

The UofSC Aphasia Lab Newsletter

Research and Community News for People with Aphasia, Their Families and the
Rehabilitation Professionals Who Work with Them

Night of Aphasia Arts

WRITTEN BY JAMES JETT

How many people like to Sing, Do Painting, Write Poetry, Drama, or other? On November 2, the National Aphasia Association had the Night of the Aphasia Art 2022. It was a great event including listening, laughing, and having a great time.



Night of Aphasia Arts by the Numbers

- 507 people registered to attend
- 305 attended the event + numerous other people attended watch parties during and after the event
- 23 recorded performances (dance, music, theater, and poetry readings)
- 174 pieces of visual art and photography
- 21 poems in the poetry booklet

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The USC Aphasia Group, Reading, Drama Club and now (Almost funny famous actors) James Jett had a Poetry:

Aphasia Depression

*A cloud around in the dust
Playing but no one can hear
Hearing that people can't say
Among into the brain to see
Strong wind blow into the trees
In the deep jibbers thinking why
Am little drop to understand me*

*Deep in the thought of the cloud
Erase in a space in the brain.
People think happy and good
Realized that it is sometimes not
Error is a bit of images only you
Slow down to your house and
Speed limit on your magic dust
Images of the blank stair
Only one problem that issue
No more than few minutes away*

by James Jett

<https://gardenofedin.wordpress.com/>



"Sunset" by Katherine Crisp, via National Aphasia Association

If you haven't seen the poems, Check this out!

<https://www.aphasia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Poetry-Night-of-Aphasia-Arts.pdf>

Also check this out for the music!

<https://www.aphasia.org/stories/night-of-aphasia-arts-2022/>

Next time, the Night of the Aphasia Art 2023 is in March 2023. Let's get together and have a dinner/party to watch the celebration Night of the Arts. Who knows, the Drama Club or others at the USC Aphasia Lab may have what it takes!

Tips for Communicating Over the Holidays

WRITTEN BY MARTHA HEATH

It's the holidays! It's the time of year when our list just keeps getting longer. We cross one thing off and add three more! For the person living or working with people with aphasia, it means adding one more thing to that long list... patience! The person with aphasia can't "hurry up" just because we are super busy. Somehow, we must find the time to wait patiently for answers and the time to really listen.

I found the following acrostic on the National Aphasia website and think it is a very succinct way to remind us all of good communication strategies. The comments in parentheses are my own.



- A:** Ask simple questions (limit choices to two or three)
- P:** Provide multiple communication options (have pen and paper handy for writing or drawing)
- H:** Help communicate, if asked (resist the urge to jump in and take over conversations)
- A:** Acknowledge frustrations (validating feelings is always good)
- S:** Speak slowly and clearly (make eye contact and never "talk down" to the person)
- I:** If you don't understand, say so (This saves a lot of misunderstanding later.)
- A:** Allow extra time (Give the person with aphasia the time they need to respond. Silence doesn't have to be awkward.)

A few other suggestions for navigating the holiday get-togethers. Large gatherings filled with excited children, barking dogs, football games, and everyone talking at once are great, but they can be difficult for people with aphasia. Providing a quiet space where two or three people can sit and enjoy a conversation would be very helpful! Previewing menus at home before heading to a restaurant can help things go more smoothly,

Remember that we all get tired! Our loved ones with aphasia do, too! Trying to communicate can be physically, mentally, and emotionally tiring. Try to schedule times for much-needed rest.

Hope your holidays are merry and bright and filled with enough time to really listen to those around you!

Welcome New Lab Members!

WRITTEN BY KATIE BEMAN



Emily Huckaby is originally from Griffin, GA, and attended the University of Georgia, where she graduated with a B.S.Ed. in Communication Sciences and Disorders. She has always been interested in working with children, but she is really excited to expand her interests and gain some experience with adults and neurogenic disorders in the Aphasia lab. Emily also enjoys spending time with her friends and family, going to see musicals, and attending concerts.



Corrie LaBelle is from Nashua, New Hampshire and she graduated with a B.A. in Communicative Disorders and Spanish with a psychology minor from the University of Alabama. Roll tide! Although she is excited to learn what all the field has to offer, Corrie is especially interested in neurogenic communicative disorders. In her free time, she loves to spend time outdoors and hang out with friends and family.

Welcome New Lab Members!

WRITTEN BY KATIE BEMAN



Anna Lewis is from Warsaw, Virginia and earned her B.S. in Education from the University of Virginia with a major in Speech Communication Disorders and a minor in Psychology. Anna hopes to work with children in the future, and is excited to be a part of the Aphasia Lab. She is excited to be in Columbia and explore a new city. Outside of her studies, she enjoys going to farmer's markets, walking her dog, and spending time with friends and family.



Gianna Venafra is from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and graduated from West Chester University of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders and a minor in Linguistics. Gianna is most interested in working in a medical setting with children or adults who have neurogenic disorders. Gianna is grateful for the opportunity to work in the Aphasia lab and is looking forward to gaining more experience. She is excited to live in a new city and cannot wait to explore all Columbia has to offer!



Kiera Rendon is from Sarasota Florida and earned her B.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders and a minor in Child Development from Florida State University. She is looking forward to all of the opportunities she has to work with people with aphasia in the lab and the aphasia groups. Kiera hopes to work in private practice or a medical setting with older populations with neurogenic diseases. Outside of being in the lab, she likes to be outside, listen and play music, and do some gardening and taking care of her plants.

Welcome to the Lab: Cissy Farrar!

WRITTEN BY KRISTI SNOW

We are so excited to welcome Cissy Farrar, an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist to the Aphasia Lab. To learn more about Cissy and her past experiences, please read her interview below.



Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I was born at Fort Jackson, grew up in Columbia, and have lived in the area most of my life. I am the third of 4 daughters, with a closeness among us and extended family. I graduated from Columbia College with a BA in Speech Language Pathology in 2001 and a MA in Communication Disorders from the University of South Carolina in 2005.

What did you do before coming to UofSC?

Before accepting a position as a research associate with the USC Aphasia Lab, I was working as a speech/language pathologist in a skilled nursing facility, focusing on rehabilitation of adults affected by stroke and other neurological conditions. The time in this position was one of the biggest blessings in my life. While building my skills as a therapist, I quickly began to experience more than just therapist/client relationship. The experience became a development of connections with people who were experiencing some of the biggest challenges in their lives, especially during the last few years of Covid outbreak. The working experience very soon developed into being a part of not only helping patients enhance communication strengths, but to continue to live life the best way possible.

What brought you to UofSC?

I heard about the opening as a research associate at the Aphasia Lab through a very dear friend, who happens to also be a Speech/Language Pathologist! I was familiar with the program and was thrilled to hear of the opening! I have been extremely grateful for this opportunity, and love being a part of something new for me in the realm of speech/language therapy: research!

What are some of your research interests?

My interest in research, as I continue as a research associate, has naturally evolved (or maybe continued) to be enhancing quality of life for those with communication deficits. Most recently, my interest is becoming more directional toward cognitive aspect of communication. I look forward to continued development and participation of research protocol in this area, as well as continuing in the progression of assessments and therapy with those with aphasia. What a blessing!

What are you most excited about when working with the Aphasia Lab?

While being new to the world of research, it was not long before I realized how research has been the catalyst for development of many effective treatment protocols! Also, the team effort and positive work environment within the research department makes it the most exciting and rewarding place to be! The importance of developing and promoting resources combined with improving quality of life for those with aphasia is so apparent among all the lab members. As the participants work and progress, it provides a most rewarding experience for them, as well as colleagues and self!

What are some of your hobbies?

Some of my hobbies/interests include nature walks at any location, reading, listening to Eagles music, devotions, and spending time with my family – especially my 2 grown sons!

Lunch Bunch Goes to the State Fair!

WRITTEN BY LEIGH ANN SPELL

On October 17th our USC Aphasia Lab Lunch Bunch group met at the South Carolina State Fair. We couldn't have asked for better weather to meet up with friends and have lunch. Popular lunch items included corn dogs, Fiske French fries, gyros, turkey legs, spaghetti, steak sundaes, elephant ears, funnel cakes and ice cream.



Some attendees stayed after lunch and visited different attractions like the petting zoo, the fine arts competition, and the agricultural exhibits. It was a wonderful afternoon to get together with good friends for great food and fun entertainment!

The UofSC Aphasia Lab

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Arnold School of Public Health

Columbia, SC 29208

