

Wavelength

DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH AND HEARING SCIENCES

VOL. XI, ISSUE I, SUMMER 2003



Opening Doors to Communication at the Muckleshoot Program

Focus on Alumni



By Ella Inglebret

Marty Laronal (M.A., 2001) can vouch for the great demand existing for graduates in the field of speech-language pathology. Marty was actively recruited for professional positions long before she walked down the aisle with diploma in hand. Before she was out the door of WSU, Marty had accepted a position as speech-language pathologist for the Muckleshoot Tribal Birth-to-Three Program in Auburn, WA. Shortly after arriving at her new position, Marty sent me an e-mail message indicating "I LOVE my job. I LOVE the community. I LOVE the kids. I'm so glad to be back. This is where I belong." Wow! I'd say that communicates satisfaction with career choice.

Marty, an enrolled member of Haida/Tsimshian Tribes, came to WSU from the Tacoma area in 1999, as a "well-seasoned" adult returning to school. She brought with her extensive experience in American Indian educational administration/planning and tribal newspaper publishing, which she considered to be extremely rewarding, but had further aspirations to "work with individuals, especially Native American children, and play a strong role in removing basic obstacles that are faced in developing and fulfilling their young lives." Marty saw the field of speech-language pathology as a means to accomplish her goal.

What does Marty say about her career choice now? She still loves her work. She is even more firmly convinced that she can play a critical role in fostering children's development as a speech-

language pathologist. She states that "speech and language are such basic functions for a person's development, that I think for a child to have success in every area, it begins in speech and language." Marty finds that "being part of opening the two-way door of communication for a child and family" is extremely rewarding.

The Muckleshoot Tribal Birth-to-Three Program is operated by the Muckleshoot Tribe but is open to both Native and non-Native children. Some of the children are typically developing and others have identified disabilities. Marty provides speech and language intervention through direct contact in an inclusive group setting, as well as through interdisciplinary consultation and collaboration. Her work also involves home-based intervention. Marty indicates that one of her favorite parts of her position is the team approach. "Learning about the whole development of the child from a physical therapy viewpoint, an occupational therapy viewpoint, the lead teacher viewpoint, and from parents" is highly stimulating.

Having been out in the profession for just a year and a half, Marty's position has already taken her full circle. She is now serving as a mentor for current students enrolled in the WSU Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. One student recently returned from observation and interaction with Marty assured that she had made the right career choice. Expressing pride in the education that she received at WSU, Marty looks forward to steering other prospective Native American students toward education in the field of speech-language pathology at Washington State University.



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Wavelength is published annually by Washington State University, PO Box 645910, Pullman, Washington 99164-5910, for the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, Washington State University, PO Box 642420, Pullman, Washington 99164-2420. Volume 11. Issue No. 1.



True Stories from SLP Alumni

Follow Your Heart: Twists and Turns Along One SLP's Career Path

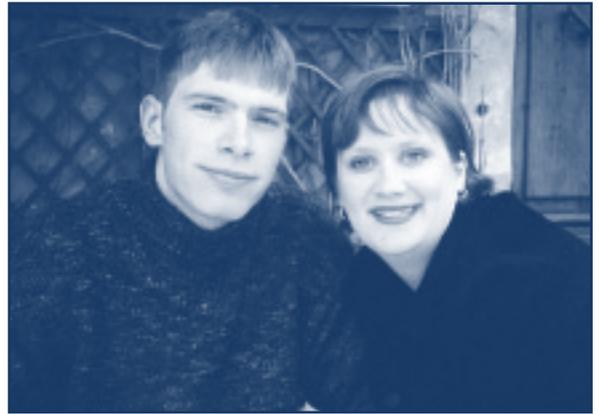
By Rachel Tapper Zijlstra

When I was asked to contribute to *Wavelength*, I could not have been more flattered. I love my chosen career and I am proud to share my experiences. My story begins with the naiveté of a recently graduated speech-language pathologist (SLP) and progresses with twists and turns culminating in my current position as Director of Clinical Services.

The experience of job hunting after graduate school was about as close to feeling like an *all-star*, *free-agent* as I will probably ever get. In the late 90s, pre-Medicare reform, new graduates were heavily recruited with big sign-on bonuses, exorbitant salaries and other perks. As one of those new graduates, I was in prime position to be enticed by a national rehabilitation agency. It felt great to be in such demand. I remember negotiating for my salary just hours before my graduation ceremony. As I walked up to receive my recognition and entrance into the professional world of speech-language pathology, I thought, "I have got a job! And what a job it is!" That of course, was just the beginning of the experiences I would later have.

In June 1996, I entered the workforce, a bright-eyed, eager-to-learn, clinical fellow. My placement involved diagnosing and treating patients in sub-acute, skilled nursing facilities, and long-term care facilities in central Washington. The work was challenging and fast-paced. I will never forget some of my first patients. Some of them changed my life as much as I helped to change their lives. Communication is the center of our existence. When our communication abilities are compromised through injury or disease, it changes the core of our being. As SLPs, we have the knowledge and expertise to assist those individuals with the communication challenges posed by injury or disease.

One of my first patients was a retired MD from the community. He had experienced a devastating cerebral vascular accident (CVA) that affected all aspects of his life. With a team of multidisciplinary rehabilitation professionals, we helped this gentleman regain much of his previous function. I will always remember his wife saying, "Thank you for returning my husband to me." She explained that after the stroke, she felt that her role as spouse had been replaced by that of caregiver. It was during this time



Andrew and Rachel Tapper Zijlstra

that I realized the profound gift we, as professionals, have to share.

I had many wonderful experiences during my time working for the rehabilitation agency, but I could not adjust to my sense that I was working for a money-machine. Although proper services were provided, the company took advantage of the mismanagement of the Medicare system and constantly focused on maximizing the bottom line. I was left feeling the need to try something new.

In May 1998, I married fellow cougar, Andrew Zijlstra (B.S. '96, Ph.D. '98). He was about to finish his Ph.D. in genetics and cell biology and was offered a postdoctoral position at the National Institute for Cancer Research in Genova, Italy. Until that time, I had never even considered leaving Washington State, let alone the country! We moved to Italy in 1998. With all the excitement of getting married and planning the logistics of the move, I had not thought much about what I would do in Italy.

As it turned out, the field of speech-language pathology is very different in Italy. There is little demand for medical SLPs and the few SLPs in practice in Italy work mostly in pediatrics. At first, I had thought that I would learn Italian and then apply for one of these positions. How naive I was! First of all, I had significantly overestimated my ability to learn a new language (it is hard!), and secondly, SLPs must have a command of the language that is better than the average speaker. This proved to be insurmountable. Fortunately, I soon found a nice niche for myself teaching English as a second language (ESL). It turned out that my knowledge and experience working as a teaching assistant for the WSU Speech and Hearing Sciences' accent reduction course (SHS 118) really paid off. There was a huge demand for accent reduction services, particularly the American accent

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True Stories, from page 2

as opposed to the British accent, which is generally taught throughout Europe.

The two years we spent in Italy seemed to fly by. Exposure to the Italian perspective on life including the food, work and the value of social interaction taught me a tremendous amount about cultural and personal priorities. Needless to say, this experience has had significant influence on many choices I have made since.

The most significant impact my experience had on me was on the type of job I would take upon our return to the United States. We moved to San Diego, California in September 2000. I knew I did not want to work for another big company as I had in central Washington. I wanted to find a position with a company whose goal was to help enrich people's lives through the special work that we were trained to do. I found many open positions, but only one that really "walked the talk." Unfortunately, this position came with a salary nearly \$20,000 less than other positions in companies that appeared more focused on the economic bottom-line. I am pleased that I followed my heart, and chose a position at Pro-Speech where I am free to explore many avenues of speech-language pathology.

Today, I am Director of Clinical Services with Pro-Speech in San Diego, Calif. and I love it. I am very proud of the work we do. I have eight full time SLP colleagues and we work very hard to serve the community. Ironically, I have even had the privilege of supervising a fellow alumna during her final graduate internship; Gwen (Schmitt) Torgerson (WSU B.A. '00,

Idaho St. Univ-MA '02). I proudly hired Gwen upon the completion of her internship.

From summer camps for users of augmentative and alternative communication (Camp TAALCC) to our "BabySign" program in which we teach parents and babies with profound hearing loss basic signs to facilitate early communication, to our phonological awareness-based reading programs (Reading STARS), Pro-Speech keeps me very busy. I enjoy the variety of this diverse, service-oriented environment, which can be hectic, but is always rewarding.

Life is about choices. Just over 10 years ago, I took my first course in communication disorders and I have not looked back. I treasure the education I received in Speech and Hearing Sciences at WSU. Our field allows us the opportunity to work in many settings with a variety of clients. Of course, with all of this flexibility and diversity of caseload, we are regularly facing new challenges; hence, the need for ongoing continuing education—and the reason that I keep bumping into my previous professors and fellow alumni at ASHA conferences as we brush up on the latest and greatest our field has to offer. My choice to enter the field of speech-language pathology has served me well. I look forward to see what the future will bring.

Speaking of CEUs... interested in obtaining some this summer? Come on down to San Diego and spend a week on the beach learning about AAC and helping campers to learn the power of communication. To find out more, check out our website at www.pro-speech.com.

News of our friends

We hear that...

Brian Shute (MA '86) (Communicative Medical) recently earned his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership/Leadership Studies from Gonzaga. **Christine Jones** (M.A. '95) was recently accepted into the same program. Congratulations to both alumni.

Also reflecting favorably on our unit and the institution, Native American alumna **Gertrude Marcellay** (B.A. '88) was recently appointed by Governor Locke to the Board of Trustees for Centralia College, and another Native American alumna, **Lenora Shaw** (M.A. '01), was appointed to the Washington State Governor's Council on Disabilities. Native American alumna **Lara Reyes** (B.A. '98) was elected co-chair of the Native American Caucus of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Katrina "Katja" Sias and **Alan Sias** are employed by the Sidney Health Center in Sidney, Montana. Katja's work covers extended care, outpatient, acute, and school-based speech-language services. Alan provides audiological services including educational contracts, VA contracts, universal neonatal hearing screenings, and hearing aid dispensing.

Amy (Moore) White (M.A. '01) is an SLP for Washougal School District.

Lisa Woolcock (B.A. '01) is working as a Speech Therapy Assistant in the Yakima Hearing and Speech Center.

In the Forefront

Speech and Hearing Sciences faculty continue to positively impact the students they educate, the professions they represent, and the communities they serve.

Faculty published several articles in refereed journals. **Jayanti Ray** published one article on orofacial myofunctional therapy in the *International Journal of Orofacial Myology* and a second article on treatment of phonological disorders in a multilingual child in the *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. **Gail Chermak** co-authored an article contrasting the behavioral characteristics of auditory processing disorder and ADHD-predominantly inattentive subtype in the *Journal of the American Academy of Audiology*. She also published two invited articles in professional journals and edited an issue of *Seminars in Hearing* focused on auditory processing disorder. Chermak was elected a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in 2002.

Faculty presented a number of peer-reviewed papers at international and national conferences and institutes. A large contingent of Speech and Hearing Sciences faculty presented refereed papers at the annual convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) in Atlanta, Ga. The Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Research Group (**Jeanne Johnson, Ella Inglebret, Jayanti Ray and Carla Jones**) presented the results of a national survey of speech-language pathologists regarding factors related to long-term use and abandonment of AAC systems in a multicultural context. (This research was funded in part through a grant from the College of Liberal Arts.) Inglebret also led a session that included a panel of Native American and non-Native American presenters who shared their perspectives on factors affecting culturally focused research. This featured session was sponsored by the ASHA Convention Program Committee. **Jon Hasbrouck** reported the design and outcomes of an intensive stuttering treatment program. **Teresa Paslawski** co-authored a presentation on paraneoplastic cerebellar degeneration. **Linda Vogel, Leslie Power, Jones, Chermak, Jeff Nye and Sandy Bassett** described the use of the clinical portfolio to document clinical faculty's accomplishments in clinical teaching, practice, scholarship and service for university performance reviews, including promotion through WSU's new clinical faculty track. Also at ASHA, Ray presented two co-authored papers on perseveration with right hemisphere damage and with dementia and one co-authored paper on emergent metalinguistic awareness in toddlers. Ray and alumna **Trinity Pintler** and graduate student **Sarah Deckman** presented a poster on the enhancement of pragmatic performance through metacognition in clients with Prader-Willi Syndrome.

Ray also presented two refereed papers on metacognitive abilities in children with language delays and hearing impairment at the IX International Congress for Study of Child Language/Symposium on Research in Child Language Disorders, held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Faculty also presented invited papers at a number of state and international conferences and institutes. Hasbrouck presented a paper on fluency management in school-age children at the annual convention of the Wyoming Speech-Language-Hearing Association. He also delivered a paper on collaborative assessment and management of auditory processing disorder at the annual convention of the Washington Speech-Language-Hearing Association (WSHA). For the 14th year, Johnson taught a one week intensive course at the Summer Institute for teachers of children with severe disabilities in both Ellensburg and Vancouver, Wash. This institute is sponsored by the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Ray presented three invited papers at the 30th annual convention of the International Association of Orofacial Myology.

Charles Madison presented the keynote address at the International Symposium on Linguistics and Speech and Hearing Sciences at the National University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Gail Chermak presented three invited workshops on auditory processing disorder at the WSHA convention, the University of Puerto Rico, and at the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, in Victoria, British Columbia.

Reflecting the faculty's collective philosophy that application anchors theory, faculty have developed interactive multimedia lab components to weave theory and clinical applications into their courses. Faculty have incorporated emerging instructional technologies in their courses (e.g., web pages, class listservs, chat rooms, Internet assignments, computer-based phonetics transcription, language sampling, simulations, virtual instrumentation, and multimedia CD-ROM), encouraging more interactive and generative learning and establishing the strong linkage between science and clinical practice. Illustrating a number of these efforts is Jayanti Ray's virtual anatomy lab, which uses interactive multimedia software and online resources.

Speech and Hearing Sciences faculty are professional and community leaders. Bassett, Nye and Madison are members of the Spokane Regional Maxillo-Facial Review Board. Madison also serves on the Idaho Maxillo-Facial Review Board. Madison travels around the country as an ASHA program accreditation site visitor and he also served as a research consultant at the Transitional Learning Center in Galveston, Tex. on a project

funded by Pfizer pharmaceuticals on the effect of medications on patients with traumatic brain injury. Bassett also represents Spokane County on the University of Washington's Pediatric Feeding Team and she is a consultant to several pediatric programs, including the programs at Sacred Heart Medical Center and Deaconess Medical Center in Spokane. Nye also participates in a number of community health and wellness screenings in the Spokane region. In addition to community service, he serves on several professional committees, including the ASHA Leadership Conference Planning Committee and the ASHA Convention Program Committee for Clinical Practices in Audiology. At the state level, he is an executive board member of the WSHA and he served as audiology program chair for the 2002 WSHA annual convention. Hasbrouck received the Spokane St. Luke's Rehabilitation Institute's "Rave Review Award" in recognition of his activities to increase outpatient access to speech-language pathology services. Inglebret serves as a consultant to area speech-language pathologists on Native American and multicultural issues. Johnson is a consultant for several school districts across the region in the areas of augmentative communication and autism. Reflecting her sense of professional and civic responsibility, **Sally Johnston** presents on various topics to local support groups in the Pullman-Moscow area. Jones is a member of the Southeastern Washington Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Diagnostic Team and the Latah County Multidisciplinary Infant Screening Team. Power participated in the Quality of Life for Our Elders Conference sponsored by WSU Spokane. Last summer, **Melissa Ratsch** offered a popular one-week American Sign Language (ASL) camp to high school students through the WSU Cougar Quest program. Ray serves the Pullman-Moscow community as a consultant for the Pullman Memorial Hospital and Summit Therapy. Vogel is a consultant to rural nursing homes, St. Luke's Rehabilitation Institute, and to the Seattle-based Gentiva Corporation Rehabilitation Without Walls.

Notes from NSSLHA

This past April, the Washington State University and Eastern Washington University National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) chapters sponsored their annual NSSLHA Spring Conference in Spokane. The conference was held in the new Health Sciences Building on the WSU Spokane Riverpoint campus. The conference opened with **Leslie Power** discussing speech-language pathology in the public schools. Following her presentation, students were given a tour of the UPCD clinic facilities and labs. **Les Loiseau** discussed private practice in audiology. **Kim Kriger** and **Greg Dempsey** described the stuttering workshop, which is held at EWU every summer. WSU graduate students **Sarah Deckman**, **Valerie Helland**, and **Krista Dehn** and EWU graduate student **Tammy Duncan** rounded out the conference with a preview for graduating seniors about what to expect in graduate school.

NSSLHA also sponsors the annual Lynn B. Larrigan Award for Clinical Excellence. This year NSSLHA and the Speech and Hearing Sciences faculty recognized senior **Lisa Barbre** for her outstanding clinical work. Lisa received a certificate of recognition, and her name was engraved on a plaque that is prominently displayed in the department's main office in Pullman. Congratulations to Lisa!

—Terra Bleicher, 2003 NSSLHA President

In the Spotlight

- Speech and Hearing Sciences students were recognized for outstanding scholarship, leadership, and service.
- Amy Williams** was named the College of Liberal Arts Outstanding Senior in Speech and Hearing Sciences.
- Amy was also awarded a Sidney Hacker Colonial Dames Scholarship earlier in the year. Junior **Tracy Behler** was awarded the Maynard Lee Daggy Scholarship. Senior **Lisa Barbre** was honored with the Lynn Larrigan Clinical Excellence Award. Junior **Bernadette Aspuria** and freshman **Andrea Prisbrey** were awarded College of Liberal Arts Dean's Excellence Scholarships.
- Graduate students were also recognized. **Courtney Christensen** received the Outstanding Speech and Hearing Sciences Graduate Student Commencement Award. **April Fagerson** received a College of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Scholar Award. **Sarah Deckman**, **Shannon Lee**, **Sharon Davis**, and **Kaelyn Walker** were awarded WSU Spokane New Student Tuition Waivers. **Angie Gates** was awarded a Scottish Rite Scholarship in childhood language disorders.
- Alumna **Keri Jones** (M.A. '00) spoke at the WSU Celebrations of Excellence scholars' reception for high-ability high school students in Spokane. Alumna **Gertrude Marcellay** (B.A. '88) was recently appointed by Governor Locke to the Board of Trustees for Centralia College. Alumna **Lenora Shaw** (M.A. '01) was appointed to the Washington State Governor's Council on Disabilities. Alumna **Lara Reyes** (B.A. '98) was elected co-chair of the Native American Caucus of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Q&A Doctor's Corner



Teresa Paslawski

Send Us Your Questions!

If you have other questions or topics you would like to discuss, send them to the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at spehrsci@wsu.edu, or mail them to the department at PO Box 642420, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99164-2420.

Dear Dr. Paslawski,

I have recently accepted a position in a medical center in a smaller community where a major portion of my caseload will be adult dysphagic patients. I am concerned because we are not able to do modified barium swallow (MBS) studies at the center. I have been told that it is possible to arrange for MBS studies to be done at an outside facility, but it is not easy to arrange and sometimes the request is denied. Since MBS studies are considered the gold standard, I do not know how I can treat patients with dysphagia without having easy access to this procedure. What are your thoughts on this situation?

First, I would point out that you have access to the procedure, it is just not easy access. This means that you will have to build a strong case each time you request an MBS. In this age of increasing awareness of health care costs, we should always consider carefully the actual need for further assessment when we make such a recommendation. The MBS has the advantages of allowing us to visualize the anatomy during swallowing and to define the abnormalities in anatomy and physiology that may be contributing to the patient's symptoms. As well, it assists us in identifying management and treatment strategies that may enable the patient to take in oral nutrition safely and efficiently. However, we must remember that an MBS study is not always appropriate. For example, an MBS study would not be recommended if the results of the study would not change your management of the patient and if there is no value added to the patient's care in defining the physiology of the dysphagia.

In the event that, despite your best efforts in a particular case, you are still denied access to the MBS, you need to tailor your report and your recommendations accordingly. Again, as should always be the case, you must be clear regarding the limitations of the assessment you have been able to conduct and how your conclusions are drawn.

I would also suggest that you consider the possibility of obtaining the equipment and training for fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES) at your new facility. While FEES has its own limitations, the equipment and procedure are less expensive

than MBS and may be a reasonable addition to your medical center.

As clinicians, we sometimes forget how much information is to be gained from doing a solid patient/family interview, a good history, and a strong bedside evaluation. One of the strengths of our professional education is that we recognize the relationship between speech and swallowing, and the role that language and cognition play in the management and treatment of patients with dysphagia. Honing our interviewing and bedside skills, and keeping current in our professional reading helps us build a case for our recommendations and should alter the likelihood of being denied a request when recommending an MBS.

I also think the team takes on a new level of importance in settings like the one you describe—understanding the reasoning behind each other's recommendations improves compliance and strengthens the team, which in turn improves patient care. I have worked in settings where resources were quite limited, and found the experience extremely rewarding in terms of how much we learned from each other and how well the team worked together to provide good patient care. A good reference to keep in your file for education purposes is an article by Bonnie Martin-Harris and colleagues (2000) that discusses the value of the MBS in the management of dysphagia.

Finally, keeping data about your dysphagic patients is important. A simple spreadsheet to track what assessment tools were used and the outcomes, along with descriptive information about the diagnoses, will help you attend better to individual patients, as well as enable you to gain some perspective on best practices across your patient caseload. Moreover, this practice may prove a valuable tool in defending your recommendations.

It is always a challenge when we work in a setting where we feel our hands are tied in terms of providing what we feel is the best care for our patients. I think this can be seen as an opportunity, however, to learn new skills and improve existing ones.

References: Martin-Harris, Bonnie, Logemann, Jeri A., McMahon, Steven, Schleicher, Melanie, and Sandidge, John (2000) Clinical utility of the modified barium swallow. Dysphagia, 15, 136-141.

Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

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*deceased

News Flash!

For the fourth consecutive year, our nationally accredited graduate programs in speech-language pathology and audiology were ranked among the top graduate and professional programs in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Message from the Chair

As we approach the end of another busy and productive academic year, I recall the wonderful accomplishments of our faculty and students with a great sense of satisfaction. The interdisciplinary research, teaching and clinical opportunities associated with our new facilities in the Health Sciences Building (HSB) on the WSU Spokane campus have energized faculty to initiate a number of new projects and to expand partnerships with K-12 and area medical centers. Hoping to expand participation in our programs, we formed a 15-member advisory council of community professionals. This impressive group will help us strengthen our programs and extend our impact in meeting our goals in professional education, clinical scholarship and research, and public and professional service.

Faculty also have enjoyed successes in advancing the quality of our undergraduate program in Pullman. I am especially pleased to highlight Clinical Associate Professor Carla Jones' and Clinical Instructor Sally Johnston's \$15,000 Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Improvement Grant from the Office of the Provost. Their innovative project will further integrate technology in clinical teaching and learning, while involving undergraduate students in clinical outcomes and efficacy research.

I invite you to read more about both faculty and student achievements in *In the Spotlight* and *In the Forefront*



features of this newsletter.

This year, I must include in my message some very sad news. Last fall, we learned of the passing of alumnus Eric McLaughlin (M.A., '98). Eric is survived by his wife, Amy, and his daughter Emily. I remember the glow in Eric's eyes as he sat in my graduate classes, fascinated by the complexity and astonishing capability of the auditory system. After earning his degree in audiology in 1998, Eric accepted a position at the Columbia Basin Hearing Center in Kennewick, Wash. Eric continued providing the highest quality of care to his patients until his illness forced him to resign his position. In honor of Eric's brief but devoted time in the profession, his former employer, Columbia Basin Hearing Center, has generously established an annual

scholarship in Eric's name. The Eric McLaughlin Aspiring Audiologist Scholarship will be awarded each fall to a first year graduate audiology student whose record reflects excellence and predicts a successful career. On behalf of the Speech and Hearing Sciences faculty, I extend our appreciation to Columbia Basin Hearing Center for this wonderful gesture.

In closing, I thank you, our alumni and friends, for the many ways in which you continue to demonstrate your support for our programs.

—Gail D. Chermak, Chair