

1956 - 2020 *A tradition of excellence*

Fall 2020

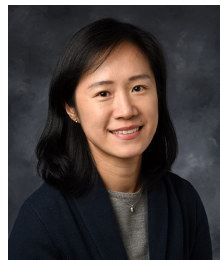


message from the chair

2020 has been quite a year! I think that may be the understatement of the century! In March, COVID-19 hit, and we quickly set up home offices and moved our classes on-line. In June, Jerry Moon's term as chair ended when he retired from the University of Iowa after a long and distinguished career. For me, the past six months are a bit of a blur; I do not think I have ever worked harder, and I am, only now, starting to feel like I am finally getting my feet on the ground. I am proud of our department. I always have been, but I have NEVER been so proud of our faculty, staff, and students as I am today. The way they worked together to navigate the challenges imposed by the pandemic was inspiring. We all got frustrated at times, but no one complained. Safety protocols were put in place. We became experts at Zoom. We found new ways to teach – while masked and socially distanced. After a brief shutdown, we even managed to re-open our clinic. That was not easy feat. We embraced teletherapy. We all donned PPE and found new ways to provide clinical service to our clients while keeping them and our student clinicians safe. We moved research online and celebrated our students' graduations virtually. Many of us have done this while learning to homeschool. I think we all have more respect than ever for how hard the job of a teacher and childcare worker really is. I am so proud to be working with such talented, hard-working, and dedicated individuals. I, for one, think that 2020 is one year I will be happy to see in the rearview mirror. I look forward to 2021 and remain confident that we will be better because of the lessons we learned in 2020.

- Carolyn J. Brown

CSD celebrates its newest PhDs



Jeong-Seo Kim, Aud, PhD, defended her dissertation, *Acoustically Evoked Compound Action Potentials (CAPs) Recorded from Cochlear Implant Users with Preserved Acoustic Hearing*. Dr. Kim will return to South Korea to seek an academic and/or clinical position. "Jeong Seo's experience as an audiologist, scientist and teacher will position her well for a long and productive career as an expert in physiologic measures of neural response from the cochlea in individuals with hearing loss who use either hearing aids or cochlear implants. There is no limit to what she might accomplish!" says mentor Carolyn Brown.



Subong Kim, PhD, defended his dissertation, *Cortical Dynamics of Speech-in-Noise Processing with Noise Reduction in Hearing Aids*. He is currently a postdoctoral fellow at Purdue University. "Subong demonstrated a unique model of applying neurophysiological frameworks to solve emerging clinical problems of audiology. He could do it thanks to his strong intellectual abilities and motivation. I am just excited to see the impact of his research on the future of audiology." says his mentor Inyong Choi.



Kelsey Klein, Aud, PhD, defended her dissertation, *Real time lexical and semantic processing in school-age children with hearing aids and cochlear implants*. She has accepted a position as Assistant Professor at University of Tennessee-Knoxville. "Kelsey brings multiple skills to her future career. She has a strong foundation in basic science and translation research, a wealth of clinical knowledge, and is able to tie research and clinical threads together to the benefit of her students and the field. I can't wait to see what Dr. Klein accomplishes in our profession," says Beth Walker, co-mentor along with Bob McMurray.

Communication Sciences
and Disorders

IOWA

The newsletter is published twice yearly for alumni, former faculty, and friends.

Carolyn J. Brown, Editor, DEO
Julie Ostrem, Associate Editor, Designer

Submit items to: Carolyn Brown, PhD
UI Communication Sciences & Disorders
250 Hawkins Drive, Iowa City IA 52242
carolyn-brown@uiowa.edu

personnel

Faculty

Bhatt, Ishan
Brown, Carolyn J., *Department Chair*
Bryant, Karen
Choi, Inyong
Clay, Kelly Schmidt
Davidson, Krista
DiVita, Jennifer
Finnegan, Eileen
Fleckenstein, Stephanie
Gfeller, Kate
Goodman, Shawn
Gordon, Jean K.
Hendrickson, Kristi
Jeon, Eun Kyung (Julie)
Kelsay, Danielle
McCauley, Stewart
McMurray, Bob
Subramanian, Anu
Tyler, Richard
Walker, Elizabeth
Wallace, Anne
Wu, Yu-Hsiang
Yoon, Si On

Faculty Emeriti

Abbas, Paul
Anderson, Charles
Bentler, Ruth
Cilek, Toni
Fennell, Ann
Hall, Penelope
Holte, Lenore
Hurtig, Richard
Karnell, Michael
Louko, Linda
Luschei, Erich
McGregor, Karla
Moon, Jerald
Morris, Hughlett
Niebuhr, Diane
Small, Arnold
Titze, Ingo
Tomblin, J. Bruce
Turner, Christopher
Zebrowski, Patricia

Staff

Bjornstad, Jennifer
Booker, Stacy
Busho, Kellsie
Dallapiazza, Margaret
Fick, Wendy
Johnson, Joshua
Jones, Julie
McConnell, Cleo
Ostrem, Julie
Stangl, Elizabeth
Thomann, Linsey
Yotty, Mary Jo

Alumni News

Cara Bryan (MA 2002) opened a private practice, *South Tampa Voice Therapy, LLC*, in May 2016. In a *Voice Forum* article, she describes her path to vocology: "I started looking at graduate programs in the country specifically where I could get more voice intensive work. At the time that was Iowa, Indiana, Purdue, and Vanderbilt. I was accepted to Iowa, moved there, and never looked back. I had a wonderful experience in grad school with coursework in vocology and medically-based SLP."

Eric Hunter (PhD 2001), Professor, Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at Michigan State University, has been recognized as an MSU Foundation Professor.

Brian Peterson (MA 2013) was elected as Iowa Speech-Language-Hearing Association Vice President for Medical, Clinical, Private Settings.

Leslie Van Winkle (MA 2014). Current position: UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute at the University of Nebraska Medical Center - UNMC. In a staff profile, she stated, "At work, I am energized by any breakthrough, small or large, that my patients make – especially when it's a result of collaboration with other disciplines and/or parents!"

Shannon Vokac (BA, 2015). Current position: Clinical Audiologist, The Ear, Nose & Throat Care Center, Barrington, IL.

Recent deaths

John Michael "Mick" Hanley, 73, passed away in February 2019. Mick earned his Ph.D. from Iowa, where he served as a faculty member in CSD from 1977-1980 before joining the faculty at Western Michigan University. In 1990, Mick became the chair of their Speech Pathology and Audiology Department and served in that position for 17 years. His areas of expertise included research, training, and clinical emphasis on stuttering. During his years at WMU, Mick won the WMU Distinguished Service Award as well as the CAPCSD Distinguished Service Award. He was honored as the UI CSD's Distinguished Alumnus in 2014.

Megan Kearney (BA 2019) died unexpectedly in June. After graduating from UI's program, Megan enrolled at the University of Oregon, where she was pursuing her master's degree in speech-language pathology. According to UO faculty member and PhD alumnus, Samantha Shune, "Megan was set to make a wonderful clinician and be a strong contributor to our profession." A scholarship at Iowa is being established in her honor.

Laura Mueldeener (BA 2016, AuD 2020) passed away in March during her fourth-year audiology placement in Philadelphia. Laura's classmates describe her as having "a quick wit and love of learning; she always had the answer to any question. Not only was she brilliant but she was humble, hilarious, and always willing to help a friend." Her hood was awarded posthumously and sent to her family. A scholarship in her name has been created.

Terry L. Wiley (PhD 1972) died in July. A native Iowan, he was a Professor in CSD at The University of Wisconsin-Madison from 1971-2002, including four years as Department Chair. Terry received a number of academic awards: Fellowship and Honors of the Association from ASHA; an Editor's Award from the American Journal of Audiology for the article of highest merit; a national Distinguished Teaching Award in Audiology; and Honors of the Association from the Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology Association. He was the first member of his department elected to the Teaching Academy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Faculty Achievements

Carolyn J. Brown was named the 2019-2020 Graduate College Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award: Biological and Life Sciences. Graduate Dean John Keller said in the letter of congratulations: “The letters referencing your mentoring style at the University of Iowa are impressive. Your mentoring continues to have life-changing impacts on your students. Past and current students appreciate the challenges you put before them that influenced the researchers they are today.”

Kellsie Busho was elected Vice President for Public Relations of the Iowa Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Krista Davidson publishes quarterly articles in “PrAACtical AAC,” a publication which supports professionals and families who work to improve the communication and literacy abilities of people with significant communication difficulties. Her recent articles include a description of the virtual camp she created by partnering UI grad clinicians with those from the University of Northern Iowa and an AAC Video Case Study.

Krista Davidson won a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences instructional award to buy an Indi speech-generating device (SGD) from the Tobii-DynaVox company. In addition to clinical training and patient care for clients with limited functional speech, AAC equipment like the Indi allows for demonstration and hands-on experiences for the graduate AAC course, undergraduate students in independent study, and intro courses as well as outreach programs like Project HOPE, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Learning Labs, and the AAC summer camp.

Jenny DiVita was appointed as the ASHA STAR (State Advocate for Reimbursement) for the state of Iowa. With collaborators from UIHC, she successfully transitioned and is maintaining two interdisciplinary virtual clinical programs: Project ImPACT (a parent education program for families with a child with social communication challenges), and an Interdisciplinary Autism Diagnostic Clinic. Graduate students have been able to participate in these opportunities online and continue to learn from other professionals in Psychology and Psychiatry.

Stephanie Fleckenstein was re-elected as Vice President for Audiology for the Iowa Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Stephanie Fleckenstein won a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences instructional award to purchase an Audioscan Verifit 2 hearing instrument fitting system to enhance teaching and clinical services. This equipment -- with special features for hearing aid fitting and hearing loss simulations -- can be used to teach in-person or remotely, which is important during this time of social distancing.

Jean K. Gordon continued her research during a Fall 2019 Obermann Fellowship-in-Residence, seeking better diagnostic tools for those with aphasia. Her work is featured in a Daily Iowan article entitled, “Lost Language Found.”

Jean K. Gordon co-presented a talk, “Can You Understand Me, Dearie?” with Nursing PhD candidate Claire Shaw for the virtual Iowa Aging Summit, sponsored by the University of Iowa.

Kristi Hendrickson’s R03 NIH grant application, “Word recognition in dual language learners: The mechanisms underlying listening and reading in two languages” scored impressively in the 4th percentile, ensuring a high likelihood for funding.

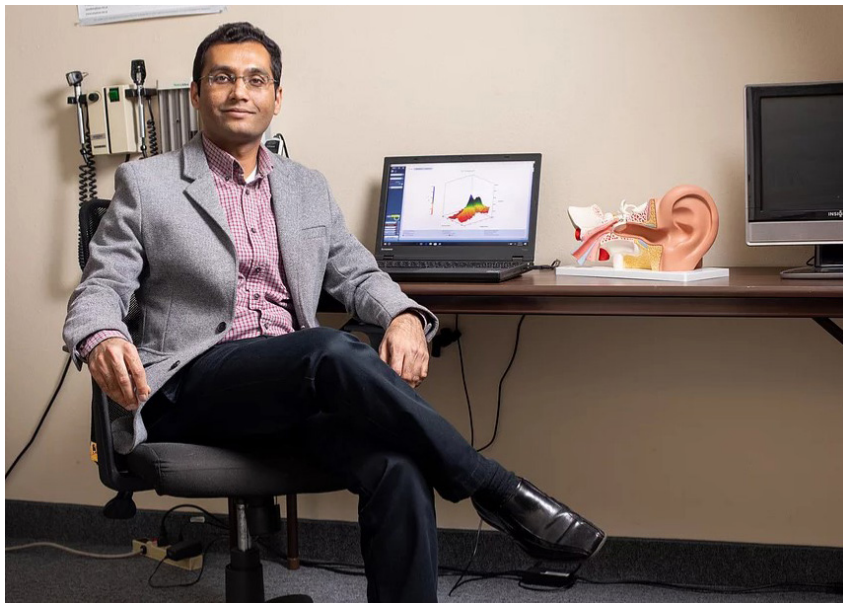
Richard Hurtig, Karen Bryant and **Krista Davidson** authored an article that won the 2019 Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups Editor’s Award. Their article, “Improving Patient Safety and Patient-Provider Communication,” was selected on the basis of its impact that meets the highest quality standards in research design and presentation.



Yu-Hsiang Wu and his colleagues were honored with the Ear and Hearing Editor's Award for the publication, Efficacy and Effectiveness of Advanced Hearing Aid Directional and Noise Reduction Technologies for Older Adults With Mild to Moderate Hearing Loss in Ear and Hearing. The award was presented at the 2020 American Auditory Society (AAS) meeting in early March.

continued on page 4

CSD welcomes Ishan Bhatt as Associate Professor



Ishan Bhatt received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Audiology, Speech and Language Pathology from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, India. He possesses a wide range of clinical experiences working with individuals with communication disorders across the lifespan. Dr. Bhatt pursued his PhD from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he studied genetic factors underlying noise-induced hearing loss in young musicians.

Here at Iowa, he is the director of the Audiogenomics Research Laboratory, where he maintains programmatic research. The central objective of the research program is to identify the confluence of genetic and non-genetic risk factors influencing complex hearing disorders. The research program aims to create audiogenomic tools that can be used by healthcare providers to identify susceptible individuals well before they acquire permanent

hearing health problems and to design individualized prevention and intervention strategies. His current research focuses on identifying the genetic basis of tinnitus and noise-induced hearing loss.

“Ishan is recognized for clinical, teaching, and research excellence at his previous academic institutions,” said Department Chair Carolyn Brown. “We are delighted to have him on faculty at Iowa.”

Faculty Achievements, *continued*

Anu Subramanian created a two-part instructional video, “How to Teach Clinician-client alliance in SLP clinical education” and “Teaching Clinician-Client Alliance to Graduate Students.” In the videos, she explains strategies for helping clinicians connect to their clients and how to help students build these relationship skills. Both videos are available on YouTube.

Anu Subramanian and **Tricia Zebrowski** were featured in a UI-produced video in honor of International Stuttering Awareness Day. The YouTube video, widely circulated on social media, garnered thousands of views. On the UI CLAS YouTube channel, search “Stuttering Myths and Facts.”

Rich Tyler and colleagues published an article which the editor cites as “a gem of a paper,” Tyler R, Perreau A, Mohr AM, Ji H, Mancini PC (2019). *An Exploratory Step Toward Measuring the ‘Meaning of Life’ in Patients with Tinnitus and in Cochlear Implant Users*. J Am Acad Audiol. 2019 Sep 27.

Beth Walker is part of a multicenter, five-year grant awarded through the National Institutes of Health to develop clinical tools to improve audiologists’ approaches to hearing aid candidacy and measure hearing aid benefit for children with mild bilateral hearing loss.

Beth Walker was elected to the ASHA Special Interest Group 9 (Hearing and Hearing Loss in Children) coordinating committee.

Beth Walker is a topic co-chair in “Language, Language, and Speech in Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing” for the 2021 ASHA annual meeting.

Staff spotlights



Linsey Thomann (above) joined CSD in the spring, managing the many tasks to keep the Clinic running smoothly.

Julie Jones and **Elizabeth Stangl** were honored for ten years of service with CLAS.

Julie Ostrem was elected to a three-year term on the CLAS Staff Council.

Mary Jo Yotty was honored for 30 years with Iowa -- 26 of those years in CSD!

Diane Niebuhr “retires” after 37 years in CSD



When you were a young undergraduate, did you ever imagine you’d find yourself as a clinical professor?

Short answer: no. Longer answer, I was a non-traditional student, which means that I was older. I started out as an Elementary Education major but decided that it wasn’t really what I wanted to do. I then thought that I wanted to study Deaf Education but was told that I wouldn’t be able to get into the department by the time I graduated, so I left Illinois State University after my sophomore year. I began to work and took classes to obtain my associate’s degree at a local junior college. I continued to work and eventually moved to Iowa: long story... I worked doing bookkeeping at Sugar Bottom Stables and in retail making very little money. That’s what happened to a woman without a degree or skills in the 70s. Eventually I took an aptitude test which suggested I would be happy as a Speech Language Pathologist. I enrolled at the University of Iowa and began to finish my undergraduate degree. In my Intro class I learned what an Audiologist is. I talked to Julia Davis about my options and decided that I could work on communication skills with deaf children with either degree. I decided on Audiology with lots of speech/language practicum experience. Although I haven’t spent much time working with deaf children, I have been happy with my decision.

What was your first day like in the Department as a faculty member?

Strange. I was hired in a temporary 9-month position as a clinic supervisor, but I still felt like a student. I did not feel that I had enough experience, but I had wonderful mentors who were there for me. At that time, there were no clinical faculty members so, although we did lots of clinical teaching, we were considered supervisors by the college. Soon I was joined by Anne Wallace and Toni Cilek.

What were there challenges you didn’t anticipate?

- Initially I was the only full-time clinical supervisor with young children. I had a 3-month-old when I started. I had no one to commiserate with about those challenges.
- As a temporary employee I never knew from year to year if I would have a job but eventually the Department decided to make my job permanent.
- Although I had not been out of school very long, I was older, and the students treated me as though I was part of the faculty. Initially I felt like I was still a student, but they didn’t treat me that way. That was a bit of a challenge for me.

People often believe that college professors work in ivory towers. Will you tell us an incident that proves it isn’t always a glamour job?

Working as a clinical professor means working with people of all sorts: Students from all over the world and clients from all walks of life and all ages. As a clinician we help people with communication struggles that are not so glamorous. No one in this country thinks that needing a hearing aid is glamorous. We clean the clinic, scrubbing sinks and cleaning floors. We change diapers and sit on the floor with little children. I remember working with one mentally-challenged gentleman who did not have enough language to tell us that he needed to use the restroom so, much to the surprise of the student clinician, he urinated while sitting in the test booth.

Does it seem real yet that you’ve retired? Are you really retired?

I definitely retired from my administrative duties, but I have not retired from Audiology. I began working part time at the VA the Tuesday after my retirement party. I love working as an audiologist! It is an extremely rewarding profession. I miss my interactions with students who kept me young for 37 years, but I love working with veterans as an audiologist and not as a teacher. Covid-19 retired me for awhile but now I am back working part time. Eventually I will retire completely but I’m not quite ready yet.

Now, one last request: now that you’ve left the Department, have you left all your accumulated knowledge with us?

No, I have too many stories and information that I accumulated but it won’t be a problem for the Department. Audiology is a constantly changing profession so old information may not be so useful. I have faith that the audiologists who are now running the clinical end of things will do an outstanding job. If they have a question, I’m always available.

student awards and honors

Lauren Brown and **Megan Kinnerk**, MA-SLP students, created a survival guide for fellow graduate students who are increasingly using virtual technology more and more for their educational and clinical experiences. Called the Virtual Media Center, the duo wrote easy-to-follow instructions for using Zoom, PowerPoint, Boom Cards, and other technology that enrich clients' therapy sessions.

Cara Held, MA-SLP student, was one of 30 teaching assistants honored with a 2020 Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award. Cara won the award for her teaching in the Classics Department.

Justin Jensen, AuD / PhD candidate, won a Graduate Student Scholarship from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation. Graduate student scholarships are awarded each year to master's and doctoral students in communication sciences and disorders who demonstrate academic achievement and promise.

Erik Jorgensen, AuD, PhD candidate, has been awarded a National Institutes of Health F32 grant, "Effects of Environment Complexity on Listening Performance in Adult Hearing Aid Users." The award will fund his dissertation project in the Hearing Aid and Aging Research Laboratory, directed by Dr. Yu-Hsiang Wu.

Jeong-Seo Kim, PhD candidate, won the 2020 CAPCSD PhD Scholarship which includes a monetary award to support her PhD studies.

Jeong-Seo Kim also won an American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation audiology student research grant.

Anne Marie Pasternock, (MA-SLP 2020), was named winner of a 2019 Students Preparing for Academic-Research Careers (SPARC) Award from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Anne Marie was just one of 12 recipients to win a SPARC Award.

Bianca Robles-Muñoz, undergraduate, was selected to participate in the prestigious Big Ten Academic Alliance Summer Research Opportunities Program, created to increase the number of underrepresented students who plan to pursue graduate study and research careers. Bianca is a research assistant in the Psycholinguistics Lab, where she is mentored by Kristi Hendrickson.

Bianca Robles-Muñoz, along with mentors Kristi Hendrickson and Anu Subramanian, won a grant from the DeLTA Center to create an innovative set of live-streamed discussions and archived materials to help practitioners and scholars better serve underrepresented populations in the health professions and applied developmental sciences.

Caitlin Sapp, PhD candidate, was one of just four out of 134 applicants to win an American Academy of Audiology Foundation award, the Jerry Northern Scholarship in Pediatric Audiology. It includes a tuition scholarship and travel stipend. Caitlin's mentor is Beth Walker.

Caitlin Sapp also won a dissertation writing fellowship from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The topic of her dissertation is "Meaningful audibility counseling for parents of children with hearing loss."

Caitlin Sapp was also given the 2020 Plural Research Scholarship Award for a student in a PhD program and will receive a financial award to support her dissertation.

Caitlin Sapp was also awarded a Graduate Student Scholarship from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation, given annually to master's and doctoral students in communication sciences and disorders who demonstrate academic achievement and promise.

Lauren Strohs (BA 2020), with mentors Caitlin Sapp and Beth Walker, was awarded an ASHA Meritorious Poster Submission for her poster, "Perceived Self-Competence in Children with Hearing Loss."

Soumya Venkitakrishnan, AuD / PhD candidate, was awarded a Graduate College Summer Fellowship for Summer 2020. The monetary award facilitates work toward her dissertation project. Soumya's research interests are in improving outcomes of aging adults who wear hearing aids, where she collaborates with Dr. Yu-Hsiang Wu.

(continued on page 9)

Undergrad Ally Valde says Iowa is 'a perfect fit'

This article, featuring Ally Valde, was originally printed in IowaNow.

When Ally Valde was a high school student beginning to make plans for college, she knew exactly where she wanted to go. “I applied to only one school, which was Iowa,” she says. “It had everything I was interested in.”

Many who feel such certainty have familiarity with the University of Iowa from growing up in the Midwest; however, Valde had no association with Iowa. While at McNair High School in Jersey City, New Jersey—a diverse community in which she’d lived all her life—Valde started searching for undergraduate and graduate programs in her two areas of interest, special education and speech pathology.

“I decided to look up schools that had good programs in both of those,” she says. “When Iowa came up, I was like, ‘What?!’” she says. But rather than being put off by the idea of going to a university so far from home, Valde found it appealing.

“My community has 300,000 people, and I needed a break from city life,” says Valde, who is pursuing a certificate in disability studies in addition to a speech and hearing science major. “Iowa is the perfect option for me, because it allowed me to have the Big Ten school but a small-town feel.”

Valde’s confidence in choosing and applying to Iowa was bolstered by two factors: the encouraging environment of her high school and her early spark of interest in speech pathology, which came when she saw a friend who was embarrassed about her stutter improve and gain confidence with help from their school speech-language pathologist. “I remember noticing how she helped my friend,” Valde says of the speech therapist. “I’ve just always wanted to be someone who helps other people.”

Valde’s former adviser, Professor Emeritus Jerry Moon noted her interest and enthusiasm in her work with students in UI REACH, and he encouraged her to approach a faculty member about the idea of engaging in independent study. “Whenever I’ve wanted to look for something or a new opportunity, whether it be the faculty in my department or the staff in the College of Education, they’ve gladly helped me find it right away,” Valde says. “I don’t think I’d have gotten this kind of experience anywhere other than Iowa.”

Valde began working on a project centered on individuals with a condition called Angelman syndrome, a type of chromosomal disorder that affects the nervous system, under the guidance of Krista Davidson, Clinical Associate Professor. Valde then went on to conduct a second independent study under Davidson, this time on the use of augmentative and alternative communication with clients who have a neurological disorder, childhood apraxia of speech.

“Ally is earnest in her approach to learning and is always appreciative of my efforts to teach and guide her,” Davidson says. “She clearly wants to be an advocate for individuals with disabilities.”

In addition to the support she has received academically and through her on-campus job, Valde, a first-generation Filipino American, says her college experience has been enriched by the Asian Pacific American Cultural Center (APACC). Valde says she would advise prospective students to get involved right away. “When I first came to Iowa, I didn’t interact with the APACC at first, which is too bad because now I love this place,” she says. “It has become my home away from home.”

“If you identify with a cultural house, make it a goal to visit it at least once during your first year, because you don’t know the impact that cultural health has,” she continues. “It’s a very welcoming environment and supportive community where they support everyone’s growth.” The center recently chartered the Filipino Student Organization, in which Valde hopes to become involved. She is also setting her sights on graduate programs, including at Iowa.

“Working with and for others is the perfect career path for Ally,” says Moon. “She is outgoing, caring, and full of enthusiasm. I have no doubt that she will positively impact the lives of those she works with.”



Take a look inside Si On Yoon's lab

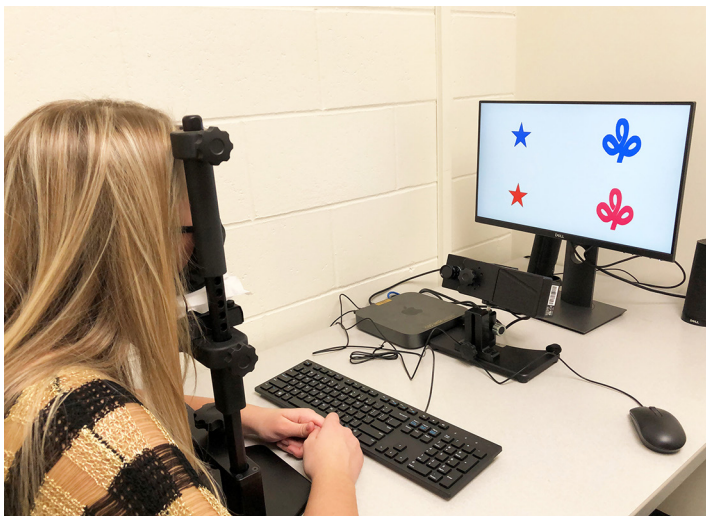
In the Iowa Communication, Memory, and Mind (ICoMM) Lab, Dr. Si On Yoon and her research team explore how people use language in natural conversational settings. Using language is one of the most basic activities of everyday life, and one of the most common forms of language use is conversation. During conversation, people may have different background knowledge, perspectives, or even distinct conversational goals. While there is extensive literature examining the way language is processed in non-conversational settings, such as reading a sentence or listening to pre-recorded speech, the mechanisms of language processing in conversation are largely unexplored due to the difficulties in examining natural conversational language with classic psycholinguistic approaches. To resolve this problem, Yoon has developed an experimental paradigm to study conversation in the lab. The research team in the ICoMM lab uses both behavioral measures, such as eye-tracking and linguistic analyses, and electrophysiological measures, specifically the recording of electrical brain activity (ERPs) during conversation, to gather converging evidence to better understand the most basic human behavior.



Si On Yoon

The work in the ICoMM lab addresses the neural and cognitive mechanisms of language use in conversation across the lifespan. Understanding these mechanisms reveals how people acquire, maintain, and use languages and how language interacts with memory throughout the lifespan. The research focuses on three different topics: 1) exploring how people process language in rich contexts (e.g., multiparty conversation), 2) examining interactive language use in different populations (e.g., children, younger and older adults, individuals with neurodegenerative diseases), and 3) studying the contributions of memory to language processing.

This research contributes to fleshing out a mechanistic theory of the cognitive processes that support conversation and demonstrate new links between the declarative memory system and on-line language processing. Further, it also has the potential for application, including contributing to our understanding of how to improve communication abilities in diverse populations (e.g., older adults and individuals with age-associated diseases), and of the social demands and requirements of human-computer interaction.



Student Honors and awards, continued from page 7

Soumya Venkitakrishnan was also named a recipient of the Ada Louise Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Fellowship for the spring 2021 semester. Her fellowship carries a stipend, tuition and fee coverage, plus a health benefits allowance.

Soumya Venkitakrishnan was featured in an International Programs Office newsletter describing her decision to leave India and come to Iowa to develop evidence-based research for use in clinics. "I decided to attend the University of Iowa because the department is highly regarded, and I was interested in the research here." After enrolling in Iowa's PhD program, she decided to also pursue an AuD degree.

Students tackle Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues

Unfazed by the significant demands of graduate school, a group of CSD grad students took on the additional mission this fall of developing a semester-long, Thursday night Zoom series designed to raise awareness and problem-solve the issue of racial inequities.

While facilitating these discussions takes considerable time and energy, the need to have a space to discuss racial inequity is far greater, said the group's organizers. "We took the famous quote 'If not us, then who? If not now, then when?' to heart," said co-organizer Jay Wilkinson.

Their call to action was sparked by the Black Lives Matter movement, and soon, shaped its focus on all populations, black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). The series examined inequities within the field of communication sciences and disorders: whether it be research, education, or clinical practice.

In recapping the semester's sessions, organizers felt it was the connection between topics that seemed to resonate most among participants, whether a particular week's focus was the issue of the school-to-prison pipeline, inherent discrimination in standardized testing, or under-representation of BIPOC in research. "We saw every week participants make connections from the current topic to issues discussed from perhaps seven weeks ago," a student said. "This highlights how no single topic encapsulates pervasive racism within CSD (and the country) and the need for dynamic, ongoing education about the topic."

As with any evolving community, lessons were learned along the way. For example, while the group certainly wanted participants to have a safe place to speak -- and mis-speak -- they quickly learned that conversations are meaningless if mistakes aren't acknowledged and corrected. Two key themes arose:

- It's a slippery slope comparing types of discrimination you experience to those that you don't experience. The end-result will ultimately limit your empathy for people.
- It's important to find ways to acknowledge problematic thoughts, experiences, and tendencies without re-traumatizing others. Progressive conversations don't benefit from reviewing offensive stereotypes.

While the group will disband to move toward externships and their future careers, what advice might organizers have for future students continuing the conversation? Here are a few of their thoughts: Many hands make light work. Work from a place of humility. Amplify the voices of BIPOC who have been leading this research and fighting this fight. De-center yourself from the conversation. Instead of amplifying negative stereotypes by repeating them, examine the effects of discriminatory policies and practices that underlie them. Stay open! Educate first, but don't stop there -- keep the conversation moving from WHY the inequities exist to HOW we can work toward an equitable future. Understand that cultural humility is a lifelong journey through an evolving landscape.

Student Organizations Shine!

Iowa's Student Academy of Audiology chapter raised over \$3,200 during their fall fundraising activities. The group sponsored a Walk 4 Hearing (photo at right), created a profit-sharing day with a local cupcake shop, and engaged the community with tips about healthy hearing habits. SAA raises funds to provide financial assistance to those in need of hearing aids who otherwise would not be able to afford them.

The SAA group also underwrote and mailed hearing aid batteries to Clinic clients who wear hearing aids, but were homebound due to COVID-19.

Iowa's National Student Speech Language Hearing

Association group was awarded 2020 Gold Chapter Honors. National NSSLHA Chapter Honors are awarded to affiliated chapters that inspire, empower, and support students in CSD programs.

UI-SAFE, a faculty-student educational effort, was awarded a Community Grant from Sertoma. With the funds, UI-SAFE will provide hearing loss prevention presentations to local school music programs, providing to students and directors musician plugs and educational information.



HUMANS OF CSD



It was February, it was frozen, and my flight from BWI had been cancelled. After a streak of frantic calls to the weather-affected airline and a stroke of luck and persistence, I made it to Iowa for my graduate school interview. I still remember the cold wind that blew through campus the day I arrived

(and my warm-enough-for-Maryland, but not quite warm-enough-for-Iowa coat), the delicious burger I ate at Short's for dinner, and my uncontrollable excitement as I set my alarm for the interview the next day. Despite the unexpected, I made it. Reflecting back on my time in undergraduate and graduate school, some of my most life-changing experiences came from the unexpected. I expected to complete my genetics major and go to medical school; instead, I discovered an interest in hearing and speech sciences and found myself in graduate school for audiology. I expected to graduate and work at a VA; now, I work and love my job as a pediatric audiologist. I expected to graduate this year in person with my amazing classmates, our families, and closest friends; yet, like most 2020 graduates, I graduated from my sofa. Perhaps unlike most 2020 graduates, however, I loved it. Much of grad school is what comes from the unexpected, and for me, graduation was no different. Surrounded by a couple of friends (six feet apart), a breakfast plate, and a hot cup of coffee, I officially became an audiologist—and I wouldn't have it any other way. - Kristen Ponturiero (AuD 2020)

What does a scholarship mean? One student's story



For me, scholarship money is everything.

Not only am I a first-generation college student, but I'm also an out-of-state student. Both my mom and I have hearing loss, and becoming an audiologist is very important to me. Most people are aware of the extremely high cost of getting a college education, and I think that some are scared to pursue their educational passion because of the cost. Students also have to consider how much money they are going to make after school.

Scholarship money has allowed me to pursue my AuD without worrying as much about the financial investment I'm making for my education. I am very thankful to the contributors to the various scholarship funds for being able to give myself and others the ability to pursue what might otherwise be impossible.

Thank you.

- Ty Tanker, 3rd year AuD student

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders relies on your support to continue to provide students with scholarships to assist them in a high quality education, faculty with funds needed for research opportunities and funds to advance the department. Please consider making a gift online at givetoioowa.org/2021SE99 or contact us.

2020 Scholarship winners

Paul Abbas Scholarship in Hearing Science
Soumya Venkitakrishnan

Audiology Research Assistant Award
Ty Tanker

Ray and Alice Barkmeier Scholarship
Jina Kim, Jay Wilkinson

ISHA Scholars Nominees
Rebecca Cleveland, Abigail Denque,
Sarah Kingsbury, Megan Kinnerk,
Jeff Shymanski

Kristin Lodge-Miller Memorial Scholarship
Jessica Spinelli

Dr. H.L. Morris Scholarship
Ty Tanker, Sophia Wittenberg

Laura Mueldener Memorial Scholarship
Caroline (Emory) Cross

Carol and Gerald Nordquist Scholarship
Andrea Zeng

Leland and Esther Ogdahl Scholarship
Abigail Straight

Stephen and Joanna Reno Scholarship
Meredith Kromer-Edwards
Ellen Scarborough

Outstanding SAA Member Award
Ty Tanker

Sassine Graduate Scholarship
Desi Gutierrez, Erin Kaufmann

Scottish Rite Scholarship
Patrick Maddigan, Jonathan Stirn

Shirley and Thomas Salmon Scholarship
Lauren Brown

Sertoma Graduate Support Award
Trenton Delp, Kelly Gerlich

Spriesterbach / Hurtig Award
Abigail Denque

Laurel Stanzel Memorial Scholarship
Madalyn Anderson

J. Bruce Tomblin Scholarship
Emma Brown, Emily Phalen

PhD New Investigator's Award
Erik Jorgensen, Caitlin Sapp

PhD Publication Award
Justin Jensen

Q & A's for Carolyn Brown, CSD chair



What do you view as the greatest strength you bring to CSD?

In many ways I think my greatest strength is how long I have been in this department. I not only was an undergraduate in CSD here many, many years ago but I also was a PhD student in the mid-80's, worked as a research scientist in Otolaryngology at the UIHC for much of the 1990's, and was lucky to be able to join the faculty in CSD in 1997. Who would have thought I would end up as Department Chair more than two decades later? I watched our department grow and mature. I was able to see how resilient we could be in the difficult times and how great things could be when the stars aligned just right. I worked with several different department chairs over the years as well. I honestly think that being able to draw on those experiences helps me immensely in my new role.

How would you describe your leadership style?

I don't know that I have had time to even think about that. I try to be transparent, positive and supportive of our faculty and staff. Some days that is easier than others. Is that a leadership "style?" I don't know.

Name a person (or two) who inspire(d) you and why:

There have been many, but I would say that the person who inspired me most was my mentor, Paul Abbas. Paul has been and continues to be my teacher, advisor, mentor, colleague and friend. He is brilliant, of course, but perhaps even more inspiring to me is what a kind and genuine person he is. I would not be where I am today without him. Period.

We work in challenging times (shrinking state funding, competition for top students, and now COVID!): how do you plan to keep circumstances from dampening your (and the faculty's) spirits?

No doubt, these are the most challenging times I have seen in my career. We have always dealt with budget shortfalls and competition for students. More challenging this year is dealing with COVID. I doubt that I can keep the social isolation and the challenges associated with on-line instruction from dampening anyone's spirits. In fact, I think that is an unrealistic goal. I try to be positive. I try to be reassuring and I work hard to be supportive and encourage our faculty to do the same. Our faculty, staff and students are amazing. They work so hard and they always rise to the occasion. They adapt, innovate and never fail to inspire me. I hope that in some small way, I can inspire them as well.



With the elusive end to the pandemic nowhere in sight, CSD keeps showing creativity and resiliency to ensure the safety and health of its students, faculty, staff, clients and research subjects. A client's 9th birthday on a teletherapy day? The celebration goes on via Zoom. Teaching small, face-to-face classes? Layers of safety measures are in place. Everything looks just a little different, yet the missions of teaching, learning, and service remain strong.

let's keep in touch

We're grateful for new technologies that link CSD alumni, friends, and former faculty to current students, faculty, and staff. We hope you read, enjoy, and respond to our annual newsletters. In the future, we plan to distribute newsletters as fully as possible via Email and downloadable pdf's from our website: www.clas.uiowa.edu/comsci. While you're there, take a look around!

Find us on Facebook , Instagram, and YouTube. Electronic media not only promotes quick responses, but allows us to forego printing and mailing costs and instead direct funds to student support for ever-increasing tuition costs.

Do we have on record your preferred Email address? If not -- or if you'd like to share your news in the Alumni Updates section -- please complete the following and mail, FAX (319.335.8751), or Email us at speech-path-aud@uiowa.edu.

Name _____ **Degree(s) / year(s) earned** _____

Current job _____

Your news _____

Finally, if you find yourself in or around the Iowa City area, please arrange a visit! Just Email speech-path-aud@uiowa.edu or call the Main Office at 319.335.8718. We'd be delighted to give you a building tour and reminisce about your time at Iowa and update you on current happenings.