We hope that you enjoy hearing about the exciting projects and outcomes from our busy and productive staff and students. We are proud to have Leanne Togher as an invited national tour speaker for Speech Pathology Australia this year, although it has meant we haven’t heard her cheerful laugh in the corridors quite as much. Cate Madill is heading up the Voice Laboratory, which is making great strides and growing rapidly in numbers of students and projects. Our staff continue to contribute to the knowledge base of the field with new publications available on their research. Joanne Arciuli has just returned from a stimulating 6 months of special studies leave and Alison has just departed on same. We look forward to hearing about their adventures in the next newsletter.

OUR PEOPLE
New Academic
We welcome Dr Emma Power to our academic staff.
Emma (left) has been in the Discipline for some time as postdoctoral research fellow with the CCRE in Aphasia Rehabilitation and research officer for the TBI express communication partner training project. In her new role, Emma will teach in the area of neurogenic communication disorders (aphasia, TBI, and dementia) as well as research led practice. Emma brings strong clinical, research and professional leadership experience to the Discipline and she will continue her research into aphasia rehabilitation and knowledge translation.

GRANT SUCCESS
Qatar National Research Fund: National Priorities Research Program
Ahmed, B. (Texas A&M University at Qatar), Gutierrez-Osuna, R. (Texas A&M University, USA), Ballard, KJ (right) (Speech Pathology, University of Sydney).
Mobile infrastructure and automated tools for the monitoring and treatment of childhood apraxia of speech. US$1,043,494 over 3 years. The grant will fund a new collaboration between the Electrical Engineering Department at Texas A&M University at Qatar, The Department of Computer Science at Texas A&M University at College Station, Texas, and Department of Speech Pathology at University of Sydney. The research aims to develop a practical and low-cost automated, interactive speech therapy system for children with apraxia of speech and validate the system through user studies in Qatar and Sydney.
Visit www.qatar.tamu.edu/about/

Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec, Canada
Le Dorze, G., Croteau, C. (Speech Language Pathology), Gagnon, J. (Psychology), Lefebvre, H. (Nursing), Botari, C. (Occupational Therapy), Togher, L. (right) (SLP, Australia), Michallet, B. (SLP), Dawson, D. (OT, Toronto). Partner: Drolet, J. (Director, Head Injury Rehabilitation Department, Centre de readaptation Lucie-Bruneau, Centre de Recherche, Interdisciplinaire en Réadaptation de Montréal (CRIR)). Communication within one’s social environment as a determinant of participation. A systematic review to design new rehabilitation methods for people affected by traumatic brain injury. CAN$49,000.
This successful grant represents a new collaboration between the Brain Injury team at The University of Sydney and the brain injury rehabilitation research team at The University of Montreal. Professor Guylaène Le Dorze will spend part of her sabbatical with Associate Professor Leanne Togher at The University of Sydney, from November 2011 to January 2012.

Social Inclusion Scholarship 2011
Congratulations to Dr Alison Purcell who was awarded $1,000 by the Institute of Teaching and Learning to attend social inclusion conferences in 2011.

Strategic Teaching Enhancement Project Scheme (STEPS) 2011
Prof Kathryn Refshaugе, Prof Andrew Gonczi, Dr Colleen Canning, Dr Tricia McCabe (right), Dr Annie McCluskey, Ms Julia Blackford, Dr Victoria Neville, Associate Professor Jennifer Alison: Bridging the gap between academic and clinical learning environments-patient simulation to enhance student learning ($35,000).

BREAKING SCIENCE
Elise Baker (below) in conjunction with Professor Sharynne McLeod from Charles Sturt University, recently had companion papers published in Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools on the evidenced-based management of speech sound disorders (SSD) in children. The first of the two papers provides a narrative review of 134 studies of intervention for children with SSD, while the second paper provides an overview of how clinicians can engage in evidence-based practice with this population.


Elise Baker and Natalie Munro had a paper published in the ACQ on the assessment of toddlers’ productions of polysyllables. Elise's informal assessment tool - The T-POT (Toddler Polysyllable Test) is featured in this article. If you would like a copy of the test, contact Elise via email elise.baker@sydney.edu.au (See Natalie’s staff profile on page 2).
BYALAWA PROJECT
Launch
Speech Pathology was proud to be the leaders of the Byalawa project.

Byalawa is an innovative Indigenous online teaching resource which was launched on August 4th 2011.

The Byalawa project is a set of six online videos designed to assist health sciences students across a range of disciplines learn to effectively communicate with Indigenous patients and clients.

To create the videos lead researcher Dr Tricia McCabe from Speech Pathology conducted qualitative research through focus groups with Aboriginal people.

“We asked our groups to tell us their stories of when they had seen health professionals. When it had gone well, and when it had gone badly. From these insights we scripted six vignettes that feature Aboriginal actors talking to, or sometimes clashing with, real-world health professionals, including a pharmacist, a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist, a psychologist and two speech pathologists.”

“As teaching materials, the videos offer authenticity in interaction because the Aboriginal actors’ roles are partially scripted, but the health professionals offer real and impromptu responses to the situation.”

Speech Pathology was highly involved in the project with Tricia, Dr Belinda Kenny and Lyndal Sheepway on the project team and Dr Cate Madill, Associate Professor Steven Cumming and Belinda taking roles in the videos.

Dr McCabe says the finished video vignettes are accompanied by talking points for students and teachers. This combination of video and learning guide can be used to direct health students in developing insights linked to the focus-group research.

The project has been completed in collaboration with James Cook University and the Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

Visit www.byalawa.com

ANNUAL HEALTHFUSION TEAM CHALLENGE
2011 Event
Lucy Kaan, (second from left) Year 4 Speech Pathology undergraduate student, and a team from the Faculty of Health Sciences, came 2nd in the National Health Care Teams challenge against teams from Universities across Australia on the 26-28th of August.

The interdisciplinary teams had to plan and evaluate the care of a complex case. Lucy said she was the only speech pathologist in any team from around the country.

The overall winner was Deakin University and they beat Sydney by a half point. Well done to Lucy and the team.

STUDENTS’ SUCCESS
Australian Postgraduate Award Scholarships
Congratulations to Katrina Blyth (Primary Super: Tricia McCabe, Associate Supervisors: Cate Madill and Kirrie Ballard). Katrina will study the use of ultrasound biofeedback to improve outcomes following glossectomy.

Congratulations to Rachael Rietdijk (Primary Super: Leanne Togher, Associate Supervisor: Emma Power). Rachael was awarded the APA PhD Scholarship to investigate whether communication training for people with traumatic brain injury and their communication partners that is delivered via telerehabilitation has comparable outcomes to traditional face-to-face methods?

STAFF MEMBER PROFILE – Natalie Munro, PhD
Natalie has just returned from 2 ½ weeks abroad as part of a successful International Program Development Fund Professorial Exchange grant between The University of Sydney and The University of Iowa. Natalie spent valuable time working with Prof. Karla McGregor in her Word Learning Lab (the gumballs were a hit! – see picture). Together, with the University of Sydney’s Kids Talk Lab researchers (Dr’s Elise Baker, Kimberley Docking and Joanne Arciuli), Natalie and Karla have been working on publishing the results from their Talking Toddler Study – for more details about the Talking Toddler study see; http://sydney.edu.au/health_sciences/speech_pathology/laboratories/kids_talk/index.shtml

During the same trip, Natalie presented some of Talking Toddler research findings at the 12th Congress of the International Association for the Study of Child Language (IASCL) in Montreal, Canada. Natalie chaired a symposium titled: “Gestural Support for Learning in Verbal Contexts” and presented a poster on some of her PhD research examining the Slow Mapping and Immediate List Recall Abilities of Children with and without SLI. For symposium and poster abstracts from this conference, see www.iascl2011.org/scientific.php

If you love child language, then this is the conference to go to! The next one will be in 2014 in Amsterdam!

Natalie teaches and researchers in child language development and disorders. Her latest research focuses on word learning cues in toddlers and the development of semantic category structure in typically developing preschool and school aged children. Her goal is to develop a word learning program within Australia and apply that knowledge towards helping children with developmental language impairments. Natalie can be contacted via natalie.munro@sydney.edu.au or on (02)9351 9880.

(Above) and Gwynnyth Llewellyn, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, came 2nd in the National Health Care Teams challenge against teams from Universities across Australia on the 26-28th of August.

The overall winner was Deakin University and they beat Sydney by a half point. Well done to Lucy and the team.

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PG RESEARCH STUDENT PROFILE – Samantha Warhurst

Having a background as a singer, I have always been intrigued by the human voice and it was this urge to know more about the voice that drew me towards a career as a speech pathologist. It was not until I completed my honours thesis in 2009 however that I realised voice research was so fascinating and diverse. My eyes were opened to a world in which we could actually measure and explain the way a voice sounds and works.

So I decided that I would take voice research further and do a PhD. I specifically wanted to use the state-of-the-art equipment at the University of Sydney to measure the voices we hear on the radio. Radio presenters and voice over artists really interest me as they are one of the few professions who communicate and entertain with only their voice.

And so began my journey as a PhD candidate, supported by the Australian Postgraduate Award and the Deidre Russell Memorial Scholarship. My supervisors Dr. Cate Madill, Dr. Tricia McCabe and Professor Edwin Yiu from the University of Hong Kong have provided unwavering support and have really challenged me to reach my potential as a speech pathologist and researcher. At the moment we’re in the thick of data collection; sixteen radio presenters and nine normal controls have attended voice assessments in our Voice Research Laboratory. These voice assessments involve a voice recording as well as an examination of the vocal folds with a high-speed laryngoscope (that lets us look at the vocal folds vibrating by taking 4000 pictures per second). It’s quite exciting to meet people I’ve listened to frequently on the radio and see their amazement when they see their vocal folds vibrating in slow motion.

We’re hoping to finish data collection in a few months time and then I’ll be off on the long and winding road of data analysis and thesis writing. In the meantime however we’re still looking for participants. If you know someone who speaks on radio and might be interested in participating, or if you’re a healthy adult with no vocal performance experience and you’d like to participate yourself please email me at swar0066@uni.sydney.edu.au.

WHATS HAPPENING IN THE LAB

Voice Box Update

The team at the Voice Box (the Voice Research Laboratory) have had a very busy 1st Semester. Dr Cate Madill and Samantha Warhurst (see Sam’s profile above) attended The Voice Foundation 40th Annual Voice Symposium in Philadelphia, where Samantha presented not only her 2nd poster, The communicative characteristics of radio performers: perceptions of radio employers and educators, but also her second international conference presentation on The potential of acoustic measures for measuring the supranormal speaking voice.

Rosanne Lawrie (Honours Student 2010) presented her first international poster, A comparison of the clinical behaviours of students and experienced speech pathologists in the prepractice phase of voice therapy: a preliminary investigation. She received excellent feedback from clinicians across the globe as to the utility of the newly devised Principles of Motor Learning Prepractice Schema in assessing student clinical behaviours. Cate Madill presented the work of the Voice Box team on The Principles of Motor Learning Prepractice Schema: A Pilot Study.

Dr Tricia McCabe and Rosanne Lawrie gave presentations on the research teams’ findings at the Speech Pathology Australia Annual conference held in Darwin in June. Are there differences between novice and expert speech pathologists in the prepractice phase of voice therapy? and A comparison of the clinical behaviours of students and experienced speech pathologists in the prepractice phase of voice therapy: a preliminary investigation.

Anna McIlwaine (Honours Student 2010), Cate Madill and Tricia McCabe were presented with the ACQ Editor’s Prize 2010 for the journal article of highest quality, approachability and research rigour (Voice Therapy Prepractice and the Principles of Motor Learning). Acknowledgements also go to Rosanne Lawrie for her invaluable contribution to this article.

We are fortunate to have Dr Daniel Novakovic (ENT) working with us in the lab on our study into the supranormal voice of radio broadcasters. We are currently looking for male and female control participants, with no voice performance experience (between 25-50 years). Email Samantha if you want to take part swar0066@uni.sydney.edu.au.
Voice Box team members continue to shine across their many endeavours in voice research and participation. Cate and Samantha were part of an international collaboration with Professor Edwin Yiu and his colleagues at Hong Kong and Beijing University that were awarded HKD$756,873 by the Hong Kong Research Grant Council General Research Fund to investigate High-speed imaging of vocal fold vibration patterns in vocally fatigued teachers.

On the media front:
- Samantha enjoyed discussing her research with Tony Arthur on his Overnight late night radio show on ABC Radio 702 on 28th May.
- Cate caught up with James O’Laughlin on his Sunday night radio show on ABC Radio 702 on Sunday 16th July, to discuss a range of voice topics including the differences between men and women’s voices, what a voice problem is and what traditional remedies might work to ease a croaky throat.
- The Canberra Times “Ask Fuzzy” column sought out Cate’s expertise to explain why mens’ voices break.

On the research front:
- Lucy Bath (GEM 2nd yr) is in the process of analysing the acoustic features of voice-over artists compared with normal subjects.
- Clare Eastwood (BAppSc 3rd yr) is embarking on a study evaluating the impact of a viva assessment task of vocal skill on the overall vocal skills of graduating SP students.
- Gemma Lee (BAppSc 3rd yr) is underway in her study evaluating what self-reported individual factors influence practice of a voice motor task in tertiary students?

Congratulations to Danielle Stone (enrolled in MApPSc) on the arrival of a healthy baby boy, Max, on 23/5/2011.

We are also in discussion with prospective post-graduate students interested in undertaking a Masters or PhD program at The Voice Box in 2012. We have an exciting and innovative range of research programs underway and in the planning. If you are thinking of undertaking a research degree in 2012, now’s the time to start thinking and talking about it. So please feel free to contact Cate via email at cate.madill@sydney.edu.au or phone (02) 9351 9692 to discuss the possibilities!!

CLINICAL EDUCATION

Staffing Update
Dr Alison Purcell is on special study leave during Semester 2 and will return in January 2012. Dr Cate Madill has been appointed Speech Pathology Clinical Education Coordinator for Semester 2, 2011. Welcome to Robyn Johnson and Rita Farah (Clinical Educators / Speech Pathologists) who recently joined the clinical team.

Our honours students are hard at work on their voice projects:
- Charlotte Jocelyn-May (BAppSc 4th yr) is in her final year of a 2 year project investigating the efficacy of different modalities of feedback in learning a voice motor task.
- Athena Chan (GEM 2nd yr) is about to launch her survey investigating current practices in the treatment of functional voice disorders. If you would like to participate in the survey, click on the following link:… http://www2.fhs.usyd.edu.au/csd/archive/voice_start.htm
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University of Sydney Graduate Options Expo – Thursday 22nd September 2011, 3pm-7pm
Come and talk to Speech Pathology staff about the Master of Speech Language Pathology course. At the GO Expo you can explore your options; investigate a particular career choice. Whether you’re interested in courses for professional development; looking to further your career; change careers or you just want to learn for the love of it, there is something on offer for you at Sydney. Find out more at www.sydney.edu.au/graduate_options/

Apraxia of Speech Workshop – Sydney – Monday 17th October 2011
Associate Professor Kirrie Ballard will be presenting a workshop, for Speech Pathology Australia, on “Emerging Treatments of Apraxia of Speech (kids and adults): Where are we up to?” - Find out more at http://online.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/sis_public/Core/Events/eventdetails.aspx?key=1NNWALLA&TemplateType=A

Aphasia and TBI Workshops – Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney – October and November 2011
Associate Professor Leanne Togher, PhD, Speech Pathology Australia’s 2011 National Tour speaker, will be presenting workshops on Aphasia and Traumatic Brain Injury during October and November 2011. Find out more at www.sydney.edu.au/health_sciences/speech_pathology/news/index.shtml

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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