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Contact us:
http://www.lwhl.arizona.edu
Email: UAhearing@gmail.com
Clinic: 520-621-7070

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Words from our Supporters

I noticed my husband, Jim, not hearing well when he was in his forties. It shouldn’t have surprised me, as hearing loss in middle age was very common in his family. His mother, his two aunts and his grandfather lost most of their hearing in their early forties. At first Jim chose not to recognize the loss, complaining about my soft tone, loud restaurants, and rumbling voices. Within a few years, he was having his hearing tested and agreed to wear one hearing aid.

Jim had a very active business career and needed all of his senses to make crucial decisions. He has a great deal of confidence which made facing his hearing loss easier. At age 68, he is now being fitted for his fifth set of hearing aids and is always researching the latest aid that might make his communications easier.

Living with someone with a hearing loss certainly has its frustrations. My frustrations are usually tied to what I perceive to be Jim’s anxieties. However, together we have made behavioral changes to address my frustrations and his anxieties. For instance, I worry that Jim will withdraw from social situations, as it becomes too exhausting to carry on meaningful conversations in large groups. One solution is to suggest to friends that we have small parties of 6 to 8 in quiet places.

Jim always selects his seat first, usually in a corner away from other tables. I try to help him by “cuing him in” when the subject of the conversation has changed, as Jim sometimes has difficulty following these transitions. Jim has become very upfront with people, explaining immediately that he has a hearing loss and the need to look at them when they talk. I do worry that Jim will not always hear on the DVDs. Jim tries to get a hearing assistive device when attending the theater. We have built a new home recently and have “looped” most of the rooms. Jim can now hear the TV and sound system by adjusting the T-coil on his hearing aid. I believe movies, TV and theater are "Together we have made behavioral changes to address my frustrations and his anxieties."

Key Note from Dr. Harris

Since our first newsletter in 2011, our program has continued to expand and improve – and the Living WELL with Hearing Loss groups are at its core. At the close of spring semester, 2012, close to 420 people had gone through this process, gaining knowledge and skills to cope more effectively with the daily challenges of hearing loss.

In our current newsletter, you will read about the progress of our outreach efforts in the Tucson community, about Hear@Tucson for younger adults and about the research results that are emerging from all of the components of the program. Evaluating outcomes is an essential aspect of the program because it allows us to demonstrate to others how such a program can be implemented. It’s exciting to see how much has been accomplished in only three years. This has all been made possible because of the sponsorship of Jim and Dyane Pignatelli, the Unisource Corporation and those of you who have made individual and organizational contributions to the program. Of course, we could not exist without the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences and the UA Hearing Clinic. On a personal note, I would like to congratulate and thank the many student clinicians, both graduate and undergraduate, who have worked so hard to make these programs successful. Their creativity and enthusiasm constantly move the program forward, and we are very lucky to have each of them at the University of Arizona. We hope that you will appreciate the newsletter, maybe see some familiar faces, and that your lives continue to go along well as you remember important information and try to use communication strategies – Walk Before You Talk, give good feedback and most of all, RELAX and remember, habits take time to change.

All the best,

Fran Harris, Program chair and coordinator, and the Living Well with Hearing Loss (LWHL) student assistants.
A Student’s Perspective

Our program gives students the unique opportunity to get involved in teaching and aiding in the Living Well with Hearing Loss groups. We interviewed one of the students about his experience during the spring, 2012 semester.

Student Name:
Andrew “Andy” Golboro

Degrees completed: B.A. in Hearing and Speech Sciences
Degrees currently working on: Doctor of Audiology (AuD)
Clinical areas of interest: Auditory Processing, OAE suppression, vestibular testing

What was your involvement in LWHL this semester?
co-taught four LWHL groups

What did you enjoy about your experience overall?
What I probably enjoyed the most was the face-to-face interaction with people who suffer from hearing loss. LWHL gave me an opportunity to see first-hand how hearing loss affects peoples’ lives and reminded me why I’m in this program.

What was your favorite aspect of LWHL?
Snack time. I kind it sounds silly but snack was when I’d get to talk to people individually; not just about their hearing loss but also about their lives. Everyone who comes through our LWHL groups has a story. Snack was always the first time they were willing to share it.

What did you learn from this experience?
LWHL taught me everything about hearing loss that my classes cannot. It’s one thing to read in a textbook that hearing loss affects peoples’ lives but it’s a totally different thing to see it and hear about it from people who experience it every day. I think everyone who wants to pursue a career in audiology should participate in a course similar to LWHL.

How will you apply this experience to your future career in audiology?
This is almost hard to answer because I feel like LWHL didn’t so much give me tools to use in my future career but rather gave me an improved perspective on audiology. Being a good audiologist is so much more than just testing hearing and dispensing hearing aids.

Interview by: Mary Rose Durkin B.S.
Program Assistant

Left to right: Rachel, Andrew, Gina, and Nick

“A Student’s Perspective”

So, remember all those forms you filled out?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out all of those forms! Your responses made a critical contribution to the growing data set for a new and active research program devoted to Living WELL with Hearing Loss. Our research team meets weekly and includes Dr. Fran Harris, Dr. Linda Norrix, AuD students, and Dr. Mende Davis, a collaborator from the Department of Psychology. By combining expertise, our current projects are answering questions focused on: 1) defining the need for groups and community-based rehabilitation programs, 2) evaluating the balance in perspectives on hearing loss between communication partners, and 3) improving outcome measures to capture what makes a difference towards everyday life. The results will be useful at both the local and national levels. We want to monitor the meet the needs of our local community and improve services. At a national level, there is a significant need to expand the scientific evidence base on the effectiveness and value of group and community rehabilitation programs. Living WELL with Hearing Loss at the University of Arizona has become one of the largest programs of its kind in the nation. This gives us the capacity to explore topics in a unique and substantive way. Our first article will be published in the next issue of Perspectives in Audiologic Rehabilitation. We have submitted nine abstracts to report on preliminary results at three upcoming national conferences. We will make these available in the “Research” section of the website. Please watch for opportunities to continue to be involved in Living WELL with Hearing Loss research in the future!

Mary Rose Durkin, Dr. Fran Harris, and Brittany Tennyson presenting their research at ASHA

“LWHL has become one of the largest programs of its kind in the nation. That gives us the capacity to explore topics in a unique way…”

L. Rose Durkin, Dr. Fran Harris, and Brittany Tennyson presenting their research at ASHA

“I try to remind myself that Jim is straining to hear and feels at least an equal amount of stress. Again, finding ways to mitigate the frustration and stress has been a team effort. I practice the obvious…techniques of speaking slowly and facing him. Whether he does not hear the message the first time, I will ask him what he did hear and then try to rephrase the message with the pieces that have already been heard. We have a standing rule that he can never pretend he heard something and “fake” a response. Before beginning a conversation, I often touch his arm to alert him something is going to be said. Perhaps most importantly, I ask myself how I would want to be treated if I had a hearing loss. The answer is always with love and respect”

“LWHL taught me everything about hearing loss that my classes cannot. It’s one thing to read in a textbook…”

“…I ask myself how I would want to be treated if I had a hearing loss. The answer is always with love and respect”

“A Student’s Perspective”

Continued from the front page...

Mary Rose Durkin, Dr. Fran Harris, and Brittany Tennyson presenting their research at ASHA

Article by: Dr. Nicole Marrone, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences

Contribution by: Dyan Pignatelli
Supporter of the Clinical Program for Audiologic Rehabilitation in Adults

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El Pueblo Senior Center
During the 2011-2012 academic year, the Living Well with Hearing Loss Community Outreach Program had the pleasure of being involved at El Pueblo Senior Center. Our student and faculty volunteers performed hearing screenings, held LWHL groups in Spanish and English, and counseled individuals on the effects of hearing loss. We were able reach almost 100 seniors!

Analydia Gonzalez Fulcher, the U of A audiology extern, teaching a LWHL class in Spanish at El Pueblo Senior Center.

El Pueblo Senior Center

On a personal note...
The sessions with Dr. Harris, Spencer, and Mary Rose were such a helpful experience for us in understanding the difficulties couples face when one of the spouses is dealing with hearing loss. As others who have been married for a long time, we had developed habits of speaking at home and in social situations that were no longer working and causing stress for us both. It was encouraging to hear similar stories from the other couples present and to have our concerns and most importantly our need for new strategies clearly addressed by Dr. Harris and her grad. assistants. We were encouraged to “walk and talk” which was challenging after years of calling to each other from another room. We became more aware that hearing loss is considered a disability and we should have the same confidence as someone with a visible physical impairment to ask for assistance. We should be aware that

Did you know...
- Since beginning the LWHL program in Fall 2009, we have had 33 groups
- Our groups have had 419 participants
- We have held 22 free community lectures in Tucson and Green Valley
- We have had 63 students involved
- We have held 4 staff and volunteer training sessions at assisted living and senior centers.
- Our work has been represented at 7 state, national, or international conferences.

Turn Down The Volume!
Hear@Tucson, the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association, and the SERTOMA foundation sponsored the second annual, “Turn Down the Volume” event, held on the U of A mall. This year, we measured the volume-level of 38 students’ iPods and MP3 players and reminded them to protect their hearing!

“Were encouraged to ‘walk and talk’ which was challenging after years of calling to each other from another room”

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Hear@Tucson Special Guest Josh Swiller
Hear@Tucson had the incredible opportunity to bring Josh Swiller to the University of Arizona. Josh Swiller is an advocate for the Deaf and disabled as well as the author of the Unheard: A Memoir of Deafness and Africa, a New York Times bestseller. A diverse audience of about seventy-five people attended the lecture. The sponsors that made this event possible included: Arizona Community Foundation/Hear@Tucson, James S. and Dyan Pignatelli/Unisource, Sertoma, and AZRelay Service.

Left to Right: Mr. Moreno, and Mr. & Mrs. Humphrey during an LWHL group

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A friendly reminder!

If you didn’t hear what was said, DON’T say “What?” or “Huh?” Instead, remember to use these strategies to help the conversation flow!

The Keyword Strategy: Repeat what you did hear. This lets the speaker know that you didn’t miss the entire message.

Let the speaker know that you have a hearing loss AND how to speak to you: if you have a hearing loss, it would help if you could please face me and speak slowly.

Relax! Habits are hard to break. Just remember to use your strategies!

University of Arizona Hearing Clinics
1131 E. 2nd St.
Tucson, Arizona 85721

The University of Arizona Hearing Clinic is a full-service hearing clinic offering diagnostic evaluations, hearing aids, assistive technology, cochlear implant mapping, Living Well with Hearing Loss classes, consultations

For appointments contact:
(520) 621-7070

For local and national resources, consult our website:
http://lwhl.arizona.edu/

Email us with suggestions or contributions for the newsletter:
UAHearing@gmail.com

Yes! I am proud to support the Living with Hearing Loss program in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences (SLHS) at the University of Arizona. Your contribution will support graduate student assistants or provide scholarships for those who are unable to pay for the group programs. You may designate how you would like your contribution to be distributed. (Clip and return). Contact us at UAHearing@gmail.com

Contributions are tax deductible!

Make your check payable to: The University of Arizona. Please send to Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences, 1131 E. 2nd St. Tucson, AZ 85721

Name: __________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________
City: ___________________ State: ________ Zip: _____________
Phone: ____________________ e-mail: ____________________________

Contribution to Living Well with Hearing Loss Program