



# DISCIPLINE OF SPEECH PATHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NUMBER 2 – JUNE 2008

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SYDNEY UNI?

WELCOME to the second edition of the University of Sydney Speech Pathology newsletter. In this edition you will meet another member of our staff and a PhD student. There is also information about research and other activities that have occurred in the Discipline so far this year. In March we welcomed just over 80 new undergraduate speech pathology students and 28 Masters of Speech Language Pathology students and in April we celebrated graduation with the 2007 student cohort. In May prizes were presented to some of our outstanding students at the Faculty Prize giving ceremony. These prizes are generously sponsored by Speech Pathology Australia and several business organisations and we thank them for their on-going support. You can find out more about the awards and their sponsors by visiting the "current students" pages on our new website – [www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/speechpathology](http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/speechpathology)

An important role for university staff is to use their knowledge to influence government policy. An example of this is that in May this year Natalie Munro, Julia Starling and myself made a submission to the Committee of the Commission for Children and Young People about School-Age Children and Adolescents with Language Disability in NSW. The staff also achieve this objective by being members of external committees and working parties and publishing research papers. Another important role for university staff is to advance the status and knowledge base of their profession. The launch of speechBITE™ is a fantastic example of this in action. speechBITE™ brings high quality Evidence Based Practice information and resources to the desktop of every speech pathologist around the world who has a computer. I would like to congratulate Leanne Togher and the speechBITE™ team on the launch of speechBITE™ and encourage everyone to get online and take a look! Bronwyn Hemsley provided input to the Speech Pathology Australia response to the ABS survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers Discussion Paper and made a public submission on ageing, disability, and communication, to the 2020 Summit.

*Michelle Lincoln*

### Who's Who in Speech Pathology at SYDNEY UNI?

#### New Staff Members

Two new staff joined the Discipline in March this year.

*Dr Bronwyn Hemsley will be teaching Professional Development and Rural Gap Program units. Bronwyn is also the Course Coordinator for the Graduate Program in Developmental Disability.*

*Ms Yetta Abrahams will be lecturing in Audiology and coordinating the hearing and speech fieldwork program.*

*Yetta is an audiologist with expertise in Cochlear Implants and Adolescents with hearing impairment.*

### Staff Member PROFILE

#### Joanne Arciuli (PhD)

Joanne obtained her PhD from Macquarie University and conducted post-doctoral research at University College London before taking up an appointment as Lecturer in Psychology at Charles Sturt University in 2006. Joanne joined the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Sydney in January 2008.

**Research Interests:** Joanne's broad research area is Cognitive Science with a specific expertise in Neuro/Psycholinguistics. She conducts research with both children and adults and examines both typical and delayed/dysfunctional language processes. Currently, Joanne is employing developmental, neuroscientific, cross-linguistic and computational modelling techniques to investigate of the nature and use of probabilistic phonological and orthographic cues to (1) lexical stress and (2) grammatical category.

Additional collaborations include: the examination of prosody in children with autism, the neural basis of auditory hallucinations in schizophrenia, the relationship between auditory processing and reading in children (typically developing, SLI and autism), consonant cluster production, and the psycholinguistics of lying. Other cross-disciplinary projects include investigations of self-esteem and the brain, and new methods of crisis management training using interactive computer games.

**Current Research Grants:** With a colleague in the UK Joanne holds an ARC/ESRC Linkage Research Grant to examine cross-linguistic lexical stress using corpus analyses, behavioural testing and computational modelling, and with colleagues at CSU, an ARC Linkage-Industry Grant to examine crisis management simulation.

**Teaching:** This year Joanne will teach in units of study on clinical linguistics, clinical phonetics and articulation, human communication, and language impairments in children. Phone: (02)9351 9286 Fax: (02)9351 9173



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Emma and Herschel  
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## Postgraduate Student PROFILE

### Emma McLaughlin

I had a stressful couple of weeks three years ago. From my home in Melbourne, I applied to do a PhD project through the University of Sydney investigating attrition and retention in the speech pathology workforce. Then, I got married. Two days later, while on my honeymoon, I had a phone interview about the project. While my husband and I were on the way home from our honeymoon, I found out that I was the successful applicant. Being a PhD student in Melbourne with my supervisors (Michelle Lincoln and Barbara Adamson) in Sydney has been challenging and fantastic. I have loved sitting at my laptop in my trakkie dacks with my cat (Herschel) on my lap in the backyard while I do my PhD: a stark contrast to running between my office and the wards in a rehabilitation hospital!

It has been tough not having academic people and atmosphere around to keep me driven and inspired, and doing most of my communication via email. However, trips up to Cumberland Campus have helped me to feel more like a "real" (not a "virtual") PhD student. Another support mechanism that helped me greatly was the Occupational Health Labour Force Trends research group meetings, which I participated in via teleconference. This group was comprised of post graduate students from several health sciences disciplines. It was an energising relief to be able to share the triumphs and frustrations of study with these peers, some of whom travelled with me to overseas conferences or offered me a place to stay in Sydney. So, even though I was by myself, I was never alone. I was also fortunate to be funded by an Australian Post Graduate Industry Award and to have the support of Speech Pathology Australia throughout my research, which allowed me to focus on the task at hand. I have grown in so many ways during my PhD. I know much more about the speech pathology workforce (including how dedicated and passionate they are about helping people), and the challenges that face them. I know that stats are not as scary as I once thought. I know that I can present at an international conference while "gurus" in my field look on. I know that with the support of many wise, compassionate, generous and encouraging people, I can complete a research project and thesis that will hopefully make a difference to the speech pathologists of the future. I am not sure what I will do after I submit my thesis, but my desire to do research and support the speech pathology workforce has only been strengthened. I hope I am fortunate enough to be able pursue these interests in the future.

## Clinical Education NEWS

### Thank you for Block Placements

*The Discipline would like to thank all of the external sites who have provided so many block placements for our students.*

*An amazing number of sites have been able to offer placements for our undergraduate and graduate entry students.*

*We value every single placement and would like to express our gratitude to the many supervisors and their departments who helped prepare almost 90 final year students, in a range of clinical workplaces during 2007, as well as numerous block opportunities for our third year students.*

### Project with Catholic Education Office renewed

*We are delighted that in 2008 we were able to renew our partnership contract with the Catholic Education Office- Parramatta Diocese.*

*This has helped ensure that all final year students gain experience working on-site within schools.*

*This year students and staff are also working in Berala Public School and Sacred Heart School Cabramatta.*

*Students are also providing services in a range of schools, under the supervision of staff from Educational Speech Pathology practice, in particular, Sue Radovich.*

### COMPASS™ and final assessment of entry-level competence

*The COMPASS™ Assessment tool is now an integral part of student assessment and learning during clinical placements.*

*Our recent graduates in the undergraduate and graduate- entry masters program were assessed in their final year placements using the COMPASS™ tool.*

*All students continue to prepare a comprehensive portfolio which demonstrates their skills across the full range of speech pathology practice.*

### Students go to Preschool

*In recent years undergraduate students have participated in some clinical activities in a local preschool setting.*

*This has been a great way to ensure they have exposure and interaction with typically developing young children, as well as interaction with education professionals early in their degree.*

*This year Annie Chan, unit of study coordinator, has refined this program to better facilitate the development of students clinical skills in planning for children in this context.*

## Breaking SCIENCE

**McCabe, P.J, Sheard, C. & Code, C. (2008).** *Communication impairment in the AIDS dementia complex (ADC): A case report. Journal of Communication Disorders. 41 (3), 203-222. Fifty percent of patients with AIDS will eventually develop AIDS related dementia. Until recently this has been thought to spare language and other communication skills. This study is the first to report varying but significant cognitive communication impairment in a man with AIDS dementia and compares his performance with a man who had AIDS but no dementia and a healthy control.*

*Over a period of 18 months the patient with dementia had severe pragmatic impairments and mild word finding difficulties. He had significant difficulties on one occasion with interpreting metaphors and with expressive naming. His pragmatic impairments included poor topic management, poor attention to the listener and a high level of redundant information.*

*People with HIV in developed countries are now living for many years in the community and this increased survival means they are more likely to eventually develop AIDS dementia without being physically ill.*

*These patients will therefore become more common in psychiatric and nursing home settings. Speech Pathologists should therefore expect to see these patients and may be asked to help design interventions to improve their cognitive communication skills.*



## speechBITE™ LAUNCH Recognition of SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

### New website up and running

The site was officially launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008 by Speech Pathology Australia and the Discipline of Speech Pathology.

speechBITE™ is a new, internet based resource designed to assist speech pathologists in evidence based clinical decision making.

It has a rapidly growing database that catalogues treatment studies across the entire range of communication and swallowing disorders.

Under the direction of Dr Leanne Togher at The University of Sydney, speechBITE™ has been in development since early 2006.

Along with the valuable support provided by Speech Pathology Australia, speechBITE™ has also received funding from the Motor Accidents Authority of NSW and Guild Insurance.

The project has benefited greatly from the guidance of an advisory committee including Associate Professor Michelle Lincoln, Dr Emma Power, Dr Tricia McCabe, Natalie Munro and Members of the NSW EBP Network.

Check it out at this web address: <http://www.speechbite.com/>

For any queries or more info about speechBITE™, contact the Project Manager, Kate Smith, via email:

[Katherine.Smith@usyd.edu.au](mailto:Katherine.Smith@usyd.edu.au)

Staff from the Discipline of Speech Pathology have provided a sustained and outstanding contribution to our professional association, Speech Pathology Australia, through several key executive roles.

Dr Emma Power has provided strategic leadership to the NSW branch for 4 years as NSW President, consultation to the National Council and NSW government departments. She stepped down at the beginning of 2008 and continues to provide mentorship in her immediate past president role.

Dr Natalie Munro provides support as the NSW Vice President and representation and advocacy on issues related to childhood communication disorders.

Dr Tricia McCabe has just been awarded a SPAA Recognition of Service Award in 2008 after nomination by her peers for her work to revitalize the National Conference scientific program process, resulting in a new structure of the Conference and the rewritten conference manual and associated policies. Congratulations Tricia. Tricia also contributed to the SPAA Course Accreditation program from 2005-2007.

Assoc Prof Michelle Lincoln has been on the SPAA accreditation team for the past 8 years, supporting the Association's important role in maintaining standards of speech pathology courses and was awarded Fellow in 2007.

Dr Elise Baker has contributed through editorial roles for the Association's clinical research publication, 'ACQ'.

Christine Sheard, who won a Recognition of Service Award in 2007, has had a long commitment to the Association, most recently as a Continuing Professional

Development committee member.

The Discipline's contribution to the professional leadership of the NSW branch and the National Association has been long term, sustained and invaluable and has led to a dynamic and active representation of speech pathology issues for speech pathologists, students, and consumers.

## Scholarship SUCCESSES

### Congratulations to Jacquie McKechnie

Jacquie, a 4<sup>th</sup> year B.App.Sc (Sp.Path) Honours student, has been awarded the Douglas and Lola Douglas Scholarship for Faculty of Health Sciences undergraduate students.

The value of the scholarship is \$12,000.

The scholarship is for one year and is awarded to a student enrolled in the final year of an honours course.

The title of Jacqui's project is 'Acoustic analysis of apraxic speech: towards reliable diagnosis'

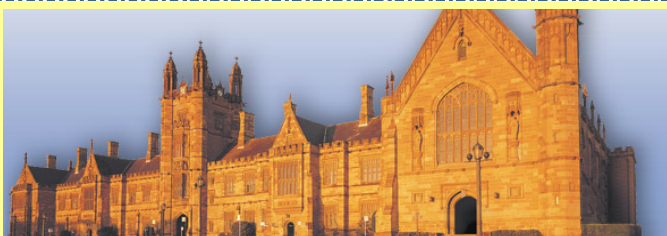
### Congratulations to our winners of the University of Sydney's International Merit Scholarships

- Ms Ee Laine LAU, from Singapore, is enrolled in the Master of Speech Language Pathology Honours course
- Ms Joanna THUM, from Singapore, is enrolled in the Master of Speech Language Pathology Honours course
- Ms Huilin YANG, from Singapore, is enrolled in the B.App.Sc (Sp.Path) Honours course

The International Student Merit Scholarships are awarded by the University of Sydney to its UG and PG coursework merit achievers who have completed at least one year of their studies at the University of Sydney. The value of each of the scholarships awarded is \$5,000.

Thinking about doing  
POST GRADUATE STUDY  
in 2009?

Now is the time to act!



If you are considering commencing a masters or PhD by research in 2009 now is the time to contact the University. You can either contact Dr Leanne Togher, who is the Discipline's post graduate student coordinator ([L.Togher@usyd.edu.au](mailto:L.Togher@usyd.edu.au)), or you can contact directly, the staff member who is working in the area that you are interested in studying in.

General information about post graduate degrees in the Faculty of Health Sciences can be found at the following web address: [http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/future\\_students/index.shtml](http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/future_students/index.shtml)

Remember you do not have to pay student fees for research degrees unless you exceed the minimum time allowed, there are post graduate scholarships available that provide financial support during your degree and it is OK to have a broad idea of the area you want to work in e.g. aphasia, child language.

Your supervisor will help you narrow down your ideas and perhaps will have work in progress that you could join!

So if you are thinking about further study now is the time to act, we would love to hear from you!



**Visit by Emeritus Professor Audrey Holland - 29<sup>th</sup> July to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

Emeritus Professor Audrey Holland, from the University of Arizona, will be visiting the Discipline from 29<sup>th</sup> July to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2008. Keep an eye on our News and Events page at <http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/speechpathology/news/index.shtml>. Dates and times for all of her presentations and workshops will be posted online as soon as they are organised.

**University of Sydney Information Day - Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

On Saturday 30 August 2008 the University of Sydney throws open its doors and offers you the chance to discover more about study opportunities and Sydney Uni life. From courses to career prospects, clubs and societies to accommodation and student services - this public open day will ensure all your questions are answered. Visit <http://www.live.usyd.edu.au/> for all the details.

**Stuttering Awareness Day, Great Debate - Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008**

Come along and hear speech pathology students and members of the Australian Speak Easy Association debate the topic "It doesn't matter if you stutter".

**Time:** 12 – 1pm **Location:** Room S102, Cumberland Campus

**Contact:** Corina Yiannoukas **Email:** [C.Yiannoukas@usyd.edu.au](mailto:C.Yiannoukas@usyd.edu.au)

**Health Sciences graduation ceremony - Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

Students from the Discipline of Speech Pathology will graduate in the Great Hall.

**Time:** From 11.30am **Location:** The Great Hall, Quadrangle

**Contact:** Liz Gibson **Email:** [e.gibson@records.usyd.edu.au](mailto:e.gibson@records.usyd.edu.au)

**More info:** <http://www.usyd.edu.au/studentcentre/grads/index.shtml>

**Student Farewell Party – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

2008's Year 4 B.App.Sc(Sp.Path.), Year 2 MSLP and Year 3 BHS (Hearing and Speech) students will be farewelled by the Discipline at a presentation and function to be held in Building S on Cumberland Campus.

**Contact:** Mary Routledge **Email:** [m.routledge@usyd.edu.au](mailto:m.routledge@usyd.edu.au)

**Deirdre Russell Award for Service – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

The Discipline's 2007 Deirdre Russell Award will be presented at a presentation and reception to be held in Building S on Cumberland Campus. Keep an eye on our website for details of the winning individual or organisation.

[http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/speechpathology/about/service\\_recognition\\_award.shtml](http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/speechpathology/about/service_recognition_award.shtml)

**Contact:** Mary Routledge **Email:** [m.routledge@usyd.edu.au](mailto:m.routledge@usyd.edu.au)

**Clinical Education Workshops – Dates to be advised**

The Discipline runs workshops for Speech Pathologists who have not supervised students before and/or those who are experienced clinical educators and wish to update their skills and knowledge. The workshops cover areas such as models of clinical education, managing placements, giving and receiving feedback, learning styles and their application to clinical education and an introduction to COMPASS™: Competency Assessment in Speech Pathology. Keep an eye on our News and Events page at

<http://www.fhs.usyd.edu.au/speechpathology/news/index.shtml>. Dates and times for these workshops will be posted on the site as soon as they are scheduled.

**For more information**

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