the minimum requirements of the IPE curriculum by earning the Management of Chronic Health Challenges Certificate of Distinction, which included participation in the 2017 Health Care Team Challenge. In this IPE learning activity, Faiza demonstrated excellent collaboration with an interprofessional student team of nine over three weeks that culminated in presenting an integrated care plan for a real patient/client in front of a panel of judges (including the patient/client) and an audience of her peers. She was also one of three SLP students to participate in the unique Top Chef Dysphagia Challenge in 2017, an immersion IPE learning activity that was organized with Baycrest Health Sciences and George Brown College. Here teams, composed of a dietician along with a personal support worker, culinary arts and SLP student, were mentored to develop appetizing and healthy foods suitable for geriatric patients with swallowing disorders. Additionally, Faiza was one of IPE two representatives for her class on the Speech-Language Pathology Student Council and the Interprofessional Healthcare Students’ Association (IPHSA). Faiza also attended a luncheon with other students and Ministry of Health delegates in September 2016 to discuss the future of interprofessional collaboration in Ontario. The discussion focused on challenges in the workforce and health professional education, including clinical practica, and served to highlight the scope of practice of SLPs.

This award is given through the Centre for Interprofessional Education to honour Susan who, as the Inaugural Faculty Lead – Curriculum, led the development and implementation of the University of Toronto IPE curriculum for 11 health science professions, including speech-language pathology.
Voice and Resonance Lab
Tim Bressmann, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
We are interested in speech disorders related to craniofacial syndromes (e.g., cleft palate) and head & neck cancer. Some of our current research focuses on the assessment of tongue movement with ultrasound and the acoustic analysis of oral-nasal balance in speech.

Speech Fluency Lab
Luc De Nil, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
We are exploring brain processes that lead to the development of stuttering in children and adults. By looking at functions and anatomy using state-of-the-art brain imaging, we can understand what factors cause stuttering and, importantly, what we can do better in treatment. In a recent study (Beal, et al. 2013 published in Cortex) we found that there are significant differences in brain anatomy between children who do and do not stutter.

Childhood Hearing Loss Lab
Alice Eriks-Brophy, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
We are currently investigating the role of culture in parent-child communicative interactions for children with hearing loss using the LENA system. Another ongoing project examines the potential of a novel intervention involving music and movement to enhance language development and pre-school readiness skills for young, orally-educated children with hearing loss. We are also continuing to examine cultural bias in and potential adaptations to language assessment and intervention strategies for Canadian Indigenous children.

Swallowing Lab
Rosemary Martino, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
We study the pathophysiology of the swallow at the bedside and with instrumentation in patients with head and neck cancer, stroke or Parkinson’s disease. Our research develops point of care tools to identify swallowing problems (dysphagia) and its medical consequences, such as aspiration pneumonia, malnutrition and psychological issues. Our tools target earlier and more accurate identification enabling earlier dysphagia interventions. Our overarching goal is to conduct research that will assist clinicians in providing the best possible care to their patients and that will ultimately help reduce the burden of dysphagia for patients, their caregivers and the community.

Multilingual Development Lab
Monika Molnar, PhD, Faculty (Tenure-track)
Our current research interests focus on infants and young children with multilingual, bilingual, and monolingual backgrounds, including typically developing populations and populations at (familial) risk of language disorders. In addition, we are interested in to what degree acute otitis media during early childhood interacts with speech perception development. In our research we are using behavioral, eye-tracking, Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (NIRS), and EEG/ERP techniques.
Language Sciences Lab
Elizabeth Rochon, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
Our current research is focused on understanding language and communication difficulties in individuals with neurological disorders. With several multidisciplinary research groups, we are characterizing neuroplastic changes after language therapy in stroke patients, determining the optimal dose of anomia therapy in aphasia, investigating whether electrical simulation is a beneficial adjuvant to aphasia therapy, characterizing the nature and course of language impairments in primary progressive aphasia (PPA), and developing clinical interventions and guidelines for clinicians who work with dementia patients.

Oral Dynamics Lab
Pascal van Lieshout, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
We are conducting research on oral motor control processes in speech production using state-of-the-art technology. Our aim is to provide a better understanding of underlying physiological and physical control mechanisms based on dynamical system theory principles in healthy and speech-disordered populations across the lifespan.

Speech Production Lab
Yana Yunusova, PhD, Faculty (Tenured)
We are conducting an NIH-funded study to diagnose changes in bulbar form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Funded by Parkinson Society of Canada and the Canadian Partnership for Stroke Rehabilitation, we are also developing interactive computer games for treating speech problems in those with Parkinson disease and apraxia of speech due to stroke.

Shared Appointment

Bloorview Research Institute
Deryk Beal, PhD, Assistant Professor (status-appointed),
We conduct research aimed at exploring and advancing our understanding of the neurobiology of language, speech, and motor control, leading to innovative neurorehabilitation interventions for children with communication and swallowing disorders. A major aim of our work is the rapid integration of research evidence and clinical care. As such, numerous clinically oriented research projects related to speech, language and swallowing are continuously ongoing.

Professor Emeritis

Child Language Lab
Luigi Girolametto, PhD, Emeritus Faculty
With his research colleagues in Rome, Mantova, and Parma, Luigi is investigating the efficacy of a shared book reading intervention for toddlers with vocabulary delays. The 6-week intervention teaches parents to use focused stimulation as the main teaching strategy. Luigi and his colleagues are measuring the impact of the intervention on vocabulary, pragmatics, and phonology. The intervention manual is being published in Italian for use by professionals in Italy who treat language disorders in toddlers.
Selected Events and Presentations

**Beal, D. S.** (2017). *Stimulating Conversation: Neuromodulation for speech and language rehabilitation.* Keynote presented at the Collaborative Program in Neuroscience Research Symposium, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON.


Bressmann, T. (2017) *Assessment (and some ideas for treatment) of structurally related speech disorders.* Invited oral presentation at the Research Colloquium, University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor.


**Stipancic, K., Yunusova, Y. & Green, J.R. (2017)** Minimally Detectable Change and Minimal Clinically Important Difference of Speech Intelligibility for Individuals with ALS. American Speech Language Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, California, United States.


Selected Publications


Diepstra, H., Trehub, S.E., Eriks-Brophy, A., & Van Lieshout, P. Imitation of Non-Speech Oral Gestures by 8-Month-Old Infants. Language and Speech. 2017; 60(1); 154-166.


Yunusova, Y. & Bandini A. AGE-WELL Catalyst Program Markerless Facial Tracking in Speech Rehabilitation. $20,000

Pascal van Lieshout, (Co-Applicant)

Pl: Blake Johnson, co-applicants: Douglas Cheyne, Pascal van Lieshout Australian Research Council – Discovery Projects Speech production in the developing brain (AUD). $338,000

Yana Yunusova, (Principal Investigator)

Yunusova, Y. & Bandini A. AGE-WELL Catalyst Program Markerless Facial Tracking in Speech Rehabilitation. $20,000

Selected Research Grants

Deryk Beal, (Principal Investigator)

Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) John R. Evans Leaders Fund (JELF). **Noninvasive brain stimulation for speech and language development** $108,791

Ontario Research Fund (ORF) Provincial Matching Component for the CFI-JELF. **Noninvasive brain stimulation for speech and language development**. $108,791

Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Infrastructure Operating Fund for the CFI-JELF **Noninvasive brain stimulation for speech and language development**. $32,637

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation, Kimel Family Matching Fund **Mapping the somatotropin representation of the human larynx using transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI)**. $50,000

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Foundation, Centre for Leadership in Acquired Brain Injury **Transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) for the treatment of persistent concussion symptoms in youth**. $18,500

In the News

Faculty of Medicine News
Graduating SLP student, Amy Verschuuren featured in “Faces of U of T Medicine” Julia Soudat, Faculty of Medicine Communications

“Fight for Your Country to Do Even Better”
Trevor Young, Dean, Faculty of Medicine

Thought you might be interested...

Centre for Faculty Development

COURSE | FOSTERING NARRATIVE COMPETENCE: REFLECTIVE AND CREATIVE WRITING FOR CLINICIANS AND EDUCATORS

Fostering Narrative Competence is an 8-session course which will focus on developing the skills of close reading and reflective and creative writing through discussion of published work, sharing student writing in a guided, workshop setting, and a selection of writing and creativity exercises. The course is open to writers at all levels interested in working in a variety of genres (fiction, memoir, poetry, drama, non-fiction, etc.).

There is a $500 fee and registration is required by Dec 15, 2017. There is a maximum capacity for 15 participants.

Course Website: https://cfd.utoronto.ca/fostering

Crossword

Across
1. Sixty
2. Faculty
3. Jean walker
4. van Lieshout
5. Emeritus

Down
1. slp
2. Voice
3. Ax
4. Sac
5. Molnar
6. May
7. Tx
8. Aha

Puzzle Answer: June First!

Want to learn more about SLP Research Initiatives?

Contact us at slp.web@utoronto.ca to join our Research Colloquia e-listserve.

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