Message from the Chair, Dr. Kristine Swain

As our Spring semester nears completion, we want to congratulate our Spring graduate students. We will have over 50 students graduating from our undergraduate and graduate programs with graduates in behavior disorders, deaf/hard of hearing, sign language interpreting, special education, and speech-language pathology. We wish these new UNO Maverick alumni the best of luck, and we look forward to hearing about your accomplishments.

The department developed and implemented a new Strategic plan with many new goals that focus on the priorities of dedicated practitioners, reflective scholars and responsible citizens. Some of the articles included in this newsletter are great examples of the work that is being done in these areas as students are engaged in research and the community. We have many great school and community partners that help us achieve many of our goals.

We also have new opportunities with new and revised graduate programs available in Behavior Intervention Specialist and Special Education Supervisor. Contact information for these programs is available on page 5. We hope to hear from you if you are interested in one of these programs.

Enjoy reading about accomplishments and opportunities!
UNO’s National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) participated in numerous events this semester. We began 2015 by attending Pump it Up, which is a monthly event we attend in collaboration with members of the Autism Society of Nebraska. Our members interacted with the children while their parents attended a support group with other parents. We also volunteered during UNO’s Day of Service in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. day. We celebrated this day by making felt blankets for delivery to the Lydia House.

In March, we travelled to the state capital for Legislative Day and had a luncheon with some Nebraska Senators. This was another great opportunity for members to advocate for our future profession and to discuss pertinent issues. In April, we hosted UNO’s Got Talent! UNO organizations performed for members of the community. We raffled off numerous door prizes; enjoyed pizza, pop and the show! All proceeds for this event were donated to the Autism Society of Nebraska.

It has been a busy semester full of a diverse number of events. UNO NSSLHA is well known in the community for their involvement and commitment. We love to serve those around us and we enjoy finding creative ways in which we can make a positive difference in our society. We are committed to advocating for the individuals who benefit from speech-language-hearing services and for speech-language pathology as our future profession.

SCEC started off the spring semester with the Munroe Meyer Walk and Roll on March 1st. It was a successful day filled with fun activities and great volunteers! Most of our events this semester will be involved with the Special Olympics with the spring games, aquatics, athletics, and the summer games. We will also be providing volunteers for the Autism Puzzle Walk that will be held April 18th at the Ralston Arena. Another event that SCEC will be participating in is TOP Soccer in Millard. During this event, members will be paired with a soccer buddy to learn various soccer skills. An exciting opportunity has come upon the SCEC officers to attend the Council for Exceptional Children Conference in San Diego, California. This will be a great learning experience for the officers to learn more about the Special Education field and share with fellow SCEC members.
Congratulations to Dr. Mary J. Friehe

Mary J. Friehe is retiring after 14 years at UNO and over 40 years in the profession of speech-language pathology. Dr. Friehe worked in a variety of settings including a private agency in Canada, the Lincoln Public Schools, the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and UNO. Throughout her career, she provided services to children with communication disorders and college students with language-based learning disabilities, taught undergraduate and graduate courses, wrote federal grants, conducted research, and acted in a variety of administrative roles. In addition to her work related activities, Dr. Friehe also was active in a variety of professional and community-based service organizations. She especially enjoyed her volunteer activities with the Sertoma organization, participating in program accreditation at the national level, and her service on committees and boards in both the South Dakota and Nebraska Speech-Language-Hearing Associations. She will miss her colleagues, the students, and the energy of a college learning environment, but is looking forward to having more flex time and more time to explore the mountains of Colorado. She thanks all who have been a part of her professional career and leaves knowing that the speech-language pathology program at UNO will continue to provide excellent training for students and important leadership in the metropolitan and professional communities.

Allies for Sign Language

Allies for Sign Language had its first bake sale of the year to support literacy at Iowa School for the Deaf. Volunteers donated baked goods and their time to work the table. Dr. Julie Delkamiller also brought in Nicaraguan jewelry and pottery to help raise money for the Deaf school in Nicaragua that she helped establish.

A future fundraiser will be a volleyball tournament this fall. A team will consist of 4 players; more information will be available soon. After spring break, a weekly lunch event for members will be held from 11:30 to 1:00 pm on Tuesdays in the MBSC. This would also be a great opportunity for members to get to know each other and practice their skills!
Students Participate in Research and Creativity Fair

Increasing the number of students involved with research has been a focus for the faculty in our department. The department of Special Education and Communication Disorders was well represented at the UNO Student Research and Creativity Fair on March 6. Congratulations to our participants!

Graduate Student Researchers

Trish Finks
Kristen VanWyndaarden
Katie Wittler

Undergraduate Student Researchers

Brianna Hendrickson
Camilla Redford
Olajide Cooper

Olajide Cooper – “Effectiveness of target language acquisition methodology when used with Spanish speaking parents of Deaf children” (Faculty Advisor: Dr. Delkamiller)

Trish Finks – “Convergent and criterion related validity of the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale-Second Edition as translated into Lithuanian” (Faculty Advisor: Dr. Nordness)

Brianna Hendrickson – “Engagement differences for 2-year-olds identified as late talkers” (Faculty Advisor: Dr. DeVeney)

Camilla Redford – “Understanding the special education teacher as a general education teacher” (Faculty Advisor: Dr. Hagaman)

Kristin VanWyngaarden - “Phonological profiles of 2-year-olds with expressive-only and expressive and receptive language delay” (Faculty Advisor: Dr. DeVeney)

Katie Wittler – “Test-retest reliability of independent phonological measure of 2-year-old speech” (Faculty Advisor: Dr. DeVeney)
Visiting Faculty Researcher, Renata Geležinienė from Siauliai University, received a grant from the Research Council in Lithuania to support her travel to UNO and research collaborations on strength-based assessment with Dr. Phil Nordness. In addition to spending time at UNO, Professor Geležinienė was able to attend the Midwest Symposium on Behavior Disorders in Kansas City.

David Conway, Phil Nordness, Renata Geležinienė, Kris Swain, and Nancy Edick

Congratulations FUSE Grant Recipients

Five undergraduate students were recently awarded FUSE grants and will be working with faculty mentors from the department.

The three speech-language pathology students include: Jordan Gearhart, with the project “Temporal Reliability of Independent Analysis for Late Talkers’ Phonological Productions,” Taylor Hansen, with the project “iPad Pilot Program: Graduate Student Tablet Technology Use in Clinical and Classroom Settings,” and Ann Walker, with the project “Test-Retest Reliability of Relational Phonological Analyses for 2-year-old Late Talkers.” They will be mentored by Dr. Shari DeVeney throughout the course of their grant.

Olajide Cooper will be mentored by Dr. Julie Delkamiller on her project, “ISN Language Intervention Development for Nicaraguan Parents of Deaf Children.”

Bradi Anderson will be mentored by Dr. Mitzi Ritzman on the project, “An Expanded View of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Awareness and Understanding on a College Campus.”

New and Updated Graduate Programs Available

Interested in advancing your career? Please contact us to discuss one of our new or updated programs.

**Behavior Intervention Specialist:** The Behavior Disorders program has been updated to align with the revised endorsement. Please contact Dr. Beth Leader-Janssen (eleaderjanssen@unomaha.edu) or Dr. Phil Nordness (pnordness@unomaha.edu) to discuss this program.

**Special Education Supervisor:** This is a program that is a partnership between Educational Leadership and Special Education. For more information, please contact Dr. Kay Keiser (kkeiser@unomaha.edu) or Dr. Kris Swain (kswain@unomaha.edu)

Follow us on Twitter at @UNOSECD!

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