

# The USC Aphasia Lab Newsletter

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Letter from Leigh Ann 1-2

New Member Spotlight 3-4

Video Game aims to help persons with aphasia 5

Summer Recipe 5

Inside Story 4

Community Events 6

Summer Puzzles 6

## A letter from Leigh Ann Spell

Hello All!

My name is Leigh Ann Spell and I am very excited to be the new Research Clinical Coordinator at the University of South Carolina Center for the Study of Aphasia Recovery (C-STAR) in the Aphasia Lab. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you and to tell you about some of the great things that we currently have going on here at the USC Aphasia Lab.

First a little background on me. I am originally from a small town in Ohio (think cows and corn) near Cincinnati. I did my undergraduate work at Bowling Green State University and, after determining that I no longer wanted to live in the snow, I only applied to graduate programs in the South! I was fortunate to complete my Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of South Carolina. After working for several years as a speech-language pathologist in a variety of settings in the Charleston and Greenville areas, I returned to USC to complete my doctorate degree. While working on my doctorate degree, I enjoyed working at HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital where I also completed research on the cognition and communication of people with traumatic brain injury. Once I completed my Ph.D., I was a full-time professor at Columbia College for 16 years and continued to teach as an adjunct professor at USC. I am proud to say that I have helped train MANY of the speech-language pathologists in South Carolina!

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# Introducing our Newest Members:

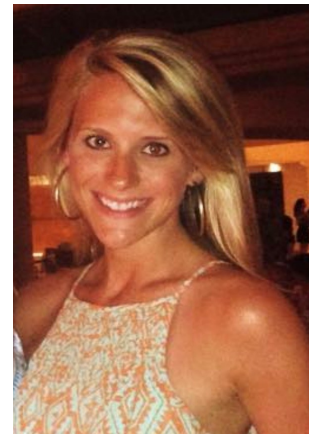
With the many new and exciting projects happening in the Aphasia Lab we are rapidly expanding and growing. It has been an exciting time of great change. We can't wait for you to meet them here as well as in person!

## Graduate Assistants



My name is Sarah Beth Bradford and I am from Greenville, SC. I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science with a minor in Communication Disorders from the University of South Carolina. I will be a first year graduate student in the speech-language pathology program this fall. My career goals include working in an inpatient acute care setting with adults who have a neurogenic disorder. In my spare time I enjoy running, crafting/painting, and cheering for the Gamecocks (I am an avid football fan)!

My name is Britnee Goldman, and I am from Aiken, SC. I attended Presbyterian College and received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Attending Presbyterian College fostered my love of learning and service, and I can't wait to see where these two interests take me in my career. I hope to continue to be a life-long learner and work with stroke and/or TBI victims. Not only am I interested in serving others, but I also enjoy being on the lake and drinking sweet tea.



My name is Megan Kingkiner and I am from New Jersey. I got my bachelor's degree from Stockton University in South Jersey where I studied Speech Pathology and Audiology. I am very interested in aphasia, dementia, and TBI and want to work with adults. In my spare time I enjoy reading, doing yoga, and going hiking/ camping!

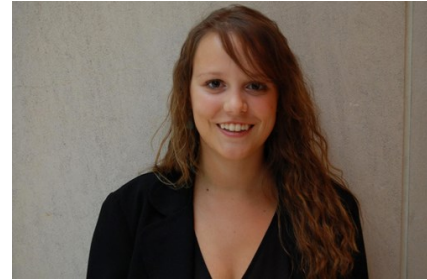
My name is Michelle Moss and I am from Barrington, RI! I completed my Bachelor of Science degree at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. I majored in Communication Sciences and Disorders and minored in Special Education (Non-Teaching). My career goal is to work as a speech-language pathologist in either an inpatient or outpatient care facility to improve speech and language skills in adults who have a neurogenic disorder. In my spare time I enjoy going on road trips with friends and family, traveling to new places, reading at coffee shops, and exploring the outdoors.



# Introducing our Newest Members (Continued):

## Research Associates

Brie Stark joins the Aphasia Lab after having recently finished her PhD in Clinical Neuroscience at the University of Cambridge (UK), studying iPad-delivered speech/language therapy and inner speech in chronic aphasia. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a concentration in Neural and Behavioral Sciences at Bryn Mawr College just outside of Philadelphia, PA. She'll be working as a Post Doctoral Fellow in the newly established Center for the Study of Aphasia Recovery. In her spare time, Brie enjoys coxing, baking, going to the gym, sampling new restaurants and traveling. She's looking forward to working with everyone in the Aphasia Lab for the next two years!



Sara Sayers is a research assistant for USC's Center for the Study of Aphasia Recovery. She received her Bachelor's degree in Speech Language Pathology and Audiology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and then went on to receive her Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology at Towson University in Maryland. Following graduation, she made the move to South Carolina where she has practiced as an SLP in the clinical setting specializing in adult neurogenic communication disorders and dysphagia for 7 years. When not at work she enjoys cooking, crafting, do-it-yourself projects and spending time with her husband, son and Border Collie.

Allison Croxton is a research assistant for USC's Center for the Study of Aphasia Recovery. She received her Bachelor's degree in English from Wofford College ('98), in Spartanburg, SC. She then earned her Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of South Carolina ('00), with a specialization in Auditory-Verbal Therapy used with individuals with hearing loss. Allison has 15 years of clinical experience working with the pediatric population, through the schools and early intervention programs, in South Carolina, Kentucky, and Indiana. She is excited about "switching gears" now to work with adults. When she is not at work she enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, photography, yoga and walking (by the river).



## A letter from Leigh Ann (continued)

For the past four years, I had my own speech-language pathology private practice working with both children and adults with communication and cognitive difficulties. I am thrilled to be in this new role at USC where I get the opportunity to work with individuals with aphasia and their families and to help determine the best way to maximize communication skills after a stroke. I am also pleased to be working with so many dedicated

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professionals and enthusiastic students in the Master's and Doctorate programs at USC. Personally, I am married to Jamie, a Columbia native, and have a daughter, Hannah, who is heading to Clemson in the fall to major in Food Science – Nutrition, and a son, Kyler, who is a rising sophomore at Chapin High School where he plays the bass drum in their state championship marching band.

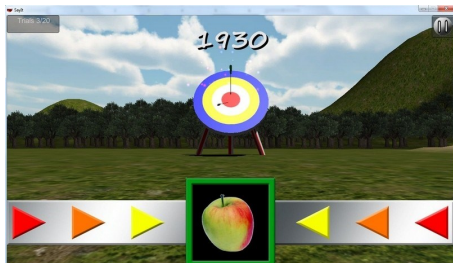
Enough about me. Let me share a little bit about some of the exciting things that we currently have going on at the Aphasia Lab. We have two ongoing treatment studies that are looking at new therapy techniques to improve communication skills in people with aphasia. One

study uses transcranial brain stimulation while the other uses a unique technique called speech entrainment (see Dr. Fridriksson describe this technique online: <http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/TEDxColumbiaSC-Dr-Julius-Fridri>). A brand new study that we will be starting in August will be examining if certain factors can determine who recovers best from aphasia as well as which treatment approaches work best with which individuals. This is an exciting treatment study as it involves collaboration with researchers from USC, the Medical University of South Carolina, Johns Hopkins University and the University of California – Irvine. We have many new faces in the Aphasia Lab (including mine!) to help get this study up and running.

Of course, we couldn't do any of this important work without the participation of people with aphasia and their families who willingly participate in one or often many of our research studies. If you or someone you know has aphasia and would be interested in participating in any of these studies, don't hesitate to give me a call or email me so that I can share more information with you (see my contact information to the left). I look forward to meeting many of you here at the Aphasia Lab in the near future!

# Video game aims to help persons with aphasia

Researchers in the Neurolinguistics lab of Dirk den Ouden, here at the University of South Carolina, are using a video game to improve the quality of life for individuals with aphasia. The computer program includes several different interactive games that have the patient say words on their own time and scores the



patient's performance based on how accurately they pronounce the words. The better an individual pronounces words, the better they score. They also receive awards for pronouncing words better, such as an arrow hitting a bull's-eye.

Feedback is given immediately by the computer, rather than at the end of the game. "This was the hardest challenge in building the program," Den

Ouden said. "The game compares the speaker's utterance to a library of words that it knows. It then finds the closest match and immediately provides a rating that reflects how close the utterance is to the target word."

The game is still in progress, so there is not yet a firm date for when it will be available for public and clinical use. However once it is ready, it will be available on smartphones and tablets. "It is very exciting to be working on this project because it is so multifaceted," he said. "It is creative, as the game environment needs to be attractive to players."

Asberry, D. (2016, July 25). Aphasia patients to benefit from game being developed at USC. *The Post and Courier*. Retrieved from <http://www.postandcourier.com/20160725/160729780/aphasia-patients-to-benefit-from-game-being-developed-at-usc>

## Summer Recipe

### Ingredients:

- 5 plum tomatoes, diced small
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons good extra-virgin olive oil, plus 1 tablespoon for serving
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, sliced into ribbons
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 baguette, sliced into 1/2 inch rounds (about 14 slices)

### Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Add the tomatoes, garlic, 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, red pepper flakes, basil, and balsamic vinegar to a bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Let sit at room temperature while you toast the bread.

Slice bread and add to a baking sheet in a single layer. Toast in the oven until golden brown about 5 minutes. Top the bread with tomatoes and drizzle with remaining extra-virgin olive oil right before serving.



<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/patrick-and-gina-neely/tomato-bruschetta-recipe.mobile.html>

# Community Events

**What:** BUTTS AND BLUEGRASS BBQ FESTIVAL

Attend the 5th annual Butts and Bluegrass BBQ Festival during Labor Day weekend where you can sample BBQ.

**When:** September 3, 2016 (10:00 AM—2:00 PM), adult tickets are \$10.00 and children's tickets are \$6.00 to sample BBQ.

**Where:** 256 Community Park Drive Clover, SC; Clover Community Park

## INDIE CRAFT PARADE

Adapted from [www.cloversc.org/pView.aspx?id=16363&catid=292](http://www.cloversc.org/pView.aspx?id=16363&catid=292)

**What:** THE MAKERS COLLECTIVE—INDIE CRAFT PARADE

The Indie Craft Parade is a marketplace that showcases the work of different artists in the South.

**When:** Opening VIP Gala is September 16, 2016 (6:00-9:00 PM), tickets (\$35.00) go on sale in August; public shopping hours are September 17, 2016 (9:00 AM-6:00 PM) and September 18, 2016 (11:00 AM-5:00 PM) and tickets are \$2.00

**Where:** 101 W. Broad Street Greenville, SC; Huguenot Mill; next to the Peace Center

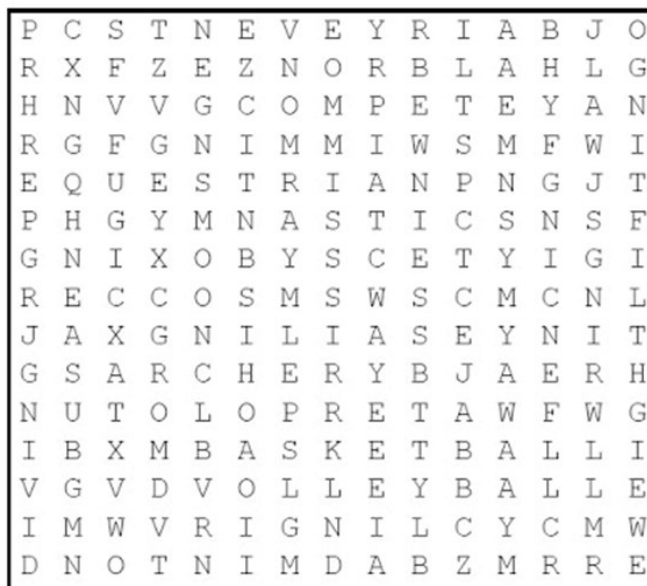
Adapted from [www.makerscollective.org/indiecraftparade](http://www.makerscollective.org/indiecraftparade)



## Summer Puzzle

### Olympic Games Word Search

ARCHERY  
BADMINTON  
BASKETBALL  
BOXING  
BRONZE  
COMPETE  
CYCLING  
DIVING  
EQUESTRIAN  
EVENTS  
FENCING  
GYMNASTICS  
OLYMPICS  
RINGS  
SAILING  
SOCCER  
SWIMMING  
USA  
VOLLEYBALL  
WATERPOLO  
WEIGHTLIFTING



Provided By Chicken Scratch NY