Fall 2024 | Speech-Language Pathology Newsletter

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Letter FROM THE EDITORS

'27 Ashley Pitz and '27 Jenna Schuda

Thank you for taking the time to read the annual Speech-Language Pathology Department Newsletter! We are stoked for everyone to read about the accomplishments of our program, students, and faculty members.

This edition will highlight the events organized by our chapter of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA), the research done and presented by our department at conferences, the accomplishments of our students and faculty, new technology used in research and therapy and a scholarship in the name of a beloved alumna.

We are honored to be a part of Misericordia University's Speech-Language Pathology Department where the four Misericordia pillars of **Mercy, Service, Justice, and Hospitality** are deeply embedded in the growth of the program and its commitment to give back. We hope this edition conveys our pride in this school and department, and that you will share in that pride. Thank you for your continued support and interest in our endeavors.



Back and Better Than Ever: DR. KATHLEEN SCALER SCOTT

By: Ava Venuto '27

Dr. Kathleen Scaler Scott is a board-certified fluency specialist (BCS-F), ASHA Fellow, fluency, autism, and literacy specialist, researcher, and professor at Misericordia University. Dr. Scaler Scott joined our esteemed faculty in 2009 but left in the summer of 2020 to explore an opportunity at another university. We are overjoyed to welcome her back to the Back Mountain, marking her twelfth year at Misericordia. Reflecting on her time away, Dr. Scaler Scott stated that the experience helped her learn and grow, and while she has no regrets, she is thrilled to be back at Misericordia, working with our faculty and teaching students.

Dr. Scaler Scott began her journey with an undergraduate degree in speech-language pathology at Douglass College, part of Rutgers University-New Brunswick. At Rutgers, she worked with preschoolers with language delays, solidifying her passion for speech-language pathology. Dr. Scaler Scott said, "I was so happy interacting with children every day, knowing that I was making a difference in their lives by helping them to communicate." To further her education, she received her Master's degree from Emerson College in Boston.

Developing a passion for research, Dr. Scaler Scott pursued a doctoral program at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette, where she also discovered a new love: teaching. Upon graduation, she sought a position that allowed her to engage in both research and teaching, leading her to Dallas, Pennsylvania. Teaching and interacting with students at Misericordia quickly became a top priority for Dr. Scaler Scott.

Cluttering has piqued her interest since her first job in the field. She stated, "I had a young man on my caseload who wasn't stuttering, but I couldn't figure out exactly what his communication difference was. When I did a little research and learned about cluttering, I was fascinated with the disorder and wanted to understand it better." Her main research areas include cluttering, fluency disorders with concomitant disorders, atypical disfluency, and literacy. Dr. Scaler Scott has noticed a strong correlation between her clinical practice and her research, which amplifies her work and understanding of therapy.

Dr. Kathleen Scaler Scott



Throughout her career, Dr. Scaler Scott has worked with clients in the autistic population and currently hosts an UNO group at Misericordia's clinic for young adults with autism. Her biggest takeaway from working with the autistic population is her ability to better understand behaviors and social aspects of their life. From her perspective, "I have come to understand autism from many angles. Of course, there is still so much to learn. The common theme always is that we learn the most from those living with autism and the significant others in their lives."

Aside from her brilliant work, Dr. Scaler Scott is known for her bright and playful personality. Her kindness and passion for helping others are an inspiration to those around her, and she constantly pushes students to be the best clinicians possible. The Misericordia Speech-Language Pathology department is incredibly fortunate to have Dr. Scaler Scott, and we cannot wait to see the wonderful things she will do here upon her return.

The Work of MU's Autism Awareness Club

By: Emilia McGoldrick '27

Misericordia University's Autism Awareness Club is dedicated to serving the community through service and engagement. This year, the club hosted several sensory-friendly events for children with autism and their families, making a significant impact thanks to the members' commitment to their mission.

The club is led by junior speech-language pathology student **Isabella Davis**, who is passionate about the club's goals. Isabella joined the club as a freshman to gain experience interacting with autistic individuals, knowing this would benefit her future career. Now, she and her fellow officers plan and execute events for the local community.

In the fall, the club held a Halloween movie night where attendees dressed in costumes, made crafts, and socialized with other children. December saw the annual Winter Sensory Wonderland, featuring sensory bins, crafts, food, obstacle courses, and photos with Santa. During the spring semester, the club partnered with Misericordia's National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) to create a sensory-friendly event at the Speech-Language and Hearing Center. Families enjoyed one-on-one activities with volunteers from NSSLHA and the Autism Awareness Club, and attendees even met Kebbi, our department's Socially Assistive Robot.

A fan-favorite program organized by the Autism Awareness Club is the weekly swim nights at the Misericordia pool. Volunteers swim, play water games, and interact with the children, providing a wonderful opportunity for autistic children to make new friends, socialize with other families and volunteers, and, most importantly, have fun. These programs benefit everyone involved—not only do autistic individuals enjoy the activities, but parents and guardians also connect with each other, and volunteers gain valuable experience for their future careers.

In the upcoming year, the club aims to expand its community outreach and increase event participation. The members are optimistic about reaching their goals and look forward to another year of service. The Autism Awareness Club provides unique programming to increase acceptance and inclusion for autistic individuals, a cause that resonates strongly with our students and faculty.



Members of MU's Autism Awareness Club participating in an outreach event with a community member

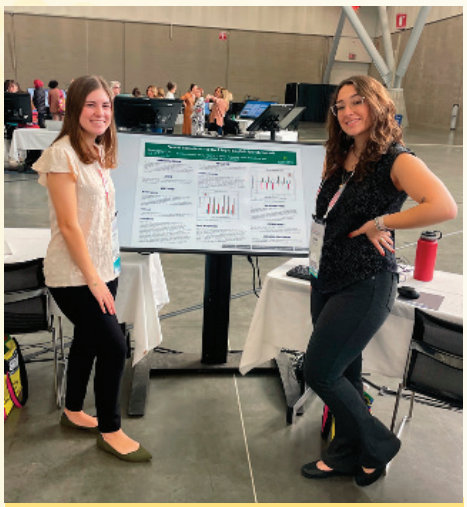
Misericordia Students Receive Meritorious Poster Award at ASHA

By: Emma Schaedler '26

At the 2023 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention, **Dr. Reethee Antony** and two of Misericordia's students, **Emma Schaedler** and **Erica Scheinberg**, were awarded a Meritorious Poster Submission for their exceptionally innovative work! Their study, entitled "Neural Signatures of the Ling-6 English Speech Sounds," used electroencephalography (EEG) to investigate the size and timing of the brain's responses to the Ling-6 speech sounds. These sounds represent the range of frequencies necessary for hearing all speech sounds and are often used to determine speech perception abilities. Previously, little was known about how the brain processes these sounds, making their work especially novel. The Neuroelectrophysiology Research Lab worked tirelessly to collect and analyze this data, discovering that the brain responds differently to each of these sounds.

This groundbreaking finding lays the foundation for future investigations into the neurophysiology of speech processing with EEG and holds promise as a clinical tool for audiology and aural rehabilitation. Now that normative data for the neural signatures of the Ling-6 sounds exists, tests could be conducted using these sounds before and after implementing hearing devices, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants. Clinicians could then assess whether brain processing improves following the application of the hearing device. Currently, EEG is primarily used as a research tool, so applying these findings in clinical settings would be particularly innovative.

The Neuroelectrophysiology Lab is honored to have received the Meritorious Poster Award for their work and is excited to see how the study's findings will be applied in the future. Our department is proud of our students' contributions to this project and grateful that their efforts were recognized on such a prestigious stage!



Emma Schaedler '26 and Erica Scheinberg '26 posing with their award-winning poster

Letter from the Chair

GLEN TELLIS, PH.D.
PROFESSOR AND DEPARTMENT CHAIR

As technology Welcome to the 15th edition of our department's newsletter! Once again, our student editors have curated an exceptional publication brimming with articles that celebrate the remarkable achievements and advancements within our program.

As we mark 21 years of excellence, it is inspiring to see our department continuously push the boundaries of innovation. Our newest cohort of first-year students, ranking in the top 10% of their high school graduating class, underscores the rigorous standards upheld by our program. In fall 2023, we launched Pennsylvania's first fully online accredited master's SLP program, tailored for students with a background in communication sciences and disorders or speech-language pathology, and offering essential online prerequisites for those transitioning from other disciplines.

Our students continue to make substantial impacts in the field, presenting groundbreaking research at state, national, and international conferences. We are happy to announce Isabella Fredo's accolade as the recipient of the Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association (PSHA) Von Drach Memorial Scholarship for 2024, recognizing her as the outstanding graduate student in Pennsylvania. Additionally, our NSSLHA Chapter earned the Chapter Honors award at the annual PSHA Convention, underscoring our commitment to excellence and community service.

Highlighting our global reach, Hannah Bilenski received an NIH/NIDCD fellowship to present at the Academy of Aphasia Conference in Reading, England, while Stephanie Fazio was awarded the ASHA Students Preparing for Academic and Research Careers (SPARC) Award, a testament to her academic prowess and potential. At the ASHA 2023 Convention, Emma Schaedler and Erica Scheinberg's research garnered acclaim with a Meritorious Poster Submission, showcasing Misericordia's leadership in innovative research.

Our faculty members have also excelled, contributing significantly through conference presentations, published papers, and influential books. Their expertise extends to serving as reviewers and editorial consultants for premier journals in our discipline. Supported by generous grants from organizations such as the Clear Spring Casualty Insurance Company, Fidelity Bank, M&T Bank, Memco Realty, PPL Electric Utilities, and Weis Markets, Inc., we continue to deliver cutting-edge services and maintain state-of-the-art clinic and research facilities.

Dr. Glen Tellis



The commitment of our Speech-Language and Hearing Center to community service remains unwavering, bolstered by invaluable partnerships with agencies like the Hazleton Area School District's Office of Special Education Early Intervention Program.

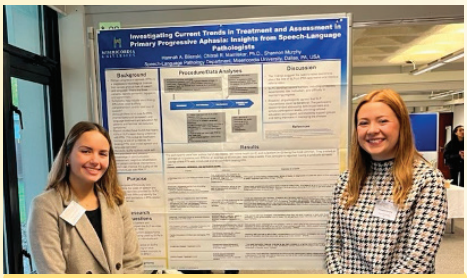
I invite you to delve into this edition of our newsletter and explore further on our department website at www.misericordia.edu/slp to discover more about our program. Thank you for your steadfast support, and here's to another year of excellence and achievement!

Glen Tellis, Ph.D.
Professor and Department Chair

Presenting at the Academy of Aphasia Conference:

BILENSKI AND MURPHY GO TO ENGLAND

By: Hannah Bilenski '24 and Shannon Murphy '24



Hannah Bilenski '24 and Shannon Murphy '24 at the AOA Conference in Reading, England

The 2023 Academy of Aphasia (AOA) Conference, a prestigious global gathering where researchers, neuroscientists, linguists, neurologists, and other scientists converge to discuss Aphasia and its impact, was held at the University of Reading in Reading, England last October.

As graduate students at Misericordia University, it was a tremendous honor for us to have our paper accepted at this conference, presenting findings from **Hannah Bilenski's** Master's Thesis. Directed by **Dr. Mamlekar**, the study aimed to explore the types of speech and language services provided by speech-language pathologists to individuals with primary progressive aphasia (PPA), identifying barriers and facilitators in service delivery.

We presented our findings to an audience of international researchers from the Netherlands, Canada, Italy, Japan, and England. It was exhilarating to engage with professionals from diverse backgrounds and receive their insights about our research. Many commented on our age, noting it was unusual for master's students to be accepted into the Academy of Aphasia. The conference featured informative presentations, including discussions on biomarkers in primary progressive aphasia and syntactic treatment of nonfluent aphasias, which we found particularly enlightening.

Hannah was also honored with the NIH/NIDCD fellowship by the AOA, supporting up to 25 first-author students and postdoctoral researchers worldwide. Through this program, she was paired with **Dr. Andrew Olson**, a neuropsychology professor at the University of Birmingham in England specializing in aphasia. They had been in contact prior to the conference and met there to discuss their research, the Ph.D. process, and future goals. They plan to maintain contact to track each other's progress.

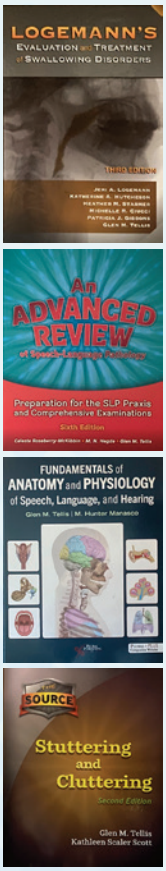
This trip marked both of our first experiences traveling abroad. We had the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the AOA conference and explore the vibrant city of London, making it one of the most significant accomplishments of our collegiate careers. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Chitrali R. Mamlekar for her unwavering support, guidance, and assistance throughout this transformative experience.

Dr. Glen Tellis Publishes New Textbooks

By: Sophia Brigidi '27

Dr. Glen Tellis, Chair of the Speech-Language Pathology program and apparent master of time management, continues to expand his already impressive career with the recent publication of four new textbooks. I'm not entirely sure when Dr. Tellis finds time to sleep, but his latest publications include the second edition of "The Source for Stuttering and Cluttering," "Logemann's Evaluation and Treatment of Swallowing Disorders," "Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology of Speech, Language, and Hearing," and "An Advanced Review of Speech-Language Pathology." Each textbook delves into one or more of the nine major categories outlined by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

During an interview, Dr. Tellis provided insights into the writing process and the content of each book. "The Source for Stuttering and Cluttering," co-authored with Dr. Scaler Scott from Misericordia University, offers comprehensive information on stuttering and cluttering, along with practical resources such as lesson plans, assessment checklists, treatment goals, and practice assignments. Dr. Tellis emphasized, "We designed the second edition to provide updated, evidence-based practices for clinicians who treat stuttering and clutter across all age groups, from preschool to adulthood."



Additionally, Dr. Tellis co-authored "Fundamentals of Anatomy and Physiology of Speech, Language, and Hearing," a textbook that meticulously breaks down essential anatomical and physiological concepts using clear bullet points and illustrations from the Anatomage Virtual Dissection Table. He highlighted the integration of modern technology in the accompanying website, which features quizzes, tests, flashcards, study guides, and images designed to promote active learning and critical thinking over rote memorization. According to Dr. Tellis, "This textbook represents 25 years of refining material to optimize student comprehension through advanced technological aids."

Dr. Tellis also contributed to the latest edition of "Logemann's Evaluation and Treatment of Swallowing Disorders," a pivotal resource for student clinicians worldwide, featuring chapters authored by multiple collaborators. He played a crucial role in developing the textbook's supplementary website.

Finally, Dr. Tellis co-edited the sixth edition of "An Advanced Review of Speech-Language Pathology," tailored to aid students preparing for the Praxis exam and other national certifications. The associated online resources include interactive study tools, tests, quizzes, and visual aids from the Anatomage Virtual Dissection Table.

All four textbooks aim to enhance the understanding and practice of Speech-Language Pathology among students, clinicians, and educators worldwide. It's a wonder Dr. Tellis hasn't written a book on time management! Congratulations to Dr. Tellis on these significant contributions to our field!

Four new textbooks authored or coauthored by Dr. Glen Tellis

Fazio's Got That SPARC!

By: Ava Laukaitis '28



Stephanie Fazio '25

Stephanie Fazio, a first-year graduate student, has achieved the prestigious ASHA Students Preparing for Academic and Research Careers (SPARC) Award for 2023, joining an elite group of only thirteen students nationwide. This award, designed to support SLP students aspiring to pursue a Ph.D. and academic career, includes a $1,000 stipend to bolster their teaching and research endeavors. Recipients also benefit from networking opportunities at the ASHA Convention and recognition on the ASHA website.

Stephanie's passion for research ignited in high school when she focused her AP Research paper on speech-language pathology. Her quest for research opportunities led her to Misericordia University, where she connected with **Dr. Reethee Antony** and joined the neuroelectrophysiology research team in her freshman year. Despite COVID-19 disruptions, Stephanie resumed lab work in her sophomore year, mastering lab technology and laying groundwork for future research.

Introduced to the SPARC Award by Dr. Antony, Stephanie embraced the application process during her sophomore year. This involved outlining her research interests, drafting a budget plan for the stipend, and mapping out timelines for achieving her teaching and research goals.

Stephanie has presented her research multiple times at conventions like PSHA and ASHA. Her current focus with the neuroelectrophysiology team explores whether individuals involved in team sports benefit from enhanced speech perception, utilizing EEG technology. Collaborating with Dr. Antony, Stephanie is preparing a manuscript for publication in an academic journal.

Reflecting on the significance of research in speech-language pathology, Stephanie emphasizes its direct impact on therapy outcomes. Her passion for research stems from a desire to drive progress in the field and view clinical work from a fresh perspective, fostering continuous curiosity and learning.

Stephanie encourages aspiring researchers: "If research sparks your interest, dive in. Reach out to faculty members and explore. Just start—research opens doors you never knew existed."

Congratulations to Stephanie on this remarkable achievement, and we wish her continued success as she pursues her research ambitions!

Misericordia Offers Online SLP Program

By: Kara Thourot '26

Misericordia University's new Graduate Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Online Program stands out as Pennsylvania's first accredited fully online master's SLP program! Designed for students with a bachelor's degree in communication disorders or SLP, the program also provides online prerequisite courses for those from other fields aiming to join the master's program.

What makes Misericordia's online SLP program truly unique is its innovative technology and strong professor-student relationships. The SLP classroom boasts advanced features like three screens and voice-sensing cameras that automatically focus on speakers. Even in-person students can attend class via Zoom when needed, ensuring a seamless learning experience. Online graduate students have the option to attend synchronously or catch up asynchronously, all while feeling fully immersed in classroom interactions. Cameras follow lecturers and capture physical participation, projecting online students on screens for active engagement.

Abigail Sykes, a current first year online graduate student in the program balancing full-time work with studies, highlights time management as her primary challenge. She appreciates the program's flexibility, utilizing Zoom recordings for asynchronous learning and meeting weekly with professors to delve into course topics. Abigail values the open communication and resources available, emphasizing the importance of self-discipline in maximizing these opportunities.

Kirby Ruiz, the another student in the online SLP graduate program, initially favored in-person learning but was swayed by the program's flexibility and supportive environment. He credits Dr. Glen Tellis, the department chair, for his transformative experience, citing Dr. Tellis's passion for SLP and willingness to accommodate his needs—an uncommon trait in many programs. Kirby highlights the proactive support he received, including mentor pairing and access to tutoring through the Student Success Center. Currently embarking on clinical work, Kirby has completed online evaluation simulations and looks forward to in-person clinics this summer at Misericordia.

Misericordia University takes pride in offering accessible, high-quality education to motivated individuals worldwide through its SLP program.

An SLP graduate class with remote students attending synchronously with our classroom's new technology



An Un-Belize-Able Service Experience

Contributions from Rebecca Rehrey '24, Isabella Fredo, '24, Megan Fenstermaker '24, and Shannon Murphy '24

This January, our department sent a group of two faculty members and six fifth-year graduate students to Belize on a service trip dedicated to providing speech and language pathology services to people who cannot typically access them. This is the second year of this service trip, thanks to the efforts of clinical supervisor **Adina Rosenthal** who connects with faculty members at Alvernia University and organizes our students annually to make this trip possible. Our students joined an interdisciplinary contingent of physical and occupational therapy students from Alvernia, and assessed and treated patients in a variety of settings, ranging from skilled nursing facilities to outpatient pediatric clinics. The group's efforts were critical, as there are currently no speech-language pathologists in the entire country of Belize, forcing individuals to either forego treatment or travel long distances to neighboring countries for alternatives.

The service trip proved to be a life-changing experience for all who attended. **Rebecca Rehrey** '24 said, "Before going to Belize, I was excited to get the opportunity to make an impact on so many lives. However, I had no idea the impact that every person I met would have on me." She continued on to say, "Everything I learned and witnessed in Belize taught me a greater sense of humility, something I was so grateful that I was able to bring back to my caseload at home." "The best part of the trip was giving one of the women in a nursing facility her voice back," **Isabella Fredo** '24 said. "This resident had not heard her voice in six or more months. Thinking about it still brings tears to my eyes."



Two students provide education to healthcare workers at a skilled nursing facility



An MU SLP student and Alvernia PT student cotreat a child

Overall, the group treated over 100 patients in the span of five days, and provided education to try to make their efforts more sustainable after they left Belize. "Having access to reliable healthcare services is a privilege I often take for granted since we have many options available to us on a daily basis. Having the opportunity to see the challenges families face because they do not have the same access to healthcare was especially eye-opening," **Megan Fenstermaker** '24 noted. "I was surprised by the stigma surrounding disabilities and the guilt some families felt because of their situation. It was humbling to be able to provide parents and caregivers with a sense of calm simply by sharing our knowledge."

Our department plans to continue with an annual service trip to Belize for the foreseeable future. When asked to share anything they think students considering a service trip should know, **Shannon Murphy** '24 said, "Service can be life changing, not only for those who you help but also in your own life. Acknowledge the gratitude you feel, embrace the satisfaction you get, and build on the potential of doing more." Fredo '24 added, "For SLP students considering this trip, take the leap and go! I learned so much about myself as a clinician and grew alongside my peers and professors. I can't wait to support more Misericordia SLP students to continue the work that is so needed in Belize."

The Tara Helwig Vining

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

By: Michaela Raub '26



Tara Helwig Vining '10

Tara Helwig Vining, a 2010 graduate of Misericordia's Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program, dedicated her life to serving others, leaving an enduring impact through her work, mentorship, and compassionate care. Tragically, Tara passed away in June 2022, but her family has admirably continued her legacy in various meaningful ways.

In a recent interview, Tara's mother, **Susan Helwig**, and brother, **Josh Helwig**, shared Tara's inspiring story. Following her passing, Susan and Josh took over Tara's practice, TeleVine Therapy, which provides comprehensive speech, occupational, and physical therapy services to clients of all ages. Tara's vision for TeleVine Therapy began in 2014 with the aim of offering highly personalized therapy to children, enriching their lives beyond the confines of school.

Tara's exceptional clinical acumen and leadership were recognized with numerous accolades, including being named "Top Speech-Language Pathologist" by Top Doctors in Ohio for three consecutive years from 2017 to 2019, and by Worldwide Leaders in Healthcare in 2018 and 2020.

Described as a fearless leader, Tara went above and beyond for her clients, displaying boundless compassion by offering pro bono services to uninsured children, ensuring they received the specialized care they deserved. Her unwavering determination led her to seek out experts worldwide to provide the best possible care for her clients, exemplifying her commitment to putting their needs first.

In honor of Tara's legacy, her family renamed their family scholarship to the Tara Helwig Vining, CCC-SLP Scholarship. This scholarship supports incoming first-year students entering Misericordia's SLP program who demonstrate financial need. Recipients can receive this scholarship throughout their five years in the program as long as they maintain a GPA of 3.25 or above.

Tara's passion for the field of Speech-Language Pathology was evident throughout her career, and she cherished her time at Misericordia, speaking highly of the program that nurtured her skills and values. She embodied Misericordia's charisms of mercy, service, justice, and hospitality, finding profound purpose in serving others.

Tara Helwig Vining is deeply missed by all who knew her, but her spirit lives on through the scholarship that bears her name, ensuring that her legacy of compassion and dedication continues to inspire future generations of SLP professionals.

To donate to the Tara Helwig Vining Scholarship, visit **misericordia.edu/makeagift**. If a check is preferable, it can be made out to the Tara Helwig Vining Scholarship and mailed to the following address:

Misericordia University
Financial Aid
301 Lake Street, Dallas, PA 18612

What's NSSLHA Up To?

By: Annabelle Fry '27

Misericordia's NSSLHA Club has been exceptionally active this past school year, demonstrating unwavering dedication to service and community support. From supporting the Belize Fund to creating heartfelt cards for local nursing home staff, the club shows no signs of slowing down.



In February, NSSLHA partnered with the Autism Awareness Club to host an Autism-Friendly Playtime event. Held on the sensory-friendly second floor of Passan Hall, home to the Speech-Language Pathology Department, the event catered to families with autistic children. The venue's sensory gym and therapy rooms equipped with tools like Kebbi robots and kinetic sand provided a perfect setting for children to engage comfortably. The playtime was a resounding success, fostering joyous moments for children and their siblings alike.



MU NSSLHA members participating in the Autism-Friendly Playtime event'10

Annually, NSSLHA organizes a benefit concert to raise funds for various causes. This year, the proceeds supported one of Misericordia's own students, Maddie Gross, who was diagnosed with cancer during the fall semester. The concert featured performances by the university's dance team, dance ensemble, local nonprofit PATAsphere, and talented solo acts from within the department. The event not only raised crucial funds but also showcased the community's solidarity and support for Maddie and her family during this challenging time.

Recognizing their outstanding commitment to service, NSSLHA received the Chapter Honors award at the annual Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention in April. This accolade highlights their significant contributions to both the university and the broader Dallas community. Looking ahead, NSSLHA remains steadfast in its mission to enrich campus life and engage meaningfully in service events for years to come.

Fredo wins PSHA's Von Drach Award

Isabella Fredo, a graduate student from Jacobus, PA, in Misericordia University's Speech-Language Pathology program, has been honored with the prestigious Von Drach Memorial Scholarship by the Pennsylvania Speech-Language Hearing Association (PSHA) at their recent conference. This scholarship, named in memory of **Dr. Robert Von Drach**, is awarded annually to an exceptional student from one of Pennsylvania's 22 speech-language pathology programs who demonstrates outstanding leadership, academic excellence, clinical proficiency, and scholarly contributions to the field.

During Misericordia University's commencement on May 11th, Isabella Fredo proudly earned her Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology. Throughout her academic journey at Misericordia, Fredo excelled as the manager of the neuro electrophysiology lab and dedicated two years as a lab assistant. Her thesis, inspired by personal experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been the foundation for multiple presentations at conferences, including the PSHA convention, the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) convention, and the Acoustical Society of America conference. In total, Fredo has presented 13 papers, predominantly as the first author. Her leadership extended beyond academics; she served as Head of Fundraising for a service-learning trip to Belize and actively contributed to PSHA's Healthcare-Telepractice Committee and the Leadership Development Program.

Recognized for her academic excellence, research impact, leadership roles, and commitment to service, Fredo was also awarded the Misericordia University Speech-Language Pathology Department's Outstanding Achievement Award. Outside of her academic pursuits, she served as a community assistant on campus for three years.

Reflecting on her achievement, Fredo expressed heartfelt gratitude: "I am incredibly grateful to the Von Drach committee for selecting me and to everyone who supported me along this journey."

Dr. Glen Tellis, Professor and Chair of SLP at Misericordia, highlighted Fredo's growth and contributions to the field: "Isabella's accomplishments are truly commendable. What distinguishes Isabella is not just her academic excellence but her holistic approach to success. I have witnessed her evolution as a student, from leading a research lab and presenting at prestigious conferences to dedicating her time to departmental service and honing her clinical skills to deliver optimal therapy."

Among her memorable experiences at Misericordia, Fredo treasures her time participating in the Belize service trip, where she and fellow SLP students provided evaluations and therapy to pediatric and adult patients across various settings. Some families traveled long distances to receive care at clinics, preschools, long-term care facilities, and community homes, underscoring the impact of their efforts.

In closing, Fredo extended gratitude to her family and Misericordia's SLP faculty: "My family, especially my parents and sisters, have been my unwavering support. Their encouragement has been instrumental in my journey. I am also grateful to Misericordia's SLP faculty for pushing me to apply for this scholarship and for guiding me toward success."

Isabella Fredo's dedication to advancing the field of speech-language pathology and her compassionate service to communities resonate deeply, embodying the values of Misericordia University and the spirit of the Von Drach Memorial Scholarship.



Dr. Glen Tellis, Isabella Fredo, and Adina Rosenthal at the 2024 PSHA Convention

Thank you

WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING FOR PROVIDING GRANTS TO THE SLP DEPARTMENT:

Clear Spring Casualty Insurance Company
Fidelity Bank
M&T Bank
Memco Realty
PPL Electric Utilities
Weis Markets

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Sandy Insalaco, Sr.
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Rosemary Macaluso '68
Erik Raj '08
Pamela Rogers '23

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- Call 570-674-6354 between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM to make a gift over the phone.
- Send a check made out to: Misericordia University, by mail to Development Office, SLP Student Fund, 301 Lake Street, Dallas, PA 18612.
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