

AUTUMN 2015 NEWSLETTER



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Northwestern’s Aphasia Center Promotes Communication and Community

By Eduardo Europa (Doctoral Candidate in CSD) and Cynthia Thompson (Director of the Aphasia Center)

Language therapy for people with aphasia traditionally focuses on improving the ability to produce and understand words and/or sentences, reading, spelling, and other domains of language in individual sessions. Another approach, known as the Life Participation Approach for Aphasia (LPAA), is now being offered at the Northwestern University Aphasia Center. Based on a social model of aphasia, the LPAA emphasizes communication, providing opportunities for people living with aphasia (and family members) to attain life-participation goals.

At the Aphasia Center, clinicians support communication among people with aphasia (members of the Center) as they participate in group activities (known as “clubs”). These clubs provide communities for people with aphasia to engage in communication, while participating in activities of their choice. They also provide opportunities to meet others within the aphasia community. Clinicians and researchers recommend both traditional individual and participation-based therapy for people with aphasia in order to maximize outcomes.

When asked what they thought about the Aphasia Center, some comments from our members were:

“I like it a lot!”

“It’s good because it makes you talk!”

Family members also are impressed by the Aphasia Center’s programs, indicating that they are great for people who struggle to participate in social settings.

The Aphasia Center has a variety of clubs that meet on a regular basis, including the TV/Film Club in which members collectively decide on movies or television programs to view and discuss. The Center also offers a Book Club, in which members read and talk about books such as “All the Light We Cannot See” by Anthony Doerr, There also are Newsroom Clubs that meet once a week to talk about national and international

events of interest, Conversation Clubs, with open-ended topics, and a Total Communication Club focused on practicing alternative strategies for communicating when speaking is difficult, such as using drawing, gestures, or assistive devices.

The Music Club at the Aphasia Center welcomes members with or without musical background to engage in musical activities, such as playing percussion instruments and singing along to songs by Stevie Wonder and Louis Armstrong! The Exercise Club, another favorite, allows members to engage in chair-activities with a Yoga influence and discuss the exercises and poses and their benefits to health. Both the Music and Exercise Clubs are staffed by faculty and students in music (from Northwestern University’s Music Department), and certified fitness professionals from the Henry Crown Sports Pavilion at Northwestern, respectively, coupled with faculty and students from Communication Sciences and Disorders. Membership in the Aphasia Center allows people to be a part of any, and as many, clubs they choose.

The Aphasia Center is currently open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with more than 20 members, and membership is expected to grow rapidly. Plans for the future include clubs focused on public speaking (Toastmasters), community service (Community Connection), and other activities.

The Aphasia Center will celebrate its GRAND OPENING AND OPEN HOUSE on May 5th, 2016.

For more information about Northwestern’s Aphasia Center and their programs, call the Center for Audiology, Speech, Language and Learning (CASLL) at 847-491-3165, e-mail nucasll@northwestern.edu, or visit the Center’s website at www.communicationclinic.northwestern.edu.

COMMUNITY AND CURRENT EVENTS

COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Zoo Lights

(Nov. 27-29, Dec. 4-6, 11-23, 26-31, Jan. 1-3 at the Lincoln Park Zoo)
ZooLights features millions of holiday lights, ice carvings, music, carousel and train rides, food and gift shopping, plus photos with Santa (some days).

Free science museum

(January 4 - 29, weekdays)
Show Illinois ID to enter the Museum of Science and Industry free during Free Days.

B-Movie Festival

(January 22-23 at Northwestern University)
B-Fest is 24 hours of low-budget movies with audience participation in McCormick Auditorium at Northwestern University in Evanston.

Auto Show

(Feb. 13-21 at McCormick Place convention center)
Admire new vehicles at the Chicago Auto Show, billed as the largest and longest-running U.S. auto show.

Local Food festivals

(March 24-26 at UIC Forum)
The Good Food Festival is all about locally produced food. Visit exhibitors, Good Food Commons, Chefs at Play, and kids' corner. The Localicious Food Festival features savory dishes of locally grown food by award-winning chefs, plus local beer and spirits, with bluegrass and swing.

Diabetes Expo

(April 9 at McCormick Place)
Learn how to prevent and manage diabetes at the American Diabetes Association Expo, which has health screenings, cooking demonstrations, experts, and exhibitors.

Aphasia Center Grand Opening and Open House
(May 5 at Center for Audiology, Speech, Language and Learning, Northwestern University)
Enjoy talks about the Aphasia Center by Northwestern faculty, students, and current members of the Aphasia Center, tours of the Aphasia Center, and other activities.

Book Expo

(May 11-13 at McCormick Place)
Book Expo America includes 1000 exhibitors, author lectures and autographing events, and publishing-industry sessions.

Holistic Living Expo

(June 4-5 at the Tinley Park Convention Center)
Body Mind Spirit Expo features speakers, workshops, and vendors for remaking your life.

Innovative Theater

(June 16-25, at Links Hall)
Physical Festival includes four creative theater shows that tell stories physically and visually.



IN THE NEWS:

Researchers have created a virtual world that helps with speech recovery

The online multi-user virtual world, called EVA Park, lets people with aphasia practice communicating with avatars. (http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/lucymaddox/speech-recovery-technology_b_8512246.html)

Changes in sense of humor may be a warning sign for dementia.

In a survey conducted by researchers from the University College London, families and friends of 48 dementia patients said they noticed a sudden change in the sense of humor over the 15 years that they have known the person. The respondents described the patients laughing "inappropriately" on events like watching news on natural disasters or seeing a relative who badly scalded herself. (<http://www.starminenews.com/beware-of-dark-humor-it-could-be-a-sign-of-dementia-says-study/7352/>)

Recent study finds leg strength associated with healthy brains

The study conducted by researchers at the King's College London tracked the health of more than 150 pairs of twin sisters aged between 43 and 73 at the start of the study. (<http://www.bbc.com/news/health-34764693>)

Scientist breach blood-brain barrier to treat sick patient

The Canadian team used tiny gas-filled bubbles, injected into the bloodstream of a patient, to punch temporary holes in the blood-brain barrier. A beam of focused ultrasound waves applied to the skull made the bubbles vibrate and push their way through, along with chemotherapy drugs. (<http://www.bbc.com/news/health-34775604>)

The effects of chronic stress on your brain: A video

In TED-Ed's latest video, "How Stress Affects Your Brain," Madhumita Murgia shows how being overworked or having arguments at home can affect the size and structure of the human brain, as well as how it functions. (<http://www.medicaldaily.com/pulse/stress-and-brain-high-cortisol-levels-can-damage-brain-structure-cognitive-function-361198>)

Right hemisphere compensates for speech loss after stroke

Researchers from Georgetown University Medical Center (GUMC) found that the right side of the brain increases growth of gray matter to compensate for loss of gray matter in speech-related areas in the left side, which can aid speech recovery. (<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/302085.php>)

PEOPLE TO KNOW & SUPPORT GROUP INFO:

Katrin Bovbjerg

Kat Bovbjerg recently joined the Aphasia and Neurolinguistics laboratory as a research technician. She graduated from the University of Chicago with a degree in psychology with honors, where she studied developmental social neuroscience and research psychology.



Her research interests include patient treatment, therapeutic strategies for language and behavioral disorders, and brain imaging techniques. She plans to pursue a graduate level degree in psychology.

Kat absolutely loves Evanston and Chicago. She moved here four years ago from Pittsburgh PA, where her family currently lives, and she hasn't looked back. In her free time, she enjoys singing, reading novels, exploring the city, and studying improvisation at her local comedy theater.

Devin St. John

Devin is a first-year doctoral student in the Aphasia and Neurolinguistics Research Laboratory. He was born in sunny Athens, Greece and grew up in sunnier Tucson, Arizona. (No, he doesn't speak Greek; yes, he wishes he did.) He received a bachelor's degree in Linguistics from the University of Arizona in Tucson and a master's degree in Psychology from Northeastern University in Boston. Devin is broadly interested in the relationship between language and the brain. As a researcher-in-training, he plans to study how people with stroke-induced and primary progressive aphasia process sentences in real time and how brain plasticity contributes to post-stroke language recovery. He's looking forward to collaborating with (and learning from) all of the incredibly talented people in the Aphasia Lab and across Northwestern's cognitive science community. He spends his spare time exploring Chicago, reading fiction, consuming staggering amounts of pasta, and worrying about whether he should even have spare time.



Aphasia Support Group Meetings

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Aphasia Support Group Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month (except for January and August) from 12:00pm to 1:00pm in Room 1-530 of the Center for Audiology, Speech Language, and Learning Building - 2315 Campus Drive. Please contact Mary Cosic for more information at 847-467-7591 or m-cosic@northwestern.edu

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

The lab is located three blocks east of the Noyes Stop on the Purple Line.

CTA: 1-888-968-7282
www.transitchicago.com

RTA: 1-312-836-7000
www.rtachicago.com

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

February 4th

March 3rd

April 7th

May 5th

(Aphasia Center Open House)

June 2nd

July 7th

Do you have a story to tell?

We'd like to know!

If you would like submit a piece to be featured in an upcoming ANRL newsletter, please contact Kat or Brianne at 847-467-7591. Possible topics include: tips and advice, hobbies (e.g. cooking, crafts, etc.), health, research, and your personal experience with aphasia.

ACTIVITIES CORNER

WORD SQUARE #3

TYPE: 4X4
MISSING VOWELS

T		L	L
	D		
P	L		N
S		N	D

A I E I A E

Fill in the puzzle grid with the vowels provided so that each column (top to bottom) and each row (left to right) contains a real word.

Mystery Words

Spell a 5-letter word using the clues below.

 — — — — —
 1 2 3 4 5

1. The last letter of the mystery word is the same letter that comes at the end of each day of the week.
2. The second letter of the mystery word is the second vowel in a word that sounds like “pear”.
3. The third letter of the mystery word is the silent letter in a four-letter word that means “to chat or speak”.
4. The first letter of the mystery word is the first letter in both words that sound like “cent”.
5. The fourth letter of the mystery word matches the third letter.



	5						
		4		9	8		2
6			2	4		3	
5				7			
	9		8	3		4	
			4				1
	2		1	7			4
8		6	9			1	
							8

		1		9			
8				3		7	
		4					5
				2	8	5	3
	9		5	4	3		7
	1	5	6	7			
7						3	
		6		5			8
				6		4	